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Racism in Norway

Africans and Norwegian-Africans understanding and experiences.

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Declaration

I, Hamdiya Ibrahim, declare that this thesis is a result of my own research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for the award of any type of academic degree.

Signature.....

Date.....

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Abstract

This is a qualitative study with 16 Africans and Norwegian-Africans from Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda and Sudan. The participants were interviewed to explore their racial experiences, coping strategies, their knowledge of human rights laws and institutions and their suggestions on how racism could be reduced. Almost all the participants had experienced some form of racism, except one. Some of the areas that they had experienced racism were transportation, health care, education, accommodation, employment sectors and others. These experiences have affected some physically, emotionally and mentally but most of them have gotten used to it. Four coping strategies were identified by the participants as their way of handling racism: confrontational-standing up for oneself; avoidance-staying away from a situation; positive attitude-adding value to oneself and reporting-communication of an encounter to the appropriate authorities. Making racism a human rights issue could be an effective way to combat it. This makes participants knowledge of human rights laws and institutions extremely significant. The study makes use of human rights Conventions to analyse the data. Arguing this analysis from a human rights perspective, it was discovered that few participants had knowledge of human rights laws and institutions which can help them deal with racism. Most of them had not been in contact with these human rights institutions because they did not have any need for them. Although a few had been in contact with some institutions, one currently has a pending case with Civil Ombudsman against an employer. The participants suggested awareness creation, integration, positive image/attitude and the media as ways of decreasing racism in Norway, whilst socialization and volunteerism aids in the process. People should be educated on the human rights laws that protect them. It could enable them fight for their rights when it is violated. This thesis demonstrates racial experiences from a diverse African perspective as a way of adding African voices to the racism discourse in Norway.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

The issue of racism has been in existence for many centuries. Though racism is an international problem, it is believed to be more vivid in the developed countries as compared to other countries in the world. Omi and Winant (2004) stated that, the term race has gradually become a challenge because of its importance and the changing meanings of the term (as cited in Massao & Fasting, 2010). In a recent Fafo research of about 4,445 Norwegians, whilst 25% of them supported policies of equality and the prevention of discrimination, some believed that some races are more intelligent than others irrespective of their educational levels and 39% said Somalians could never be full Norwegians.¹ This 2019 survey shows an indication of racism in the country because, some Norwegians have some criteria for measuring one's ability of being intelligent or to become a Norwegian.

The Ombud (2018) report describes the existence of racism in Norway and the need for authorities to formulate more specific policies to stop the prejudices, racist attitudes and hatred from gaining roots among the population. Most Africans who migrated to the developed countries for greener pastures end up facing racial prejudice especially when it comes to issues such as education, housing and employment as compared to other immigrants from Asia, Central and South America (Ombud, 2018). The reality of the matter has become a sore for most African migrants who struggle to deal with it on a daily basis. They experience it at work, schools, hospitals, in the transport, health care and others. Racism has become an international issue which no country wants to align itself with it, due to the stigma and other United Nations Conventions against it. International organizations, state institutions and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) have played active roles to curtail this menace but it is still on the rise.

Gullestad (2005, p.32) stated that, the main term for the racial discourse in Norway is skin colour "dark skin colour" is a metonym for many different aspects of a person's looks, the main point being that he or she 'does not look Norwegian', the way this is currently perceived". A person's skin colour gives them away especially when it looks different from the majority group. The statement of Gullestad is a confirmation of the current 2019 survey which postulates that, skin colour always makes a difference in Norway. According to Diène (2003), the

¹ <https://www.newsenglish.no/2019/05/20/survey-indicates-underlying-racism/>. Accessed on 01/06/2019.

September 11 disaster has influenced the resentment towards immigrants and hence increase racism. The recent migration boom around the world has also increased inequality as people are treated based on their skin colour and where they come from. According to Kunst and Phillibert (2018), Africans experience of discrimination in Norway is based on their skin colour. There has been a trend of research on racism in Europe but Norwegian scholars feel reluctant to pursue it due to their lack of interest on racism issues Gullestad (2004). Racism is broad and can affect people based on their gender, race/ethnicity, religion, background and sexual orientation (LGBT). In this study, I will focus on the discrimination based on a person's skin colour. There has been the lack of concentration of African voices in the racial discourse in Norway. However, the Organisation for African Youth has tried to change the status quo by calling on the Norwegian authorities to abolish the use of the word *Neger* (Nigger), which they find offensive due to its link with colonialization (Gullestad, 2005).

Again, this study aims to add African voices to the recent discourse of racism in Norway and provide research information which could be used in formulating policies to combat racism. Most of the studies done on racism about Africans are generic or when an African country is being mentioned, it is likely to be Somalia (Fangen, 2006; Fangen, 2010; Ombud, 2018; Svendsen, 2014). Somalians, from Africa, account for the fourth largest immigrant group in Norway (Statistics Norway, 2018). This could partly explain why some researchers conduct studies referring to Somalians as all Africans. The purpose of this study is to select some Africans and Norwegian-Africans from Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda and Sudan, to get an in-depth knowledge and understanding of their racial experiences, their coping strategies, their knowledge of human rights institutions, how racism could be reduced and the role of socialization and volunteerism in the reduction of racism.

Research questions

These research questions were used:

- How do Africans in Norway experience racial prejudice?
- How do Africans in Norway cope with racial prejudice?
- Do these Africans know that racial prejudice is a violation of their basic human rights?
- What role can Africans play to reduce racism?

1.1 Structure of the thesis

This thesis will consist of five chapters: chapter one is the introduction; Chapter two is the literature review and the conceptual framework. The literature will include a brief history of Norway, theoretical and conceptual framework, human rights institutions and Conventions like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and the Equality and Anti-discrimination Ombud. Concepts of the experiences like transport, health care, education, accommodation, employment and no racial experiences will be explained. The coping strategies concepts: confrontational, avoidance, positive attitude and reporting would be discussed. Integration as a means of racism reduction method will also be discussed as well as the limitations of the literature used. Chapter three will be the methodology, where the research design, target population, sampling, sampling size, data collection tools, data analysis, the participants, the interview, coding method, reliability & trustworthiness, ethical consideration, the strengths and challenges of the study will be discussed. Chapter four will contain detailed discussions of the findings based on the excerpts from the interviews. The experiences of the participants will be categorized on thematic areas such as transportation, health care, education, accommodation, employment, those with no racial experiences and other racial experiences. The next section will be the coping strategies used by participants in dealing with racism. These were categorised as confrontational, avoidance, positive attitude and reporting strategies. This was followed by the participants knowledge of human rights laws and institutions. The participants recommended three strategies for minimising racism: awareness creation, integration and positive image/attitude and the media. And how socialization and volunteerism could enhance the reduction process. Lastly, chapter 5 will contain the conclusion, recommendations and the suggestions for further study.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW & THEORETICAL & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.0. Introduction

This chapter is about the literature review and the theoretical and conceptual framework. The literature review is about the use of existing literature that has been written the thesis topic, mainly from academic journals, state institutions, international organization and the media on the experiences, impacts and consequences of racism. Some of the literatures reviewed discussed the marginalization of the minority groups but not specifically on Africans.

Racism, prejudice, stereotyping, and discrimination will be used interchangeably in this thesis because they have similar meanings in terms of how the participants experienced and understood racism (Benkert & Peters, 2005, p. 864). According to Benkert and Peters (2005), racial prejudice, bias, and stereotyping are based one's attitude while discrimination is based on one's behaviour. They defined these terms as "attitudinal racism in which preconceived judgments result in unjustified negative attitudes toward others based on their race or group membership" (p. 844). Discrimination is when the behaviour of a person or an organization denies equitable treatment to an individual or a group based on their ethnic background (Clark, Anderson, Clark, & Williams, 1999, p. 805).

2.1. Brief history of Norway.

The current era of racism can be traced back to the history of "*longue dure'e*", where race was steadily engraved on the human body over hundred years of the European growth and hegemony (Gullestad, 2005, p.27). Norway is a liberal democratic welfare state and has become one of the wealthiest countries in the world since its discovery of oil in 1969, which has contributed massively to economic growth of the country (Lambert, 2018). Norway has a population of about five (5) million people with the as Sami's the main indigenous group while Roma, Romani, Kvens, Jews and Forest Finns are the five national minorities (Ombud, 2018).

In popular consciousness people in Norway are historically *innocent* with regard to slavery, colonisation and racism. Norway is a *victim* of colonisation (by Denmark) and occupation (by Nazi Germany), and not a colonizer. 'Norway did not have colonies' is a common refrain. People in Norway supported the civil rights movement in the United States, as well as the African National Congress in South Africa. Norway has played an important role in peace negotiations in various regions of the world, such as the

Middle East, Guatemala, Sri Lanka and Columbia, and Norway is among the world's nations that give most per head in development aid. In sum, Norway is seen as an innocent, humane, tolerant, anti-racist and peace-loving society that is committed to helping the needy. The debate offended the sensibilities of a public committed to a national self-image of decency, innocence and goodness (Gullestad, 2005, p. 43).

Norway became an independent state in 1905 but thirty-five (35) years after their independence, Nazi German invaded Norway in 1940-1945 even though Norway was neutral during the Second World War (Lambert, 2018). Norway finally joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949; between 1972 and 1994 two referendums were held in connection with Norway joining the European Union (EU) but the Norwegians voted against it (Lambert, 2018). Brochmann and Kjeldstadli (2008) added that, immigration in Norway started around the year 900 (as in cited Midtbøen, 2018) but according to Gullestad (2002), the late 1960s was when immigrants from the third world countries begun to enter Norway. In the year 1975, an immigration ban policy was implemented in Norway Gullestad (2002). From that time on, immigrants could only travel to Norway by being "experts, family members (family reunification), students (with the expectation that they would return home after completing their education), and, last but not least, refugees and asylum- seekers" (Gullestad, 2002, p .47). During that period, the term for immigrant was racially coded as (*innvandrere*) which even included people who had moved to Norway temporarily or permanently (Gullestad, 2005). They considered every foreigner as an outsider.

In 2008 the Norwegian storting (parliament) passed some laws which protected the minorities: the disability laws, the new marriage Act for lesbians and homosexuals, parental salaries for self-employed people (The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, 2008). But there were still much to be done due to the increased salary gap between men and women, the higher rate of women employment in part time work and the poor working conditions among immigrants (The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, 2008). Skjeie and Langvasbråten (2009, p.5) asserted that Norway has been criticized by civil society organizations, UN agencies and Council of Europe for their lack of comprehensive protection among ethnic and national minorities with issues relating to discrimination. Norway has improved in some areas of its human rights like gender equality, LGBT rights and others but more needs to be done for the minorities especially Africans. The Ombud (2018) report stated that Africans gets the least treatment in terms of work and housing.

2.2 Human right theory

In this thesis, I use theoretical framework to analyse how Africans and African Norwegians enjoy their basic human rights. I argue from a universalism human right perspective to determine how Africans and African-Norwegians experience equality and fairness in transportation, health, education, housing, employment and others. Human right is important to many Western countries and it could be used in determining how these countries educate and socialise their citizens to treat minority group and people of different culture, colour, creed and religion who live in these countries. In the context to my study, I am using the universalism approach of UN Human right perceptive. This is because Norway is a democratic egalitarian and welfare state which believes in universalism. Egalitarians believe that every individual has the right to full self- development, which involves the access to adequate food, shelter, education and health (Nagel,1995).

Universalism in moral philosophy indicates the “different moral theories arguing for principles of universal validity, independent of particular traditions, cultures or relations” (Kildal & Kuhnle, 2005, p.5). The principle of universalism was discussed in the 18th century based on human rights ideologies (Kildal & Kuhnle, 2005). Democratic welfare ensures equality before the law and the equal status of its citizens (Kildal & Kuhnle, 2005). Some features of a welfare states are that, more people benefits from the state polices and the rights of people are recognised based on their membership in the community (Kildal & Kuhnle, 2005). Norway believes in equality and thereby has polices which can bridge the gap between the rich and poor to ensure free education, subsidise heath care and employment benefits for all (Kildal & Kuhnle, 2005). Human rights play a significant role in the foreign and domestic policies, some Western countries like US, Norway and the Netherlands now tie their aids to the human rights performance of the recipient countries before giving them aids (Donnelly & Howard, 1987). This reinforces Norway’s belief in human rights and universalism.

It is therefore expected that Norwegians treat and relate with people from different cultures on the principles of equality regardless of age, colour, race, sex, age etc. as stipulated in the UN human right laws and Conventions of which Norway is a signatory. Norway ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in 1972.² The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Right recognises the right to education, health,

² https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-3&chapter=4&clang=en. Accessed on 15/06/2019.

accommodation, employment etc.

Health

Donnelly and Howard (1987) denotes that, the access to health care is significant for every human life. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Right states in article 12 that, everyone has the right to health and also ensures how states should achieve these rights. Cohen and Ezer (2013) stated that patient care is a significant part of health in relation to one's human rights. They emphasized on how equality, participation, transparency and accountability could improve patient care delivery. Human rights in patient care mostly concentrates on the services rendered to the patient than biomedical models, this ensures that the basic dignity and freedom of the patient is respected, protected and fostered (Cohen, & Eze, 2013.p.16).

Education.

The Universal Declaration and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights recognize the right to education in both Article 26 and 12 respectively (Donnelly & Howard,1987). The articles states that every person has the right to education irrespective of their background “including free and compulsory primary education and access to secondary, technical, and higher education on the basis of merit and, to the extent possible, without cost to the student” (Donnelly & Howard,1987, p.235).

Education can be used as a powerful tool to fight discrimination especially based on class and it can also bridge the gap between the rich and the poor (Donnelly & Howard,1987, p.1988). When people are educated it could influence how they rise fast in the society (Donnelly & Howard,1987). Education is an important human right which influences how the other human rights are realized (Donnelly & Howard,1987). Education influences every aspect of the human life and how one perceives and interprets issues.

Accommodation

Everyone one has the right to housing irrespective of their background. The Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights states that:

States Parties to the present Covenant recognize the right of everyone to an adequate standard of living for himself and his family, including adequate food, clothing and housing, and to the continuous improvement of living conditions. The States Parties will take appropriate steps to ensure the realization of this right, recognizing to this

*effect the essential importance of international co-operation based on free consent.*³

The direct opposite of universalism is relativism. Relativism may be defined as the position according to which local cultural traditions (including religious, political, and legal practices) properly determine the existence and scope of civil and political rights enjoyed by individuals in a given society (Teson, 1984, p.850). Relativist argue that, the human right norms vary from culture to culture and Western human right idea should not be forced on others (Teson, 1984). Relativist do not believe in universalism and they are of the view that what is a human right violation in one country may not be a violation in another (Teson, 1984).

Relativism is also a framework but my study is not going to be based on it, I would rather use human rights laws and Conventions in the context of universalist framework.

Equality and non-discrimination

The United Nations and the rule of law define equality and non-discrimination as “all persons, institutions and entities, public and private, including the State itself, are accountable to just, fair and equitable laws and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law” (para. 2). They also dedicated themselves to respect the equal rights of all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion (para. 3).

Racism

International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) defines racism as

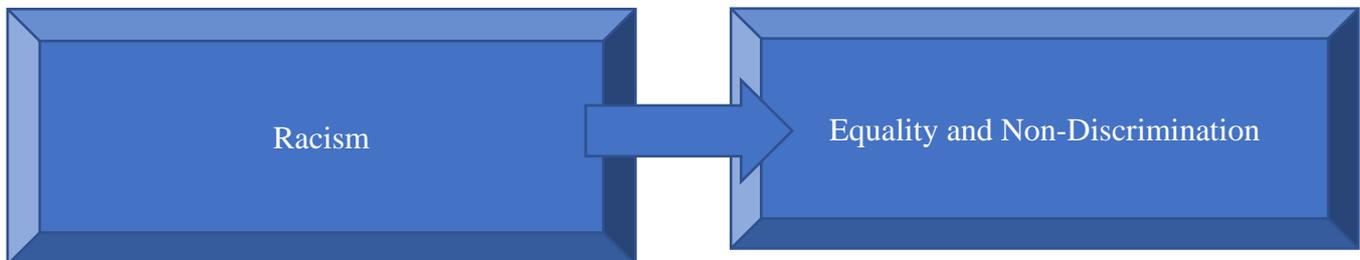
*any distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life.*⁴

³ https://treaties.un.org/Pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-3&chapter=4&clang=en. Accessed on 15/06/2019.

⁴ <https://www.ohchr.org/en/professionalinterest/pages/cerd.aspx>. Accessed on 06/01/2019

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1



Source: adapted from (United Nations and the rule of law, no date; ICERD, 1965).

Figure 1 explains the relationship between racism and equality and non-discrimination in the experiences of Africans and Norwegian-Africans. The high rate of racism in a country could lead to less equality and more discrimination. But when there is less racism it could lead to more equality and less discrimination.

2.3 Human rights laws & Conventions and institutions

Combating racism through the human rights lens can be an effective way of curtailing the prevailing problem. This approach has been effective in Norway for the LGBT community as they can now live a normal life without being discriminated against. The enactment of international and national laws like the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI), the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act and other institutions are helping in the fight against racism. These laws keep state institutions, private organizations and individuals in check, to ensure they promote equality. Also, these laws and Conventions are very important as people's knowledge of them could influence how they respond and react to racial encounters. If people do not know the existence of these laws, it is would be difficult to fight for them or demand for their rights when is being violated. Racism can be reduced through the human rights approach.

The inception of racism date back from the colonial period to recent times. Clark et al., (1999, p. 805) states that racism is “beliefs, attitudes, institutional arrangements, and acts that tend to denigrate individuals or groups because of phenotypic characteristics or ethnic group affiliations”. Its eradication has become even more difficult especially with the inception of the

nationalist and right-wing movements growing strong in many developed countries especially in Europe and the US due to their opposition to immigration. The right-wing movements have enhanced racism by making their values and cultures more superior than others. Bonilla (1997, p.471) posited that “historically the classification of a people in racial terms has been a highly political act associated with practices such as conquest and colonization, enslavement, patronage, indentured servitude, and, more recently, colonial and neo-colonial labour immigration”. The Statistical Department of Norway stated that, there are 131,700 people from Africa who have either an immigrant background or are born in Norway to immigrant parents as Africans represent 2.5% of the immigrant population (Statistics Norway, 2019). Africans in Norway also experience racism differently as compared to other immigrants (Ombud, 2018).

Norwegians had an immense support for the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa and the civil rights movement in the United State which indicates their abhorrence for racism (Gullestad, 2004). The government enacted the new Equality and Anti- Discrimination Act in 2017 to enhance the fight against racism in 2018.⁵ The new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act does not include the term race, the government explained that discrimination based on race should also be considered as ethnic discrimination because using the term race would mean it exists (LinlØkken, 2018). The NGOs in Norway supplementary report to CERD on the 23/24 report stated that “although one agrees that race does not exist, one can question if omitting the term will make racial theories disappear”, the race term is used in various political discourse, articles, books and the media and it has public recognition (LinlØkken, 2018, p.7). Therefore, the eradication of the race term from the “law obscures the fact that these ideas are spread and in active use, and when the legislation does not clarify that discrimination and harassment based on ideas of race is affected by the law, it becomes contrary to the government's intention with the amendment” (LinlØkken, 2018, p.7).

Though the new Equality and Anti- Discrimination Act has been passed, the situation has not improved much as the rate of racial violence has not decreased in Norway, the National Police Directorate’s survey stated an increase from 2016 to 2017.⁶

⁵ <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/1941881e546b48578367e342e11202db/norway-23.24-report-cerd.pdf>. Accessed on 08/01/2019.

⁶ https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/NOR/INT_CERD_IFN_NOR_32892_E.pdf. Accessed on 29/01/2019.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) declares that “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights” (UDHR,1948, p. v). It means all humans are equal and should be treated as such irrespective of their race. The convention does not favour a particular country or social group. Also, the declaration is for “all people, at all times, and in all places” irrespective of “colour, race and ethnic group; disabled or not; citizens or migrants; regardless of their sex, class, caste, creed, age or sexual orientation” (UDHR,1948. pp. v-vi).

Article 2 of UDHR states that

*Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.*⁷

The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination is an important treaty in the UN to combat racial discrimination (Meron, 1985). It was adopted in 1965 and entered into force on January 4, 1969 (Meron, 1985). The United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination finds it important to “speedily eliminating racial discrimination throughout the world in all its forms and manifestations and of securing understanding of and respect for the dignity of the human person” (ICERD,1965, p.1).

The committee was worried about how some governmental policies were formed based on racial superiority or hatred, examples of such instances were the apartheid and segregation (ICERD,1965). The convention was drafted to eradicate all forms of racial discrimination and to “prevent and combat racist doctrines and practices in order to promote understanding between races and to build an international community free from all forms of racial segregation and racial discrimination” (ICERD,1965, p.1). The part one of the convention clearly spells out how states could enact laws and measures to protect people against racial prejudices and how it could be prevented.

The European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) was founded by the Council of Europe, as an independent human right body (ECRI, 2015). Its aim is to monitor particular issues relating to racism and intolerance (ECRI, 2015). “It is composed of independent and impartial members appointed on the basis of their moral authority and

⁷ http://www.un.org/en/udhrbook/pdf/udhr_booklet_en_web.pdf. Accessed on 10/01/2019.

recognised expertise in dealing with racism, xenophobia, anti-Semitism and intolerance” (ECRI, 2015, p.7). As a body, it organizes a country by country monitoring activity to evaluate the work of its member states in relation to racism and intolerance (ECRI, 2015, p.7). It also gives out suggestions for handling the recognised racial issues (ECRI, 2015, p.7). Their monitoring work usually take a period of five years and covers between nine to ten countries every year (ECRI, 2015, p.7). Although Norway is not a member of the European Union (EU), it is still bounded by its policies through a comprehensive cooperation treaty; the Agreement on the European Economic Area – the EEA Agreement (Skjeie & Langvasbråten, p. 1, 2009). Norway is therefore obliged to follow the EU policies on racism and intolerance. It has not ratified the number 12 Protocol of the European Convention on Human Rights; the public denial of genocide and the formation or the involvement of groups that promote racism is not criminalised in Norway (ECRI, 2015). The laws against hate speech on the internet has been improved (ECRI, 2015). In as much as individuals are the perpetrators of racism, the state has an enormous power to enact and ratify laws which could make it difficult to treat others unequally.

Many people find it offensive when labelled as racist especially in Norway (Gullestad, 2004). Norway is known as one of the most peaceful and happiest countries in the world but despite these attributes, racism is said to be deceptive and harmless.⁸ This could imply that racism might be minimal or none existence. The Norwegian government spends more money on development aid in the developing countries in the bid to enhance growth, this makes it unbelievable when the minority groups in Norway complain about racism due to the selfless acts the government portrays to the outside world (Gullestad, 2004). In 2015, a research report by the police directorate stated that immigrants experience discrimination in many part of the society and there is the need for more information pertaining to national minorities.⁹

Gullestad (2004) stated that most Norwegians become profoundly ashamed, embarrassed and strongly defensive when accused of any racist act. The white supremacy notion might still exist in Norway. This means that when a white person (majority) commits a crime, it is regarded as pertaining to mental conditions but when a person from the minority (immigrant) commits the same crime it is mostly viewed as a trait of a particular culture or religion (Gullestad, 2004). It

⁸ <https://universitas.no/sak/63784/yes-norway-that-s-racist/>. Accessed on 01/01/2019.

⁹ <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/1941881e546b48578367e342e11202db/norway-23.24-report-cerd.pdf>. Accessed on 27/01/2019.

could be interpreted as generalizing certain criminal acts to a particular minority group but when a crime is committed by a member of the majority group is it always treated as an individual case. The Norwegian 23rd/24th ICERD report states that

*The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination has been incorporated into Norwegian law, according to section 5 of the Ethnicity Anti-Discrimination Act, the Convention is applicable as Norwegian law. That will remain the case under the new Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act when it enters into force in January 2018.*¹⁰

Norway also recognises and supports the declaration and programme of action from World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance in Durban (2001), the Norwegian government passed the Ethnicity Anti-Discrimination Act to forbid “discrimination on grounds of ethnicity, national origin, descent, skin colour, language, religion or belief”.¹¹

The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination also claimed that Norway has been unwilling to take actions against right-wing extremist violence and hate speeches and has also condemned them for their refusal to generate any statistics on hate crimes.¹² The Norwegian government has made some strides in certain human rights areas like gender equality and LGBT but little efforts had been made to implement the International Decade for People of African Descent.¹³ The law would ensure that, people of African descent enjoy full economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights, as well as their full and equal involvements in society. This will enable states to eradicate social injustice, combat racism, prejudice and racial discrimination against people of African descent.¹⁴

The National Police Directorate’s survey in 2017 indicated an increase in the national hate crime reported cases as compared to 2016 (Ombud, 2018). The number of hate crimes in 2016

¹⁰ <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/1941881e546b48578367e342e11202db/norway-23.24-report-cerd.pdf>. Accessed on 19/02/2019

¹¹ <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/1941881e546b48578367e342e11202db/norway-23.24-report-cerd.pdf>. Accessed on 10/01/2019.

¹² <https://www.thelocal.no/20150819/un-too-much-racism-in-norway>. Accessed on 10/01/2019.

¹³ <https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/1941881e546b48578367e342e11202db/norway-23.24-report-cerd.pdf>. Accessed on 27/01/2019.

¹⁴ <https://en.unesco.org/decade-people-african-descent>. Accessed on 0/06/2019.

was 466 as compared to 549 in 2017 which indicates a 17.8% increase. Out of the 549 hate crimes reported in 2017, 373 of the cases were in connection with hatred driven by skin colour, ethnicity or national origin (Ombud, 2018). The Oslo Police District had the highest reports of 208 out of the 549 national reports. Oslo is the only district that has a specialised hate crime team consisting of investigators and lawyers (Ombud, 2018). The 2017 police's citizens survey indicated that, 12% of people from immigrant backgrounds are scared of hate crimes as compare to 4% of ethnic Norwegians (Ombud, 2018). The survey also showed that a higher number of people from immigrant background have experienced hate crime.¹⁵ It could then be said that people from the immigrant backgrounds mostly live in less secured communities (Ombud, 2018).

Norway is still facing challenges in the implementation of the ICERD Convention but the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act has been effective in fighting discrimination in the country though there is more to be done. The joint Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud was formed in 2006 to examine the Equality Tribunal, which has been responsible for fighting discrimination and promoting equality (Skjeie & Langvasbråten, 2009, p.1). The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) are the two UN Conventions in the Act (Skjeie & Langvasbråten, 2009).

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud is an independent public administrative organization which monitors that the Norwegian laws and its administrative practices are in agreement with fulfilling the United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD).¹⁶ It has a tribunal which handle issues related to discrimination and human rights. Ombud's main purpose is to "promote equality irrespective of gender, ethnicity, national origin, descent, skin colour, language, religion or belief in all areas of society" (The Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act, 2007). They also ensure "equal treatment irrespective of political views, membership of

¹⁵https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/NOR/INT_CERD_IFN_NOR_32892_E.pdf. Accessed on 28/10/2019.

¹⁶ <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/The-Act-on-the-Equality-and-Anti-Discrim/id451952/>. Accessed on 02/06/2019.

an employee organization, sexual orientation, disability or age”.¹⁷ Ombud provides an annual supplementary report to the UN Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination based on Norway’s periodic report to the committee. The report entails the assessment of the areas that Norway has improved and the challenges they are facing. They also provide recommendations on how the challenges could be resolved.

The Norwegian constitution article 98 states that “*all people are equal under the law. No human being must be subject to unfair or disproportionate differential treatment*”, this law is phrased in a broad term and does not give detailed measures which prohibits discrimination (LinlØkken, 2018, p.7). The report added that, the protection against discrimination is lenient (LinlØkken, 2018). The Norwegian government is doing a good work in combating hate crime and though more needs to be done, some state officials and the police still defended neo- Nazis marches (LinlØkken, 2018). The UDHR article 19 states that “*everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers*” (UDHR,1948, p. 40). Freedom of expression is a tool that can be used in protecting people from discrimination. It can help people to voice their sentiment whenever they are faced with discriminatory behaviours “rather than being subject to prosecution, they may be contested through public criticism” (Bangstad, 2014, pp. 21-22). When the people faced with racial discrimination are able to express their emotions verbally to the racist, it could help them to heal. It might also hinder other people from repeating the same behaviour.

The International Convention on the Elimination of all forms Discrimination (ICERD) has been ratified by 179 states and 88 signatories.¹⁸ After its adoption, a committee was formed in 1970 called Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) (Wolfrum,1999). Its main duty was to “monitor States Parties implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination” (Wolfrum,1999, p. 489). It was the “first special organ to implement a human rights treaty” as a result other human rights bodies like Human Rights Committee under that the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights were formed (Wolfrum,1999, pp.489-490).

¹⁷ <https://www.regjeringen.no/en/dokumenter/The-Act-on-the-Equality-and-Anti-Discrim/id451952/>. Accessed on 9/02/2019.

¹⁸ https://treaties.un.org/pages/ViewDetails.aspx?src=IND&mtdsg_no=IV-2&chapter=4&lang=en#EndDec. Accessed on 24/02/2019.

The ICERD convention outline four main functions for the committee which includes:

To examine States Parties' reports (article 9); to consider inter-State communications (arts 11-13); to consider individual communications (article 14); and to assist other UN bodies in their review of petitions from inhabitants of Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories and of reports of those territories (article 15) (Wolfrum,1999, p. 489).

One of the reasons for drafting the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD) was based on “anti-Semitism and other forms of racial and national hatred and religious and racial prejudices of a similar nature” (Wolfrum,1999, p. 490). He stated that the Human Rights Commission has appointed special rapporteur on Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and other similar Intolerance (Wolfrum,1999, p. 490). Their duties are to assess contemporary forms of racism and intolerance (Wolfrum,1999, p. 490). The ICERD convention has unique qualities than other human rights treaties in the sense that it goes beyond obligating states to avoid any forms of racial discrimination but also puts legislative and administrative measures in place to ensure that racial discrimination is avoided or not practiced (Wolfrum,1999, p. 490).

Gaertner (2004, p. 4) asserted that due to the “cognitive, motivational and sociocultural processes that promote intergroup biases, most whites also develop some negative feelings towards or beliefs about blacks, of which they are unaware of or which they try to disassociate from their non- prejudiced self-image”. The feeling of racial bias could be in the subconscious mind of a person which might sometimes manifest in their attitudes and reactions towards the minority group. This make the CERD (2019, p.3) recommendation to Norway important. They recommended that Norway “increase awareness-raising campaigns to address stereotypes and increase tolerance between various communities to prevent hate crimes”.

In this thesis racism would be analysed from the individual and institutional level. Individual racism is when a person exhibits overt racial attitude towards a person of another race (Massao & Fasting, 2010). Institutional racism “involves identifying racism without a single racist. The consequences of the institutional/system racism can be traced at institutional and structural levels in the society” (Massao & Fasting, 2010, p.149). This form of racism is subtle and an individual might exhibit racial discrimination without knowing because it is already ingrained in the system or institution. Institutional racism is indirect and uneasy to identify (Feagin & Bennefield, 2014).

2.4 Transportation

Transportation plays a significant role in the lives of every individual as it connects people from one place to the other. Bullard (2003, p. 1183) posited that, transportation influences every aspect of people's lives in terms of where they live, work, play, attend school and their physical and natural world. The issue of transportation and racism dates back to the civil right movement in the United States (US). In 1896, the US Supreme Court witnessed a debate on the different treatment rendered out to whites and blacks (Bullard, Johnson & Torres, 2004). At the time, the Jim Crow law still argued that the segregated seating in the public transport does not violate the US constitution (Bullard et al., 2004). However, in 1953 some African Americans boycotted taking buses which cost the transport sector enormous financial losses (Bullard et al., 2004). In 1955, the famous Rosa Parks story sparked the civil rights movement in the US when she declined to vacate her seat for a white man in the disobedience of the Jim Crow law (Bullard et al., 2004).

The Freedom Riders movement in the 1960s was based on civil rights and racism in order to change the status quo, in terms of the segregation within the public transport (Bullard et al., 2004). There has been great improvement since 1997 with the inception of the "Just Transportation: Dismantling Race and Class Barriers to Mobility" (Bullard, 2003, p.1183). The 21st century has seen enormous improvements within the transportation sectors in the world, especially with the arrival of modern buses, fast trains, planes, ships and others. It has made commuting around the world much easier than before.

2.5 Health

Ignoring discrimination in the health care sector could be detrimental on a person's life. Discriminatory treatment within the health care system could lead to poor health consequences on the individual (Benkert & Peters, 2005). Lewis (2012) also asserted that, "it is her 'deep concern with the experiential, social and political effects' of the everyday injuries of racism that makes it necessary for her to find ways to account for the psychic life of racism" (as cited in Svendsen, 2014, p.12). According to Benkert and Peters (2005), there is an evidence of discrimination from health care practitioners which leads to unequal treatment towards the minority. This could be attributed to the existing systems in the healthcare sector and the prejudicial traits of the practitioners. Though health care practitioners are supposed to be professional in executing their duties, their prejudicial mentality could influence their attitude towards their patients. The health care system should be divided into subcategories which

could accommodate the tailored needs of the different cultural groups (Castro, Shaibi & Smith, 2009, p.100). They posited that these tailored solutions could help in dealing with their precise intervention methods which would be successful for the cultural groups.

The treatment of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) among Africans has been a problem in Norway. The issue of FGM has been a tradition among most Muslim women and girls in Africa (Vangen, Johansen, Sundby, Træen & Pedersen, 2004, p.34). It is a common practice in some African cultures, but it is prohibited and an offense in Norway (Vangen et al., 2004). It is stated in Vangen et al., (2004) that, the lack of knowledge of how medical practitioners should treat FMG patients could be the reason behind their relaxed attitude. Vangen et al., (2004) posited that “none of the health care professional had received theoretical information or practical training on delivery procedures in infibulated women during their formal education” (p.32). The lack of FGM treatment among Africans could affect their well-being and their ability to conceive. Though FGM mostly affects the minority group, it should be given equal attention as other critical health issues which affects the majority group. Equal access and treatment to health care should apply to all people irrespective of their background.

2.6 Education

Racism amongst children in western countries has been on the rise in schools and communities (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002). Education in Norway is free, which gives every child access. Every child in Norway has the right and duty to attend primary, lower secondary school to upper secondary school. The primary school education is mainly structured and funded by the public system, where the child attends school from year 1 -10 (Ombud, 2018). Education from upper secondary school is between ages 16-18 years and it also applies to immigrants who have not completed compulsory primary and lower secondary school education in their country (Ombud, 2018). Study has shown that, the school performance of descendants has improved as their involvement in higher education also rises, though some descendants are still marginalised than others (Ombud, 2018). Most immigrants face difficulties with higher education and employment as they score low points in secondary school; they also have higher school dropouts (Ombud, 2018). Ombud (2018), has recommended that thorough study be done to discover the reason behind the poor performance of immigrant children and put necessary remedies in place to increase their performance. Again, to reduce school dropout, newly arrived pupils should be taken through the school year, the fair distribution of resources and others (Ombud, 2018).

Thomas (2016, p. 243) argued that, though Norway does not have any “history of slavery, Jim Crow, or Montgomery”, the frequent use of the word Negro for the past 45 years has shown that “the pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness for black people was hamstrung through linguistic incarceration”. People’s use of certain words to describe another race could demoralize them. Thomas (2016), narrated an incident where a 9-year-old girl was bullied in school because of the colour of her skin. This traumatised and made her doubt her self-worth and value. According to Svendsen (2014), some black Norwegians do not feel like they are Norwegians because of the colour of their skin. This explains why the 9-year-old girl doubted her identity as a Norwegian.

Verkuyten and Thijs (2002) suggest that, teachers play significant roles when it comes to how children cope with different ethnic or cultural groups and some of the negative relations that comes with it. When a teacher reacts to racist name calling/ bullying and exclusion of other children it has the tendency of reducing racial incidence amongst the pupils or students (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002). The European Union survey in 2018 suggested that there is racial discrimination against people of African descent. The agency director, Michael O’Flaherty, made a statement in connection to the EU’s 2000 racial equality directive that, “almost 20 years after adoption of EU laws forbidding discrimination, people of African descent face widespread and entrenched prejudice and exclusion”.¹⁹

The impact of racism does not disappear in an instance but leaves a temporary or permanent scar depending on the severity of the situation. It has an “odourless traces but suffocating in the wake of their nevertheless denied diffusion” (Svendsen, 2014, p. 12). Racism has a way of socially, psychologically, emotionally and physically affecting people. For instance, a child might not want to go to school because of the fear of being bullied due to his/her race. The Norwegian Language Council in 2002 “quietly changed their policy concerning the word Neger (Nigger) (Gullestad, 2005, p. 35). They now “advise people to be cautious when using this word” (Gullestad, 2005, p. 35). The Organisation for African Youth in Norway has petitioned for the abolishment of the usage of the word Neger (Nigger) for blacks in Norway as it is done in United States, England, Germany and France (Gullestad, 2005).

According to Thomas (2016), the use of the word Negro (Neger in Norwegian) has been used in the Norwegian media since the 1970s to describe black people. The Norwegian media has a

¹⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/28/people-of-african-descent-face-dire-picture-of-racism-in-eu>. Accessed on 16/04/2019.

huge audience and many local newspapers, but few of their employees come from the minority backgrounds (Gullestad, 2005). “In the Norwegian public sphere, racism is limited to ‘the dogma that one ethnic group is condemned by nature to congenital inferiority and another group is destined to congenital superiority’” (Svendsen, 2014, p. 12). Thomas (2016), gave an example from Aftenposten of a 14-year-old boy who was pointed out by his class teacher as an example of a Negro even though there were other dark-skinned pupils from Asia. He said the boy shared his sentiment by saying that “some people are of the opinion that the word means dark skinned, and is not degrading. So why does the word crop up when they for example quarrel with a dark-skinned person” (p.241). Verkuyten and Thijs (2002) reiterated that, teachers play a key role in reducing the occurrences of name calling and bullying in school.

Professor Vinje stated that, in the Norwegian language, Neger (Nigger) means “people with a dark skin colour”, so the word Neger (Nigger) has no connection with racism; meanwhile, the Norwegian sixteenth volume of encyclopaedia has stated that “Neger is a racist and derogatory expression and should be avoided” (Gullestad, 2005, p. 36-41).

2.7 Accommodation

Immigrants from Asia, Africa and South and Central America make up a small percentage of the Norwegian population, yet they are the most economically disadvantaged when it comes to the housing sector (Ombud, 2018). Studies have also shown that, immigrants have had the most negative treatments in the buying or renting of houses as the prices sometimes increases (Ombud, 2018). Being a home owner in Norway is easy, some people perceive it as a source of investment; 80% of the majority groups own their homes whereas only about 50% of the minority can boast of having homes of their own. Even within the immigrant group, the background of a person determines his/her chance of owning a house, which explains why most immigrant, especially Somalians, live in poor socio-economic conditions (Ombud, 2018).

2.8 Employment

The employment rate for immigrants is around 78% with African immigrants recording the lowest rate of 49% compared with Asian, South and Central Americans (Ombud, 2018). In the Ombud (2018) report, approximately 50% of African immigrants have the lowest employment rate, and even though they have lived in Norway for more than 10 years, they also have the highest unemployment rate at 10%. A Norwegian study stated that people from the minority background become more disadvantaged in recruitment both in the private and public sector even if they are qualified (Ombud, 2016). This is predominant in the government

agencies, where a candidate from the majority background with lesser qualification has a greater chance of being called for an interview than a person from the minority background with better qualification for the same position (Ombud, 2018). The minorities have lesser chances of being shortlisted for an interview compared to the majorities; a graduate with Master's degree from an immigrant background has a higher rate of being unemployed six months after school even with the language skills, grades and a professional discipline (Ombud, 2018). The CERD's conclusion report stated that, there is absence of clear guidelines in the prevention of discrimination in employment, especially during the recruitment stage (CERD, 2019). 25% of job applicants with foreign names stand a lower chance of being invited for a job interview (CERD, 2019).

Ombud has recommend an equal treatment in the recruitment process. The lack of clear guidelines in the recruitment process exposes people, because of their foreign names, from the minority background during the early stages of recruitment (CERD, 2019). Though the Equality and Anti- Discrimination Act has an effective system requiring employers to promote equality, there are no sanction for flouting it (CERD, 2019). But the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act *section 39* states that, a “penalty of a fine or imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years shall be applied to any person who jointly with at least two other persons commits an aggravated breach of the prohibition against”, when a person is discriminated based on their ethnicity, religion or belief and others.

The *section 31* of the act has also gives employees and job seekers the power to demand an official explanation on the education, experience and other related qualifications of the person employed, if the employees feel that they are qualified for the job but have been denied the position.²⁰ The Norwegian authorities should stress on the positive sides of immigration in the public debate and the role of migrants' background to the Norwegian society and economy (ECRI, 2015). This could change the anti-immigrant sentiment of some Norwegians. Immigrants are believed to be more employed in menial jobs. Gullestad stated that

Many ‘non-Western immigrants’ work in unskilled and semi- skilled occupations as taxi-drivers, hotel personnel, cleaners, and so on, doing many of the jobs that ‘Norwegians no longer want’. Educated ‘immigrants’ often experience difficulties in

²⁰ <https://lovdata.no/dokument/NLE/lov/2017-06-16-51>. Accessed on 1/06/2017.

obtaining employment that fits their educational level (Gullestad, 2002, p .47).

Virtanen and Huddy (1998), has also suggested a reduction of prejudice by the current whites based on the prediction of a future decline in prejudice. But they stressed that issues like integrated occupation could increase negative racial stereotype. The competition of the same jobs with the other race might increase prejudice. Dovidio and Gaertner (2004) suggest that, the mental, motivational and sociocultural factors that creates prejudice could lead more whites to develop some negative feelings towards black people.

2.9 No racial experience

Krieger and Sidney (1996) stated that, some people refuse to acknowledge their racial experiences because of the pain attached to remembering it. Krieger and Sidney (1996), gave an instance where a study was done in the United Kingdom (UK), about the racial experiences of some black people. According to them, the participants denied their racial experiences but when asked further questions, they agreed that they have had racial experiences. The denial of racism might depend on the experience and its impact. The denial of racial experiences might be effective for a short period especially if the encounter is short termed. But, it could be devastating when the torture continues for a long period. This could perhaps confirm that, some people use denial as a means of handling discrimination but it could be detrimental to their health (Krieger & Sidney,1996).

2.10 Coping strategies

Coping strategies mostly involve the mental effort to alter the way racism is seen and how to deal with its effects (Scott & House, 2005). Racism has psychological and physical effects on its victims (Fernando,1984, Brondolo, Halen, Pencille, Beatty & Contrada, 2009). The psychological effect of racism could have an indirect damage on the victims. This could lead to “low self-esteem, sense of loss and helplessness” (Fernando,1984, p.44). The physical impact of racism is more direct and could have damages like “unemployment, denial of a job promotion, or poverty” (Brondolo et al., 2009, p.67). Some coping strategies were confrontational, avoidance, positive attitude and reporting.

2.11 Confrontational strategy

History proves confrontational strategy as a “powerful medium for social change” (Czopp & Monteith, 2003, p. 532). This strategy comes with consequences like anger, aggression, insults and could lead to physical exchange and others (Czopp et al., 2006). Confrontational strategy

is when a person makes an immediate and public expressions to oppose prejudice (Czopp, Monteith & Mark, 2006, p.784). This strategy has a direct and indirect effect on how individuals or groups respond to prejudice (Czopp et al., 2006). Confrontation as an antidote to racism came about in the 1970s (Czopp et al., 2006). It is suggested by Gulker, Mark and Monteith (2013), as a good strategy which could reduce discriminatory behaviours against the minorities. But, it might not always be the case because sometimes confrontation could turn out to be negative; the confronter could get angry and it may lead to physical and verbal attacks, though hostile confrontation could be an effective strategy to decrease racial bias in the future (Czopp et al., 2006, p. 785). And, since most people would not want to have such hostile experiences again, they could become less prejudiced in future. Black people are mostly labelled as complainers when they confront prejudice but when a white person confronts another white person for a prejudicial behaviour towards a black person it becomes more effective in reducing prejudice (Czopp & Monteith, 2003).

Czopp et al., (2006) suggested that, hostile confrontation could reduce future prejudicial attitudes because of the stigma of being labelled a racist when confronted. “By speaking up and addressing the person who made prejudiced comments and voicing displeasure, people have the opportunity to confront prejudice directly and perhaps help reduce the likelihood of such aspersions in the future” (Czopp et al., 2006, p.784). It could influence their “health and wellbeing, educational and social outcomes both in childhood and throughout life” (Priest et al., 2014, p.17). The emotional tone of a message could affect the efficiency of confrontation as it could alter one’s behaviour and lead to negative outcomes (Brondolo et al., 2009). How a person says something could mostly influence how others would react.

Parents responses to racism is very vital in curtailing or worsening it (Neblett et al., 2008). Parents’ role in how their children relate with the minority and other ethnic groups are significant for ethnic-racial socialization (Priest et al., 2014). When children grow up in a negative stereotypical environment, they mostly follow the pattern of their predecessors and therefore might pass that attitude from one generation to the next (Virtanen & Huddy,1998).

2.12 Avoidance

Avoidance is used because people do not want to draw any attention to themselves (Czopp et al., 2006). According to Shorter (2004, p. 419) avoidance is “staying away from people, situations, or topics of discussion that are likely to stir up biases and prejudices”. The avoidance strategy can be immediate or long term. According to Brondolo et al., (2009),

avoidance strategy could be efficient and suitable in some situations. They said it could be more effective when a person finds themselves in a position where responding immediately might not be safe for them. It would be safer to say, “keeping it to myself” when the person experiencing racism senses an immediate cause of retaliation (Brondolo et al., 2009, p.67).

Brondolo et al., (2009) also added that, when the mistreatment is over, the victim could be hurt due to its effect on them and this is because avoidance does not minimise the pain. Avoidance leads to consequences like depression, low self-esteem and other health conditions.

2.13 Positive attitude

Shorter (2004, p.419) suggested that, the value of oneself is a coping strategy to deal with racism. She defines positive attitude as a belief or feeling of oneself and sometimes an obligation to involve in deeds that help to develop oneself. Having a positive attitude could determine how others behave and reacts towards a person in a particular situation.

The self-esteem of a person mostly determines how they perceives life and their relations to others. People with high-self-esteem might have a positive outlook and interpretation to what happens to them as compared to those with low self- esteem (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). They asserted also that, that the low self-esteem of a person could increase their tendency of causing trouble but a person with high self-esteem could avoid those troubles (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001). People with low self-esteem tend to always see the negative sides in every situation which mostly influence their negative reactions. Having a high self- esteem could influence how one perceives and understands situations. Those with low self-esteem might have health issue like stressing unnecessarily while those with high self-esteem could live a less stressed life.

2.14 Reporting

The 2017 police’s citizen survey indicated that, “people who have been exposed to hate crime are also those with the least confidence in the police and who most strongly believe that they did not receive sufficient help from the police” (Ombud, 2018, p.21). This explains why the hate crimes statistics is reported to be low in Norway (Ombud, 2018). The ineffectiveness of the law in connection to hate crime issues could hinder others from reporting because once a person reports an issue they become the centre of discussion by those around them.

Brondolo et al., (2009, p. 66) suggested that, “the strategies that are effective for quickly terminating a specific episode of maltreatment are not necessarily the same as those needed to manage the possibility of longer term exposure”. They emphasized that, every racial encounter

may require a different coping strategy. An immediate racial experience might not be reported but a long-term experience has a higher possibility of being reported due to the prolonged torture. The “diversity that exists within each ethnic group must thus be recognized and addressed by the use of population segmentation that identifies ethnic-cultural subgroups (strata) that can be defined by socioeconomic status, level of education or literacy, age group, and perhaps by gender, as this segmentation aids in focusing the content of the prevention intervention curriculum” (Castro, Shaibi & Smith, 2009, p.102). The National Police Directorate asserted that, there are numerous hate crime cases which are not reported to the police, and Ombud has been worried about the same issues, especially hate crimes outside Oslo (Ombud, 2018).

2.15 Integration

Entzinger and Biezeveld (2003, p. 6) define integration as a “characteristic of a social system”. Integration enhances understanding between people as it may lead to peace and tranquillity. Entzinger and Biezeveld (2003, p. 6) asserted that, “the more a society is integrated, the more closely and the more intensely its constituent parts (groups or individuals) relate to one another”. They also stated that, integration can be categorised into two forms: individuals and groups. These two categories could determine the measure of integration within a society. Incidence and identification are the two forms of integration (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003). Incidence has two features: frequency and intensity. Frequency is “about the number of ties with their surroundings that an individual or a group maintains, as well as to the number of actual contacts with others. Intensity rather relates to the nature of these contacts, and therefore to feelings of belonging and familiarity” (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003, p. 6). Frequency does not mean intensity of ties as one can interact with people every day without having ties with them or the ties might not be very strong (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003, p. 6). Identification means a sense of belonging with others and could lead to stronger ties or connections (Entzinger & Biezeveld, 2003). Entzinger and Biezeveld (2003, p. 6), said “frequent and intense contacts with others may lead to a better mutual understanding and, ultimately, to a stronger identification with one another”. Proper integration could enhance individual or group ties.

2.16 Media

The media could be an important tool in reducing racism. According to studies, “the media’s treatment of race over the years has suggested that, its reporting has been limited in its themes

and negative in its content” (Saeed, 2007, p.6). since the media has created negative images and made statements about the minorities over the years, it is logical to emphasize that, same platform could be used to create a positive image. This could enhance the social reorientation of people. The media plays an important role in how their viewers perceive and treat people from the diverse racial or ethnic backgrounds (Oliver, Ramasubramanian & Kim, 2007). This makes the media’s position on how their viewers see and behave towards other ethnic groups very crucial (Oliver et al., 2007).

2.17 Social participation

Few literatures have been written on the social participation and volunteerism among people from the minority backgrounds (Mattis et al., 2004, pp. 261-262). According to Mattis et al., (2004, p .262), Young and El Haaj Malik al Shabbaz (Malcolm X) indicated that, people who have had bad racial experiences tend to get more involved in social activism. The African Americans used “ethnic community approach” as a reason for their social participation during the Civil rights and Black Power movements (Mattis et al., 2004, p. 262). They added that, the African Americans who participated in voluntary activism used it as a successful means for their survival. Social participation and volunteerism also connects people together and through that, they achieve their common goal.

2.18 Limitation of literature

The existing literature used in this thesis has been very useful in analysing the research findings but there have been some limitations. In the CERD concluding remarks on the twenty third and twenty fourth periodic reports on Norway, they expressed their concerns that the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act (2018), does not include the term race as a prohibited ground of discrimination, although this term is widely used by the public and media.²¹ The none usage of the race term in the Norwegian law does not necessary mean it does not exist (LinlØkken, 2018). This could contribute to why there is less research on racism in Norway. Gullestad (2004) said Norwegian scholars feel reluctant to pursue research on racism due to their lack of interest. The lack of literature on racism towards Africans especially in areas like accommodation, health, education and transportation is worrying. There is little information on employment, accommodation, health and the transport sectors. Africans and the other race are grouped as one minority though this generalization of minority makes it difficult to

²¹https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CERD/Shared%20Documents/NOR/CERD_C_NOR_C_O_23-24_33263_E.pdf. Accessed on 27/01/2019.

distinguish the impact of discrimination on Africans, in the different sectors. In reality, people of African descent really experience racism in all sectors based on the findings of this thesis. This could explain why CERD (2019, p.7) is recommending Norway to take measures “to implement actions adopted in the framework of the International Decade for People of African Descent”. This could also draw more attention to the racial experiences of Africans. It might lead to the enactment of other laws which could curb it. By having a regular public debate on racism, it could enhance social reorientation. CERD (2019, p.7) also suggested for a report on the racial discrimination against African descents in the next periodic report of Norway.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the methods used for the data collection and analysis. Methodology is an important part of a research because it affects the research findings and its validity. In this chapter I explained the research design, sampling design, data collection and analysis, information about the participants, details of the interviews, coding, reliability and trustworthiness, the ethical consideration and the challenges I faced as a researcher.

3.1 Research design

Qualitative approach was used in the study to examine how Africans and Norwegian -Africans experience racial prejudice, cope with it and how they can minimise it through their self-initiated activities. In order to get an in-depth overview of the study, I used the case study design to explore their diverse experiences and responses. Bryman (2012), defined case study as a design which involves the details and intensive analysis of a particular case. Case study research uses past stories/events studies to explore and understand complex issues which enables the researcher to perceive things from the participants view (Zainal, 2007, pp.1-2). Case studies research “explore and investigate contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions, and their relationships” (Zainal, 2007, pp.1-2). I used exploratory case study for my research. Yin (1984), define exploratory case study as a “set to explore any phenomenon in the data which serves as a point of interest to the researcher” (as cited in Zainal, 2007, p.3). Case study design assisted me to make intensive, detailed and critical assessment of the study (Bryman, 2012).

3.2. Sampling design.

I used both purposive sampling and snow ball sampling methods in identifying the participants. For this thesis, purposive sampling and snowball sampling design was used in the data collection. Purposive sampling is a non-probability sampling where the researcher does not select participants on random basis but based on the participant’s background and experiences which are relevant to the study (Bryman, 2012). It helped me in targeting the Africans and African Norwegians from the selected African countries for the interview. Snow ball sampling is a type of convenience sampling where “the researcher makes initial contact with a small group of people who are relevant to the research topic and then uses them to establish contacts with others” (Bryman, 2012, p. 202). Most of the participants, apart from

those from Ghana, I used the snow ball sampling design to establish contact with them in order to get access to some of the other participants. This allowed me to get the participants from the various counties I selected to interview. For some of the Ghanaians, I used my personal contacts and a few of my contacts from the other African countries, but majority of the participants were identified through snowball sampling design especially those from Uganda, Nigeria and Sudan.

3.3 Data collection and analysis

For this study, I used both primary and secondary data for the data collection and analysis. The primary data was the interviews I conducted with the participants while the secondary data was the journals/articles on racism, state and international institutions' reports like Statistics Norway, credible organizations like Equality and Anti -Discrimination Ombud Act, International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and online and media sources. I used semi structured interview because it allowed me to ask open ended questions, which enabled me to probe further for clarifications as I explored new paths during the interview process (Bryman, 2012). The process gave me more insight into the participants racial experiences. Some participants also felt free and relaxed during the interview, I observed their body language and other nonverbal gestures as well.

Semi-structured interviews are mostly used in qualitative research. According to Holloway and Wheeler (2010), this involves the use of predetermined questions, where the researcher is free to seek clarification during the interview (as cited in Doody & Noonan, 2013). According to Patton, the researcher is able to word the questions and develop a conversational style, during the interview, that focuses on the topic (as cited in Doody & Noonan, 2013). Semi- structured method was used for the interviews. A semi – structured interview usually has an interview guide which includes particular questions and topics to be covered (Bryman, 2012, p. 471). The questions which were not included in the guide were asked because I picked up on things said by the interviewees; some of the interviews did not follow the same order as outlined in the guide (Bryman, 2012, p. 471). The interview guide had the biodata of the participants which included their age, gender, country, years of being in Norway, religion, education, marital status, how they become resident of Norway and fluency level in the Norwegian language; the main interview question were based on four research questions: experiences of racism, coping strategies, knowledge of human rights institutions and racism reduction methods.

3.4 Participants

I used a small sample size of sixteen Africans and Norwegian -Africans who were willing to participate in the study and share their racial experiences in Norway. The research participants were from Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda and Sudan and they were mostly adults who reside in Oslo, this was because Oslo has the largest immigrant population in Norway which represents 33.1% of the entire population (Statistics Norway, 2018). Four participants were interviewed from each country and they included two males and two females each. All the participants had lived in Norway for more than five years. The participants were eight males and eight females and they were all between the ages of 25-55. Their diverse backgrounds enhanced the findings of the study.

3.5 Interviews

Twelve of the interviews were done face to face while two were done on the telephone. Some of the interviews lasted for an hour and others two hours. Fourteen interviews were recorded with a mobile phone while two face to face interviews were not recorded but I typed while the participants were answering the interview questions. All the participants I recorded during the interview gave their consent before the interview started. Some were sceptical about the recording in the beginning, but I assured them the interview was going to be anonymous and confidential. I jotted some points down during the interviews. I used a month to conduct the interviews; each participant was interviewed once and there were no follow up interviews either by phone or face to face. All the interviews were conducted privately except for the ones which were held at public areas like the coffee shop, restaurants and the church. Albeit there were people around, we sat in an area that made it difficult for a third party to eavesdrop on the conversation.

Nine were Christians, five Muslims and two were non-religious. All the participants had been to school, one was a high school leaver; two had Diplomas; eight had Bachelors and five had Master's degrees. Nine were married, four divorced, one was separated and two were single. All the participants were legally residing in Norway. Six came to Norway through family reunion (joined their husbands) and one was also by family reunion but he joined his father; one was by education (came to school and had a job after studies), two were by education and family reunion (they came to study and got married after school), three came as refugees, one came as an Asylum seeker and one chose other (did not want to disclose how he became a resident of Norway). Eight were fluent in the Norwegian language, three were quite good and

could use the language in most situations, two had basic skills of the language and three were still learning the language. The females were more fluent in the language than the men.

Seven of them did not have any perception of Norway before they arrived; four knew it was cold, clean and had a lot of fishes; two knew it was a quiet and rich country; one said it was a peaceful country with free education and had high standards for equality, one said they were nice and sophisticated people and the other said she only knew of the Nobel Peace Prize. All the participants were working except for one who was working part time because of school. Most of them were doing menial jobs. They all had children except for four of them. Eight have had their family visit them while eight did not.

All the interviews were done in English except one which was done in Twi (a local Ghanaian language). I translated the interview from Twi to English. The translation of the interview did not change the meaning of what the participant said. As stated by Bryman (2012, p, 211), when interview questions are open ended, the interviewer should try and write the participants' exact words in order not to alter the meaning. Though some participants were not fluent in the English language, they were able to answer the interview questions.

3.6. Coding

Coding is a “process whereby the data are broken down into their component parts and those parts are then given labels” (Bryman, 2012, p.13). Coding plays a key part in identifying themes in every interview transcript (Bryman, 2012, p.13). As a researcher, I used thematic coding for my data analysis. Thematic coding is a qualitative analysis which includes the recording or identifying passages of text or images that are related to a common theme or idea which allows the researcher to index the text into categories and therefore, establish a “framework of thematic ideas about it”.²² After the data collection, I did the transcription. I then identified the general themes for each research question that were similar and categorized them into groups in order to understand how they related to each other. This made the data analysis easier. Again, I searched for the repetition of themes and connected them with others by listening to the interview recordings and reading the transcript over and over again to make sense out of the data which answers the research questions and it enabled me to connect the various themes with other literature which were related to the themes (Bryman, 2012, p.13).

²² <https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/thematiccoding>. Accessed on 09/01/2019.

3.7 Reliability and trustworthiness

Reliability and validity are important for qualitative and quantitative studies as it has the ability of showing the credibility of the research (Golafshani, 2003). Though quantitative studies use reliability and validity separately, it is viewed as one term in qualitative studies because it uses words like “credibility, transferability, and trustworthiness” (Golafshani, 2003, p.600). Reliability and validity are mostly based on the researcher’s efforts to ensure trustworthiness because it is essential in qualitative studies (Golafshani, 2003; Bryman, 2012). Trustworthiness is measured by four criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Bryman, p.390, 2012). As a researcher, I was very particular that, trustworthiness was prioritized in the study. When the reliability of a study is improved it has a tendency of increasing the chances of generalizing the results of the study due to its quality (Golafshani, 2003).

3.8 Ethics

The sensitivity of racism has a way of affecting its victims mentally, emotionally and psychically. Ethical principles were held in high esteem and the participants were informed of the purpose of the study. They gave verbal/oral consent to voluntarily participate in the study without any force. They were also informed of their right to withdraw from the interview before, during and after, which meant that they could have decided to stop me from using their data in the study or even after the interview was conducted. They were informed of other risks and benefits involved in the study. Participants’ right to privacy, confidentiality and anonymity were highly respected. For the protection of the participants’ privacy, which was of great concern to them, I used pseudonyms. This was to prevent others from identifying them. After the data transcription and analysis, I deleted all the interview recordings on my phone to avoid any traces by a third party. As a researcher, I have ensured that the research findings will not harm any of the participants before, during and after the study. Some of the participants requested to see the interview questions before the interview started. One participant requested for the questions to be sent to her by email days before the interview. Two did not want their interviews to be recorded. Also, another participant requested to listen to the interview recording before I could leave which I allowed.

3.9 Strengths and challenges

In writing the thesis, I faced a lot of difficulties especially during the data collection phase but my race as an African helped me to get the people to interview. Some felt more comfortable

with me as they kept calling me their African sister. Most of the people I initially wanted to interview declined after series of excuses. As a result, I had to find new participants. A friend also promised to help me find some people from his country to interview since I did not know anyone from his country apart from him. However, when I was ready to start the interviews, he told me that all the people he knew had declined. When I enquired about his availability for the interview, he surprisingly declined. This is someone who had assured me earlier of his interest and availability and had even volunteered to help me find more interviewees. I respected his decision. Later, a mutual friend asked for updates on the interview and he was astonished when I told him our friend's decision. With the intervention of our mutual friend, he reconsidered and explained that, his decision was premised on his unwillingness to provide private information. During the interview, he was sceptical about the interview being recorded but he later agreed and requested to listen to the recording before I could leave his residence.

Some of the participants also agreed to do the interview but did not turn up on the scheduled time and day so we had to reschedule for another week. I remember I arrived at the participant's office about 20 minutes ahead of schedule and informed him of my arrival via text, only for him to reply that he had forgotten about our meeting and had left for the house. We had to reschedule for another meeting the following week. I went back the following week and waited for hours before the interview commenced.

Another participant, who also agreed to be interviewed, said he would only be available on Sundays at her church. On the interview day, she sent me a text message that she could not make it to church that Sunday because their car broke down on the way and had to return home. We rescheduled the interview to the next the Sunday. Again, another participant who had agreed to notify me of his preferred day and time via phone call, texted to apologise for his 'resignation'. He told me there were many people from his country I could interview.

For some of the interviews, I had to wait outside in the cold for some of the participants because they did not turn up on the scheduled time. One told me not to ask him any details about his work. Some of the participants warned me, strongly, to make sure the recorded interviews do not get to the public domain otherwise they will deal with me seriously. One man, before he agreed to do the interview, asked me how long I had lived in Norway, where I come from in Ghana and if I had any relative here in Norway. After that, he gave the phone to his friend who also warned me not to misuse the information provided by his friend.

Due to the nature of life in Norway, most Africans have a busy schedule so I anticipated that it would be difficult for the participants to make time for the interviews. I had to strictly go according to their available time and venue, due to that we met at places like their homes, coffee shops, restaurants, work places, church and their cars. The interviews that were conducted at the participants homes turned out to be more relaxing compared to the other venues. Again, I think the sensitivity of the subject made some of the participants a bit reluctant to provide adequate responses to some of the questions. I also noticed that, some of the participants were scared of the information they were giving and because of that some opted to give just close ended answers. Overall, most of them gave detailed information about their experiences but others, especially the men, were not entirely forthcoming with their responses. The women were more open and detailed, especially the ones married to Norwegians or had lived in Norway for many years as compared to the men, though some of them were also detailed. Among all the nationalities I interviewed, the female Sudanese were the ones I struggled to find due to the language barrier. All the Sudanese I initially wanted to interview were fluent in Arabic and Norwegian but not in English. The nationalities I interviewed had some similar racial experiences and understanding as well as diverse ones, especially based on their gender, religion and nationality.

3.10 Positionality

According to Bourke (2014, p.3), positionality is when “objectivism and subjectivism” meets. It is about being objective and ensuring my analysis is devoid of any subjectivity (Bourke, 2014). As an African woman from Ghana, I knew about discrimination. Back home in Ghana, it is called tribalism. Tribalism is where some tribes consider themselves superior than others which sometimes affects how they treat and relate to other tribes. Ghana also has its fair of discrimination in the form of gender inequality, which makes it difficult for women to hold certain positions in the society. I also heard about racial discrimination in the developed countries, especially, in the United States and Germany but I never heard anything about racism in Norway until arrived here. I got interested in the topic because I want to create awareness on the experience of racism among Africans and African-Norwegians. As an African, I felt the participants were more comfortable with me because they saw me as one of them.

Before coming to Norway, I did not know much about the country except that it was a small rich oil country in Europe. I was expecting to study in a school which had all the educational facilities to make my academic life easy and to be honest that expectation was met. I have

enjoyed my studies at NMBU. Again, I was optimistic that my classmates would be warm, friendly and welcoming but I was disappointed. Some pretended not to know me when I meet them outside campus after class. I remember during the introduction week, I was in a group with some students and we related well. I met one of them who happens to be a Norwegian at the bus stop and I greeted her but she did not respond. I felt bad and shocked at the same time so I explained to another friend who had been in Norway for a while and she told me that, some of the Norwegians are only nice when they are in class but after class they pretend not to know you. I decided never to greet her again. Despite these experiences, few of them were nice. But these attitudes, as shown by some Norwegians, could have a cultural context. As an African, greetings mean a lot to me but that might not be the same in the Norwegian culture.

Like the participants, I have also had similar racial experiences within sectors like transport, education, health and employment but not in the other areas. I have never experience any form of hate speech. Sometimes when I sit in the public transports, some Norwegians do not sit beside me which was surprising to me when I first arrived but I am used to it now. I have also experienced discrimination in school as an African student. At times when I find myself in a group with white students during group discussions, they ignore my ideas and suggestions which made me very uncomfortable. Prior to my arrival in Norway, I was not only excited about the knowledge I was going to gain through the education, I was equally thrilled about getting work experience through internships. I could not get any internship because I could not speak the language. I found that to be shocking because, I knew I could not learn the language within a short period to enable me to get an internship; I gave up. Due to the language barrier, most Africans like me do menial jobs. However, I believe I have become a better person in terms of the knowledge I have acquired through my education. I have also had negative experiences with the Heath care system in Norway. I was scheduled for an appointment with a specialist and the waiting time was over five months. After enduring the pain till the scheduled date was due I finally met the specialist. He offered very little help so I had to visit a private facility for the needed solution. I felt I could have been treated better if I were a Norwegian.

Though I have experienced some discrimination in Norway, I ensured that it did not influence the interviews, analysis and the findings. This study has given me more knowledge about how some Africans experience racism. The research finding reinforced some of my racial experiences as an African woman in Norway. But some experiences like the hate speech and name calling were new to me. I thought such experiences were not happening anymore.

My thesis topic was very sensitive and emotional as it brought some painful memories. Through the study, I listened to many painful and sad stories from the participants which I could relate to a few. Even though I could relate to some of the experiences I remained objective. I made sure to draw the boundaries between the research and the sentimental feelings. Some thought I was a government spy who wanted to collect their personal information. As a researcher, I was objective, neutral and I managed to convince the participants to feel comfortable and relaxed. I informed them that, the research was for academic purposes with highly ethical standards. That was why I was able to convince some to allow me to record them during the interviews. As a researcher, I have gained more knowledge on the racial issue in Norway. I have learnt to be objective, neutral and not allowing my emotions to influence my findings and analysis. I have also learnt to be patient especially when I was conducting the interviews, some participants could not adhere to the schedule time and day.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings on the racial experiences of the participants, their coping strategies with racism, their knowledge of human rights laws and institutions which can help them deal with racism and how they could personally reduce racism. The first part of this paper analyses the participants' experience with racism within the transport, health care, education, accommodation and employment sectors. It is followed by those with no racial experiences and other racial experiences. The next section is about the coping strategies used by participants in dealing with racism. They are categorised as confrontational, avoidance, positive attitude and reporting strategies. This is followed by participants knowledge of human rights laws and institutions both nationally and internationally. The last part is the racism reduction methods: awareness creation, integration and positive image/attitude and media and how socialization and volunteerism could help in the process.

4.0 Transportation

Africans in Norway experience racial prejudice in different forms, racism in transportation is one of them. Transportation plays an important role in the lives of every individual as it connects people from one place to the other. Transportation is used in almost every aspect of the human life; people use it at their homes, work, school and their other daily routes (Bullard, 2003). It makes human interactions and economic transactions easy and simple.

The immense improvement within the transportation sector has made life easier for commuters around the world. With the inception of modern buses, fast trains, planes, ships and others, travelling around the world has become much easier and convenient than before. The improvement has also enhanced the transportation services rendered to passengers. Customer service has now become the hallmark for most organizations. These improvements have gone a long way to reduce transportation racism around the world, with many countries effort to uphold human rights laws. The transport sector has implemented policies to ensure the safety and comfortability of passengers like having special seating for the aged, disabled, pregnant women, nursing mothers and others. The Norwegian public transport is very effective and well-structured in a way that it makes it difficult for people to feel discriminated but the concern of most participants were their experiences of how some Norwegians isolate themselves when they sit in the public transports. They interpreted that as racism. They explained their experiences this way:

I noticed that sometimes when I sit in the public transport some of the Norwegians put their bags/luggage beside them to prevent me from sitting next to them; they sometimes also get up when I sit beside them (Lizzy).

The public transport system was good but when I first came to Norway I was treated badly by a train conductor though I felt I could have been treated differently if I was not an African (Sandra).

Whenever I sit in the public transport and the ticket controllers happen to come on board to check those with valid tickets, they always come to check my tickets first. I feel I am the first person they notice so they come to me (Mohammed).

Due to human rights laws in Norway and around the world, discrimination is frowned upon by many people though it still exists. Many of the participants expressed the same sentiment and how bad it made them feel. The irony of the current situation is that, during the segregation period in the US, coloured people had to stand up for a white person to sit. But, now the reverse is the case, though it is voluntary this time.

The issue of race may still be lingering in our everyday interaction as most of the participants said some of the Norwegians preferred to stand rather than sit next to them. At first, the experience came as a shock to them but after a while they got used to it and it did not bother them anymore. One participant said, “when I sit beside them and they get up I just relax myself and put my bag on the vacant seat”. It could also mean that most Norwegians like to have their space or prefer standing to sitting. This could have nothing to do with prejudice as some of the participants said. Few of the participants said they have never had any negative experience from the Norwegians in the public transport. The findings confirmed that all the negative racial experiences were not based on the structure of the Norwegian transport system but were based on the attitudes of the individual Norwegian. These experiences were based on the individual level compared to the system level. The way people treat others is mostly based on their perception about them. But despite the negative attitudes encountered, some of the participants said the Norwegian public transport system was good, organized, systematic and very effective. Some even said they wish their countries would emulate the same transport system.

4.1 Health care

Benkert and Peters (2005) postulated that, there is evidence of discrimination by health care practitioners which leads to different treatment for the minority. All the participants were asked

about their experience with the use of the health care system in Norway, but generally, almost all the participants had positive experiences with the Norwegian health care system except three participants who felt more is needed to improve it in terms of how they are treated. Thirteen participants mentioned that the health care system was good and some went further to state their reasons. One said, “I believe the Norwegian health care system is one of the best in the world”. Three of them said it was good because of the equal treatment they received from their practitioners. One also added that, he is always treated well whenever he visited the health care facility. Two of the participants made these statement:

The Health system in Norway is good. I believe it is one of the best in the world. However, I don't always get the needed attention when I visit the hospital because sometimes my illness might not be considered serious. There are times other patients always bypass me in the waiting queue even if I went before them (Mahama).

The Norwegian health system is very good but the waiting time to get an appointment with a specialist takes too long (Hamza).

Few of them shared their negative experiences with the Health Care System. The consequences of racism cuts across all sphere of one's life. That notwithstanding, its occurrence in the health care sector could be detrimental to a person's existence when it happens in the health care sector due to the delicate nature of the human life. The three participants were worried about the lack of expertise and urgency for treatment when they get sick or were in need of medical help. They narrated their displeasure and negative experiences with the health care system. These were some of their experiences:

My experience with the health care system has been bad due to poor reception I received. I felt sick and went to the Emergency unit but I was ignored for hours whilst I suffered. This has happened more than three times and also to my daughter and a friend. When a person gets sick and have the money to pay they should be given the needed attention as it happens back in my country. This makes me prefer the Health system in Uganda though it is not a rich country like Norway (Baba).

Getting an appointment with a specialist takes forever. I got very sick one day because of the chemical I was using at work. I was spitting blood and when I went to my doctor for sick leave she denied me and said my condition was not serious. She asked me to go

back to work. This has been my doctor for years and that was my first time I was requesting for a sick leave (Emeka).

Another participant gave an example of the pain she endures due to the Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) she underwent in her home country; she felt the Norwegian doctor lack the expertise to handle her situation.

The health care system is good but my only concern is that the Norwegian hospitals are not good with treating victims of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). I still have problems with my menstruation because of the FGM. Whenever I visit the hospital I am told they can't really help me because they do not know much about FGM. However, they often give me some tablets which they think might help (Alima).

The Health care sector should be divided into subsections in order to meet the specific needs of the different ethnic groups in dealing with their peculiar methods which mostly works for them (Castro et al., 2009, p.100). The participant's issue could be related to the lack of expertise with FGM treatment among the health care practitioners in Norway. It is stated in Vangen et al., (2004) that, the lack of knowledge of how medical practitioners should treat FGM patients could be the reason behind their relaxed attitude. This goes a long way to affect these women in conceiving and during delivery. Vangen et al., (2004, p. 32) said that, the health workers had no practical training on delivery during their formal education. The participant also confirmed that some of the people she knew have issues with conception but they received little medical help. The findings indicated that, the participants blamed both the health care system and health care personnel as responsible for the existence of racism in the sector.

In the Norwegian system, the General Practitioner (GP) refers the patient's details to the specialist and also explain the urgency of the illness. The waiting time for a patient to see a specialist is mostly based on the urgency of the illness. If the doctor does not see the illness as serious, it could influence the length of the waiting time. The long waiting time in the public health sector could be due to their huge client base, shortage of personnel, logistics and others. Though the private sector has a lesser client base, they might not have the needed medical personnel and equipment. This puts very minimal pressure on them as compared to the public health sectors. The public health facility is mostly subsidised by the government which makes it cheaper than the private health facilities. This also puts enormous pressure on them because more people tend to visit their facilities than the private ones. Some people also believe that

the public health sectors have the best medical personnel and facilities, but some participants in this study thought otherwise. They interpreted their bad experiences at the public health sector as racism. Some of the reasons mentioned above could be the reason for the long wait and might have anything to do with race. But in a where a medical practitioner treats a patient differently because of their skin colour, like allowing them to wait in the queue for a long time while others bypass or perceiving their illness as not serious. This might depend on the doctor's perception. This was interpreted as discrimination by the participants. In instances where a patient is bypassed in a waiting queue, it is only prudent they are furnished with tangible reasons. It could go a long way to influence how they interpret such situations.

4.2 Education

The existence of racial discrimination in the Norwegian schools cannot be overemphasized, as cited by Thomas (2016). Fourteen participants who had their education in Norway said their access to education was easy and good. Two of the participants had never had any formal education in Norway. Ten of the participants who had their children in Norway said their children's access to education was easy because their children were automatically registered in the Norwegian system. One had a child in Africa while five had no children.

Though most of the participants said their access to education was easy, they experienced discrimination from their teachers and classmates when they were in school. The Norwegian education system is good but, it is marred by the ill-treatment from some teachers and classmates. A participant noted that she always felt excluded by her Norwegian classmates when she was in school. She said whenever they had to form groups none of the white students would select her so she always ended up with an African colleague.

One participant said she had a teacher who taught her Norwegian language for two years. According to her, she was very nice to her. But when she started teaching her "Religion" in her third year she realized she was getting bad grades in her course. Whenever the teacher was teaching about Islam, she would say things which were not true and when she drew her attention to it, the teacher would get aggressive or offended. Her grades were not getting better though she knew she had improved. She confronted the teacher and told her she was going to report the issue to the school administration because she was making good grades at the beginning of the course when her Norwegian language skills was not good; but now that she had gotten better with the language her grades had gotten worse. The teacher said she was going to remark her work with an external examiner. After the external examiner marked her

work she had a higher grade for the same work. The teacher wanted to punish her because she defended what she believed in. She added that “sometimes, I even get higher grades in Christianity and Hindu but get lower grades in Islam which was strange to me because I don’t know much about Christianity and Hindu but I know more about Islam”. As a Muslim, she knew more about her religion than other religions. She also added one of her teacher’s first impression of her: “my teacher once told me that her first impression of me was that I was a terrorist because I had my hijab (Head scarf) on but her perception changed when she got to know me better”. According to Verkuyten and Thijs (2002), teachers play a key role in reducing the occurrences of name calling and bullying in schools. But when the teacher is rather showing prejudicial attitude towards a student, because of her race and religion, it could motivate the other students to emulate the prejudicial attitude.

Another participant also added that, during her bachelor’s study she found herself in a group with Norwegians whose biased attitudes made her feel unwelcomed. She explained further that, on seeing her, what one of the members spontaneously said was, “are you also part of us”. The tone of the question made her uncomfortable but she stayed due to the academic requirement. She narrated that, she fell sick along the way and informed her group members that she could not join the group meetings. She submitted her work to the group leader through an email but she later got an email from the lecturer that she did not participate in the group work. She managed to convince the lecturer that she took part in the work and was asked to send her part of the work to the lecturer by email after which she was graded. She would have failed that course if the lecturer had not contacted her, she vowed never to be in a group with them again.

Also, another participant recounted that, when he arrived in Norway as an African student, he was the only person of colour in his class and he could feel the enmity and dislike from his colleagues. According to him, sometimes when they were put in groups to perform some tasks, his colleagues would meet without informing him. When he manages to join the meeting, they refuse to add any of his contributions. He went further to inform the teachers about his experience but nothing was done about it. After three years in the program, it was mandatory to do a two-year training/internship to be prepared for the job market. He was selected for the training in a firm in Stavanger. When he went for the interview, he was asked if he was the one by that name because they thought he was a British or European. He added that, his interview was shorter than that of his colleagues. The next day he received a message that the vacancies had been filled. He asked for an explanation as to why he was denied but was told he did not

have the one compulsory military training and also, he is not a Norwegian citizen. He asked them to give him an official explanation but they declined and that ended his dream of a profession in the aviation industry.

The racial treatments amongst children in the western countries has increased in schools and communities (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002). Some narrated their children's racial experiences in their schools. Some contained abusive words and hate speeches. Below are some of the examples:

One day my daughter came back from school and said the other kids were avoiding her because they did not want to play with her. I asked why they didn't want to play with her she replied that they told her she was not one of them. I reported the issue to her teacher but he told me he can't force the other kids to play with my daughter (Emeka).

This coincides with the story shared by Thomas (2016) of a 9-year-old girl who was bullied in school because of her skin colour, it left the little girl traumatised and she doubted herself worth and value. Children are very sensitive to what happens to them when they are growing up, this makes their daily experiences important. When they encounter more negative experiences, it can scar them for life. The teacher could have ensured that the pupils do not repeat such attitudes again but, he was adamant even when a parent confronted him. His attitude could encourage the pupil to discriminate and bully other classmates.

My children have also experienced racism in school by name calling, as my son was called a Neger (Nigger) several times and my daughter was also called a "sheep" because she and another African girl were the only children with brown skin in their class (Sandra).

Verkuyten and Thijs (2002), asserted that the role of teachers are very important when it comes to how children cope with different ethnic or cultural groups and some of the negative relations that it comes with. When a teacher reacts to racist name calling/ bullying and the exclusion of other children, it has the tendency of reducing racial incidence amongst children (Verkuyten & Thijs, 2002). This is because most children look up to their teachers and always want to impress them. The participant took the issue up to the school authorities and it was settled peacefully. Some of the participant said they have had encounters with overt racism. Though these instances were not physical attacks, they suffered both verbal and non-verbal attacks. The European Union survey in 2018 confirmed the existences of racial discrimination among

people of African descent. Michael O’Flaherty (Agency director) said that, the EU laws forbidding discrimination had been adopted for almost 20 years but the people of African descent still experience “widespread and entrenched prejudice and exclusion”.²³

The experience of racial discrimination in the educational system in Norway was not about the structure of the system precisely but, was based on the attitudes and behaviours of the individuals. Even though the educational system is good measures should be put in place to reduce the occurrences of discrimination in schools.

4.3 Accommodation

The issue of getting accommodation in Norway was a problem for some of the participants especially those who were renting. Nine of the participants had mortgages while seven had rented their apartments. Two of the participants said their mortgages were bought by their husbands. Six of the participants who were renting their houses said it was difficult because the home owners are the ones who decide who gets their apartment. Even though one of the participants had ease with finding a place in Oslo, the evidence of prejudice in this sector cannot be overruled. One of the participants who now owns a house said this, “I was forced to buy my own house because of the bad experiences I encountered whilst renting”. He added that, the acquisition of a house in Norway is systemized and poses less challenges, provided the buyer has sufficient income. The other nine participants concurred with this assertion. Although two participants ruled out racism as the reason for the difficulty in acquiring a lease, the other participants could not help but share some of their negative experiences.

All the nine participants who owned a house confirmed that buying a mortgage was much easier and simpler and it all depends on the economic power of the buyer. Ali, for example said,

I had difficulties when I was looking for a place to rent but I do not believe it was because I was an African. I would blame it on the housing system in Norway. Oslo is the capital and everyone wants to live here, that makes the housing system crowded.

Doris said she had difficulties when she moved to Oslo but believed that everyone has the right to choose who they rent their apartments to. She also blamed the difficulties of renting on the housing crisis in Oslo. She explained it like this:

²³ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2018/nov/28/people-of-african-descent-face-dire-picture-of-racism-in-eu>. Accessed on 16/04/2019.

I wanted to rent an apartment which had Norwegian home owner but I did not get, though they told me they really liked me but had to give it to someone else who happens to be a Norwegian. My friends started telling me Norwegians don't rent their houses to blacks. But I kept denying it and said I know friends who were renting houses from Norwegians. I believe I was just not lucky at that time so I decided to let my Norwegian partner at that time help me to look for another apartment. He was also denied. I then realised it had nothing to do with my race. But when I later used my education and work experiences in applying for an apartment, I got a place.

Some participants narrated their negative experiences:

I live in a rented apartment and getting accommodation was difficult especially because I had a large family. During my search for my current apartment my husband and I visited one home owner who had a place to rent out. Unfortunately for us the wife was not around so we were asked to come back later. When we went back after a week the wife told us that we were the only ones that had come to see the apartment. But we have to wait If nobody comes for it then we could be considered for the place (Abena).

It was difficult to get a place to rent especially when I didn't know people who could help me (Hamza).

Renting an apartment is tough because I had to wait in a long queue, but buying a house is easier because it is about having the money to pay (Baba).

My current accommodation is mortgage, my husband bought it before we got married. Before that, I lived in rented apartments and it was hard for me to rent in a nice community. I realised the prices always increased at the safe community whenever I wanted to rent (Lizzy).

Getting accommodation in Oslo may be difficult because it is the capital city. This is common in many countries around the world. Irrespective of the challenges the participants faced, they all managed to get places to stay. Some of those who were renting lived in immigrants dominated communities whilst those who had mortgages lived in diverse communities or white dominated communities, as prices of the houses mostly determined the type of people who lived there. Most Africans live in poor communities' due to their low economic power (Ombud, 2018), this might be the case for those who lived in rented apartments. In this study, most the

participants owned houses as compared to those who were renting. This supports the Ombud 2018 report, which stated that the background of an immigrant mostly determines their chances of owning a house. It might be possible that, the participants country of origin could have had an influence in their ownership of the house. The Ombud (2018) report on renting agrees with the findings of this study. The study found that, immigrants, especially Somalians, receive negative treatment in the bid to rent a house. Most participants had experience negative treatment from home owners before renting. Though the outcome of this study supports the Ombud 2018 report on renting, it contradicts its report on owning a house. Majority of participants who owned houses and some of those renting confirmed that the processes of buying a house in Norway was free and fair. The Ombud (2018) report stated that, it is easy to buy a house in Norway which is also supported by the findings of this study. Some blamed their negative experiences on the Norwegian housing system whilst others blamed it on individual home owners.

4.4 Employment

African immigrants have the lowest employment rate of 49% compared to others from Asia, South and Central American even when they have lived in Norway for years. (Ombud, 2018). Though all the participants were employed, they had different experiences to tell. Whereas some had positive experiences, the others could only provide negative experiences on how they got their jobs. Their experiences varied in terms of their access to employment, promotion at work and access to equal salary. Nine of the participants said it was difficult to get a job in Norway whilst seven said it was easy to get a job in Norway. One said, “it is easier to get a job when a person has the right documentation, work experience and can speak the language”. Another also added that, “though finding a job was not hard, it is much easier to get a menial job as compared to a job related to my qualification”.

The CERD’s conclusion report stated that, there is absence of clear guidelines in the prevention of discrimination in employment especially during the recruitment stage, as 25% of job applicants with foreign names get a lower chance of job interview (CERD, 2019). This makes it difficult for immigrants with foreign names to get jobs. This has led some of them to changing their names in hopes of getting a job. These are the experiences of some participants:

It was very difficult to find a job in Norway especially a professional job related to my educational qualification. In order to get a job, I had to change my surname to that of my Norwegian husband’s though I didn’t want to. But after changing my surname, I

started receiving calls for interviews. But most of the time it ended after the interview stage when they realised I was an African. It was a friend who later recommended me for a job that is when I got employed (Sandra).

It was tough to find a job in Norway. Though I had taken many courses, I still struggled to find a job immediately. But I blame it on the lack of jobs in Oslo (Ali).

As a refugee, there were structured programs and course that I had to take before I could find a job. Even after that, I did not find a job so I worked for free and through that I met people who later helped me to secure a job (Hamza).

When I started working as a medical practitioner one of my patients refused my services because he said I was black man. I left him because he decided whose services he preferred (Ike).

When a racist can get away with their behaviour without it being noticed or dealt with by the appropriate authorities, they tend to harm more people. Virtanen and Huddy (1998) has predicted a reduction of prejudice by the current white people based on the expectation that, there would be lesser prejudice in the future. But they warned that integrated occupation might increase negative racial stereotypes. This could perhaps mean that, the more the immigrant population compete with white people for the same jobs, it could increase their negative racial attitudes towards them. Such attitudes could discourage immigrants from competing in a white dominated workforce.

A participant gave an example of how he endured name calling and maltreatment from his colleagues at work and though he complained to the authorities they refused to take the matter up. He said he came to this realisation after he was moved to a different department and was confronted with dislike from two of his Norwegian colleagues. He narrated with a lot of pain, how he trains new recruits and they get promoted whilst he remains in the position. Then, his colleagues in the department formed a group against him and because of that even those people he was training begun to disrespect him. They started calling him names like black monkey, monkey man and chimpanzee. After a while, when the opportunity for new and higher roles were presented, he realised to his utter dismay that he was the only one who did not qualify to be interviewed. He was, again, confronted with the harsh reality when he saw his name at the bottom of the organisational chart which meant he had to do the menial jobs. He inquired about

his demotion but never got any explanation while his colleagues with lower qualification than him were promoted.

Some participants also gave example of their racial experiences.

It was challenging in securing a job in Norway in the beginning but I got a job when I started volunteering with some organizations (Alima).

I have experience racism in different forms, I was not appreciated and was looked down upon. When I used to work in a grocery store some of the customers would not allow me to serve them because of my colour (Grace).

I was called a Neger (Nigger) by a Norwegian woman because I was working with another Norwegian woman to raise funds to support women in Africa. I felt I did not belong anywhere because back home in Africa I was called a “white woman” because of my light skin colour, my people always saw me as an outsider in my own country so I felt I would be welcomed in Norway only to be called Neger (Nigger) when she said that I felt torn between two worlds (Lizzy).

Two participants shared similar experiences of how they could both not secure a job through Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV).

I struggled to find a job even though I went to NAV so many time, but I could not find any help. I met a friend who helped me to get a job. I also used to work in a kindergarten in Oslo but realised that whenever I tried to help the children the teachers won't allow me but they allowed my other Norwegian colleagues to help the children when they needed it (Baba).

Getting a job was not easy in the beginning, as I went to NAV for help so many times but could not find a job through them. I decided to search for work on my own and got it. When I started my training (nurse) most of my colleagues were Norwegians and I remember I did not receive the same assistance and help needed for my training because I could not communicate in the Norwegian language well. When I also started working at the clinic a Norwegian woman visited one day, I saw her I stretched forth my hand to welcome her but the woman said are you the one going to attend to me and she asked again if there were others who could attend to her instead of me. I was the one on duty so I took the woman in because I had to do my job, the woman was silent

and cold in the beginning but she later cooperated and allowed me to treat her. After the session, she apologised for her behaviour (Chioma).

Two of the participants owned their business. According to one, though he has his business, his search for a job on his arrival in the country proved futile until a friend helped him out. Some added that, the securing of a job is highly dependent on recommendations.

Three of the participants had experienced promotion at work. One said she experienced promotion from her previous work but not with her current job because she was new. Another participant posited that, he believes getting more working hours is promotion. For him, even though he started off as a volunteer, he was given some hours later and eventually became a permanent employee. One also added that, promotion comes automatically at her work place. Eleven of the participants said they had not experienced any promotion at their work place because there is no promotion in their work. Two of the participants had experienced demotion at their work place. For Mahama, who said he had had an experience with demotion, his experience was entirely due to his race. Mohammed on the other hand, had experienced both promotion and demotion on the same job and had this to say:

I know if I am competing for the same job position with a Norwegian I would not get it even if we have the same qualification and experience. I experienced promotion but was demoted after a month because I had a little misunderstanding with my supervisor who reported me to the boss. The boss did not hear my side of the story but demoted me after a month. I believe I would have been treated differently if I were to be a Norwegian.

Fourteen of the participants said they have equal salary while two said they did not. They had these to say:

I have the same qualification and experience as my colleagues but they earn more salary than me (Mahama).

I do not have equal salary as I am an asylum seeker and based on that I am paid less because I do not have the required documentation to receive a full salary for my work (Lizzy).

Racial discrimination against Africans in the employment sector is based on the employment system as well as individual attitude and behaviour. One could argue that, it is not far-fetched

that employers are able to exhibit prejudicial traits when the system itself is a culprit. That is why most Africans find themselves doing menial jobs irrespective of their educational qualification as argued by Gullestad (2002). Even in instances where immigrants are employed in roles befitting their qualifications, they are faced with rejection from the majority who question their competence. An example is what happened to the medical doctor and the nurse.

4.5 No racial experience

The denial of racial experiences might be effective for a short period especially if the encounter is short term but it could be devastating when the torture continues for a long time. This could perhaps confirm that some people use denial as a means of handling discrimination but it could be detrimental to their health (Krieger & Sidney, 1996). Four participants said they had never had any experience with racism in Norway but when asked further questions about their experiences with the public transport, accommodation and the use of public area, three gave instances of discrimination. Prior to the interview, they all said they understood what racism meant. Two of them were Master's degree holders whilst the other two had a Bachelor and a High school education. Below are some of the examples the participants narrated when asked further questions.

It is difficult to get accommodation especially when other Norwegians are also interested in the same apartment because they tend to get it instead of me (Kojo).

Whenever I visit the public parks, I feel isolated because the Norwegians are cold, they do not get close or interact with me (Hamza).

When I use the public transport sometimes there could be a vacant seat beside me but no Norwegian would want to sit with me and I think that is racism (Ali).

Though three participants had, in a way, experienced discrimination it appeared they were either in denial or chose to normalise it. It could mean that they still believed in the overt form of racism, where people say what they really felt and not cover up. Also, they might want to isolate themselves from any racial ideas in order to ignore their day to day encounter with prejudice. By the end of the study, only one participant was found to have not had any racial experiences. Krieger and Sidney (1996), gave a similar example of a study done in the United Kingdom, about the racial experiences of some black people. They narrated that, the participants denied their racial experiences but when asked further questions, they agreed to have experienced it but it was hard to talk about.

4.6 Other racial experiences

Dovidio and Gaertner (2004) suggest that, the mental, motivational and sociocultural factors that create in group prejudice could lead more whites to develop some negative feelings towards black people. He added that, they might not be aware of such feelings or would sometimes disassociate themselves from it when they realize it. This could happen in a situation where a person unconsciously behaves in a prejudicial way without noticing it, due to the ideas in their subconscious mind. Their attitude could be normal to them but might mean something different to the person at the receiving end, as experienced by one of the participants. This participant narrated how she and her then African boyfriend had very little interactions with the whites whenever they visited the park. However, being married to Norwegian now, she is met with an entirely different attitude at the park. She said, “whenever we visit the park people stare at me as if I am a prostitute who is with a white man for his money”. She also posited that, when she moved in with her husband some of their neighbours ignored her because of her race and when her husband introduced her to one of their neighbours, the man said “ohhh so you waited all these years for her” and her husband’s response was “yes I am a very lucky man”.

Another participant narrated an incident that happened to him when he visited a client to lobby for work contract. During their meeting, the client was nice and pretended to be interested in what he was saying. Whilst he was leaving the office, he could hear the sound of the shredder which he interpreted to mean that his proposal was being destroyed. Moreover, to confirm his doubt, he didn’t hear from the client again. He also added that due to the nature of his work he meets a lot of clients to sign contracts and sometimes when he offers to give some his pen to sign, they refuse and act as if there are germs on his pen. At times, they are also very rude to him. Other participants narrated that:

When I first moved to Norway I used to live in a community in the North. I discovered that whenever I greeted my neighbours, they refused to respond even when I repeated it several times. After some time, another Norwegian told my friend that they were not used to black people so it is hard for them to relate (Baba).

When I used to live in my previous community I sometimes park my car outside but would find scratches with metal object and even sometimes drawings of a male genital on it. After moving to my current residence, I realised I was the only African living in the area. My neighbours refused to respond to my greetings and also tried as much as

possible to avoid me. I could sometimes see scratches and banana peels on my car. I monitored and saw that it was two Norwegian children. I told their parents about it but one parent said it was not their daughter and asked me to get out of his house while the other parent apologized for their daughter's behaviour. I also realised there were a lot of police patrols in my area but it stopped after other nationalities started moving into the area (Emeka).

A man walked up to me at the train station a month ago and he started screaming at me that I was a bad Muslim so I should leave his country (Alima).

Sometimes when I visit the park with my children, some Norwegians pull their children away from my children when they want to play together (Abena).

One participant believed his marriage ended because of racism. He married a Norwegian woman against the will of his mother-in-law. According to him, he is convinced that his race was a huge factor for the contempt he suffered from his mother-in-law who even threatened to disinherit his wife unless she leaves him. He believes his marriage ended because of his mother-in-law's attitude. These bitter experiences have made him reserved, very sceptical of people and even doubts the equality notion he had of Norway before he arrived. One also narrated how she ends up training alone at the gym because the whites refuse to join her during pairing.

The experiences, as shared by the participants, have affected them in diverse ways. Whilst some are dealing with issues of low self-esteem, others are battling depression and although some are living in a world of disappointments, others just ignore and move on with their lives. One of the participant said anytime he is confronted with any form of racism, he reminds himself that it the racist that has a problem and is probably ignorant. Each one of them has gotten tougher skins when it comes to racism. The study found that, against all odds, all the participants, with the exception of one who has had his dream of a career in the aviation industry truncated, the others have either excelled in their various field of work or are in pursuit of their successes.

4.7 Coping strategies

Though almost all the participants had experienced racial prejudice in one way or the other, they had different ways of coping with it. Coping strategies mostly involves the mental effort to alter the way in which racism is seen and the behaviours of how to deal with its effects (Scott & House, 2005). Racism has psychological and physical effect on its victims (Fernando, 1984, Brondolo et al., 2009). The psychological effect of racism could lead to low self-esteem and a sense of loss and helplessness (Fernando, 1984). Some of the participants expressed that, it has affected their self-esteem, made them reserved, lose confidence in themselves and also makes them unhappy sometimes. The physical effect of racism could be unemployment, denial of a job promotion, or poverty (Brondolo et al., 2009). This makes coping strategies more vital in curtailing the consequences on its victims. The strategies used by the participants were confrontational, avoidance, positive attitude and reporting.

Confrontational strategy

Confrontational strategy has proven to be an effective means of social change over the years (Czopp & Monteith, 2003). Some participants said they used this strategy as their means of coping with racial prejudice in Norway. This strategy comes with consequences like anger, aggression and insults which could lead to physical exchange and others (Czopp et al., 2006). One participant was keener on the use of confrontational strategy because she felt that, sometimes the racist might not be aware of his/her behaviour; through confrontation he/she would realise the impact of their attitude and hence change. Even those who might be aware of their behaviour could desist from such behaviour due to the possibility of being confronted. But it might not always be the case as sometimes confrontation could turn out to be negative. The confronter could get angry and it may lead to hostile confrontation, even though hostile confrontation could be an effective strategy to decrease racial bias in the future (Czopp et al., 2006). And most people would not want to encounter such bad experiences again based on their past experience, they could become less prejudiced. She added that though she uses confrontational strategy, she does not take those experiences personally.

Two participants said they mostly confront the racist to find out why they behave that way towards them. Another participant gave an example of when a Norwegian woman who called her a Neger (Nigger) when she was volunteering at a fund-raising event. She got angry and confronted the woman but the woman got scared and left the scene and she continued with her duties. Her attitudes toward the woman might hinder her from repeating the same attitude.

Gullestad (2004) stated that, most Norwegians become profoundly ashamed, embarrassed and in some cases, strongly defensive when accused of any racist act.

When a person speaks up against prejudicial comments and also register their displeasure, it might lessen the reoccurrence of such in the future (Czopp et al., 2006). Another example was when one of the participants' children were being called Neger (Nigger) and a sheep at school because of the colour of their skin. She confronted the school authorities and the parents of the bullies were called for a meeting in the school to settle the case amicably. Most importantly, the school authorities' recognition of the issue was vital as it led them to take action. The role of the mother was also important because if she had not taken the bullying and name calling of her children seriously, it could have gotten worse by affecting their academic performance, school attendance or might have even extended to other African children. This could influence their general health, wellbeing, educational and even influence their social status in their childhood and growing (Priest et al., 2014).

Another participant also confronted the parents of the children who were throwing banana peels on his car. One parent apologized whilst the other was rude to him and asked him to get out of their house. When person a use a harsh tone in a message, it could influence the effectiveness of whatever message they are trying to get across and might lead to negative consequences (Brondolo et al., 2009). The parents' attitude could be a show of support for their daughter's behaviour. If so, the probability of their daughter repeating the same or worse attitude is very high. Parents attitude to racism is very significant in curtailing or worsening it (Neblett et al., 2008), most children develop attitudes and characters based on their immediate environment. Also, parents' position on how their children relate with the minority and other ethnic groups is important for ethnic-racial socialization (Priest et al., 2014). When children grow up in a negative stereotypical environment, they mostly follow the pattern of their predecessors and therefore might pass that attitude from one generation to the next (Virtanen & Huddy, 1998). The popular saying, "like father like son and like mother like daughter" could support the statement above.

Avoidance strategy

Most people prefer to stay quiet when they experience racism because they do not want to draw any attention to themselves (Czopp et al., 2006). The avoidance strategy can be immediate or long term. According to Brondolo et al., (2009), avoidance strategy could be efficient and suitable in some situations. They added that, it could be more effective when people find

themselves in a position where responding immediately might not be safe for them. Five of the participants said they used the avoidance strategy. For one, avoiding ignorant people is the best coping mechanism. One of the participant gave an example of how she was attacked by a Norwegian at the train station because she was wearing a hijab (head scarf). The man just walked up to her and he was shouting at her to leave his country because she is a bad Muslim. In that moment, she felt it was safer for her to just ignore the man even though he was abusing her verbally.

Avoidance does not lessen the pain of discrimination (Brondolo et al., 2009). Avoidance strategy might not be an effective coping strategy for a long- term situation where there is prolonged maltreatment. An example was given by one participants who said when she worked at a grocery shop some of the Norwegians did not want her to attend to them. In such instances, she pretended as if nothing had happened because that was the safest thing to do at that time. She could not serve them if they did not want her to. Most of the participants who felt discriminated against when they took the public transport used the avoidance strategy. They could not call anyone racist because they preferred to stand rather than sit next to them. Also, those who complained of the discrimination when they joined groups in school also used the avoidance strategy.

Positive attitude

Five participants believed that having a positive attitude was the best way they could deal with racism in Norway. Positive attitude could mean when a person places more value on themselves or put up a good behaviour that could prevent or minimise others from maltreating or discriminating against them because of the colour of their skin. One participant said portraying a good image as an African is good because “she believes we get what we put out there”. When you have a good behaviour, it changes the perception others have about you and sometime your entire race. The same thing could happen when someone behaves in a negative way. An example was given by one participant who narrated an experience he had when he went to look for work contracts. Some of his clients were sceptical of him especially when they realized he was from Nigeria. But he managed to convince them to give him a try, which they do. After getting the contract, they become so impressed with his work because he does a good work and he is honest in his transactions. Working with them for some time, they get to know he is a nice person. They tend to trust him more and even helped him to win more contracts

from their friends and colleagues. They keep telling others that he is a good man. Some even told him one time that he was a good Nigerian because of his honest nature.

Shorter (2004, p.419) suggested that, the value of oneself is a coping strategy to deal with racism. She defines it as a belief or feeling of oneself and sometimes an obligation to involve in deeds that help to develop oneself. One of the participants also posited that, prejudice is everywhere irrespective of where one finds themselves but she asserted that having a positive mind set would enable her to see the positive sides in all situations irrespective of how bad the situation is. This could mean that once a person looks at the positive side in all circumstances, it would enable them to build themselves up mentally and physically even when they are confronted with a negative situation. It could go a long way to determine how the incident affects them or their interpretations of it.

Another participant added that, he believes that as he works hard people would see him as an intelligent man who has confidence in himself. He already knows who he is so how others treat him would not make any difference in how he feels or sees himself. He also said that “when someone discriminates against me it is the racist that has a problem not me”. Again, one participant said that being a good role model helps because others would look up to him and might change the negative perception they might have about Africans in general. He further added that, if for example you are the only African student in your class and people laugh at you or don’t want to be your friend all you have to do is to study hard and be the best student, dress well and be presentable. In that way others would get close to you and might not discriminate against you. The self-esteem of a person mostly determines how they perceive life and their relations with others. People with high-self-esteem might have a positive outlook and interpretation to what happens to them as compared to those with low self- esteem (Crocker & Wolfe, 2001).

Reporting

Four participants said reporting racial incidence was the way they dealt with racism. It could also be said that the nature of the prejudice would determine how a person would deal with it. If the racial encounter is dangerous, there is a higher possibility of it being reported. For most of the participants, though they did not like being discriminated against, they also did not see the need to report their racial experiences to any higher authority because they did not see it as threatening. It is only one participant who had reported his racial experiences to Ombud due to the prolonged maltreatment he endured at work. After making the report to Ombud, his

organization was found guilty by the court for not taking any action against the perpetrators who were calling him names in the office. But despite the court's verdict, the organization still did not take any disciplinary actions against the two perpetrators to serve as a warning to others but rather, they were relocated to new offices with better working conditions. He questioned whether reporting the issue was worth it due to the lack of effectiveness of the law. This could explain why the hate crimes statistics is reported to be low in Norway (Ombud, 2018). The ineffectiveness of the law on hate speech could hinder others from reporting because once a person reports an issue they become the centre of discussion by those around them.

When people know their actions would not materialize into any fruition, they would rather prefer to stay quiet and endure the pain. The 2017 police's citizen survey indicates that "people who have been exposed to hate crime are also those with the least confidence in the police and who most strongly believe that they did not receive sufficient help from the police" (Ombud, 2018, p.21). Brondolo et al. (2009) suggested that, the strategies used for temporary racial experiences are not the same strategies used for long term racial torture. They emphasised that, every racial encounter may require a different coping strategy. An immediate racial experience might not be reported but a long-term experience has a higher possibility of being reported due to the prolonged torture. One of the participants who said he prefer to use avoidance as a coping strategy said reporting the case to the police would make the issue worse, he believes that, the police believe their own people than an African. So, he does not trust the law enforcement authority. The National Police Directorate asserted that there are numerous hate crimes case which are not reported to the police and Ombud is equally worried about the same issues especially hate crimes outside Oslo (Ombud, 2018).

4.8 Racism as a human rights violation

Africans knowledge of their human rights is key in how they deal with racism. Fourteen of the participants knew that racial discrimination was against their human rights. One was not sure whilst the other one did not know that racial discrimination was against his human rights. Three of the participants knew of international/ national human rights organizations in Norway which prohibits racism but could not mention them. Five participants didn't know of any international or national organizations which prohibits racism while eight of the participants knew international or national organization like United Nation High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers (NOAS), OMBUD, Integration and Diversity Directorate (IMDI), Organisasjonen mot Offentlig Diskriminering (OMOD), Anti-

Racist Centre, the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) , Power, Self Help for immigrants and Refugees (SAFE), Power and Landsorganisasjonen i Norge (LO). All these organizations play significant roles in combating racism in Norway. Some got to know these organizations through various means like the media, social media, human rights institutions, activist groups, friends, colleagues and by working or volunteering with them. Two of the participants had been in contact with these organizations.

One said he contacted a sexual equality group on behalf of a friend but could not remember the name of the organization. The other added that she contacted LO when she was treated unfairly by her former employer:

I contacted Landsorganisasjonen i Norge (LO) when I was denied my full salary from my former employer for a work I did. LO helped me to receive the full payment of my salary (Jennifer).

Three had worked with some of these organization. The rest of the participants said they have not contacted any of these organization because they do not have any need for them.

The Equality and Anti- Discrimination Act has been vital in the fight against racism in Norway. It has laws which protects minorities from racial discrimination. Participants knowledge of the Act could determine their attitude and response to some racial encounters. Seven knew of the Equality and Anti- Discrimination Act whilst nine did not know the Act existed. Twelve of the participants knew that racial discrimination was a crime in Norway but four participants did not know that. One of the participant knew that racial discrimination was a crime in Norway but has never heard of anyone being convicted for it.

Ombud is an organization which works to promote equal treatment for all people regardless of their background and also ensures that their human rights are not violated by the state and other individuals (The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud, 2008). They have a tribunal that deals with cases of discrimination, gender equality, protection of workers' rights etc. Thirteen of the participants did not know of Ombud but three knew of its existence. Two had been in contact with Ombud whilst the other said she did not have any need for them. One contacted them on behalf of a friend whilst the other contacted them due to unfair treatment and utterances of name calling at work.

I contact Ombud because I needed help to deal with the racial encounters I experienced at work due to unfair repositioning of my job and hate speeches. When I made the report to Ombud they contacted my organization and gave them a time period to settle the repositioning of my job which they ignored. The issue went to court and the organization was found guilty for condoning racism at the work place. The other case against the organization in terms of the unfair change of duties has now been taken to the civil Ombudsman and it is still pending for verdict (Mahama).

Norway has the Equality and Anti- Discrimination Act obliging employers to take effective measures to improve equality. However, failure to do so does not incur any punishment (CERD, 2019). CERD's concluding observations on the combined twenty-third and twenty-fourth periodic reports of Norway recommended that, Norway includes punishments in their laws to ensure that people adhere to.²⁴ Though the participant won the first case on the hate speech, no punishment was metered out to his organization as a deterrent to others. Majority of the participants knew that racism was a violation of their human rights and the fact that racism was a crime in Norway. But most of them lacked knowledge of the Equality and Anti - Discrimination Act and the existence of Ombud. This could indicate their lack of knowledge pertaining to the laws that protect them. How can people fight for their rights when they are oblivious of their existence? It should, therefore, not be a surprise when these people are left at the mercy of their employers and society.

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https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CERD/C/NOR/CO/23-24&Lang=En. Accessed on 5/05/2019.

4.9 Racism reduction strategies

Most of the participants recommended awareness creation, integration and positive image as a means of minimising racism. One did not have any idea and the other suggested avoidance. For him, avoidance means ignoring the racist and isolating himself from the racial environment, he believes it could prevent further racial encounters.

4.10 Awareness creation

Awareness creation was mentioned by six participants as a strategy which might reduce racial prejudice. This was based on the fact that the participants felt the whole discourse of racism was seldom discussed. Having more conversations about it could enlighten many people on the issue and could lead to positive outcomes. One participant said “Africans should discuss issues about racism openly in order to create awareness. This might change the perception of how others see us. I advise Africans to speak up and report issues of racism to the appropriate authorities when they experience it”. These were some of their statements:

The more awareness creation there is about racism, the better others could understand its impact. It would enable others to gain knowledge about the issue through the awareness creation campaigns. It could enhance behavioural change in the way Norwegians perceive and treat Africans (Grace).

Awareness creation would enable Africans to know more about their rights in order for them to fight for it when it is being trampled upon. It could also influence how Africans conduct themselves which could affect how others treats them (Sandra).

CERD has recommended Norway to increase its awareness creation campaigns “to address stereotypes and increase tolerance between various communities to prevent hate crimes” in Norway (CERD, 2019, p.3).

4.11 Integration

Integration enhances understanding between people and leads to peace and tranquillity. Entzinger and Biezeveld (2003) said that, integration is the inter relations between individuals or a group of people. Integration was recommended by two participants as a racism reduction method. They believe that when Africans and Norwegians integrate properly, it could improve how they perceive and understand each other. It might be difficult to understand someone from a different cultural background if one does not have knowledge about their culture, since

culture mostly determines how people behave and relate with others. One added that racial prejudice could be reduced when there is proper integration among Norwegians and Africans. This reinforces Entzinger and Biezeveld (2003, p. 6) assertion that, “frequent and intense contacts with others may lead to a better mutual understanding and, ultimately, to a stronger identification with one another”. The other participant said:

Integration is a good way to reduce racism as it would help Africans to understand the Norwegian culture in which they find themselves while it gives the Norwegian the opportunity to know and understand the African culture at the same time (Grace).

Integration is between two individuals or groups; therefore, it is important for both to agree on the common goal of their interaction to achieve the desired results.

4.12 Positive image/attitude and media

The inception of technology has changed the interface of communication in the 21st century as the use of the traditional media keeps evolving with technological advancement. Six of the participants recommended the use of the traditional and social media to portray positive image of Africa. Saeed (2007) posited that, the media’s report on the issues of race has been negative. Since the media has created negative images and made statements about the minorities, it is right to argue that the same platform can be used to create a positive image about the minority. The Norwegian media could be used as a powerful medium to promote positive image of Africa and Africans. It could influence the perception of some Norwegians. The media’s position on issues of racism has the ability to influence their viewers perception and attitude towards other ethnic groups (Oliver et al., 2007). These were some of the examples:

Having a positive self-image and attitude could change the stereotype that most Norwegians have about Africans (Abena).

Racial prejudice could be reduced when there is mutual respect between Africans and Norwegians (Hamza).

Social media could be used as a platform to show or promote the good image of Africa. We Africans should exhibit virtuous characters where ever we find ourselves. This could help change how others see Africans thereby influencing their attitudes towards us (Emeka).

Racial prejudice could be reduced when as Africans we strengthen our self-values, build our self-esteem and self-confidence, that way it would be difficult for others to disrespect us (Ike).

Portraying Africa in a good image and supporting other victims of racism could be vital in reducing racism (Lizzy).

I always tell nice stories about my country to my friend. Because of that my foreign friends visit my country based on how I sell it to them. I also use my social media pages to portray positive things about my country because of that I don't post or write anything negative about my country (Doris).

4.13 Socialization (social participation) and volunteerism in racism reduction

Though almost all the participants gave recommendation on how racism could be reduced, they were further asked to share their views on how socialization and volunteerism could reduce racism. A participant argued that, he does not think socialization and volunteerism could reduce racial discrimination rather it could be reduced when people travel to different countries and get to know other cultures. This could help in improving the understanding of the different cultures and how to relate with others. Volunteerism helped some African Americans to survive racism, especially, during the Civil Rights and Black Power movements (Mattis et al., 2004). Some participants had engaged in social activities that reduced stereotype or prejudice. These were of their examples:

I participated in socialization activities and volunteer work because I believe it could help reduce racial prejudice. I always take part in the National Project (dugnad). Dugnad is a general cleaning exercise done in every community twice each year after the winter and after summer. The communal cleaning exercise gives all the residents in the community the opportunity to meet their neighbours and through that get to interact and know each other well, though, some Africans prefer to stay indoors instead of participating. Such attitudes could confirm the stereotype some Norwegians have, that is Africans are lazy. Getting involved could change their stereotype (Grace).

Football enhances socialization and could contribute in reducing racial prejudice. I used to live in community, I did not know anyone there, but through organised communities football matches among different nationalities I got to meet different

people and through that I made some good friends who helped me to get a job and accommodation when I needed it (Kojo).

I organized an event (festival) in the small community I used to live in, I realized that there were a lot of foreigner who lived there. So, I organized an event. During the event, everyone dressed in their traditional clothing; we ate, drunk and danced. It was very successful and the Mayor and the media came to support us. There were 40 nationalities who attended the program and through that a lot of friendships were made (Doris).

In 2015, I participated in volunteer work to welcome the Syrian refugees and through that it brought people from different backgrounds together. This helped me to understand these people and their way of life (Lizzy).

Some of the participants also added that, socialization and volunteerism could help change some of the negative perceptions about Africans. Their interaction helps them understand other's culture and vice versa. According to Mattis et al. (2004, p .262) Young and El Haaj Malik al Shabbaz (Malcolm X), indicate that people who have had bad racial experiences tend to get more involved in social activism.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

In this thesis, I have discussed the experiences and understanding of Africans and Norwegian-Africans on racism in Norway. The participants were from Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda and Sudan. The study found that, most of the participants had experienced racism within the transport, health care, education, accommodation and employment sectors, as well as those with no racial experiences and other racial experiences.

The ECRI (2015) report indicated that, majority of immigrants have experienced discrimination in sectors like recruitment, housing and the health care sectors. Some also shared their experiences of being called names at work, being demoted, refusal of work contracts or positions due to their race. Though the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the European Commission against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI) and other NGOs are strong advocates against discrimination, the issues still persist in the work place. The lack of clear guidelines in the recruitment process, especially in the early stages, allows for the easy identification and subsequent rejection of people from the minority background due their foreign names and the equality and Anti-Discrimination Act does not punish employers who refuse to promote equality (CERD, 2019).

I argue that, this can encourage employers to maltreat their employees especially those from the minority background. People mostly follow rules and laws that govern them when they are aware of the consequences but without consequences, it makes it easier to flout them. The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud Act *section 39* states that, a “penalty of a fine or imprisonment for a term not exceeding three years shall be applied to any person who jointly with at least two other persons commits an aggravated breach of the prohibition against” the discrimination of a person based on their ethnicity, religion or belief, etc. This section of the law might not be exactly effective. One of the participants recounted his experience with the law when he reported discrimination and hate speech charges against his employer at Ombud. According to him, neither his employer nor perpetrator were sanctioned. The *section 31* of the act provides employees and job seekers the power to demand for an official explanation when they are denied a job. They can request for the educational, work experiences and other related qualifications of the person employed.²⁵ When these laws are strictly followed, it could

²⁵ <https://lovdata.no/dokument/NLE/lov/2017-06-16-51>. Accessed on 1/06/2017.

promote equality at the work place and also enable people to speak up against inequality. This is because, the law would bind the employer to be fair and neutral in the recruitment processes. Employees can only demand for an official explanation when they have knowledge of the law. As an international student from Ghana, my hopes of acquiring any practical experience was quashed due to the language barrier. Thus, I had to take up menial jobs. Maybe the schools could play an active role in assisting international students to find an internship.

The experience of discrimination at school was also observed, especially, among colleagues. The participants expressed how they were isolated by their Norwegian classmates when they formed groups with them. They were mostly looked down upon and, most of the time, did not receive good reception from their mates. Being an African student, I have also had a share of these experiences. I recall a time when I found myself in a group with my white colleagues and they ignored all my contributions to the work. After having such experience, I preferred to be in a group with other Africans. One participant's children were called names like Neger (Nigger) and sheep in school because of their skin colour. I believe there should be procedures by the various schools in promoting equality. This could be held during the introduction or orientation weeks. It could go a long way to change the perception of some people. Again, the school authorities should create a friendly environment where students could report any issue of discrimination among their peers and when the culprit is found guilty he/she should be punished to deter others.

The experiences of racism in the transport sector was also found as many of the participants recounted that, most Norwegians did not sit beside them. This could also mean that some Norwegians preferred to stand. I have had same experiences as well and though it was upsetting initially, I have learnt to adjust. A participant narrated how a Norwegian gave up his seat when she sat beside her. It might not be wrong to interpret this scenario as racially discriminatory as opposed to defining it to mean that the Norwegian preferred to stand since he was already seated. During another time, someone also placed her bags on the vacant seat to prevent her from sitting next to her. In such scenarios, I suggest that the person at the receiving end politely confronts the other person to remove the bag and if this fails, it will be prudent to bring it to the attention of the conductor. As Africans, we should know our rights and also learn to speak up when it is trampled upon.

The study also found that majority of the participants had good experiences with the health care sector with the exception of a few who felt they were not treated fairly by their practitioners because they were Africans. I cannot help but agree with the participants who lamented that the waiting time for an appointment with a specialist was too long. In my case, after I had waited for months to meet a specialist, I still had to seek the needed solution from a private health care centre. Coming from Africa, this was very strange because back home seeing a specialist was very easy provided you have the means to pay the bills. However, compared to the private healthcare sector, the public healthcare sector is usually slow due the huge number of patients they receive on a daily basis, the dearth of practitioners and inadequate logistics. Usually in Norway, the severity of a patient's illness determines the waiting time of an appointment with a specialist. But the participant interpreted their bad experiences at the public health sector to racism.

As mentioned earlier, although I have had a somewhat bad experience with the healthcare sector in Norway, I would not attribute it to discrimination but rather to the inefficiency of the doctor. I came to this conclusion after I received excellent care from the private healthcare practitioner who was even flabbergasted at the treatment I received from the public healthcare practitioner. Though the private facility was relatively expensive, I received the required treatment. There should also be guideline to assist medical practitioner in promoting equal treatment for their patients particularly the minority. At the end of the study, it was discovered that most of the participants who owned homes and those renting believed that buying a house in Norway was much easier if one has the money to pay. They said the process of buying a mortgage was fair and does not allow for discrimination because what really matters in the bidding process is money. Some opined that, because home owners have the prerogative to choose who they let their homes and apartments to, there is a bit of difficulty with finding rental accommodations.

Some also shared other racial experiences of being called Neger (Nigger), the use of offensive gestures and verbal abuse due to their race. Some of their experiences varied whilst others were similar especially within the transportation, education, health and accommodation sectors. Some denied their experience of racism but it was later observed that they had experienced it within the transport, accommodation and the public area when they were asked further questions. Out of the 16 participants, only one had not experienced any racial discrimination based on the criteria used in this thesis. All the participants who had experienced discrimination

admitted that it affected them emotionally and psychologically, made them sad and hurt and also had a negative impact on their self-esteem. Lewis (2012) also “asserted that it is her ‘deep concern with the experiential, social and political effects’ of the everyday injuries of racism that makes it necessary for her to find ways to account for the psychic life of racism” (as cited in Svendsen, 2014, p.12). Despite people’s pretence, racism, in the long run, affects their self-esteem. It can have an impact on every aspect of one’s life, be it employment, education, accommodation, healthcare, etc. Research has shown that most Africans experience subtle and overt forms of racism in Norway (Kunst & Phillibert, 2018). This statement confirms some of the racial experiences explained by some of the participants.

Almost all the participants used strategies like confrontation, avoidance, positive attitude and reporting in dealing with racism. Even those who denied experiencing racism knew the strategy to use when it happens to them. My argument is that, as Africans they have it in their subconscious mind that they might have that encounter one day. I have also discussed human rights laws, convention and institutions in Norway which are combating racism and discrimination. It was therefore necessary to discover the participant’s knowledge of the human rights laws and institutions. Most of the participants did not know of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act and Ombud though they are key in promoting equality in Norway. I also argue that, when the people who are experiencing racial discrimination are not aware of the laws that protect them, it might be difficult for them to know what their rights are, how to demand it and where to seek justice. Knowledge of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act and Ombud is vital. They have laws that protect people’s rights, especially when the rights are denied. There should be more awareness creation of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act in schools, work places, social events, and refugee orientation programs. Organizations like Ombud and other NGOs should have awareness creation campaigns on equality to inform the general public of the problem.

The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act and other laws could also be translated from Norwegian and English into the local language of the minorities to make it easy to understand. The participants recommended awareness creation, integration and positive image/attitude and media as a way of minimising racism in Norway. They also shared their views on how socialization and volunteerism could assist in the reduction. Awareness creation campaigns on racism could shed light on the issues as it is seldom discussed, integration might enhance the relationship between Africans and Norwegians whilst positive image/attitude and media could

build a better image for Africa and Africans. Africans should be great ambassadors of the continent as people would always treat you based on your self- worth or value. People from the Western countries receive better treatment than those from other countries because of how the world see them.

The media could be a very powerful tool in the equality campaign because they influence how their viewers perceive issues. The image of Africa has been portrayed by many Western media as a poor and dark continent. This is only partly true because there are always two sides to every story. Africa might not be very rich in terms of infrastructure but it is rich in resources. The bad stories in Africa gets more Western media coverage than the positive ones. I recommend that the media could start showing positive images of Africa like they do to the other Western countries. This could influence how others see Africa and Africans. Some white people have primitive ideas about Africa. They think Africans live on trees or the whole continent is full of mud houses but their perceptions are changed when they visit. The public discourse on the positive sides of immigration and the role of migrants' background to the Norwegian society and economy should be stressed by the Norwegian authorities (ECRI, 2015). It could change the perception of some anti- immigrant supporters and the prevention of another Breivik attack.

The purpose of this thesis was to explore how Africans and Norwegian-Africans experience and understand racism in Norway. My aim was to add African voices to the racial discourse in Norway which would in effect provide research information and can also be used in formulating policies to combat racism. For further studies, there should be a quantitative study on this topic with a larger sample size from more different African countries. Also, Africans in the other cities in Norway could also be part of the study in order to explore the similarities and differences of their experiences in the other cities. During the interview, some of the participants were scared to be interviewed due to the sensitivity of the topic. A study could be done on why some Africans are scared to share their racial experiences. The thesis begins to address the gap in knowledge and provides information on experiences and understanding of Africans and African-Norwegians. As a researcher, I have gained more knowledge on the racial issues in Norway. I have learnt to be objective and neutral by not allowing my emotions to influence my findings. I have also learnt to be patient.

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Appendix 1

Interview guide: Africans and African-Norwegians experiences of racism.

What is your experience with racism in Norway?

How is your experience with the health care system in Norway?

How was it like accessing education for yourself and children?

How is your experience with the use of public areas like parks, beaches and others?

How is your experience with the public transport in Norway?

How is getting accommodation like in Norway?

How was the experience of finding a job in Norway?

How do you think Africans should handle racial prejudice when they experience it?

What do you know about racial prejudice as a violation of your human rights?

What do you know about international/ national organizations in Norway which fights racism?

What do you know about the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act?

What do you know about racial discrimination as a crime in Norway?

What do you know of OMBUD or NGOs in Norway that can help you deal with racial prejudice?

How do you think your self-initiated activates could reduce racial prejudice?

How do you think socialization and volunteerism could reduce racial prejudice?