

***«No matter where you live, you need to belong»:
Unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees' reflections and
experiences of identity, citizenship and integration***

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*no one leaves home unless
home is the mouth of a shark.
you only run for the border
when you see the whole city running as well.*

(...)

*you have to understand,
no one puts their children in a boat
unless the water is safer than the land.*

— Warsan Shire

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ABSTRACT

Throughout the years, unaccompanied minor refugees have received increasing levels of attention in different contexts of society. In Norway, the phenomenon of immigration and integration are acknowledged as key elements at the top of the political agenda (Brekke & Mohn, 2018). This has particularly been the case in the aftermath of the European refugee crisis in 2015. There exist several opinions on how the youth are to successfully integrate, and this thesis seeks to explore the youth's own perspectives on the matter. More specifically, the main aim is to assess how the unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees' reflections and experiences of identity and citizenship may affect the process of integration. The data material derives from semi-structured interviews with eight unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees. The interviews were conducted in three different cities across Norway. The analyses are divided into three chapters – citizenship, identity and integration – and the findings point to the interaction between internal and external factors in the integrational process.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the first chapter of the thesis, I introduce my research project. Firstly, I will provide a personal explanation of why this specific topic, phenomenon and participants were chosen. Secondly, I shed light on society's extensive focus on unaccompanied minor refugees and integration. Thirdly, I will elaborate on the importance of listening to children and youth's voices and to include them in research when the topic concerns them. Then, I account for the aim and objectives of this study, as well as the research questions I will attempt to answer in the thesis. Lastly, I specify the definitions, as well as present the overall structure of the thesis.

1.1 Background and justification

The year of 2015 was characterized by a refugee crisis of such complexity and extent that the Norwegian government and world community deemed it the largest wave of refugees since the Second World War. Throughout that year, record-breaking numbers of people reached Europe by boats across the Mediterranean, mainly from Asian and African countries (Peisker, 2017). More specifically, over a million people entered Europe by crossing the sea (United Nations Association of Norway, 2016). The largest groups of refugees were Syrians, Afghans and Somalis (Peisker, 2017). In total, 60 million people were forced to relocate on a worldwide basis, both within and across borders (The Norwegian Government, 2015). The European countries responded differently – some by welcoming people in need, others by imposing restrictive legislations. One alarming tendency that occurred was that the public debate became increasingly polarized as well. Negative factors such as criminality, exploitation of the welfare state and stigmatization were given due weight on the one hand, whereas providing help to those in need of refuge was focused upon by the other. As Brekke and Mohn (2018) explain, the media is still constantly influenced by articles on asylum politics, immigrants' participation in the labour markets and societal participation in general. Not to mention, the concepts of immigration and integration are reoccurring and highly contested topics within the public debate, and people hold strong opinions on the matter (Brekke & Mohn, 2018). Based on this interest, one can tell that immigration and integration are two key elements that are at the top of the Norwegian political agenda (Brekke & Mohn, 2018). During and in the aftermath of the European refugee crisis from 2015, Norwegian citizens and the Norwegian government have largely focused upon asylum seekers and asylum seeking procedures, especially concerning minors who flee on their own.

According to Øien (2010), this extensive and increased attention towards this particular group is mainly based upon two elements. Firstly, there exists a common perception in Europe that migration is not suitable for children and youth to perform on their own without the presence of caretakers. This is closely linked to current, commonly-held perceptions of children as in need of protection (e.g. Korsvold, 2012). Historically, however, Eide (2007) contends that child migration by far is not a newly-discovered phenomenon, and that child migration also has occurred in the Norwegian context. Lånkan (2017) exemplifies that Norwegian children migrated for the purpose of work in the 1800s. What distinguishes the different child migrations that have occurred throughout history, is how the process have been looked upon. In this respect, Eide (2007) argues that historical and political changes in the perception of children and childhood have direct consequences for the upbringing of these children.

Secondly, attention is especially given to children fleeing alone due the judicial and moral obligations adults have towards protecting children in need, in accordance with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). Within civil society there exist numerous opinions on how migrants and refugees are to successfully integrate and adapt to the social norms and values of the Norwegian society. Yet, the voices that tend to speak the loudest are not the ones of the unaccompanied minor refugees. Therefore, I want to explore the views of the ‘silent’ youth in order to gain meaningful insight from where it is due. I believe that certain perceptions unaccompanied minor refugees hold – and are told - about their own citizenship and identity will determine the level of willingness to integrate to the Norwegian society, and I am motivated to explore this in greater detail.

1.1 Personal interest

I have been passionately interested in everything concerning immigration and integration for as long as I can remember, and these two phenomena make up the political and societal issues that are the closest to my heart. Ever since I began working with unaccompanied minor refugees in the municipality of Trondheim, I have been fortunate enough to be introduced to new mind sets, new cultures and new outlooks on life. The brave, resourceful and playful individuals I have encountered through my work stand in contrast to the picture that is often presented in media and in the public debate. Getting to know the people who are being subjects of public concern has

motivated me to seek ways to enhance a mutual understanding and to write a thesis that potentially can discover ways of facilitating better integration and a heightened understanding of other perspectives. I am also preoccupied by the often unfair labelling of unaccompanied minors, hence I aim to portray these young people based on their accounts.

My background and the convictions I hold in regard to this field do not come without challenges, and my personal and professional biases have been important to keep in mind throughout this process. In the making of this thesis, I have become increasingly aware that in every human interaction, one must acknowledge that the parties mutually influence each other in one way or the other. In understanding that objectivity is not possible for me to achieve, I have taken into account Warin's (2011) reflections that objectivity becomes an illusion in this field, and that total objectivity should not serve as an aim. Rather, I have tried to be aware of how my predispositions play a role in the making of this thesis, and I have implemented this understanding throughout the text.

1.2 The importance of children and youth's participation and inclusion in research

Young people is one of the groups of people that is most excluded from research, according to Alderson and Morrow (2011). When they first are included, there are various perceptions of the ideal way to carry out research with them, and these perceptions affect both the research process and outcome. How much are children and youth allowed to participate and to voice their opinions? Throughout the years, and in different social, cultural and historical contexts, children have been perceived and valued in different manners. Drawing on Korsvold (2016), Ursin and Lyså (In Press) describe how children's position in Norway have varied according to context, in which they have changed from being perceived as useful to the workforce, to having school as the second most important socialisation arena next to the family. Such distinctions can lead to differences in the ways in which children are perceived and researched.

In terms of researching children, one has usually made a division between the research values derived from the developmental paradigm originating from psychology, and the interdisciplinary research tradition of Childhood Studies. Woodhead and Faulkner (2002) claim that, within the first research tradition, it is the researcher who is reckoned to be in power and the expert on the

young people, how to conduct the study, and what the study should entail. Here, research has typically been conducted *on* children and youth. On the other hand, Childhood Studies have deliberately turned away from the notion that children and youth are ‘human becomings’, and rather recognize them in their full potential, accompanied with the view that it is them who are the experts of their own lives (Qvortrup, 2009). This mind-set has resulted in research conducted *with* children and youth, as they are seen as worthy to be included and to be engaged in matters regarding themselves. However, viewing developmental psychology and Childhood Studies as two research traditions on opposite poles have been diminishing in later years (Tisdall & Punch, 2012; Hammersley, 2017). Prout (2011, p. 8) himself, one of the Childhood Studies pioneers, states: “Instead of starting with an already inscribed set of dichotomies, we should see childhood as a complex phenomenon not readily reducible to one end or the other of a polar separation”. In this manner, Prout (2011) wishes to increase and intensify the interdisciplinary of Childhood Studies to place emphasis on both similarities and difference to the questions regarding children and childhood. This recognition is based on his outlook on childhood as a complex phenomenon (Prout, 2011).

Regardless of stance, the turn to emphasise children’s voices has been of importance for their literature and for children’s place in society. This is in line with the principles of the UNCRC, in which realization of every child’s participation was explicitly put on the agenda (UNCRC, 1989; Abebe, 2009). This is illustrated in Article 12 (1), where children have the right to express their own views in matters concerning them (UNCRC, 1989). Of particular importance, the focus has been to include all children and youth, and not only the ones that seem to be the ‘ideal’ participants in terms of articulation and confidence (Ursin, 2018). I believe that including unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees is especially important in terms of providing them with a platform where their opinions on matters that regard them are valued. They are a new group to this country, and as they become targets of integration, it should be as relevant to also present the integration process from *their perspectives*.

1.3 The aims and objectives of the study

The aim of this current study is to explore integration from the perspectives of the unaccompanied minor refugees themselves, and to especially consider how experiences of

citizenship and identity may influence this process. Instead of focusing on traumatic incidents from the past, or the mental health of this group which already has been excessively theorized, I wanted to provide a societal perspective that focuses on here-and-now reflections, thoughts and processes. Based on these aims, the objectives of the study are the following:

1. To explore what successful integration entails for the unaccompanied minor refugees
2. To explore how experiences of citizenship may impact the process of integration
3. To explore how experiences of identity may impact the process of integration

1.5 Research questions

Main research question:

How can experiences of citizenship and identity influence integration of unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees in Norway?

Detailed research questions:

- How do the unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees understand and practice their citizenship ('medborgerskap')?
- How do the unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees understand and experience their identities?
- Which factors influence the process of integration?

1.6 Definitions

Unaccompanied minor asylum seeker

An unaccompanied minor asylum seeker is a person below the age of 18 who comes to a foreign country without guardians and applies for asylum status and protection as a refugee. The person is only regarded as an asylum seeker until their application has been decided by the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) (The Integration and Diversity Directorate (IMDi), 2015).

Unaccompanied minor refugee

An unaccompanied minor refugee is defined as a person below the age of 18 who comes to a foreign country without guardians, and has the right to protection according to international

conventions to which Norway is bound. In daily speech, ‘refugees’ are used if the individual has been granted a residence permit after having applied for asylum (IMDi, 2015).

1.7 The structure of the thesis

Chapter 1 introduces the research project, by presenting research questions and aims of the study. In addition, it accounts for relevant and personal interests connected to the phenomena explored. In Chapter 2, I focus on the contexts in which the participants have found themselves in, both in Afghanistan, and as part of a larger statistics in the receiving country of Norway. I also examine the implementations, responsibilities and implications of the unaccompanied minor refugees’ universal rights in line with the UNCRC. Then I present how the notion of an ideal citizen has derived from values from the Norwegian welfare state. Lastly, I connect statistics, political aims and public opinions on the topic of integration. Chapter 3 presents the theories and theoretical concepts that are fundamental to the project itself and its analyses. In Chapter 4, the methodology of the project is accounted for, and I provide reflections from the field work. Ethical aspects are of special importance and have been given due weight as a result of the participants being unaccompanied and under-age. Furthermore, I present the three analysis chapters. In Chapter 5, I analyse how culture plays a vital part in shaping the participants’ identities, and I also evaluate how they define and relate to Norwegianness, and how they socialise into Norwegian culture. In Chapter 6, I present how the participants reflect upon and practice their citizenship in the Norwegian society. In the last analysis section, in Chapter 7, I assess how the participants define successful and unsuccessful integration, and further place emphasis on the importance of language, social networks, school and work in the integrational context. I conclude this thesis by offering a summary of the findings and concluding remarks in Chapter 8.

CHAPTER 2: CONTEXTUAL BACKGROUND

In this chapter, I will provide background information regarding the participants both in terms of past and present experiences. The chapter's structure will follow the footsteps the participants have taken during their migratory route towards Norway. As Afghanistan is the starting point, I will first give a brief insight into the country concerning its people and its society. This will hopefully contribute to an increased understanding of a somewhat shared background of the eight participants. The security situation of the country will also be touched upon, before I account for the situations many children and youth face during their flight route. There are several reasons for why children and youth escape the well-known to the unknown in foreign countries, and these will be presented. Then, I turn to Norway, to portray the current refugee situation and how the state has handled severe asylum seeking numbers. I will shed light on the rights and responsibilities the unaccompanied minor refugees hold while in Norway, and the implications of these rights. In the last part of this chapter I present how values of the Norwegian welfare model can be applied to notions of an ideal citizen. Lastly, integration is put on the agenda in terms of the government's severe focus on this matter, and how the process is perceived by the majority population.

2.1 Afghanistan – its people and society

The estimated 34 million citizens of Afghanistan are divided into 20 ethnic groups, where the largest groups are Pashtuns (42%), Tajiks (27%), Hazaras (9%), Uzbeks (9%), Aimaqs (4%), Turkmen (3%), Balucher (2%) and others (4%) (Landinfo, 2019). In Norway, Pashtuns and Hazaras encompass the majority of the Afghans seeking asylum. Traditionally and historically, Pashtuns have been the dominating ethnic group in Afghanistan, whereas the Hazaras have been a socio-economic suppressed and marginalized ethnicity (Landinfo, 2018). The Islamic Republic of Afghanistan is an Islamic nation with a 100% of its citizens being Muslim; 85% of the population are Sunni Muslims and the remaining 15% are Shia Muslims. According to Landinfo (2019), Islam significantly guides the life of every Afghan individual, and their religion is a fundamental aspect of the family structure and everyday life. Not to mention, the Pashtuns have another essential guiding element as well, the Pashtunwali. This represents a traditional way of living for the Pashtuns, in which following unwritten codes of honour is of great importance (Landinfo, 2019). Key values in the Pashtunwali include hospitality, courage and loyalty

(Landinfo, 2019). The Pasthunwali code of honour is passed from father to son, and the Pasthuns take great pride in having their own moral codex.

Afghanistan is built up by 34 provinces, in which the Norwegian government currently has deemed only two, Helmand and Nangarhar, as unacceptable to return asylum seekers to (UDI, 2018). However, it should be noted that the on-going situations in several other provinces are extremely challenging as well. UDI has received extensive criticisms for their assessments by prominent figures such as Kai Eide, UN's former special envoy to Afghanistan (Skjetne & Vikøyr, 2018). In fact, the situation in Afghanistan has been challenging for several decades, and the United Nations acknowledges Afghanistan as one of the less developed countries in the world (UN, 2015). The troubles have significant basis in the country's long history of war. In newer times, the resignation of the Soviet Union in 1989 was followed by a seven years long civil war, while the Islamic Taliban regime started to proclaim control over the country in 1994 (UN, 2015). The totalitarian regime introduced sharia law as the law of the government, in which all forms of opposition were prosecuted and women were denied their rights to work and study. After the United States of America declared war on terror, following the terror attack of 9/11, the country invaded Afghanistan in 2001 (Landinfo, 2019). Afghanistan has been experiencing war between Taliban and a coalition of international forces since then (UN, 2015).

2.2 Children and youth escaping war

Living in circumstances characterized by war and hardship, as is the case in Afghanistan, forces many people to relocate both internally and externally. In the past, the refugee children were mainly accompanied by their families; now, Eide and Hjern (2013) point to an increasing development of children and youth fleeing on their own. Save the Children (2017) notes that the refugee crisis led to an estimated 60 million people fleeing their homes – among half of which were children. As various serious risks to children's physical and psychological well-being have been identified, academics, practitioners and policymakers recognize that the children who are unaccompanied are among the most vulnerable groups of those affected by war (Mann, 2004). Separation from one's family is at times inevitable: Several of the separated individuals have not chosen to be estranged from their parents – rather, because of war, they have no other choice than to escape (Mann, 2004).

In her report for the social science research foundation Fafo, conducted on the behalf of the Ministry of Justice and Police, Øien (2010) assesses the circumstances that play a role in the decision to migrate. Gender, age and the socio-cultural circumstances in the country of origin determine which individuals will leave the country to search for better opportunities (Øien, 2010). In addition, who will have the best prospects to overcome the migratory route and to establish a positive future is also a question of consideration. Øien (2010) argues that the differing expectations of boys and girls in the Afghan context show itself in the fact that the majority of unaccompanied minors who come to Norway are boys. Moreover, it was found that it was mainly the parents, grandparents, older siblings or uncles that made the initial decision about the individual leaving the country, and that there were differences in gender, nationality and ethnicity to which extent the youth themselves were involved in the process (Øien, 2010). What was interesting, however, and important to keep in mind throughout this thesis, was that the Afghan male youth were involved in the process to a great extent (Øien, 2010). Whether the children are sent away or if they actively choose to leave is therefore a complex interplay.

To describe migratory processes, Eide (2005) contends that push-and-pull models are relevant to apply. Herein, one evaluates which factors push the youth away from their homelands and pull them towards the receiving country. Several concrete reasons for why unaccompanied minor refugees take on life-risking travels have been identified.. In sum, these reasons are regarded as an intertwined combination of external factors such as war, poverty, lack of opportunities, and an internal factor, the wish to acquire a better life in terms of economy, education or safety (Øien, 2010; Ansell & Van Blerk, 2004). More specifically, Øien's (2010, p. 40-42) identified reasons to abandon the homeland are: 1) *War and armed conflict*: The family's desire to protect their children from military or militia recruitment, violence or participation in war-related conflicts are important motivation factors to send their children away. However, as previously noted, it must be emphasised that UNICEF has recognized an important tendency where the Afghan boys also have a crucial say in the matter: "the family and child make the decision. It would be rare for a child to be forced to go" (Boland, 2010, p. 20). 2) *Family situation, threats or perceived danger connected to one's social network*: The death of one or both parents, economical situations or political problems that drastically changed the family dynamics are reasons to leave the homeland behind. For instance, in Afghanistan, violent retaliation is common – the children of a family can

easily be targets of revenge. 3) *Lack of opportunities for education or work in country of origin:* For unaccompanied minors in general, the journey and settlement in another country are often linked to the ambitions of acquiring either higher education or a practical education that can give them better opportunities in the job market, and hence, support their family economically. 4) *Migration to a neighbouring country that did not turn out as expected:* Many Afghans first travel to Iran or Pakistan to seek better living conditions there. If this relocation does not meet the expectations, they often continue to search for better prospects elsewhere.

When escaping war, the paths to safety are everything but safe. The fleeing youth are at risk of exploitation and dangers (UNICEF, 2017). It is important to acknowledge that child and youth migration affects boys and girls in different ways (Øien, 2010). Boys' vulnerability is often linked to other forms of violence and to the type of work they often end up performing, while girls are considered by many to be at greater risk of being subjected to sexual abuse and human trafficking (Øien, 2010). Recent accounts from UNICEF (2017) highlight that 77 per cent of refugee children and youth travelling along the Central Mediterranean route report direct experiences of abuse, exploitation and practices, which altogether may resemble human trafficking.

Due to current flows of globalisation, most local communities in the world are affected by influences from the wider society (Kjørholt, 2013), and because of these kinds of information flows, people are aware of how to mobilize and where to go in times of need (Peisker, 2017). Many choose to migrate in despite that the routes—human-smugglers-enabled sea passage or tracking through a desert—can prove fatal (Peisker, 2017). It is of importance to note that different youth have a variety of different experiences after managing to escape war. Many are granted asylum and provided safety in foreign countries, given every opportunity to establish a better life for themselves, while others keep experiencing significant hardship even after fleeing armed conflicts and war zones.

2.3 The refugee situation in Norway

During the European refugee crisis in 2015, 5,500 unaccompanied minor refugees sought protection in Norway. Two thirds of the unaccompanied minor refugees seeking asylum in Norway were Afghans, and, among these, 92% were boys (Garvik, Paulsen & Berg, 2016). Lyså and Ursin (In Press) note that there are many reasons for why Norway became an attractive

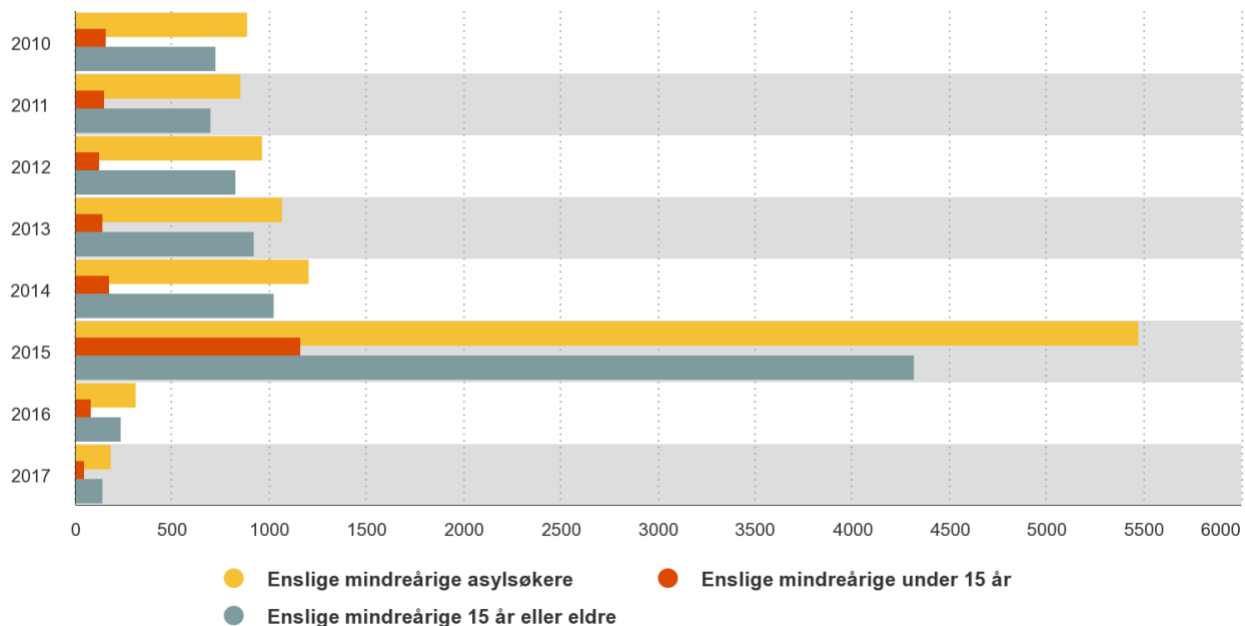
migrant destination. Among others, Norway is known to be a safe, democratic country with high living standards due to the welfare system (Lyså & Ursin, In Press). On the government's behalf, however, several dilemmas arose. How to maintain the country's international obligations towards a shared European refugee crisis, while at the same time trying to maintain the strict immigration regulations turned out to be a significant dilemma on the political, societal and human-rights level. Even though there appeared to be a shared perception among both politicians and civilians that a certain degree of responsibility had to be claimed, and protection of individuals ought to be ensured, the massive influx of immigration still created societal division. After having experienced significant high numbers of asylum seekers, the Norwegian government made it a priority to tighten up the asylum policies and reintroduce the significantly restrictive legislations. Also worth noting in regard this, is that the so-called "October Children", that is the youth who applied for asylum in October 2015, have mainly only been given temporary protection until the day they turn 18 (Save the Children, 2017).

The following years were characterized by ground-breaking *low* numbers of cases and individuals seeking refuge. In 2017, there were only 191 individuals seeking asylum as unaccompanied minors – the number of applicants for this group had not been as low since 1996 (Bufdir, 2018). Einarsson (2016) suggests that this might be because the government of Norway put it highly on their political agenda to globally announce that massive numbers of refugees would not acquire protection within the borders of the nation. This deliberated way of attempting to decrease the amount of refugees seeking asylum, in addition to the restrictive regulations, have received great criticisms from neighbouring countries that have done quite the opposite. A recent news coverage received widespread attention, as Ericson (2019) in the Swedish newspaper 'Aftonbladet' claimed that Norway, despite being one of the world's richest countries, is one of the countries that take in the least number of refugees in entire Europe. The Norwegian government was further criticized for its priorities. The current political climate regarding the unaccompanied minor refugees is still influenced by an emotionally connoted, polarized debate. Although, the claim was quickly refuted, as numbers based upon population shows that Norway actually is ranked top seven country in terms of granting refuge for individuals seeking residence (Akerbæk & Karlsen, 2019). In comparison to previous years, only 159 unaccompanied minor refugees sought asylum in 2018 (UDI, 2018). The table presented below illustrates the

development in the number of unaccompanied minors seeking asylum in Norway during 2010-2017. The colour yellow represents unaccompanied minor asylum seekers in general, while the colours red and blue separates the individuals in terms of age. Red, then, represents the individuals below the age of 15, while blue represents the individuals above the age of 15. The table clearly demonstrates the fluctuations that occur on the field, and although numbers were stable from 2010-2014, the refugee crisis of 2015 lead to an expansion of asylum seeking cases. This had also consequences for the following years up to 2017, in which decrease occurred.

Table 1

Antall asylsøkere i løpet av året som oppga at de var enslige mindreårige asylsøkere, etter aldersgruppe. 2010-2017



Kilde: UDI - statistikk om innvandring

(Source: UDI, Statistics on immigration)

2.4 Children's rights in the Norwegian context

2.4.1 An introduction to the UNCRC

In the aftermath of the Second World War, the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights was established in 1948 (Burr & Montgomery, 2003). Ensuring the rights of every human beings across biological, cultural and geographical differences were crucial. 41 years had to pass before

children received a similar recognition, although the process began ten years prior (Burr & Montgomery, 2003). The establishment of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 (UNCRC), then, marks the heightened and judicial acknowledgement that all children have universal rights, but also that their particular vulnerability is recognized (Sandberg, 2015). Sandberg (2015) further argues that this recognition of vulnerability must not be confused with the way children throughout history have been thought of as passive. Rather, the UNCRC promotes children's right to have a say on aspects concerning them, thus positions them as subjects of rights (Sandberg, 2015). Its 54 legally binding articles seek to ensure the implementation of children's rights in the Nation Parties that have ratified the UNCRC – more specifically, this entails every country in the world except the United States (Burr & Montgomery, 2003). UNCRC is based upon the three P's – provision, participation and protection. There are also four articles that are granted special emphasis, and are seen as fundamental in order to realize the remaining rights: Article 2 (non-discrimination), article 3 (best interest of the child), article 6 (right to life survival and development) and article 12 (the right to be heard) (UNCRC, 1989).

In addition to all general rights that apply to all children, some groups are granted other specific rights as well. Article 22 (1) is of special relevance for the children and youth who are ascribed refugee status, as it concerns the right a child has to seek asylum. Hereby, Article 22 is set out to ensure that the children seeking refuge are met with the proper protection, care and humanitarian assistance that they are entitled to. Furthermore, Article 22 (2) formulates the right an unaccompanied minor refugee has to seek family reunion. Lastly, it must be mentioned that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) plays a significant part in interaction with the UNCRC. UNHCR was established in 1951, and has since been ratified by 145 State Parties (UNHCR, 2018). This organization provides an overview of the rights of the displaced, in addition to the legal obligations of States to protect them (UNHCR, 2018). Nevertheless, questions and political debates have occurred in regard to which of the Conventions to place the most emphasis on when assessing unaccompanied minor refugees: UNHCR, or the UNCRC. It is also important to include that the UNCRC has faced criticism for its content, as it is claimed the focus mainly concerns Global North countries (Tisdall & Punch, 2012). In this sense, it is claimed that it is lacking an awareness of cultural and local constructions of childhood (Liebel &

Saadi, 2012). For instance, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child (1990) was established as a result of the discrepancies between the UNCRC and certain African constructions of children and their responsibility (Tisdall & Punch, 2012). In regard to this, Abebe and Bessell (2011, p. 767) argue: “At the level of legislation and policy childhood became increasingly homogenised, while the experience of individual children continued to be shaped by diversity and difference”. This will further be assessed in the Norwegian context concerning unaccompanied minor refugees.

2.4.2 The implementation of rights in Norway

Norway ratified the UNCRC in 1991 and further incorporated it into Norwegian legislation in 2003. The incorporation was formulated in the Norwegian Human Rights Law § 3, in which the UNCRC was granted due weight and proclaimed to supersede that of other legislations, as for instance that of UNHCR (Søvig, 2009). It is certain that protection, a fundamental value of the UNCRC, is of special importance for unaccompanied minor refugees. Participation rights are also of great relevance for these youth, as these may contribute to manifest their citizenry. Articles 12, 13, 15 and 17 seek to ensure children’s participation, in which freedom of speech and freedom of thought are especially important. However, this recognition of children as participants varies across cultures. Importantly, Kjørholt (2004, p. 14) argues that “children’s social participation in society is thereby closely intertwined with social constructions of childhood”. Norway has usually been internationally considered as a forerunner in terms of implementing and upholding the universal rights of children (Aarak, 2017). Korsvold (2012) argues that protecting children’s rights is an important cultural value for the country. Recently, Norway was ranked second worldwide in the World Justice Project's Rule of Law Index, where eight factors were evaluated, such as fundamental rights and civil justice (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018). Of relevant comparison, Afghanistan was ranked at the bottom three (Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2018). Norway was the first country in the world to establish its own Ombudsman for Children, the first to present a Child Minister, and was also among the first to sign the UNCRC (Aarak, 2017). The country has put children’s rights specifically on the political agenda, and made the focus on children highly prioritized. Though, as the program director in SOS-Children’s Villages argues, Norway’s position as a forerunner for children’s rights has now been severely decreased (Aarak, 2017). Among other reasons, the most recent cause is that

Norway did not sign the third additional protocol of the UNCRC. The consequences are severe, as the ratification of the last protocol establishes children's individual right to voice violations of children's rights in front of the UNCRC (Aarak, 2017).

To follow up nation states' responsibilities of implementing children's rights in daily-life, in policy and decision-making, the Committee on the Rights of the Child conducts periodic reports on the matter. In their newest report reviewing Norway's implementations and violations of children's rights, dated 4 July 2018, The Committee on the Rights of the Child expresses concerns towards several practices regarding unaccompanied minor refugees. A few of these concerns are illustrated in the excerpt below:

The Committee welcomes the State party's integration efforts with regard to refugee children and their families, such as those relating to access to education. The Committee is concerned, however, about:

(a) The increase in the use of temporary residence permits for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and the absence of any system to automatically reassess cases involving unaccompanied children with temporary residence permits, leading such children to fear that their applications for permanent residency will be denied, which is a significant reason for the relatively large number of children disappearing from reception centres;

(g) The insufficient care provided to unaccompanied children in some municipalities, and children 15 years of age and older not receiving the same quality of care as those under 15 years of age

(The Committee on the Rights of the Child, Concluding Observations, 2018).

Point (a) must also be commented upon, as 443 of the 913 individuals granted temporary residence permits from 2009-2017 have disappeared from reception centres (Save the Children, 2017). From January to September 2017, temporary residence permits were granted to 45% of the asylum seekers, which was a significant increase from previous years (Save the Children, 2017). These permits were given in accordance with § 8-8 in the Norwegian Immigration Regulations (UDI, 2018). Despite the positive efforts of the Norwegian government in many arenas concerning the well-being of children and youth, critical violations of their rights in accordance with the UNCRC still occur. Søvig (2009) states that many of the legal twists surrounding Article 3, concerning that the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration, are those related to immigration cases. This is closely connected to the way in

which the right is formulated. Emphasising that the best interest ‘only’ is “*a primary consideration*” instead of “*the primary consideration*”, opens up for interpretations in which immigration policies may supersede that of children’s rights (Lundeberg, 2011). This formulation, which opens up for questionable assessments, have severe implications for the well-being and outcomes in the lives of these children, and has been object of great criticism directed at the UNCRC (Lundeberg, 2011). Even though Norway, as mentioned, previously has been recognized as a forerunner in terms of implementing the universal rights of children, the country fails to be a forerunner of implementing the rights and entitlements of the specific group of unaccompanied minor youth residing in the country (Save the Children, 2017).

Furthermore, the Committee on the Rights of the Child criticizes the insufficient care provided to unaccompanied children in some municipalities. Despite the clear stance in regard to the universal rights of all children, the articles of the UNCRC are still being object to different interpretations by governmental officials (Lundeberg, 2011). Even though unaccompanied minor refugees are to be taken care of, and treated and assessed equally, as ethnic Norwegian children (Garvik, Paulsen & Berg, 2016), the information above proves otherwise. Skagen (2011) argues that the unaccompanied minor refugees’ differences in age, development, health and personal background determine that there ought to exist different care placements to fulfil the individual’s rights and personal requests. One must keep in mind that these individuals are not uniform: They all have different needs, and are entitled to be individually assessed (Garvik, Paulsen & Berg, 2016). Hopkins and Hill (2010) note that the younger children receiving the most care support were also the ones who adjusted the best. This supports the notion that the best interest of each individual ought to be constantly implemented in decision-making processes. The rights in relation to the right placement of the child is formulated in, for instance, Article 27 (1) in the UNCRC, which ensures that every child has the right to a standard of living that will enable the individual’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development (UNCRC, 1989). In an evaluation of the municipality of Trondheim in terms of their work with unaccompanied minor refugees, it was widely acknowledged that the care placements were of great impact for youth’s societal well-being, in which schooling, understanding of the system and integration to the society were highlighted as vital factors (Svendsen & Berg, 2017).

2.4.3 The implementation of responsibilities in Norway

When applying for permanent residence status or citizenship in Norway, the unaccompanied minor refugees have a formal responsibility to meet certain requirements set forth by the government. Regarding applications for permanent residence permits, one must have resided in Norway coherently for the past three years, have a residence permit that enables grounds for permanent residency and not be a convicted criminal (UDI, 2018). Last, but not least, UNCRC places due weight on education, and in accordance with Article 28, all children in the world have the right to an education. In the Norwegian context, the Education Act § 2-1 manifests both the right and the statutory responsibility for all children and youth residing in Norway to undertake primary education. As Ursin and Lyså (In Press) note, this is in accordance with UNCRC, and work that interferes with this educational right and responsibility is forbidden. Further, and more specifically, the unaccompanied minor refugees have to meet specific demands in terms of education and training: Individuals above the age of 16 must have completed 550 hours training in Norwegian and 50 hours training in social sciences, and have passed final tests (UDI, 2018). If the unaccompanied minor refugee, then applies for a Norwegian citizenship after five years, the individual does not need to undergo further training or education, but must pass certain mandatory tests. These tests include an oral test in Norwegian, on minimum level A2, and either the social science test in Norwegian or the citizenship test (UDI, 2018).

2.4.4 Implications of age from a rights-based perspective

Age is of great significance in relation to an individual's rights and responsibilities (Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2018). This is particularly relevant in terms of the dividing line between what constitutes a child or an adult. A child is, according to the definition of the UNCRC, every human being below the age of 18 (UNCRC, 1989, p. 1). If a refugee is judicially acknowledged as a child, the individual is entitled to 54 rights in accordance with the UNCRC. As previously elaborated, these rights are established to ensure special protection and safety of children. Once turned 18, there are another sets of rights that apply to the individual. Sørsveen (2018) argues that such a clear-cut definition of what it implies to be a child have great consequences for those who are not able to prove their age and identity. The matter of age is one of particular relevance for unaccompanied minor refugees. In Afghanistan, assessing children's

age chronologically is uncommon, as one rather connects age to historical events (Sørsveen, 2018). Having birth certificates or passports is not mandatory or required.

As a result of not being able to provide identification papers, many have to undergo age-determination tests, for instance x-rays and dental assessments (Snilsberg, 2006). In their 2010 periodic report assessing Norwegian practices, the UNCRC expressed their concern about this usage. One can argue that these ‘generally unreliable’ methods contribute to the fact that a number of unaccompanied minor refugees are deprived of their childhoods, and the legal rights that inherently follow the status of being a child. As Clark-Kazak (2009) argues, the chronological age definitions overlook the social constructions of childhood. Sørsveen (2018) also adds an important perspective. The Norwegian government’s distrust of their age/identity can have consequences for their future position as citizens in the Norwegian society (Sørsveen, 2018). The initial distrust they experience can lay important groundwork for their perceptions of the Norwegian society, and how they feel perceived by other established community members.

2.5 The Norwegian welfare state

Understanding how the welfare state and its principles have impacted Norwegian society and its citizens are crucial. As the welfare system is closely connected to perceptions of successful and unsuccessful integration, one can recognize what constitutes an ideal citizen by understanding the dynamics, structures and values of the Norwegian welfare state. The traditional welfare model has been characterized by an extensive regulative state, economic support to weaker groups of society, and equal treatment to all citizens (Rugkåsa, 2010). Historically and throughout the years, the conditions for immigrants have changed. Today, they are entitled to most rights and social services equal to the majority population, as opposed to previous times when a lack of rights was prevalent (Brochmann, 2005). To visualise immigrants as users and citizens of the welfare state is both an important element and challenge for the Norwegian society (Brochmann, 2005). This is closely connected to a frequently asked question on societal level, on whether the influx of immigration leads to structural change of the Norwegian welfare system (Brochmann, 2005). In order for the system not to collapse, and to remain sustainable, it has been crucial to facilitate that new residents integrate both to the work life, but also, to society in general. This is closely linked to Norwegian notions of a typical Norwegian citizen (‘medborger’) – one that

contributes to the unity of society. Based on reflections by Hernes and Hippe (2007), Rugkåsa (2010) contends that the ideology of the Norwegian welfare corresponds to ‘collective individualism’. This is based on the notion that “it is widely perceived that collective action provides individual meaning, and serves as an expression for a typical Norwegian way of thinking” (Rugkåsa, 2010, p. 71, author’s translation). This collective identity is significant, and Brochmann (2005, p. 29, author’s translation) argues: “The extensive multicultural immigration in the later years, and the attempt to integrate new citizens in the receiving countries, have led to a citizenship-concept that also include aspects of identity and questions of belonging”. Brochmann (2005) further argues that the welfare system significantly shapes the ways in which immigrant and integration politics are developed. In turn this has an impact on the lives of the immigrants in Norway.

2.5 Integration on the agenda

Closely associated to values of the Norwegian welfare state, one finds the phenomenon of integration. Integration has increasingly received great emphasis on the political and societal level. The Integration and Diversity Directorate (IMDi) was established in 2006, as means to direct the focus, to a greater extent, on aspects of integration (Skagen, 2011). Since then, refugees have been settled in accordance with an agreement between the state, represented by IMDi, and municipal authorities. However, it is the municipalities which decide whether they want to settle refugees, and if so, it is up to them to decide upon the number of settlers (Djuve & Kavli, 2007). A municipality’s assessment of the unaccompanied minor refugees and their specific needs of care and support has been given much significance (Garvik, Paulsen & Berg, 2016). This is based upon the fact that these evaluations, and the choices made, have great implications for the youth’s prospects, potentials and possibilities of positive development and integration to the society.

Integration is a phenomenon largely put on the agenda in the context of Norwegian politics and public debate, and as previously touched upon, it is a matter of which everyone seems to have an opinion. The concept implies diversity and heterogeneity, and there are several interpretations of the matter (Bjerkan, 2009). However, this thesis will apply the term as defined by Garvik, Paulsen and Berg (2016), in which integration is to establish relations with local and large communities, to create social networks that maintain contact with one’s own ethnic group and to

bridge networks with ethnic Norwegians. On the basis of this, what does successful integration entail in practice, and what responsibility does the individual migrant have to fulfil society's expectations? Not to mention, what kind of responsibility does the *society* as a whole have in order to contribute to the process?

The Norwegian government frequently launches goals and projects to improve integration on both micro and macro levels. One of their reoccurring aims is for everyone residing in Norway to be able to fulfil their potential and to contribute to the society (The Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2015). The most recent goal of the Norwegian government is to increase efforts to promote integration, through the implementation of the 2019-2022 integration strategy labelled 'Integration through Knowledge'. Here, key elements are to improve immigrants' participation in working life and the society in general, and for them to be a part of, and feel a sense of belonging, to small and large communities within the society. A translated version of these aims is more concretely elaborated below:

A key feature of the strategy is therefore a strong and clear commitment to education, qualification and competence. (...) The strategy also involves an intensified effort against segregation and exclusion. (...) It is particularly important that children and young people with immigrant backgrounds can participate in activities and in social arenas at the same rate with other children

(The Norwegian Ministry of Knowledge, 2018, p. 4, author's translation).

The government's goals and aims in relation to integration are not always easy to fulfil, and it is of relevance to know how the Norwegian people actually experience the phenomenon in everyday life. Recently Brekke and Mohn (2018) published the report 'The Integration Barometer', which sought out to measure Norwegian citizens' attitudes towards immigration and integration in Norway, based upon responses and reflections from 3000 respondents. The report has been conducted seven times before, and this time around, it was carried out by researchers at the Department of Social Research commissioned by IMDi (Brekke & Mohn, 2018). The most important findings will hereby be elaborated, as this is a significant determinant that portrays how integration is perceived by members of society (Brekke & Mohn, 2018, p. 8-10). Based on previous measures and reports, there are now more Norwegians than ever that agree that the country should welcome more refugees in need of protection. However, when asked about

integration and whether the current integration is successful, the respondents are not as positive. Only two out of ten express that the integration is going well. Nearly five out of ten believe that the current integration of immigrants is unsuccessful. Though, the population seems to agree upon which factors contribute to a more fruitful and efficient integration. Language proficiency is deemed as the most significant factor, whereas work participation, values, having children in day care and having Norwegian friends are important determinants as well. The population perceive that the responsibility to achieve a successful integration belongs mainly to the immigrants themselves and to the Norwegian government. They also recognize that stigmatization towards immigrants and the lack of efforts from Norwegian citizens are important obstacles in realizing a successful integration.

Concluding, six out of ten regard themselves as integration optimists, who strongly believe that the relations between immigrants and ethnic Norwegians will improve. Based on assessments and research conducted by Statistics Norway, it seems as the Norwegian people have valid reason to be optimistic. Statistics Norway acquired important findings in terms of active societal participation for the participants of this thesis, unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees. It was found that a number of 90 per cent of the individuals between 18-29 years, acclaimed status as unaccompanied minors when granted asylum, had either acquired jobs or were enrolled in education after four years in the country (Dalgard, 2016). The Afghans stand out in comparison to other unaccompanied minor refugees from other nationalities, settled in the same year of 2009 (Dalgård, 2016).

It is vital to emphasise that these views are presented for the purpose of illustrating Norwegian citizens' attitudes towards immigration and integration in Norway. Still, the main aim of this thesis is to explore what the unaccompanied minor refugees' experiences and perceptions are, as it is of great significance to shed light on what the individuals that are to integrate feel and believe about the matter. This will serve as the main theme in the concluding analyses.

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I present theoretical concepts that lay the foundation for the subsequent analysis of the data material in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. The theoretical framework is, amongst others, based on concepts and perspectives derived from Childhood Studies, as well as literature on migration studies. Indeed, one must keep in mind that notions of what it means to be a child differ throughout the world, and has implications in terms of how they are treated and the possibilities they are given. Thus, I will firstly present theoretical concepts from Childhood Studies before I move on to the main elements of this thesis – citizenship, identity and integration. The subchapter of citizenship will focus on the complexity of the concept, and how the complexity further increases when adding children to the equation. The main purpose in the subchapter of identity is to provide an understanding of the ‘self’ and how it is shaped and exercised based on varying factors, such as transnational belonging. Furthermore I turn to socialisation, and lastly, the last subchapter of the theoretical framework places emphasis on core domains of integration.

3.1 Childhood Studies

Children and childhoods have increasingly been put on the agenda from the 1980s and 1990s (Tisdall & Punch, 2012), and the twentieth century was deemed the ‘century of the child’ (Prout & James, 2015). During this period of time, the multidisciplinary research field of the Sociology of Children and Childhood (more often called Childhood Studies today), emerged as a critical response to the ways children have been conceptualized and treated in the mainstream research tradition. Tisdall and Punch (2012) argue that Childhood Studies deemed itself a ‘counter-paradigm’, and in more recent times, an academic debate on whether Childhood Studies can be recognized as a paradigm has emerged. Ryan (2008) is one of the academics challenging these notions, and contends that similar outlooks on children have been emphasised prior to the emergence of Childhood Studies. However, pioneers of Childhood Studies perceived their research tradition to be an epistemological break (Ryan, 2008), and strongly opposed the domination notions which emphasised children being vulnerable and passive objects. These acknowledgements ‘belonged’ to the domains of developmental psychology and mainstream sociology. Within the developmental psychology paradigm during the early twentieth century, children were valued in terms of their future orientation as adults (Woodhead & Faulkner, 2002). It was the researcher who was the expert on children - giving due weight to the child itself was a

radical thought that was yet to be placed in motion. Mainstream sociology also conducted studies on children, but similarly, focused on their passive roles as objects who automatically and uncritically were socialised into the world of adults (Prout & James, 2015). Put in other words, children were recognized and research in accordance with a perception of them as ‘human becomings’ instead of ‘human beings’ (Qvortrup, 1994). As I mentioned in Chapter 1, the perception of major differentiation between the research traditions have decreased in later years (Prout, 2011).

Childhood Studies has put its emphasis on children as social actors in their environments. Scholars within Childhood Studies further highlight the value of viewing childhood as various social, structural constructs, as opposed to regarding it as a singular given concept (Prout & James, 2015). Following Childhood Studies and their research *with* children rather than on children, children are now regarded as human beings, thinkers and doers. With an acknowledgement of children’s competence, in addition to the recognition of their rights granted by the UNCRC in 1989, children have in present day been given significant and much needed acknowledgement in the academic, societal and judicial context.

3.1.1 Childhood as a permanent structural form

Childhood is by many understood periodically, as it is a stage in life that every individual passes through. Nonetheless, following Qvortrup (2009), one cannot simply understand childhood in periodical terms, as it as a permanent structural form in society and thus has no beginning and no end. Childhood is, according to Qvortrup (2009, p. 26), “both constantly changing and a permanent structural form in which all children spend their childhood periods”. Ansell and Van Blerk (2004) stress the importance to be aware of the various social structures that influence the lives of children. If childhood is a permanent structural form, it cannot be evaluated independently, but ought to be seen in relation to, and interacting with, other social structures such as social class, ethnicity and gender (Qvortrup, 2009). Alanen (2009) has taken the step further, and focuses on the interactive relation between childhood and adulthood, children and adults, and presents this relationship as a generational order. Alanen (2009) explains the significance of assessing childhood as part of a generational order:

(...) it proposes one further socially determining structuration for social scientists to consider in addition to the more recognized social class, gender, 'race', ethnicity, dis/ability and sexuality/sexual orientation (p. 162).

That is, when evaluating children, their place in society, how they navigate in the social world and form their identities, one should assess generational relations in the same respect as one evaluates other social categories. Corsaro (2009) illustrates this by pointing to the fact that young people participate in two cultures at the same time, that being their own culture and the culture of adults, and these cultures are connected in various ways depending on current contextual factors and social structures.

3.1.2 The social construction of childhood

Childhood Studies have stressed the importance that children and childhoods ought to be situated in the cultural, historical and social context in which they live, resulting in the fact that there is not one universal, natural or shared childhood to be found across cultures and borders (Prout & Jenks, 2005). This notion has basis in pioneering reflections made by Philip Ariés in 1962, who recognized that the concepts of childhoods are constructions which change and vary over time (Ariés, 1962). As a result, one now makes an important division in distinguishing between the childhoods of the world. As every corner of the world is filled with difference and uniqueness, the social constructs of what it implies to be a child, and to have a childhood, will naturally differ in accordance with the context in which the children live. As La Fontaine (1979) eloquently expressed, children's immaturity is a biological fact of life but the way this immaturity is given meaning and understood is a fact of culture. The minority of the world's childhoods resides in the Global North, while the majority of the world's childhoods consist of children in the Global South, who live in Latin America, Asia and Africa (Punch, 2003). Nevertheless, despite the fact that the South accounts for the majority of the world's child population, Western ideologies and discourses of childhood still have acquired global dominance with their narrow perception of what it implies to be a child and what a childhood should contain and not. Punch further enlightens that, before labelling Childhoods of the South as 'abnormal', one should keep in mind that the protected and privileged childhoods of Western children do not represent the majority of the childhoods in the world (Punch, 2003).

Throughout history, childhood has been conceptualized in different manners. Montgomery (2003) places emphasis on three historic periods of significance: Childhood as a time of evil and wilderness, childhood as a time of becoming and childhood as a time of innocence. The latter is mainly based on reflections from French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) who strongly felt that children were born pure and ‘good’, and was only introduced to evil through experience (Montgomery, 2003). He argued that the highest aim of a child’s childhood was to achieve happiness, and to be protected from evil and misery connected to that of the adult world (Montgomery, 2003). Notions of childhood as a time of innocence still exist in policy and public opinion to this day. For instance, the discourses on childhood innocence that are widespread in Western countries are not necessarily held by parents or children in the South. Read (2002) elaborates:

These children's own cultural understandings of who they are need acknowledgment; by the same token, in order to define what children's rights should be, we all need to be aware of how we are defining childhood and when we think moral agency develops (p. 398).

What it means to be a child, will, as accounted for, vary according to various contextual factors such as culture, class, gender, age, ethnicity, disability, religion and birth order (Punch, 2003, p. 278). The context in which the child finds itself will have great implications for that individual’s childhood and place in society. In the Norwegian context, one can point to a number of factors which have contributed to strengthen children’s value in society. As mentioned in the contextual background in Chapter 2, Norway has been a forerunner in terms of placing emphasis on children’s rights and making it a priority to listen to children’s voices (Lyså & Ursin, In Press). Further, a typical Norwegian childhood involves contributing minimally to household chores, where the children rather have a responsibility to focus on school and homework (Lyså & Ursin, In Press). Besides that, engaging in self-governed play in nature is considered part of an ideal childhood (Nilsen, 1997). A typical childhood in Afghanistan, on the other hand, stands in contrast to these notions. Information retrieved from Landinfo (2018, p. 8) states that even though children have the right to schooling in Afghanistan, the parents are not obliged to enrol them, which leads to many Afghan youth rather undertaking work responsibilities for the benefit of the family. They may experience the transition from being a child to having responsibilities within the sphere of adults as abrupt. Growing up in these different countries are rooted in entirely

different contextual and situational norms, values, cultures and local practices, which have consequences for how their childhoods transpire.

The interplay between social constructions and biological factors play a significant part in relation to public and personal opinions of what it implies to be a child, and how a typical child ought to look like. Landinfo (2018, p. 9) argues that physical appearance is fundamental to Afghan constructions of child and childhoods, as they typically ignore the legal age of 18, and rather separate children from adults based on biological and physical development and their capabilities to exercise certain tasks. Particularly male Afghan youth may look older than they are, which may spark confusion and suspicion according to cultural perceptions in the context in which they surround themselves (Hopkins & Hill, 2010). This issue may consequently lead to a discursive pattern that does not acknowledge the unaccompanied minor refugees first and foremost as children (Hopkins and Hill, 2010; Sørsveen, 2018). Due to the knowledge that discourses are not just passive utterances, but rather involve sets of ideas rooted in a historical, social and political context (Montgomery, 2003), they can indeed have severe impacts on the attitudes and behaviours displayed towards these young people.

3.1.3 Questioning agency – a brief theoretical reflection of unaccompanied minor refugee’s abilities and vulnerabilities

Childhood Studies are especially concerned with, and advocate for, children and youth’s agency. Giddens (1979), a central figure in the debate revolving agency, describes agents as individuals who are able to create action and to influence one’s circumstances. In further elaborating on the concept of agency, Prout and James (1990) state:

Children are and must be seen as active in the construction of their own lives, the lives of those around them and of the societies in which they live. Children are not just the passive subjects of social structures and processes (p. 8).

James (2011) argues that viewing children as social actors, a viewpoint that occurred in the 1970s, has been one of the most noteworthy theoretical developments in Childhood Studies. However, the concept of agency has met resistance, and to present a nuanced picture of the term, I will include some of these criticisms.

Following Ursin (2019), the concept of agency and the focus on children as pure agents can be problematic as one risks a tendency in which one holds the children themselves fully accountable for their destinies, neglecting contextual influence. As such, Valentine (2011) claims that Childhood Studies operates with different understandings of the concept of agency, and that the research tradition would benefit from a more critical outlook on the term. That is, considering critical outlooks on agency that offers a heightened awareness and sensitivity towards differences among the children of the world (Valentine, 2011). Ursin (2019), drawing on reflections by Tisdall and Punch (2012) notes:

We risk holding the child responsible rather than to acknowledge his/her vulnerability. When one emphasises the ‘competent child’, one is at risk of placing too high expectations on the child, while avoiding (the adult) outside world responsibility. (p. 20, author’s translation)

Although acknowledgement is in place on behalf on children’s empowering abilities, one must be careful not to overrate the meaning and extent of children’s agency and not to downplay their vulnerabilities. Applying the term uncritically can, as mentioned, serve as an oversimplification that in the worst case contributes to place the blame on them when assessing negative outcomes in their lives (Ursin, 2019). Abebe (2019) notes that there exist unexamined assumptions regarding the agency of children, and he specifically outlines three assumptions that need to be contested: That “agency is the exercise of free will against the constraints of social structures” (p. 4-6), that agency is universal and that agency is gained as children mature. Oswell (2013) also raises important questions related to agency, such as whether or not all children have agency, or if some inhabits more agency than others. Following this line of thought, Abebe (2019) contends that one needs to evaluate what kind of agency an individual has, and how contextual issues influence that specific agency. Mayall (2002), however, questions whether children can be acknowledged as ‘agents’ at all, and rather applies the term ‘social actors’ with greater conviction.

With the former discussion in mind, the hardship and trauma unaccompanied minor refugees have experienced serve to illustrate how the youth demonstrate both dependence and independence, resourcefulness and vulnerability. Armed conflict and forced migration are indeed mentioned among of the issues that have raised concern internationally in terms of protecting

children and the enabling of their health and well-being. According to Boyden and Mann (2005, p. 1) “adversity comes in many forms, as a result of social or political strife, individual acts of omission or commission, environmental calamities and many other causes”. Children and young people are often those that are most severely affected by these conditions, and this is likely a result of their lack of social power and their youthfulness (Boyden & Mann, 2005). Notably, children in general are often acknowledged in terms of their shared vulnerability (Sandberg, 2015), yet unaccompanied minor refugees are recognized as particularly vulnerable due to their past traumatic experiences. Their marginal position in society is also greatly influenced by the fact that they are ‘unaccompanied’, which further increases the risk due to their traumatic experiences and separation from caregivers (Hopkins, 2008). Although many children experience traumatic and horrendous events, and struggle with these issues in daily life, it is not given that all of them will develop problems in the future. The concept of resilience is hereby relevant to apply, as it concerns individuals’ ability to function despite having gone through serious incidents (Berg, 2010). Those who experience armed political conflict often have no other choice than to rely on their own individual coping abilities (Boyden & Mann, 2005). These coping abilities will naturally differ from person to person, as explained by Boyden and Mann (2005):

Resilience is recognized as depending on both individual and group strengths and is highly influenced by supportive elements in the wider environment – these are often described as protective factors or protective processes. They operate at different levels and through different mechanisms – individual, family, communal, institutional and so on, and frequently correlate with and complement one another (p. 6).

Boyden and Mann (2005) further emphasise that the social, cultural, economic and political environment in which children surround themselves - in addition to factors such as their individual genetic heritage and physical and biological maturity - will affect how they relate to their experiences. Based on particular dispositions and temperaments, some children are better able to cope with stress and negative impacts. Though, the literature not only points to individuals’ competencies and resources, but also to interpersonal relationships and external factors as a crucial feature mediating risk and resilience (Berg, 2010). The support from family and non-parental adults is found to be important in protecting children from the consequences of experiencing negative situations, but also, key evidence suggests that social support from peers is

highly important in terms of enhancing children's resilience (Boyden & Mann, 2005). Having positive peer relations also appears to be vital in order to achieve an arena of support outside of the family, in which a sense of self-esteem and a sense of belonging, among other positive factors, may be formed (Boyden & Mann, 2005).

Unaccompanied minor refugees serve as a good example to illustrate the debate on children serving as passive objects or active agents in their social worlds – or as something in between. Once settled in their new community, they may often experience that people have contradictory expectations towards them. When labelled unaccompanied minors, national systems of protection and rehabilitations are put in place to manage their vulnerability and to provide them with adult support and supervision; On the other hand, their families back home may expect them to contribute financially and act as mature adults (Tefferi, 2008). The question whether these individuals are looked upon as passive recipients of their circumstances or social actors in their environment arises. Watters (2008) argues that youth's agency is being demonstrated by the fact that massive numbers of children and youth have taken great risks when escaping war zones and armed conflicts in order to pursue a dream of a better life. If they are passive objects, who have yet to reach their full potential as rational and acting beings, how would they be able to take on life-risking travels and manage all the incidents and obstacles such a passage entail? The diverse empowering abilities they show indeed point to the resourcefulness these children and youth demonstrate. Lastly, my aim in touching upon this theoretical discussion is not an attempt to conclude with any of the stances. The purpose is rather to shed light on the importance of being careful in how one decides to label children – specifically unaccompanied minor refugees - and how one chooses to conceptualise their abilities and vulnerabilities.

3.2 Citizenship

In this section, I will elaborate on ideas and theoretical understandings of citizenship, and later present an assessment of children's citizenship. The term 'citizenship' will be applied in accordance with the understanding of the Norwegian word 'medborgerskap', which excludes formal citizenship from the conceptualisation and rather focus on societal participation and recognition (Knudsen, 2016). Further, Knudsen (2016) illustrates this by stressing that it is fully possible for an individual to be a citizen ['medborger'] without having citizenship

[‘statsborgerskap’]. This differs from the English understanding of the term, which bases its formulation on having formal citizenship.

Cohen (2005) argues that a person’s full citizenship, factors that are connected to an individual’s nationality, is made up by obligations and rights - that of social, civil and political rights.

However, to belong to a nation does not only concern citizenship per se (i.e. rights and responsibilities), it is also closely connected to the emotions associated with such a membership (Yuval-Davis et al, 2005). Knudsen (2016) notes that the individual acknowledges his/her citizenship in relation to other individuals he/she shares a community with. The extent to which the individual, in this case, an unaccompanied minor Afghan refugee, decides to practice his citizenship is based on the extent of belonging to the larger society (Korsgaard, 2007, p. 25). Askins (2016) reflects on this issue by highlighting that, even though acquiring a formal citizenship is a key issue among refugees’ legal struggles, experiencing solidarity by members of society is also a way of being recognized as a citizen. Moosa-Mitha (2005) states that inclusion and exclusion always have been central aspects of citizenship, and Lister (2007) also acknowledges its force to promote societal inclusion or exclusion. Recognition and participation are closely linked, and an individual’s struggle for recognition may be interpreted as a struggle for participation and a desire to be embraced as a citizen (Lister, 2007). Following Askins (2016), engaging in meaningful interaction with established members of a community can contribute to a decrease of social tension among citizens, and an increase of inclusive notions of citizenship. Yuval-Davis (2007) suggests that the complexity of citizenship increases when assessing individuals who differ from the hegemonic majority:

[P]eople’s lives are shaped by their rights and obligations in local, ethnic, religious, national, regional, transnational and international political communities. This is true for all people, although the lives of migrants, refugees and people of ethnic minority origins are probably affected by this multiplicity of citizenships even more than those of people who belong to hegemonic majorities. (p. 562)

This is especially important when it comes to the participants of this thesis, as none of the participants were ‘legally Norwegians’ in terms of holding formal citizenships. To have equal possibilities to partake in society is a basic element of being a citizen (Pettersson, Westholm & Blomberg, 1989). This requires access to resources that makes societal participation possible

(Ødegård, 2011). Further, Petersson and colleagues (1989) launched the terms the ‘small democracy’ and the ‘big democracy’ to demonstrate different ways of exercising societal participation. The ‘small democracy’ entails that individuals, or a group of people, try to empower and influence their own situation in their local societies, whereas the ‘big democracy’ involves more broad and direct processes of influencing societal structures (Ødegård, 2011). It is the former which, according to Andersen (2004), is the most connected to notions of citizenship, as it emphasises the citizens’ perspectives (Ødegård, 2011). Further, following Andersen’s (2004) conceptualization of citizenship, I use the term in accordance with his understanding. This involves viewing citizenship as made up by three factors which must be acknowledged and assessed in relation to each other. The first factor is rights, which regards the rights and responsibilities of a citizen – or the absence of such. The second factor is identity, in which sense of belonging is given emphasis. The third factor is participation, involving participation in political and social arenas. Perceived or actual experienced inclusion or exclusion in one of these dimensions of citizenship can have great impacts on integrational efforts and societal well-being.

As accounted for in the previous paragraph, assessing unaccompanied minor refugees’ citizenship is complex due to a variety of reasons, in which one key element is their status as legal minors. Children, although having nationality and passports, are not granted the same aspects of citizenship as adults, due to their perceived inability to exert self-governance (Cohen, 2005). In this respect, Kjørholt (2004) raises important questions:

Giving children citizenship rights raises fundamental question connected to notions of citizenship, childhood, and social and democratic participation. What does it mean to be a citizen? What is social and democratic participation? And what does it mean to be a child? (p. 33)

Due to children’s lack of political rights, traditional liberal theories of citizenship exclude children from the equation (Kjørholt, 2004). Cohen (2005) adds two perspectives on children’s citizenship, namely ‘paternalism’ and ‘the minor’, which both contribute to degrade or minimize children’s citizenry. The first allows for the parents or adult supervisors to exclude children from public affairs, minimizing their possibility to be active societal agents by limiting them to the private sphere. The latter acknowledges children for their future potential as adults, and stresses children’s temporal status. Childhood Studies, as mentioned initially, criticizes the outlook on

children as ‘humans in the making’, and rather honour children as active agents. They additionally put due weight on the fact that childhood is a permanent structural form in society (Qvortrup, 2009). Individual children will grow up to be adults, but the structural form of childhood still prevails. Cohen (2005), then, argues that the here-and-now political interests of children ought to be emphasised, as their societal needs and desires are not limited to their future adult roles. Kjørholt (2004) places emphasis on the fact that children indeed have civic and social rights, and that these aspects of the concept of citizenship are increasingly given significance. The social acknowledgement of children and youth’s citizenship is in accordance with their rights to participation, as stated in the UNCRC, in addition to a general outlook on children and youth as competent rather than vulnerable and dependent (Kjørholt, 2004). Indeed, participation rights are acknowledged as a vital part of citizenship (Hart, 1992), as these can be used as both a means and frame of reference to treat children as co-citizens (Kjørholt, 2004). However, as cultures vary, so do their acknowledgement and treatment of children and youth as participants. Thus, children and youth’s social participation in society is deeply linked to the phenomenon of social constructions of childhood (Kjørholt, 2004). It is further emphasised that the worldwide marginalisation of children leads to the fact that children often are denied to perform their rights to participate in democratic processes and urban planning (Kjørholt, 2004). One must maintain a critical outlook on how children’s participation is being practised and portrayed. Hart (1992) points to an alarming tendency where children’s citizenry is a ‘a show for the gallery’, in which children’s participation mainly has symbolic value, as opposed to the experience of empowerment as co-citizens.

3.3 Identity

Identity is acknowledged as a dynamic phenomenon rooted in language that involves distinguishing between ‘who’s who’ and ‘what’s what’ (Jenkins, 2008). Giddens (1991) claims that an individual’s self-identity does not show itself in the reactions of others, but in the capacity to keep a particular narrative going. On the other hand, Sporton and Valentine (2009) argue that, in addition to the fact that identity is something an individual personally holds, a given identity also is dependent on an individual’s recognition or acknowledgment in certain wider communities. Recognition *is* a vital aspect in terms of social identity and sense of belonging. This concept will be further elaborated in the last section of the chapter. I have divided the notion of

identity into two sections: Processes in relation to ‘othering’ and constructing similarity and difference, and acculturation and transnational identities. Altogether, the theoretical concepts and reflections provided in these sections may contribute to an understanding of the participants’ complex understanding of ‘self’.

3.3.1 Identification and ‘othering’ – constructing similarity and difference

Identification is a process, not a thing, that encompasses classifying our places in the world, both as individuals and as members of groups. Tajfel (1958) resonates that recognizing oneself as a member of a group may itself cause identification with that particular group, and may produce behaviours that involve in-group preference and discrimination towards out-group members. In-group and out-group are an important classification in relation to identity. Jenkins (2008) argues that most theories on the concept of identity relies on two criteria of comparison, that of similarity and difference. He calls this the “internal and external moments of the dialectic of identification” (p. 7) and regards how individuals identify themselves (internal self or group identification), how other people identify them (external social categorisation) and the dynamic interplay between these factors. Similarity and difference are mutually dependent factors, as recognizing similarity means that differentiation is also being evoked (Jenkins, 2008). Inclusion and exclusion, here, becomes key elements, in which established criteria for group membership work as a clear boundary that excludes those who do not belong. Despite their many differences, the common ability among groups to recognize out-groups and groups they differ from is something that is a highly relevant and useful tool in navigating in the social world.

Jenkins (2008) points to the interconnectedness between identification and motives for behaviour – as to identify someone could be enough to decide how to treat that individual. Here, Goffman’s (1978) in-depth stance on stigma is of significance. He noted that the appearance of an individual makes us anticipate his/her social identity, consequently making us lean on these anticipations. When attributions of such are negative, in which an individual is discredited and reduced to another person’s negative assumptions, a stigma is being made (Goffman, 1978). This includes the creation of a division between a person’s actual and virtual identity. The first involves an individual’s own assumptions about his/her identity, whereas the latter entails the attributes other people assign to the individual, which he/she has no control over. This becomes relevant in

processes in constructing similarity and difference. Out-groups have been heavily theorized and assessed and there are variations of the phenomenon. The concept of ‘stranger danger’ comes into the equation of cultural and social identity (Kofoed & Simonsen, 2012). The stranger is a symbol of the danger of the unknown - ‘stranger danger’ - and the stranger is instantly recognized without special attention or thought (Goffman, 1978; Kofoed & Simonsen, 2012). The stranger is subject to processes of ‘othering’, defined by Lister (2004, p. 1) as:

A process of differentiation and demarcation, by which the line is drawn between ‘us’ and ‘them’ – between the more and the less powerful – and through which social distance is established and maintained.

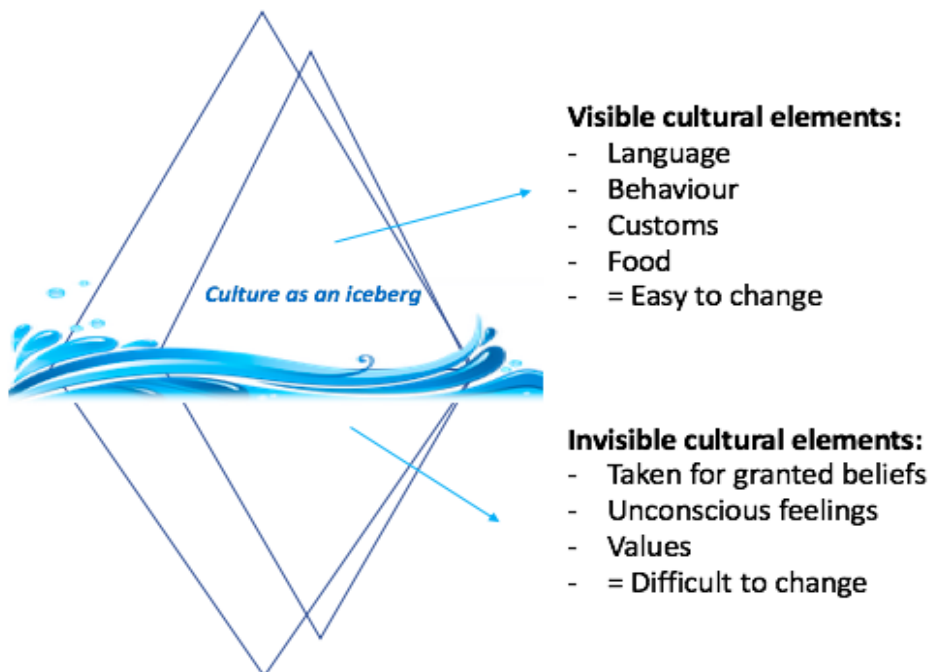
Kofoed and Simonsen (2012, p. 628) note that an individual becomes a ‘stranger’ through ‘specific embodied encounters’ in which they apply the term ‘experienced otherness’. This is described as a phenomenon that occurs when one experiences bodily or social restrictions based on other’s visual perceptions of them (Kofoed & Simonsen, 2012). Berg (2010) contends that how society treats and considers these youth is of relevance for their experiences of societal position and feelings of self. This tendency is further illustrated by examples, in which two of Kofoed and Simonsen’s participants explained that they quickly felt categorised as ‘the others’ in public spaces, such as the looks they received when being the only brown individual on a train, or the restriction they experienced when trying to access clubs. Ahmed (2002) acknowledges restrictions of this character as a technique people apply in order to separate the familiar and ‘the strange’, through reading the bodies of others. Sørsveen (2018) states that the ways bodies are understood are based on own experiences and societal ideas connected to them, and Aitken (2001, p. 66) argues that “the body is central to how hegemonic discourses designate certain groups as ‘other’ (...)”. Further, discourse plays a vital part in maintaining or practising processes of ‘othering’. Kofoed and Simonsen (2012) discuss that a common question for ‘the stranger’ to be asked, is ‘where are you from’, an utterance that reinforces the notion of the individual being out of place. Gullestad (2002) also reflected upon the usage of the word ‘immigrant’ and how this contributes to illustrate a difference between people. She argued that the concept has a powerful rhetoric, and as Foucault (1972) theorized, discourses significant meaning that shape actions. Gullestad (2002) mentioned an example in which a woman living in Norway was appalled by the label ‘immigrant’, as she indeed felt otherwise about herself. Gullestad (2002) explained this

issue by pointing to the woman being forced to accept an identity she does not want, and it is out of her control when others make this identity relevant for her. There seems to exist an established idea in which feelings of equality and equal value is dependent on the extent to which people see themselves as the same as others (Gullestad, 2002).

3.3.3 Acculturation and transnational identity

Culture is defined as a network of conventions and expectations that lay the basis for existence, and this network can either facilitate sense of belonging and identity, or provide feelings of difference and exclusion if one does not comply to the current norms and values (Engebretsen, 2015; Holm, 2016). In response to entering a new culture or society with a new set of norms and values, people go through a process of acculturation (Salole, 2013). Acculturation is defined as “the process of cultural and psychological change that follows intercultural contact” (Berry, Phinney, Sam & Vedder, 2006, p. 300). The concept is often seen from the perspective of those with the least power in the situation, such as refugees. Salole (2013, p. 65, author’s translation) claims that “cultural scriptures and cultural programming are mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion”. Weaver (1993) established a model of the cultural iceberg, which illustrates how some cultural scriptures are visible for new members of society, whereas other cultural scriptures are hidden.

Figure 1. Culture as an iceberg



(Illustration by author, inspired by Weaver, 1993)

In order to grasp what is hidden on the cultural iceberg, observing and learning from established members of society is crucial in order to navigate a new cultural landscape (Weaver, 1993; Ager & Strang, 2008). The process of acculturation is acknowledged as a useful coping mechanism in the new receiving country (Salole, 2013), however, its consequences may include conflict of loyalty and loss of identity. It can prove to be a challenging experience, depending on how the larger society in the receiving country welcomes their new residents.

As if the phenomenon of identity is not complex enough in itself, the complexity increases when placing the emphasis on the individuals that are ‘torn in two’ in terms of networks, sense of belonging, cultures and nationalities. Jenkins (2008) raises questions regarding who we are, and how other identify us. The answers are far from clear-cut, especially not when many find themselves having transnational ties, and hence, transnational identities. Transnationalism is a phenomenon that has been prominently theorized, as it is interesting to acknowledge the multifaceted ways people can relate to national belonging. Transnational belonging is a result of migration and encompasses the concept in which individuals feel a sense of belonging to two or more geographical areas at the same time (Knudsen, 2016). For many unaccompanied minor refugees, preserving ties to the homeland is of great meaning for several reasons, such as staying in touch with their roots. Cultural conservation, here, becomes a key concept, which can involve both conscious and unconscious processes (Salole, 2013). This entails to gain and maintain cultural stimuli from country of origin, such as upholding religious rituals, speaking one’s mother tongue, reading local newspapers and watching the local news. However, as the individual do not experience the culture first-hand in country of origin, the cultural expressions they apply may be out-dated and be characterised by the fact that the individual now receives other cultural input as well (Salole, 2013).

It is also useful to regard the phenomenon of transnational identities in a greater context. By examining how an individual in a new country maintains ties to the country of origin, one can gain a greater understanding of the unaccompanied minor refugees’ situation in the receiving country, and how their previous experiences shape them in the present (Engebrigtsen, 2002).

Migration studies show that transnational relations between migrants and their homelands is not just a transitional phenomenon, but is rather a key element in the formation of identities and in the conditions under which migrants create their new existence (Engebriksen, 2002). In this respect, Jacobsen sets out three different strategies an individual, consciously or unconsciously, undertake in order to meet these challenges, as an attempt to further build their identities (Jacobsen, 2002, p. 111). The first strategy is maintaining a 'pure identity', which is to keep the emotional, social and cultural identity the individual has from his/her homeland. The second strategy is embracing a dual identity ('bindestreksidentitet') which implies that the individual moves between the minority culture and the majority culture, trying to minimize a potential cultural clash. The third strategy is undertaking a dynamic multicultural identity, which indicates that the individual reflects on his/her position towards the cultures he/she is affected by (Jacobsen, 2002, p. 111). Embracing such strategies is a meaningful coping mechanism when faced with a new culture and societal norms and values one must learn how to relate to. Lastly, and related to this, Lynnebakke and Fangen (2011) note the difference between ethnic identity and cultural identity. One's ethnicity cannot necessarily change, but the cultural identity allows for a more nuanced perspective. A given identity, for instance a Norwegian identity, can be coincided and assessed in terms of extent of degree. When moving to the analysis, this difference is fundamental to keep in mind.

3.4 Socialisation

Immigrants, in general, may struggle with expectations to maintain the cultural heritage of the homeland, while at the same time, feel the need to adapt to a new way of living in the receiving country (Valentine & Sporton, 2009). As such, there are several foreign customs, values and norms that the new immigrant is expected to internalize, which indeed can lead to experiences of internal conflict. Notwithstanding, among several arenas, this particular tendency is widely shed light on in academia, public debate and contemporary culture. Adapting to social norms, roles and values of a given society is often seen as a prerequisite for acquiring an ideal integration. Berg (2010) contends that the concept of adaptation has received increased focus in accordance with the concept of integration. The main claim is that integration is acknowledged as a 'question of degree', in which the individuals themselves decide the degree to which they are willing to integrate (Berg, 2010). However, the common expectation by society is that minority people

should adapt to the majority society (Berg, 2010). This can occur through the process of socialisation.

Emile Durkheim (1982), ‘the father’ of the socialisation concept, established the phenomenon as the way in which individuals internalise the norms and values of a given culture or society. Here, it is implied that children are given a passive role in the process, as they only internalise adult culture that is presented to them through parents or other caretakers. Childhood Studies has, as mentioned, criticized these notions. In general, the main basis of the critique encompasses the passivity children are traditionally ascribed in the socialisation process – as it is the adults who are recognized as the active socialisation agents (Nilsen, 2009). The consequence is that the younger generation’s potential only is acknowledged as ‘adults in the making’ (Nilsen, 2009). They are not recognized for the ways in which they themselves are able to be influenced, while at the same time, are influencing others. In this respect, Corsaro (2009) established the theoretical concept ‘interpretive reproduction’, which stands in stark contrast to the traditional socialisation theory. Corsaro (2009) emphasises that children and young people are not only passive recipients of the adult culture - instead, they produce, and reproduce, culture along with their peers. They always participate in two cultures at once, their own culture and that of adults (Corsaro, 2005). These cultures are not separated, but rather intertwined in different ways across time and space (Corsaro, 2005). As previously argued, this stance is in accordance with Qvortrup’s (1991) structural perspective, where key elements concern the fact that childhood is exposed to the same societal forces as adulthood, and that children and youth themselves are co-constructors of childhood and society.

3.5 Core domains of integration

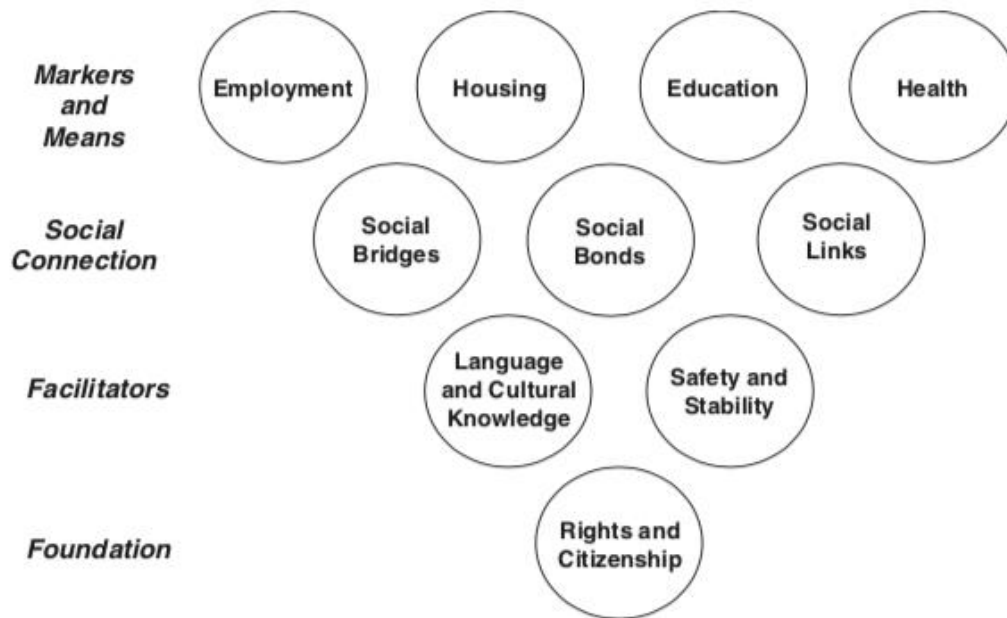
Integration is put on the agenda in the context of Norwegian politics and public debate, and has become a matter everyone seems to have a strong opinion about. It is argued that integration is “a chaotic concept: a word used by many but understood differently by most” (Robinson, 1998, p. 118). In this chapter, I will shed light on theories, models and concepts which account for the heated topic of integration. These will be separated into the two sections of socialisation and core domains of integration.

There exist several theoretic models that account for experiences connected to acculturation and intercultural contact, in which one specific model concerns the four different responses to intercultural interaction: Assimilation, separation, marginalisation and integration (Berry et al., 2006). Firstly, assimilation concerns an individual's lack of interest in to preserve his/hers cultural heritage, instead there is a desire to interact with the larger society. Separation happens when cultural maintenance is chosen instead of engagement with the larger society. Further, marginalisation occurs when an individual does not seek cultural maintenance or engagement with the larger society. Lastly, integration encompasses both cultural maintenance and engagement with the larger society (Berry et al., 2006). Integration is acknowledged as the most desired response to acculturation and intercultural contact.

In this chapter, I have discussed several internal processes that can enable or inhibit integration to occur on an individual level. However, one must also assess which external factors that may enable or inhibit integration to take place. I will discuss this matter through the usage of a theoretic model proposed by Ager and Strang (2008) in 'Understanding Integration: A Conceptual Framework'. The model below is hierarchically organized, clearly illustrating certain levels, or factors, that may need to be met before being able to fulfil the next in an attempt to achieve a successful integration. Some of the identified factors have been previously elaborated, but I will in the following still provide an overlook of the main identified areas – the foundation, the facilitators, social connection, and markers and means.

Figure 2. Core domains of integration

A Conceptual Framework Defining Core Domains of Integration



(Figure retrieved from Ager and Strang, 2008, p. 117)

Rights and citizenship lay the main foundation of the core domains of integration. This has been assessed above, in which one can summarise that having the same opportunities as other citizens in a community, and the tools and resources to realise those opportunities, are vital aspects of citizenship (Petersson et al. 1989; Ødegård, 2011). On the second level, the facilitators are placed, in which ‘safety and stability’ and ‘language and cultural knowledge’ are identified. Safety and stability are important elements in the life of a refugee, as they have experienced danger and instability in their home countries and on their way to protection. Learning the language, and thus being able to partake in the society by contributing through communication, is a crucial aspect of being a citizen. Furthermore, Hohn (2015) stresses that, when learning a new language, it takes a long time before one can enjoy the fruit of the struggle, and that one can even experience the learning process as a threat to one’s own identity before experiencing that the new language can serve as a source of joy and pride.

On the third level, social connection comes into the equation. Forming positive relations with the locals and larger communities is essential for the well-being of refugees. For instance, Ager and Strang (2008) stress that, for refugees, acquiring knowledge through connecting with established members of the community, such as neighbourhoods, is critical. To be guided and introduced to the current norms, values and culture of a given society can be of great significance for an individual who is facing the unknown in all possible ways. One must keep in mind that integration is a two-way process, which requires both refugees and locals to actively partake in the development. In their model, and more specifically on level three, the three forms of social connection by Putnam (1993) are relevant: Social bonds (with families or similar ethnic groups), social bridges (with other communities), and social links (with a given state's structure). In the following paragraph, these variations will be shed light on.

Social bonds involves establishing relations with 'like-ethnic groups'. This may be evident in participation in refugee community organizations, which is seen to be socially, culturally and religiously beneficial (Ødegård & Takle, 2018). For instance, it allows isolated individuals to find common ground with peers, to partake in social and cultural activities and to learn from other immigrants who have been in the host community for a longer period of time (Ager & Strang, 2008). It also facilitates the opportunity to maintain significant cultural or religious traditions from the homeland. *Social bridges* involve the relationship between refugees and host communities. The results from Ager and Strang's (2008) study point to the importance of friendliness and recognition from the locals in regard to integrational success. The more a refugee is welcomed, recognized and accepted within a certain local community, the more the individual's likelihood to partake in integrational efforts increases. *Social links* encompasses the link between the refugee and the state, in which an example of this connection can be accessibility to government services. Ager and Strang (2008) reflect that refugees' language barriers and lack of understanding with their surroundings lead to additional efforts having to be made to achieve equality in access to services among a state's citizens. As emphasised, the multidimensional phenomenon of social connection is fundamental for refugees in regard to integrational efforts and societal well-being.

On the last level, that of markers and means, the factors of education, work, housing and health are identified. Bjerkan (2009) points to the importance of school as a learning arena, where a previously mentioned facilitator, sufficient language competency, is a prerequisite to be able to participate in school. Schools and the educational context are widely acknowledged as the most vital place of contact with members of local host communities for refugee children, thus, the learning arena is crucial in terms of facilitating relations that are supportive of integration (Ager & Strang, 2008).

Among policy makers, politicians and the public at large, acquiring work is one of the most highly valued factors related to integrational efforts. The latter is also deemed one of the most researched areas of integration (Castles et al., 2001). As Ager and Strang (2008) point to, many equate work with integration – this can be based on multiple reasons, but one of the most prominent is the positive outcome it creates. Employment can facilitate economic independence, a felt and actual contribution to the larger community, development of language skills, increased self-esteem and the establishment of relations with conventional members of the society (Ager & Strang, 2008). As mentioned in the contextual background in Chapter 2, the living conditions for an unaccompanied minor refugee can have great impacts in terms of physical and emotional well-being. Ager and Strang (2008) mention the feeling of ‘being at home’ and settled over time as crucial.

3.6 Recognition and the interconnectedness of citizenship, identity and integration

Based on the theoretical concepts of the main elements of this thesis, citizenship, identity and integration, I want to emphasise that the phenomena are closely connected and interdependent. For instance, an unaccompanied minor refugee’s experiences in one arena, such as those related to citizenship, will further impact the individual’s experiences in the other two domains. As Knudsen (2016) argues, the individual acknowledges his/her citizenship in relation to other individuals he/she shares a community with. The extent to which the individual, in this case, an unaccompanied minor Afghan refugee, decides to practice his citizenship is based on the extent of belonging to the larger society (Korsgaard, 2007, p. 25). The concept of citizenship is of importance, as whether an individual identifies as a citizen may have severe implications on aspects of internal motivations for integration. The higher the individual’s motivation is to

integrate, the higher is the individual's potential for extensive societal participation as a citizen – and vice versa (Knudsen, 2016).

Further, I propose that a shared and fundamental concept to be found across the three concepts are experiences of recognition. Eide (2007, p. 127) argues for the importance of recognition for the unaccompanied minor refugees, and resonates:

Unaccompanied refugee minors constitute one example of relations between different minority groups and the Norwegian community. These children are dependent on a network of relations in varying spheres of recognition where a minimal degree of mutuality and freedom are important for achievement of social integration.

Eide (2007) resonates that the way in which the unaccompanied minor children are met in the Norwegian society, in addition to the quality of their relationships in care-situations, are of equal value in terms of achieving integration. Recognition, here, is of importance, especially connected to the individuals' feelings and understandings of 'self' in relation to his/her peers. Døving (200) also notes this tendency and highlights three crucial factors in ensuring a successful integration, namely recognition as an individual, accept of difference and work employment. Drawing on Salole (2013), children who belong to different cultures are a part of both in- and out groups of society, and they can be classified as both 'us' and 'them'. Their sense of belonging to society is, as Salole (2013) argues, closely connected to the extent in which they are recognized by others. Eide (2007) connects notions of recognition to Honneth's (1995) model on the topic, which has identified three spheres of mutual recognition. This model has similarities to Putnam's theory on social connection. The first sphere is the private sphere based upon emotional support or love. The second sphere is the legal sphere, built on respect and equal legal treatment. The third sphere involves achievement within certain fields or communities, either cultural, political or work communities – this may facilitate individuals to recognize themselves as appreciated for the common ethical goals of the community. However, recognition is not always the response, in which moral disrespect may rather be the outcome. For instance, if members of a certain community have received signals that their contribution to the community is not valued, or if individual or collective ways of living are denigrated, from being avoided to extreme stigmatisation, moral resentment can occur. Eide (2007) concludes that this model points to an

interplay between recognition, identity and social integration. Whether or not unaccompanied minor refugees feel recognized by locals can have severe implications of their adaptation to their new surroundings, and thus, have significant consequences on their willingness to integrate. Ager and Strang (2008, p. 173) further enlighten the interplay in this subsequent matter:

There is probably no theme that creates more confusion and disagreement regarding understandings of integration than that of citizenship, and the rights and responsibilities associated with it. This partly reflects the widely different understandings of citizenship but, more fundamentally, of nationhood across societies.

They resonate that definitions of integration are dependent on the nation's sense of identity (Ager & Strang, 2008). The interconnectedness between citizenship, identity and integration is hereby clearly acknowledged. The concepts and implementations of nationhood, citizenship and rights are not universal or fixed, but regardless, the ideas connected to it are fundamental in order to understand the practice of integration in a certain setting (Ager & Strang, 2008).

3.7 Previous research with unaccompanied minor refugees

Unaccompanied minor refugees are a group that has increasingly been the subjects of research. In this section I will outline some examples of the previous research conducted with these youth, and present some of the papers that have guided my own writings.

There has been extensive research conducted on unaccompanied minor refugees, both internationally and domestically, and research on these individuals can be found among multiple disciplines. Among topics which clearly have been acknowledged as fundamental regarding these individuals, widespread literature on mental health, care-placement, children's rights, temporary residence permits, religion and integration were identified. Hopkins and Hill (2010) and their paper 'The needs and strength of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and young people in Scotland' was a useful inspiration in which a key element was to recognize this group first and foremost as children. They also carefully assessed both the needs and the strengths of unaccompanied minor refugees, giving due weight to their complexity. Through the work of 'Identities on the Move', Sporton and Valentine (2010) further demonstrated the difficulties that arise when people with multi-cultural backgrounds are asked to evaluate their own identities.

Other contributors have also been included in the theoretical framework of this thesis. Ager and Strang (2008) have, as mentioned, conducted a study on the core domains of integration. They report several important findings, such as the process of integration was severely compromised if a refugee did not feel safe from violence or threats in his/her surroundings. Additionally, due to the nature of seeking asylum, refugees tend to have histories involving a great extent of mobility and short-term stays. This can have a serious impact on both the refugees themselves and their neighbours in terms of attempting to be a part of a community.

Turning to the local context of Norway, one can point to an increase of articles and studies conducted on unaccompanied minor refugees. Berit Berg, Hilde Lidén and Ketil Eide, among others, ought to be highlighted as significant pioneers and contributors. The work of the former and the latter have thoroughly been applied to this thesis. In Berg's (2010) doctoral thesis, which concerned the path from asylum to integration and living transnational lives, she found that maintaining links with the homeland was a shared aspect of all the participants, but how this transpires can take different forms. An important finding was also that among the individuals' processes of exile, a key determinant is based on that the process can be influenced by one's own attitude and the willingness of the society to provide the individual with opportunities. This is particularly a relevant notion that serves as a guiding element of this thesis. As mentioned in the introduction, internal processes and the willingness to integrate may potentially be as crucial as the external opportunities the individual is granted.

Moreover, Eide has conducted several studies which have been applied to this thesis. In his dissertation of 'Ambiguous Children: Child Migrants in a historical perspective' (2005), he suggested that historical change on the perceptions of children and childhood have been crucial for how different groups of child migrants have been treated throughout the years. He also noted that the perceptions of motives on behalf of the children create attitudes that shape the ways these children are recognized and treated in the politics and in care-situations. These propositions are both in line with Childhood Studies and points made in this thesis. Further, in 'Recognition and Social Integration: The Interpretation of Children on the Move' (2007), Eide proposed a connection between recognition, identity and social integration. This work, combined with 'Belonging and Identification: Challenges and Negotiations in Refugee Children's Everyday Life

in Norway' by Archambault and Haugen (2016), are two of the works that seem the most connected to my research topic. The latter point to similar assessments as Eide, in which the refugee children's individual and collective identification played an important part in their sense of belonging. Besides this, I was not able to find literature specifically and explicitly combining the three phenomena of citizenship, identity and integration connected to unaccompanied minor (Afghan) refugees.

In addition to a growing body of literature conducted in the field, a number of governmentally funded reports have been published in newer times. The literature certainly reflects the public's need and desire to uncover and seek knowledge on this topic. NTNU Samfunnsforskning, Department of Diversity and Inclusion are frequent contributors to the spread of information regarding unaccompanied minor refugees. Researchers within this department have produced several reports, and such as 'Knowledge Summary about Unaccompanied Minor Refugees and Asylum Seekers' (Svendsen, Berg, Paulsen, Garvik & Valenta, 2018). This showed that local conditions and structures have a crucial say for the settlement. They also identified that basic qualifications is a prerequisite in order for the unaccompanied minor refugees to be able to participate in education, work and the society in general. However, they note that many experience challenges due to a lack of former schooling. In addition, reports have also frequently been launched by non-governmental organisations, such as Save the Children and Norwegian Organisation for Asylum Seekers (NOAS), critically assessing Norway's implementation of children's rights connected to unaccompanied minor refugees.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

This chapter will focus upon the methodology and ethical challenges connected to carrying out research with eight unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees living in Norway. Firstly, I am going to briefly introduce the phenomenon of qualitative research. Further I will provide the background of my eight participants, before I account for my role as a researcher. Then, I will elaborate on semi-structured interviews as a research method and present reflections connected to the research site. Lastly, I touch upon ethical challenges and considerations related to the process of doing research with unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees. Indeed, there are several ethical aspects one can stumble upon when conducting research with these youth. In general, children and youth are often acknowledged in terms of their shared vulnerability (Sandberg, 2015), however, unaccompanied minor refugees are in general recognized to be particularly vulnerable due to their past traumatic experiences. Their marginal position in society is also greatly influenced by the fact that they are ‘unaccompanied’, as the risk associated with these young people is further increased by the fact that they are separated from caregivers (Hopkins, 2008). Based on these reflections, it is of great importance to place a special emphasis on the ethical and methodological assessments that has to be made prior, during and after this research process (Hopkins, 2008).

4.1 Qualitative research

This thesis is based upon scientific values and guidelines derived from the qualitative research approach. Denzin and Lincoln (2014) define qualitative researchers as someone who attempt to make sense of phenomena by considering the meaning individuals ascribe them, by studying people or things in their natural surroundings. More specifically, when conducting a qualitative research project, one systematically collects, organizes and interprets textual material from talk or observation (Malterud, 2001). James (2011) argues that, from a Childhood Studies perspective, the use of qualitative, ethnographic research approaches has been crucial in order to acknowledge children and youth as people worthy of studying in their own right.

4.2 The participants

The participants of my fieldwork consisted of eight male unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees, aged between 16 and 18. They are all given fictional names, as presented in the table below. Six

of the participants live in municipal housing facilities [‘bofellesskap’], while the remaining two participants live in their own apartments. However, the two individuals living by themselves received care and transition support from the staff at the municipal housing facility.

Table 2

Participant	Age + duration in Norway	Ethnicity	Living situation	School/work
Samir	17, two years in Norway	Pasthun	Municipal housing facility	Combination class + part time work
Hamidullah	18, three years in Norway	Pasthun	Municipal housing facility	Combination class + part time work
Rashid	18, three years in Norway	Pasthun	Municipal housing facility	Combination class + part time work
Jamal	18, three years in Norway	Pasthun	Municipal housing facility	Vocational school + full time work
Abdul	16, three years in Norway	Hazara	Municipal housing facility	Vocational school + part time work
Farajullah	17, three years in Norway	Pasthun	Municipal housing facility	Adult training programme
Karim	17, three years in Norway	Hazara	Own apartment	Adult training programme + part time work
Ahmed	18, three years in Norway	Hazara	Own apartment	High school

Initially I had recruited ten informants, though, two of them decided to withdraw from participation before I was able to meet them personally. One participant did not show up for our meeting due to illness, while the other one personally called to tell me that he was ‘a busy man’, but wished me the best of luck in the process. The fieldwork was conducted in three different counties in Norway with significant geographical distance. This was a means to gain representative findings, as to not only include participants that may have a similar or given

experience based on living in the same city or at the same housing residence, or attending the same school. Furthermore, the decision to narrow down the specificities and nationality of the participants occurred early on in the process of the project, and this was based upon three main reflections. Firstly, as a result of my work at a municipal housing facility of unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees, the Afghan nationality is the one I have acquired the most knowledge about in regard to culture, history and behavioural patterns. My understanding of their culture would potentially make it easier to establish chemistry with the participants. Secondly, I imagined that it would be easier to provide a common background for every participant, instead of presenting several historical frameworks according to participants' different homelands. Thirdly but most importantly, Afghan refugees make up one of the largest groups that seek asylum in Europe (The Norwegian Refugee Council, 2018).

As specified, all participants were male. A representative finding in terms of presenting both genders, and point to possible gender differences connected to the phenomenon of integration would have been highly valuable to take into consideration. Nevertheless, the unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees that have been granted asylum nationwide mainly consist of males. Statistics Norway (SSB) report that 98% of the unaccompanied asylum seeking minors from Afghanistan are boys (SSB, 2016). However, the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs report that, in general, the numbers have increased from the arrival of 8% female unaccompanied minor refugees in 2015 to 26% in 2017 (Bufdir, 2018). Of the municipal housing facilities I recruited participants from, there were no female Afghans currently residing in the homes that met the criteria of participation.

4.3 Interviews

It was important to choose a research method that was in line with methodological values derived from Childhood Studies. This is based on my heightened awareness of the importance of listening to and treating children and youth as beings worthy of studying in their own right. By truly taking children's and youth's voices into account, one opens up for facilitating the participants to share their stories on their own premises. I decided to listen to these voices through the conduction of interviews. The type of interview that was selected was also relevant, as the structure of the methodological interviews can vary from unstructured to highly structured, depending on the

researcher's need of control of the interaction (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). I chose semi-structured interviews as the method for data collection in this study, as I believed it to be the most appropriate for the participants, and the most likely to contribute to results to answer the research questions of this thesis.

4.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

Childhood Studies claims that it is the children and youth themselves who are the experts of their own lives (James & Prout, 2005), and it is argued that conducting semi-structured interviews is a beneficial method if one wants to uncover the expert knowledge of an individual (Harrell & Bradley, 2009). As Abebe (2011) states, the methodological values of Childhood Studies correspond to children's rights as formulated in the UNCRC. Article 12 specifically concerns the right a child has to be 'properly researched' (UNCRC, 1989). This implies active participation, using methods that enable them to express their opinions and, also, to protect them from harm (Alderson & Morrow, 2011). Ethnographic methods, such as semi-structured interviews, facilitate the children and youth to be active participants rather than passive research objects (James, 2011). Additionally, the semi-structured interviews allowed me to maintain some level of control, yet, I was also able to organize the interview in a casual, conversational manner. The fact that there was no required, fixed structure enabled the participants to speak more freely on the matters that engaged them.

In total, eight semi-structured interviews were conducted during fieldwork. Three interviews took place in the South-East of Norway in the participants' dorms in their housing facility, two interviews took place in East of Norway in a group room at a school, and three interviews found place in North of Norway, conducted in common areas in a housing facility. The interviews lasted from 30 minutes to 1,5 hours. Seven interviews were recorded through the usage of a Dictaphone. One of the participants expressed scepticism towards being recorded, thus, I actively used pen and paper when conducting this particular interview. Although the participants were not native speakers of Norwegian, I chose to not have an interpreter presents, as I was worried that this would compromise our interaction and chemistry. I will reflect more on this issue in the section revolving ethical implications.

4.3.2 The interview guide

An interview guide was designed and approved by my supervisor and NSD before conducting the semi-structured interviews (Appendix D). The interview guide can, according to Howitt & Cramer (2010), be acknowledged as a list of questions and topics one seeks to explore, but there is no rigid structure or need to follow it systematically. How I applied my specific interview guide varied in terms of the order of the interviews, as I was more dependent on the interview guide in the first three interviews I conducted. Certainly, it also varied according to the different participants I encountered in the process. Particularly one participant, Rashid, was surprisingly eager, open and talkative, and the interview lasted for a full 1,5 hours. Rashid's willingness to talk led to the setting feeling more like a dynamic dialogue than an interview – this had its impact on the extent to which the interview guide was taken into use. In another case, where one participant, Hamidullah, appeared to be quite shy, the interview guide was followed more systematically. This seemed to fit his conversational style the most, as he did not express any wish to speak more freely. I experienced that the partially structured design of the interview guide worked well during my fieldwork, as I was able to adjust its usage in accordance with the participant's personality and linguistic style. One certainly cannot assume that every participant has the same ability to answer all questions. However, I still wanted to be able to compare the answers later on (Thaagard, 2013). Thus, there were some topics I acknowledged to be of special importance to receive feedback on, and I made sure to address these questions.

4.4 Research setting

4.4.1 Gatekeepers and recruitment

Early on in the process of the project, I decided to exclude recruitment of unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees that live in the municipality of Trondheim. This was a conscious, ethical decision as a means of not creating any confusion to my role as a social worker and my role as a researcher. As I then started the recruitment process with a clean slate, in terms of no 'easy'-accessible participants, the recruitment process proved to be challenging. As I had expected – and feared – prior to the recruitment phase, I experienced both declines and a significant lack of feedback from potential gatekeepers. The term 'gatekeepers' is applied to the people responsible for granting a researcher access to a certain research field (Homan, 2001). This may involve giving a researcher access to a physical space, or to grant permission for a certain way of conduct

(Homan, 2001). I contacted several gatekeepers across the country - principals or teachers at schools, and leaders and staff of municipal housing facilities. The contact information of the majority of the potential gatekeepers was accessed through public information on the Internet, as municipalities' list of staff, but I was also given contact information to some potential gatekeepers through mutual acquaintances. Eventually I gained access through three gatekeepers from three different parts of the country. Two of the gatekeepers who responded positively were a result of personal familiarities – one of whom I personally knew, while a friend helped me establish contact with the other gatekeeper. The remaining gatekeeper was fully unfamiliar to me. I came into contact with him as a result of reaching out to the care departments of the unaccompanied minor refugees in different municipalities. The organising of the project's gatekeepers and participants are illustrated in the table below.

Table 3

Gatekeeper	Participants	Geographical placement
Male leader of a municipal housing facility	Three participants	South of Norway
Female leader of a municipal housing facility	Three participants	North of Norway
Male teacher at a vocational high school	Two participants	East of Norway

After having experienced a lack of feedback and difficulties in establishing contact with several potential gatekeepers, I was pleasantly surprised by the commitment of the three gatekeepers who responded positively. They all seemed to have faith in my project, and voiced that the results I acquire can be relevant and important for their youth and the work connected to this particular group. Furthermore, the gatekeepers took charge of the recruitment process by informing potential participants of my project. When interest was shown by some of the minors, consent from their guardians was sought before being able to give me an approval. This was also in accordance with recommendations proposed by the Norwegian Centre of Research Data (NSD)

(Appendix A). Altogether, the recruitment process and the work of the gatekeepers provided me with a total of ten willing participants, in which eight of them proceeded with the interviews.

4.4.2 Research site

Prior to conducting fieldwork, my aim was that the research sites varied according to the participants' requests. I wanted to have the chance to encourage them to decide upon places that would enable them to be concentrated and feel safe, whether this encompassed settings as the outdoors, cafés, or their homes (institutions or apartments). This aim was based on ethical reflections made by Punch (2002), as she argues that many research environments are typically adult spaces, resulting in the fact that children and youth may feel that they have a lesser degree of control. Furthermore, based on Abebe's (2009) experiences with field work and the choice of research sites, I wanted the participants to be respected in terms of privacy, and for them to decide where that place would be. This could also contribute to the participants' sense of an increased feeling of control and mutual respect, and to lessen the power imbalances that typically arise in research. However, because I had to travel to the municipal housing facilities and the school to meet the gatekeepers, it seemed as the easiest solution to conduct the interviews in these particular settings. Especially in the homes, a relaxed and safe atmosphere was easy to create and maintain, as the participants seemingly felt that this was a comfortable, safe place. In the homes, the participants were given the choice of which room in the housing residence they would prefer the interview to take place in. In total, six interviews were conducted in the participants' homes – or prior home, as was the case with the two participants that had moved out from the housing facility – while the other two interviews took place in a group room at their school.

In general, a research setting and the location itself may influence the kind of answers the participants provide and the researcher receives. Therefore, in the context of school, I had to be especially aware of the fact that children and youth may perceive that adults are expecting a perfect and correct answer (Punch, 2002). Thus, it was of importance to stress that there are no right or wrong when it comes to their personal life experiences and reflections. In retrospect, one can point to the fact that the participants were not given as much freedom of choice in terms of research setting as I initially wanted them to have.

4.5 Analysing the findings

4.5.1 Transcribing

Transcribing is the process where one transforms the oral data material into written text. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009, p. 94) further elaborate on the matter:

Transcribing the interviews from an oral to a written mode structures the interview conversations in a form amenable to closer analysis, and is in itself an initial analysis.

As previously mentioned, I transcribed seven out of eight interviews, as one of the participants did not want to be recorded. In this specific instance, I rather had to quickly write down his responses in my fieldwork diary, in addition to taking notes of other observations I found interesting. Moreover, in the seven other interviews, I excluded names and residence both from the recordings and the transcriptions. This was a conscious, ethical choice in order to anonymize and protect the participants' identities. During the process of transcribing the data material, I quickly noticed areas of improvement in terms as my role as a researcher. As I transcribed the first interviews quickly after completion, I was able to review my strengths and weaknesses. During the first interviews I was concerned about covering most of the questions and topics from the interview guide. Here, I could beneficially have asked more follow-up questions as to further pursue interesting reflections the participants touched upon. Not to mention, I could be less systematic in the way I asked the questions. This was something that I became highly aware of in the interviews that followed, and I was able to learn from my initial mistakes. The subsequent interviews are to a greater extent more influenced by a less systematic and casual, conversational style. The process of transcribing the interviews was useful both in reviewing my own efforts, as well as familiarising myself more in-depth with the data material, which definitely helped me in the next step of analysis.

4.5.2 Thematic analysis

After finishing the transcriptions of the data material, I conducted a thematic analysis of the findings. This specific analytical tool is described as “a qualitative analytic method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organises and describes your data set in (rich) detail” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 79). The tool is recommended for novice researchers that are not experienced in conducting a qualitative research project - it is

highly flexible as it has no mandatory, standardized guidelines (Howitt & Cramer, 2010). Although its flexibility is one of its advantages, I also wanted to follow some specific steps in order to know how to proceed with the analysis. Thus, the six steps Braun & Clarke (2006) have proposed worked as a guideline when analysing the data. The six steps were as follows: Familiarising yourself with your data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In order to keep track of the different themes, I marked all the quotes in the transcribed interviews in different colours. The main identified themes corresponded with the main themes of the interview and focus point of this thesis: Citizenship, identity and integration. Further, several sub-themes emerged from the data material, which I was able to divide into respective main sections. A tendency that occurred was that many of the sub-themes often overlapped. For instance, the themes of school, work and language are reoccurring both in the analysis of Chapter 6 and in the analysis of Chapter 7.

4.6 Ethical considerations

4.6.1 Implications of the recruitment process

It is important to keep in mind that it is not coincidental which type of participants that accept to be a part of a research project. Ideally the aim should be to include all types of children and youth, and not only the ones that seem to be the ‘ideal’ informants in terms of articulation and confidence (Ursin, 2018). Thus, when it comes to the recruitment process, it is relevant to ask the question of who has been excluded in this study. Alderson (2004) mentions the possibility of ‘opting in’, which means to actively choose to be a research participant, opposed to have to actively ‘opt out’ from participation. To be able to actively ‘opt in’ is acknowledged as ethically valuable as it honours the individuals’ privacy and their right to be the sole decision-makers (Alderson, 2004). As the gatekeepers of my study were in charge of talking to the youth and providing sufficient information about my project, I did not observe first-hand how the recruitment process played out. However, based on conversations with the gatekeepers, the eight participants of my study actively ‘opted in’. Two participants decided to actively ‘opt out’ further along in the process, as previously mentioned, but there were other youth in the housing municipalities that did not volunteer to participation.

One can certainly argue that the people who choose to ‘opt in’, and are willing to partake in a project of this character, has a somewhat positive mind and an open attitude. At least this is the impression I have of the majority of the participants. Especially Rashid, Samir, Jamal and Ahmed stand out in the way in which they showed signs of eagerness and openness. Two of them were surprisingly outgoing, wanting to talk about other matters than just the academic aspects, while two others showed great interest in the project itself, asking with enthusiasm to read the finished material. Surely, having talkative and optimistic participants was highly appreciated in terms of receiving rich answers and in-depth explorations, but it can also have other consequences for the results. I perceived them to be genuinely, noteworthy positive individuals, and it is only natural that this positivity influenced the answers they provided. However, by having a mainly progressive, outgoing group of participants, my results may not be as nuanced as reality really looks like. It is likely to assume that, when using this type of recruitment method based on the willingness to ‘opt in’, potential participants with negative views on Norwegian society and integration may not feel comfortable to actively share these thoughts with an ethnic Norwegian investigating the matter.

4.6.2 The importance of an appropriate method and language to facilitate participation

It was crucial that the method chosen for the fieldwork, and the implementation of this method, did not cause the participants harm in any way. As Hopkins (2008) states, which kind of methodological approach a researcher decides to implement in the research project has great ethical consequences. In line with Childhood Studies’ methodological values, I had initially planned to combine the usage of semi-structured interviews with the participatory method of an informal photo diary (Punch, 2001) This would ideally serve as an icebreaker if the participants had a difficult time finding the words to describe their feelings and experiences. Not to mention, by applying a photo diary they would be allowed to start off the research setting by having some sort of control. However, the photo diary was difficult to implement in practice, as the participants were unable to follow it up, so it was quickly eliminated as a research method.

The benefit of using interviews as a research tool was that I could get detailed narratives from the participants. One of my main responsibilities was to act with thoughtfulness towards individual differences in terms of sensitivity and vulnerability. Importantly, my aim was to facilitate the

interview in such a manner that the youth felt safe to participate at their own pace, and not to make them feel reluctant to being interviewed. Culture sensitivity and understanding were two critically important elements I had to bear in mind during the interviews. Furthermore, as Thomas and Byford (2003) discuss, children and youth with difficult or troubled backgrounds will naturally become cautious of researchers digging into their past, therefore, they may be resistant to engage in conversation loaded with guilt and pain. One of the participants, though he did not express it verbally, conveyed signs of scepticism when asked certain questions. Here, Alderson and Morrow (2011, p. 35) raise an important question, as to “how far is it right to ask questions that offend or upset people?” The mental states of the children ought to be treated with sensitivity, and it was highly important that I was aware of the possibility of traumatisation or re-traumatisation in regard to difficult topics (Thomas & Byford, 2003). Naturally, this implies that some conversational themes, such as stories of war and related disturbing experiences, had to be handled with special care. For instance, a researcher can easily be tempted to further explore a topic if one believes that an interesting discovery is about to be made, but in this case, I had to be careful. There is a balance between benefits and risks of the participants, in which one of the key elements is to consider the likelihood of risk to occur (Warin, 2011; Alderson & Morrow, 2011). In the incidences where this specific participant showed signs of reluctance to answer, or seemed a bit confused as to why I asked certain questions, I dedicated significant time to try to defuse the situation. I skipped some of the questions since I anticipated that they might make him feel uncomfortable. An example of a question I decided to skip, was a question regarding the sense of belonging in the Norwegian society and whether there are situations in which he feels out of place or excluded. My experiences point to the importance of the researcher having a thorough, on-going important ethical responsibility towards the participants. Several of the participants mentioned experiences with war and hardship, and I did not want them to feel obliged to dive into details evoking traumatic experiences. Hopkins (2008) suggests the valuable idea of providing the participants with alternatives if they are unable to express that they wish to move on from a certain topic.

I was highly aware of the fact that *how* I spoke to the participants during the fieldwork was going to be of great importance to the project. In line with Foucault’s (1972) ideas of discourse, language is not just passive utterances, but rather expressions that carry meaning, and may

consequently shape actions. Therefore, it was vital that I established a communication style between the participants and I that promoted mutual respect and understanding. This establishment would ideally contribute to the participants' active engagement. Punch (2002) claims that researchers may be more aware of their linguistic style when it comes to research with children and youth, as opposed to research with adults, and that this tendency is based on their lack of competence. However, although I acknowledge the participants' resourcefulness, I am also aware of the fact that language can be a barrier with this group, based on the fact that they are not native speakers of Norwegian. The special emphasis upon language lies therefore not on a perception of children and youth's general and inherited incompetency, but rather on natural communication challenges due to their background as refugees. As I chose to not have an interpreter present - as this would interrupt the bond between the participants and myself, and possibly be a disturbing element - I was aware that misunderstandings might occur. Still, I was confident that my occupational experience in communicating with non-native speakers of Norwegian would be beneficial in the research setting. I am well used to expressing myself in a different linguistic style than I normally use, and being thoroughly patient if necessary. In regard to the language usage, I still found it important to prepare myself sufficiently prior to conducting fieldwork. The first draft of the interview guide was sent to my supervisor, who pointed out linguistic changes that ought to be made in order for me to express myself in an understandable way. Amongst others, she suggested changes that helped generalize the topics and make them formulated in a matter that appeared to be less intrusive. Additionally, before my first fieldwork and set of interviews, I was having frequent conversations with the male leader of the municipal housing facility. He was of great assistance in suggesting changes to the interview guide, as to adjust the language to the participants' capabilities and levels of understanding. In general, during the interviews and informal dialogues with the participants, language was not a barrier or an issue. In fact, I was surprised by their language competencies, and the participants and I communicated freely and openly, without encountering a lot of misunderstandings.

4.6.3 Informed consent

Informed consent is a mandatory element when conducting research, as to inform the participants of the nature of the study, and to guarantee their awareness of voluntary participation (Homan, 2001). Related to this issue, Thomas and Byford (2003) stress an important point in which the

researcher must be able to assess the young participants' capacity to provide informed consent. This relies on aspects such as literacy and mental health. An ethical challenge I was prepared to face was that the youth did not have an understanding of what the concept of informed consent entailed. Furthermore, they may have experienced trouble in grasping the aim of the research, and why it was precisely they who were 'chosen' to participate in this project. Hence, thorough preparation became a vital step in the process. In some of the instances with participants being below the age of 18, approval from legal guardians was sought before carrying out the fieldwork and the interviews. Regardless of age, I dedicated a significant amount of time providing information about my project and its aim prior to conducting the interviews, to be fully able to ensure that the participants knew what they were taking a part of and signing on to. The participants received their own copies of information sheets, containing information regarding the project as well as important ethical aspects such as consent, confidentiality and anonymity (Appendix B). Several of the participants asked questions about the information provided in the sheets, and wished for further elaborations beyond the written material they were given. Verbal communication therefore became an important factor in ensuring that the participants fully understood the content. I interpreted this as something positive, as their curious behaviour told me that they were genuinely interested in the project, and also, that they showed an awareness of their rights. Providing such information sheets is supported by academics, as it gives details about the project in a way that is sensitive towards the youth's abilities, needs and levels of development (Morrow & Richards, 1996; Hopkins, 2008). Ideally, this contributed to a heightened understanding of what the phenomenon of research implies, and more specifically, what participation in this particular project implied for them. Inspired by Warin's considerations (2011), amongst others, I regarded consent as an on-going process, and therefore ensured that the participants felt motivated to partake in the study at every stage. Thus, I conveyed that they could withdraw from the study at any given time (Alderson & Morrow, 2011).

4.6.4 Confidentiality and anonymity

It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure the participants' anonymity and right to confidentiality in regard to the research projects. Confidentiality entails that personal aspects about the projects remains unknown to other people than the researcher and participants. This implies to protect and storage the data material in such a way that it is not accessible to any other

individuals than the researcher (Alderson & Morrow, 2011). The protection of the data material was done in accordance with the ethical guidelines of NSD, of whom I received ethical clearance. Tape recordings were deleted after transcriptions had been made. Throughout this process, it has been vital to not disclose or reveal any personal information that can be used to trace or identify the participants of the project. Ensuring their confidentiality and anonymity was something I stressed several times during the interviews, and I pointed to my availability if they at any given time want to discuss the project in general, or the roles they play in it. One of the participants contacted me after the completion of the interview, and wanted to know whether the thesis would be published and if he would be able to read the finished result. This experience was quite assuring to me as a researcher, as this pointed to the participant's commitment to his participation in the project.

4.6.5 The role of the researcher

My role as a researcher had to be carefully reflected upon prior to conducting fieldwork, in which I had to be aware of aspects of my thoughts and behaviours. I had already envisioned some important ethical considerations before deciding on the research question. Due to the fact that I work closely with unaccompanied minor Afghan youth, I am aware of the emotional responses some topics arise, and consequently chose to engage in a research project that focuses upon less sensitive elements of their lives. Instead of placing the emphasis on past experiences, that are likely to consist of war trauma, or current vulnerable situations that evoke harm, my aim was rather to focus on the present process of integration. However, the concepts of citizenship, identity and integration surely do not lack ethical concerns and emotional connotations either, and therefore, it was important that I adopted a role that was in accordance with an ethical ideal.

During the interviews, as previously mentioned, it was important to maintain a special awareness of the youth's cultural background, and I therefore paid closely attention to cues and nonverbal communication as signs of reluctance to further engage in a research topic. There were times I both felt a need and a responsibility towards the participant to either move on from a topic or turn the conversation into a more positive perspective. For instance, one of the participants reflected upon the initial exclusion he felt from Norwegian peers, after having gone to great lengths to try to make some new, needed friends. Even though this would have been interesting material to

pursue in terms of its research value, I could tell that this subject was difficult for him to reminisce on, and he suddenly turned quiet. I did not ask any further questions, but rather tried to comfort him and assured him that Norwegians, in general, can be quite shy, and that the lack of social offers most likely had nothing to do with him personally. We, then, rather turned the conversation to revolve around the other people that truly know him and wish him well, and soon it came up that he was eventually able to build a strong social network. He lit up when speaking about his multi-ethnic friendships, and the conversation could continue with the participant being in a more uplifted spirit.

Furthermore, in an interview setting with an adult and a youth, where the researcher's role is a crucial element, one must speak on the matter of power relations. As Abebe (2009, p. 433) discusses,

many researchers argue that power will always be present and that adults cannot avoid being in control of research agendas. Also, adults cannot pretend not to have power over child participants and the research process.

There seems to exist a common acknowledgement that one can never completely avoid power imbalances, although different researchers take various stances to the question of power (Abebe, 2009). It is surely a central aspect of ethical research to negotiate unequal power relations (Abebe, 2009). Christensen (2004) argues that researchers must be aware of how different degrees of power can affect participants, and further how this affects knowledge derived from the research. This has led many researchers to come up with solutions and specific roles one can undertake in a research setting with children, as a tool to minimize the differences. In the research setting, I claimed the role of the 'friendly adult', as proposed by Abebe (2009). Here, as a means to minimize the power imbalance, I did not express authority or discipline. Instead, I did my best to express respect and a sincere desire towards spending time with the participants (Abebe, 2009; Mandall, 1991). Conveying this sincere desire was fairly easy, as I am engaged with this group on regular basis. I believe that my genuine commitment towards this particular group was noticeable to the youth. As I reacted with great interest and curiosity to their stories, both of informal and serious character, they seemed to get more and more trustful towards me. In addition, I also believe that my relatively young age and my occupational role contributed to the

successful adaption of the role of the ‘friendly adult’. The participants were possibly more likely to identify with a researcher that is somewhat close in age. As their Afghan culture highly values formal respect towards elders, it is likely to assume that, when meeting me, they were convinced that we could communicate on a more equated level. Not to mention, by being able to greet them in their mother tongue, either in Pashto or in Dari, I was able to establish immediate chemistry and a relaxed research environment. This is in line with Abebe’s (2009) reflections in terms of building rapport, as he mentions frequent informal dialogues as one of the critical factors.

Lastly, I attempted to be reflexive throughout every stage of the research process, as suggested by Warin (2011). The concept of ethical mindfulness is hereby relevant;

An alertness or heightened sensitivity to understanding the relational aspects of the research process: an interdependent awareness of how I, as a researcher, am influencing my research participants’ perceptions and a simultaneous and interdependent awareness of how they are influencing me (Warin, 2011, p. 809).

It is not possible to achieve a fully objectively conducted study within the qualitative research domain, and as claimed by Warin (2011), objectivity becomes an illusion in this field.

Regardless, achieving a total objectivity should not serve as an aim. In every human interaction, one must acknowledge that the parties mutually influence each other in one way or the other. When conducting research of this character, where mutual interaction is the basis of the study, one cannot avoid the power of influence. For instance, I presented myself first and foremost as a student, but I also stated that I am a social worker at a housing facility for unaccompanied minor refugees in Trondheim. Some of the participants may have acknowledged me mainly as a student, and perceived and treated me accordingly, while others may have focused on my role as a social worker. Not to mention, my role as a researcher of this study, or my identity as a young woman, can also have contributed to a certain response by the participants. As five of the participants were Psthuns, I have to take the Psthunwali into consideration. As stated in Chapter 2, this unwritten moral codex is deeply dependent on the maintenance and expression of honour. One may assume that all of these factors could have had an impact on both the participants’ responses and their attitudes in the interview setting. A proud, honourable Psthun, coming from a strong

patriarchal society, may find it uncomfortable or unnatural to 'show signs of weakness' by disclosing challenges to an unknown female. Although, it must be noted that I never got this impression from any of the youth, I still had to be aware that underlying aspects of this character could occur in the interview settings. Moreover, as their responses and behaviours towards me differed, I am likely to have treated them differently as well. It is crucial, then, to be aware that they influenced me, as much as I influenced them, and that this awareness is a conscious, ethically important part of the project.

CHAPTER 5: “IF I LOSE MY CULTURE, I LOSE EVERYTHING THAT I AM”

A man has as many social selves as there are individuals who recognize him and carry an image of him in his mind (James, 1950, p. 294, quoted in Swann & Bosson).

5. Identity

I have divided the analysis into three chapters, where the main elements of this thesis – citizenship, identity and integration – have their own analysis chapter. For analytical purposes, I have chosen to focus on the phenomenon of identity first, as it is an important fundament in understanding and assessing the participants in relation to citizenship and integration. In this chapter, I will seek to explore and analyse how one’s cultural heritage affects integrational efforts, and therefore I will first account for the role of culture in identity formation. How do the participants narrate their sense of self? Are the unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees worried to lose their Afghan identity when taking part in the integration process in Norway? With these two questions in mind, I seek to define and analyse the term ‘Norwegianness’, and explore how the participants relate to Norwegian culture. Lastly, I turn to the phenomenon of socialisation and exemplify how they act, interpret and adapt in navigating their new life in Norway.

5.1 The role of culture in identity formation

In this subchapter, I will analyse how culture affects identity formation among the eight participants. By applying theory from Jacobsen (2002), I will start off by exploring how the youth relate to the different cultures they are surrounded with and influenced by. Evidently, the concept of identity cannot be assessed without placing emphasis on the social structures in which it is influenced and shaped by (Berg, 2010). The participants all have roots in Afghanistan, in addition, two of the participants have multicultural backgrounds since they also have been raised in Iran and Pakistan. Karim explains his upbringing in the subsequent matter:

I have never been in Afghanistan, my parents are born there. When I lived in Iran, I didn’t feel like an Afghan. I was born in Iran, and felt like a normal Iranian. I felt at home in Pakistan too. But now I feel

like Norway is my country. This is where I experienced goodness, had positive experiences. I didn't have that in Iran and Pakistan.

Experiencing multicultural influence, like Karim, enhances a transnational sense of belonging, and it can be challenging to navigate the social world under the impact of several cultures with opposing views and traditions. As outlined in the theoretical framework, Jacobsen (2002, p. 111) sets out three different strategies an individual, consciously or unconsciously, undertake to meet these challenges. This is recognized as an attempt to further build one's identity. She argues that an individual either maintains a pure, dual or dynamic multicultural identity. Karim maintains a multicultural identity, in which he reflects on a sense of belonging to both Pakistan and Iran, in addition to the belonging he feels for his parents' native country. Importantly, he feels at home in Norway too and expresses a belonging to the country based on the positive experiences he has endured here. Abdul, who has a similar background, seems also to be holding a multicultural identity. He states:

I feel 40% Pakistani and 60% Afghan. (...) But I want to be with Norwegians, and to be like them. But I don't think that is going to happen. An Afghan can never be entirely Norwegian, that's just how I feel. But he can integrate in Norway, to be together with Norwegians.

Due to his multicultural background, Abdul says that he finds it easy to adjust to new cultures. He claims that he changes according to the nationality of the people he surrounds himself with. When he is with Afghans, he is an Afghan, and when he is with Pakistanis, he is a Pakistani. He tells me that after some years of being with Norwegians, he can also be a Norwegian. However, this stands in contrast to what he utters above - that an Afghan can never entirely be a Norwegian. This discrepancy can be based on that he would like to be recognized as a Norwegian, but not at the expense of giving up his multicultural identity. Abdul reveals that his reflections about culture is influenced by his parents' wishes for him. He tells me that his mother and father voice their concerns about their, and how he should not fully and completely internalize Western culture:

I'm a Muslim you know, I want to connect with Muslim people when we for example have Muharram [Shia Islam tradition] and Eid. If I don't join those things, my mother and father are gonna say I am

forgetting my culture. That is not good. They feel like I can be with Norwegians, but you can't forget your culture.

Abdul seems to value his parents' opinion and advice, and he does not want to disappoint them by losing their mutual culture. Through them, he has learnt the impact culture has on his identity: "The worst thing that could happen, is if I would lose my culture. If I lose my culture, I lose everything that I am". This is in line with key findings in migration studies, which suggests that maintaining relations with the homeland is fundamental in forming an individual's identity (Engebrigtsen, 2002; Ager & Strang, 2008; Ødegård & Takle, 2018). How this process transpires will also have impact on the individual's new life in the receiving country (Engebrigtsen, 2002). For Abdul, it seems of great meaning to keep up a cultural conservation (Salole, 2013) That is, in nurturing cultural and religious traditions, he maintains important bonds to his homeland and his in-group, which further strengthen his sense of self. Even though Abdul has grown up with a transnational sense of belonging, the countries share similar aspects in terms of culture and the role of religion. Thus, his identity as a Muslim seems to be the most consistent and prevailing despite crossing nation borders. Hamidullah also points to the possibility of relating to both Afghan and Norwegian identities. He says:

If you want to, you can be both Afghan and Norwegian. For example, if I hang out with Afghans, I can speak my mother tongue and do things I did in Afghanistan. When I am with Afghan boys, I feel the most connected to Afghanistan. If I am with Norwegians, I have to speak Norwegian and do things the way they do them in Norway.

Even though Hamidullah demonstrates an awareness that it is important to be a part of Norwegian society, and that the individual can be both Afghan and Norwegian, it still appears as if he maintains a pure Afghan identity in the present (Jacobsen, 2002). This is based on what he tells me in the interview, in which I sense that he has a strong connection to his in-group. When mainly socializing with them he maintains strong links to his cultural heritage. His contact with the majority population seems at this point to be limited to contact with teachers or staff at the housing facility he lives in, but he seems optimistic that he can undertake a dual identity in the future: "If you haven't lived in Norway for a long time, you feel that you are Afghan. But you can decide (the identity) for yourself". Hamidullah places due weight on the possibility to choose

for oneself what the individual wants to identify himself as or with. External identification was not as relevant as the internal identification, and he focused on his own feelings of self instead of other people's feelings regarding him. Ahmed, who seems to also maintain a pure Afghan identity, shares reflections about his connection to his in-group. He stresses that they share important life lessons together, and thus, are able to recognize each other in a way that few others can. He expresses:

You have a feeling of people being from Afghanistan, you have a feeling that they don't have it so good as people here in Norway, so you're kind of.. That is something we have in common. We have experienced the same things. That makes us able to connect and to feel Afghan together.

In interacting with his in-group, Ahmed automatically connects with his peers based on a unique understanding of his past and present. This is both in line with Putnam's (1993) concept of social bonds and Honneth's (1995) first sphere of mutual recognition. Firstly, social bonds describe an individual's link with close groups, such as like-ethnic groups. Establishing and maintaining bonds within this group is a key element in terms of integrational potential (Ager & Strang, 2008). Secondly, Honneth (1995) emphasises mutual recognition in terms of emotional support as fundamental for the individual's well-being. Ahmed continues describing that:

Most things are positive here. Negative is that there are a few people who exist in society who don't realize how people who come from countries with war feel like. This is just a few people, not many.

In the excerpts above, Ahmed reveals a vulnerable desire to be acknowledged for the experiences and hardship he and his peers have gone through in their lives. It seems like he is in need to be assured that other people besides his in-group have empathy and understanding of the past occurrences who have contributed to shape him into the person he is today. He appears to be longing for validation. Their past experiences serve as crucial determinants for how these youth feel, think and behave in the present. Luckily, he experiences this recognition within his own in-group: To experience a shared sense of understanding for each other is important in terms of having a sense of comradeship and support system.

Farajullah also claims a pure identity in which he first and foremost identifies with his in-group. They share a lot of commonalities that make it easy to relate to each other, such as nationality, cultural heritage, religion, language and similar life experiences. This is in line with an outlook on identity as something personal, but also as something that is dependent on a recognition in wider communities (Sporton & Valentine, 2009). Similarly, Jenkins (2008) reflects on the interconnectedness between internal and external identification, which involves how an individual sees himself and how he feels other people perceive him. Samir is somewhat hesitant in trying to classify his identity, and touches upon the difficulties that arises when other people identify him in certain ways based on nationality. Accordingly, his arguments are based on a resistance towards the labelling of people:

The most important thing is to be a positive person. I don't like it when people say "he's from Afghanistan, he's from Norway", you know. In our home country we have different groups, someone speaks Pashto and someone speaks Dari. Then someone says "you're Afghan" and then others say "no you're not". What's the deal with that? The thing that matters most is that we're all humans, I am a person.

In their research, Lynnebakke and Fangen (2011) also recognized a tendency among their participants to relate to their surroundings by identifying with wider identities, similar to Samir. By not claiming a national identity, he does not need to place himself as included or excluded in any society (Lynnebakke & Fangen, 2011). Samir's reflections can also be seen in light of the ethnic groupings in his home country and how this clear distinction between in-and out-groups have led to years of conflict and stigmatisation. Based on this, it is natural that Samir seemingly feels the need to be recognized as an individual, and not as a member of a certain group or nationality. This is in line with thoughts by Sandbæk and Lidén (2009), who note the importance of multicultural youth being individually recognized – for being themselves– not representatives of *something* or *someone* else.

Samir seems to have understood the value in focusing on himself. Many of the participants mention that living in Norway have given them opportunities that allow them to increasingly place the emphasis on themselves and their individual self-growth. When I asked the participants whether they have changed after they came to Norway, most of them uttered a clear 'yes'. Jamal

explains: “There were no dreams in Afghanistan – there was nothing in Afghanistan. It was war, you can’t dream, you can’t even think when it’s war and people are killed”. Rashid also tells me that it was impossible to ‘dream big’ and set goals for himself based on his surroundings:

I had no dreams when I lived in Afghanistan. Oh my god. I went out and just thought “when am I going to die?” When you send people out, “here you go my son, go out and buy potatoes”, and then my mother could get the message that her son would have been bombed to pieces on the way. As long as you see freedom and opportunities... Your conscience, your heart, your thoughts develop... Then you get dreams you never even thought about having.

Rashid further explains that it is only natural that he has changed and developed in Norway and bases this on that he previously did not know his way in the world. He has now learned what is right for him, and which values that resonates the most with his own; the Norwegian ones. He says:

I have learned many new rules and how I should be after I came to Norway. If I came here and didn’t develop... I could never go further in society. I would still be in the same place. Let’s say I got here, and I wouldn’t speak to girls, that’s haram [forbidden by Islamic law]. I wouldn’t have a girlfriend, that’s haram. I wouldn’t have Norwegian friends, that’s haram. Then I wouldn’t develop either.

Rashid is the only participant who claims an apparent dual identity, in which he identifies both as an Afghan and as a Norwegian. He explicitly says “I feel like a Norwegian! It’s not like Norwegians are different from other people in the world, like different in the body or something, they’re just like different from Afghans in the mind set”. I sense that he has adapted a Norwegian way of thinking about society, and therefore connects this closely to his identification as an Afghan-Norwegian. Samir, who as mentioned is not interested in determining his national identity, rather finds it important to speak about belonging to a certain culture. He applies a saying from his homeland’s culture in explaining how a sense of belonging to a new culture is crucial:

I don’t need to be the person I was in Afghanistan all the time, you have to change also. In Pashto we have this expression that, where you live you know, you have to learn the culture, the situations that occur and such, you have to look at it all, what’s going on.

Farajullah is also convinced that he has changed a lot since he left Afghanistan, and says: “I just feel different now”. However, he notes that his sense of belonging is affected by the longing for his family, and wishes that they could get to know the Norwegian society and be provided with the same opportunities as him. Salole (2013, p. 25) argues that understanding the complexity of transnational belonging is crucial on a societal level – by helping these youth to unite their different cultural experiences, their sense of belonging and willingness to integrate in the Norwegian society increase. These reflections are supported by Engebrigsten (2002) and the emphasis to place the focus on the dual, or multiple, sense of belonging migrants is likely to develop. Even though the participants either maintain a pure Afghan identity or a multicultural identity – except for Rashid who keeps a dual identity – most of them still feel like they belong in the Norwegian society, or aspire to increasingly do so. Herein, understanding and relating to the Norwegian culture are fundamental aspects which will further be assessed.

5.2 Defining and demarcating ‘Norwegianness’

During the semi-structured interviews, the participants reflected on their own position in Norwegian society, on their social networks and sense of self. With the former subchapter in mind, in which the importance of culture in identity formation was established, I connect this to how they relate to the current culture they find themselves in. As they now are part of an ethnic minority compared to the majority population, navigating and identifying themselves in a new cultural landscape do not come without challenges of some sort. I hereby recognize this cultural landscape as ‘Norwegianness’ (Gullestad, 2002). Drawing on reflections from Lynnebakke and Fangen (2011), I apply notions of Norwegianness not in line with a static, given entity, but rather something individuals can associate with. What constitutes Norwegianness, then, can change and vary according to time, context, and the dominating discourse and behaviour among popular culture. This is important to include in relation to identity, as Norwegianness can facilitate feelings togetherness or separation on societal level. I will explore what constitutes membership in the Norwegian society, and how the participants relate to the concept Norwegianness.

I started by asking the participants what they believe the majority population expect from them. Ahmed shares the following reflections:

Maybe they're a bit scared that the people who come here are going to take what they [majority population] are after. Maybe, but I don't know.. Don't know what they think. Maybe they're a bit scared that Norway... Norway is a multicultural society, but they're scared for their traditions and their culture. That foreigners should not affect that.

Ahmed interprets that the influx and influence of immigrants can have consequences for traditional norms and values of the Norwegian society. Based on reflections by Hernes and Hippe (2007), Rugkåsa (2010) contends that the ideology of the Norwegian welfare state can be coined a 'collective individualism'. This implies that "it is widely perceived that collective action provides individual meaning, and serves as an expression for a typical Norwegian way of thinking" (Rugkåsa, 2010, p. 71, author's translation). Norway has a long history of promoting values such as equality, justice and solidarity, in which equality and togetherness have been driving forces for the way in which the Norwegian welfare model has been shaped (Rugkåsa, 2010). Ahmed connects the historical values of the Norwegian welfare model to the phenomenon of the 'stranger danger', which I described in the theoretical framework. The stranger danger represents the fear of the unknown (Kofoed & Simonsen, 2012), and Ahmed notes that the presence of the 'unknown' may result in a majority population who fear how the immigrants influence the Norwegian society as a whole. In facing the Norwegian society with an awareness of such processes and experiences of 'othering', Ahmed's sense of belonging to the wider society may already be compromised. Further, Karim connects the presence of immigrants in the Norwegian society from a financial perspective. He is convinced that the majority population want *something* in return from immigrants – he elaborates that they value contribution to the society so the foreigners do not just "come here and get money from them". This is in line with the welfare model's 'give and take' policy, which will be further assessed in line with citizenship and societal participation in Chapter 6. The main emphasis is, however, that the Norwegian labour policy emphasises full employment among its citizens. Work and the benefit it generates to its citizens through tax payment, i.e. free public services, lay the groundwork for ensuring the welfare of the population (Rugkåsa, 2010).

Ahmed and Karim seem to reproduce typical discourses majority citizens tend to apply when speaking about minority citizens. Gullestad (2002) claimed that the majority population not only perceive immigrants as a possible threat socially or economically, but a treat to what is perceived

as the establishment of the ‘Norwegianness’ and the Norwegian togetherness. This can result in a notion that immigrants pose a threat to what it implies to be Norwegian.

Opposed to reflections from Ahmed and Karim, Abdul focuses on the ‘foreigner-friendly’ majority population in terms of expectations:

I don’t really know what they think, but I know that they think something. They probably thought that it was good that they opened their borders for us, that it was a good thing for us [to come here].

Abdul’s statement and positive input is in line with historical fundamentals of the Norwegian welfare state, according to Rugkåsa (2010). Caring for people defined as vulnerable is an important value of the social democratic ideology, which also ensures an inclusive collective identity among the citizens of Norway (Rugkåsa, 2010). Eide (2007) also points to the historical discourse that has been prevailing on unaccompanied minor refugees, in which the way they are spoken about give associations to care and protection. Whether this is the prevailing discourse and practice to this day can be questioned. The polarized public debate, for instance, reflects this increased complexity (Berg, 2010). Hamidullah says that although there are many foreigner-friendly people among the majority population, he has nevertheless encountered people he perceives to be racist. Samir has the same experience, and expresses that most members of the majority population are positive, but after he got to know them more thoroughly, he learned that some were racists as well. An important question in this analytical section is then to raise the question on what it takes to feel as an included part of the togetherness of the Norwegian ‘we’, or, to identify with aspects related to cultural Norwegianness. Farajullah tells me that their appearance herein plays an important part:

We can’t be entirely Norwegian, because... It’s a bit difficult, because we have dark hair and stuff. How we look like. But if we live in society with them, we can follow Norwegian rules and traditions.

Although Farajullah does not explicitly mention skin colour as an important determinant of what it takes to be Norwegian, he still acknowledges that appearance in general is something that separates them from the majority population. Further, he touches upon skin colour implicitly when he mentions that he expected to experience racism. Gullestad (2002) claimed that, in the

context of the public debate, being white is a main discursive aspect of what it implies to be a Norwegian – the ethnic identity is possibly what matters most. It is argued that some Norwegians may hold certain assumptions to people with a different skin colour than their own. A different skin colour can symbolize geographical distance, genetic differences and cultural alienation (Gullestad, 2002). To illustrate his opinion on the matter, Samir further adds an interesting metaphor about difference:

In the woods, for example, there are so many animals that aren't alike, in the same way as people are not alike. So I feel like it's totally fine. Whether people are racists or not, I don't care about them. There are so many who say "you are foreigners and blabla", but I don't care. I say, "okay, you can say whatever you feel like".

In relation to Norwegianness, how the participants of this thesis is perceived and classified is of significance. Jamal touches upon such classification in the following way: "Doesn't matter whether you're white or black or whatever – but we are foreigners, refugees..." Jamal speaks as though his identity as a foreigner and refugee is the ones that matter the most. This is in line with Gullestad's (2002) claims, in which the identity that is made relevant for him is out of his control. This can also be connected to Goffman's (1978) and the concept of virtual identity, in which other people assign certain attributes and an identity which the individual has no power over. Jamal's due weight on the fact that he and other Afghan boys first and foremost are refugees, can be further be linked to prevailing discursive patterns presented in the media. Lynnebakke and Fangen (2011) argue that the distinction between Norwegianness as a cultural practice and Norwegianness as an ethnic group allows for different ways of taking part in the Norwegianness, and explain this subsequently:

A definition of Norwegianness based on ethnicity leads to people being Norwegian or not Norwegian; you're either an immigrant or a Norwegian. On the opposite, a definition of Norwegianness based on cultural practice lead to people feeling different degrees of Norwegianness: you can be a little or very Norwegian (p. 143)

In this respect, Gullestad (2002) reflected upon the usage of the word 'immigrant' and how this contributes to illustrate a difference between people. It separates ethnic Norwegians from '*them*'

or *'the others'*, implying that there is a significant difference between the two. She argued that the concept has a powerful rhetoric, and as Foucault (1972) theorized, discourses are not just meaningless words – they rather contain significant meaning that shape actions. Berg (2010) also reflects that discursive patterns of this character point to a trend in which 'immigrants' and 'people in need' often are presented as a 'threat to the 'Norwegianness''. As I stated in the previous subchapter, Rashid says that he feels like a Norwegian, and he seems to be claiming a dual identity. However, the only element that prohibits him from fully feeling alike the majority population is his last name. He illustrates this with an example:

You still have that different type of last name. Imagine those who have a mother from Norway and father who's from foreign country, and their child is still getting asked where she is from? Think about the Pakistanis who came here like many years ago, why are they still called 'pakki'?

This draws on conceptions that, besides the fact that Norway is a diverse, multicultural nation, an image is still being painted of ethnic Norwegians being the hosts, and the immigrants, 'them', being the guests (Gullestad, 2002). Gullestad (2006) and Rugkåsa (2010) argue that the notion of 'the West and the rest' maintains a colonial-historic perspective on the world. Rashid's experiences seem to be rooted in theory as well, as Kofoed and Simonsen (2012) claim that the question 'where are you from' is common for the stranger to receive – as Rashid himself says, this certainly confirms the feeling of the individual being out of place. Rashid mentions the Pakistani people, who immigrated to Norway in the 1960s and thus are one of the foreign groups that have been here the longest, still can be looked upon as 'out of place'. When an individual is discredited and reduced to another person's negative assumptions such as this, a stigma is being made (Goffman, 1978). There seems to exist an established idea in which feelings of equality and equal value is dependent on the extent to which people see themselves as the same as others (Gullestad, 2002). Jacobsen (2002) also contends that individuals who have traits that make them stand out from the majority population are constantly being reminded of such.

Jamal admits that he has received negative comments by the majority population. He says that he is able to ignore those comments he identifies as 'kidding', whereas he is genuinely hurt by those who make remarks with the purpose to hurt him: "You're allowed to mess around, to be kidding with me, but when anyone says something serious, that makes you think... Then you get sad". It

seems as thoughts like this can make him question his place in society, even though he generally feels like he belongs. Ahmed mentions other signs of feeling excluded from society, and tells me that the majority population seem to avoid contact with the ethnic minority:

I feel like other countries are warmer to each other, but people in Norway are a bit cold, they don't want to have contact with others, especially with people from other countries. But that doesn't mean that they don't like us, they have lived here for a long time and it's cold here, maybe that's why they have cold personalities, hehe.

Based on this quote, it is evident that Ahmed is aware of the tendencies people have to create distinctions between 'us' and 'them'. He suggests that the majority population in Norway prefers to only have contact with their own in-group, and thus perceives them as 'a bit cold'. Ahmed tries to bring humour into the equation, although I sense that this is a sensitive topic. He connects the cold weather with the somewhat perceived cold personalities of ethnic Norwegians, and he goes on to say that, on the contrary "foreigners like to have a warm life". Ahmed, then, reproduces discourses about ethnic Norwegians that are well known – for instance, first impressions of many ethnic Norwegians would be described as shy and standoffish. While Ahmed acknowledges that the majority population as a group have a certain reputation, Ahmed still paints the most positive picture of ethnic Norwegians and Norwegianness as a whole. He says:

Everything surprised me [about Norway]. The society, the people, the way they live... School, everything. Positive surprise. When I'm at school and I do a certain thing, for example, some can laugh. But the Norwegian youth, they don't do that. They know about respect and everything. If we do something wrong in our culture, everyone can laugh of you, or react in a way that you don't like...

It seems as if Ahmed resonates more with what he perceives as a Norwegian way of thinking than that of his own culture, and that he nearly feels inspired to act more in line with such norms.

Abdul, on the other hand, shares the following in his perception of the majority population: "It's difficult to get to know them. They're a bit shy. It's like they have something on their tongue, but they're not able to say it". Abdul contends that communicating with the majority population is challenging. Both the majority population and Norwegianness can be difficult to comprehend for the unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees. Jacobsen (2002) reflects that the concepts of

Norwegianness and Norwegians are thought by the majority society to be fixed or static definitions that do not need to be further explored or explained. As the term is not a given cultural construct in which the participants immediately find meaning and their place, the data material revealed that they can do two specific things in order to grasp Norwegianness. They *observe* the members of society, *and learn* from members of society (Weaver, 1993; Ager & Strang, 2008). The ‘culture as an iceberg’ model established by Weaver (1993), which was incorporated in Chapter 3, is hereby relevant. The model illustrates how some cultural elements are easy to learn, as they are external elements such as language, behaviour, customs and food. The invisible culture elements are more challenging to grasp, as these elements include taken-for granted beliefs, values and unconscious feelings that are difficult to observe and point out.

As a result of the division between visible and invisible cultural elements, a consistent finding in the data material was that all of the participants touch upon the importance of getting introduced to the culture, norms and values by other Norwegians. Salole (2013, p. 65, author’s translation) claims that “cultural scriptures and cultural programming are mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion”. Based on Ahmed’s reflections of ethnic Norwegians being somewhat ‘cold’, receiving support and guidance from open Norwegians who embrace their new citizens is crucial. This draws on reflections by Ager and Strang (2008) who point to the significance of refugees being guided by more established members of the community. Three of my eight participants had friend families [‘vennefamilier’], and agreed upon this as a highly important factor in learning common Norwegian social cues and values. When asked whether Rashid feels like his friend family introduces him to the Norwegian society, he explains:

Yes, they’re trying to get me to eat ‘makrell i tomat’ [mackerel in tomato sauce], they’re trying to get me to eat ‘norvegia’ [Norwegian cheese], they’re trying to get me to eat that creme you have on your bread, but I’m not able to eat those things. I hope that I am able to eat those things one day, but it’s not easy.

Rashid connected notions of the Norwegian society to certain foods, which a visible culture element on the cultural iceberg. In his expressed desire to be able to eat those foods one day, one can identify a long-term wish to be fully included in the togetherness that Norwegianness represents. However, he further elaborates:

When I am with them [friend family], then I understand how I should talk to the Norwegian people and how I should behave with the Norwegian people. Like, in my home country, people who are buddies can hit each other just to mess around, and you can think “oi, what are those people in that culture up to”, and then we have to explain that we are friends and that we love each other, and you will think “oh my god”. I have learned that we can’t do that in front of Norwegian people, they get scared.

What Rashid mentions is a clear illustration of what is typically ‘hidden’ in the cultural iceberg (Weaver, 1993). This can point to unconscious feelings or values, which Rashid only became aware of through interaction with his friend family. Such hidden cultural elements would be difficult for Rashid to comprehend on his own, without receiving any guidance. This points to the importance of being properly introduced to social and cultural cues by the majority population (Salole, 2013). Karim has a similar experience as Rashid. He says that he talks to his friend family about the Norwegian society all the time, in which invisible cultural elements - societal rules, values and efforts to be ‘a better person’ are frequent themes of conversation. He adds that talking with them and observing them has helped him a lot in his daily life. Samir, who does not have a friend family, emphasises the school arena as an important contributor in introducing him to the Norwegian society. By comparing cultures in social science class, he can identify the typical things that constitute Norwegian culture, and he utters that this is of great help. He notes that the majority population is important. He states: “I learn by myself as well. I see people, what they do, and you know stuff when you see a person, you get to find out stuff”. It is apparent that both getting introduced to invisible cultural elements while also actively observing the visible cultural elements are highly important for them in getting to know the Norwegian society. To grasp Norwegianness, Samir plays an active part in acquiring the knowledge that is available to him. This is in line with Corsaro (2009) and the concept of ‘interpretive reproduction’, which will further be assessed in terms of socialisation in the Norwegian society.

5.3 Socialisation

As was focused on in the previous subchapter, it is evident that the participants observe and learn from the majority population in their quest to adapt to the Norwegian society. In this subchapter, I will more closely explore exactly *how* the youth adapt to Norwegian culture, and how they simultaneously ‘make it their own’.

Despite varying answers in relation to cultural identification, the majority of the participants express the importance of adaptation and learning how the Norwegian society is and what it consists of. As adaptation here becomes the key word, it points to the active part the participants take in the socialisation process, in trying to navigate their new world. They do not, in line with classical socialisation theory by Durkheim, passively internalize current norms, but rather actively take part in the processes by interpreting, acting and adapting to their new situation (Corsaro, 2009). Jamal values the importance of learning from the majority population, and says: “If you only hang out with other Afghans, you don’t learn anything new”. This can also be connected to the model of the cultural iceberg implemented above, in which getting introduced to the new and foreign social and cultural codes by the majority population is crucial. In this respect, Samir mentions how he, through observing the majority population, slowly, but surely is starting to act like an ethnic Norwegian:

At the store, our Afghan culture is to just pay for our friends and guests, like one person takes the bill if we are five friends who go to the store together. But Norwegians, they go to the store, you know, and they pay for themselves. But now, I have become more like the Norwegians! We are becoming integrated now. It’s been three years since I came here, and during that time, I have learned a lot about everything, culture and rules.

Through what is acknowledged as visible cultural patterns Samir has observed ‘the Norwegian way’ of doing things. This is characterized by an individualistic way of thinking and acting as opposed to a collectivistic way of living, which is prevalent in countries such as Afghanistan. Sometimes action speaks louder than words, and one can gain insightful information by assessing an individual’s behavioural patterns. It is evident that Samir interprets, acts and adapts to his new situation (Corsaro, 2009). By reflecting on how his shopping habits have changed, Samir recognizes important aspects of his cultural identity. Berg (2010) argues that integration is about a question of degree, where it is up to the individual to decide the extent of which they want to integrate to the Norwegian society, norms and values. Samir connects his new shopping habits as a clear example of how he is actively choosing to be integrated in Norway. Further, Abdul explains how he had to adjust to the Norwegian culture in ways he did not expect beforehand. He tells me:

When I left Pakistan to Iran, I wore like traditional clothes. When I came to Iran, they didn't wear that, they had jeans and t-shirts. I was surprised by that. Then I went to Turkey, and then to Norway, and it was different again. They [the girls] didn't even wear hijabs! I talked to my parents and told about the girls, and they laughed a bit and said "it's getting worse and worse, hehe". Now, it's totally normal for me. It was a bit difficult to shake hands with girls in the start, because we don't do that, but now I manage that just fine.

Abdul notes that the Western way of dressing and acting were strange for him to observe, as this was his first meeting with modern culture. He tells that it was a challenging transitional phase, where he had to take in new behavioural patterns, norms and values that he was never used to deal with before. However, it increasingly became easier to shake hands with girls when he saw that his peers from Afghanistan and Pakistan were comfortable doing it. Abdul's experience is closely connected to reflections proposed by Valentine and Sporton (2009), who mention that immigrants experience challenges in maintaining their cultural heritage while also adapting to new social and cultural norms in the receiving country. In opposition to a passive socialisation process, Abdul shows that the culture he produces along with his peers is significant for his behaviour. By being influenced by his peers, not by the majority population, he eventually became comfortable in shaking hands with girls – which is not common according to conservative Islam code of conduct. If Abdul did not feel comfortable in shaking hands with girls, it could cause reactions by the majority population, as the common expectation is that minority people *should* adapt to the majority society in the best possible way (Berg, 2010; Brochmann, 2005). Corsaro (2009) described the impact and importance of peer cultures in navigating the social world. Abdul's example illustrates that the youth are not only passive recipients of adult culture - instead, they produce and reproduce culture along with their peers (Corsaro, 2009).

Abdul further states: "I can't know everything grown Norwegians know, or those who are kids who are 16-17 years, we have experienced totally different things. We don't understand each other entirely". Abdul touches upon the relation between generations, in which the adult culture and youth culture not necessarily overlap or correspond to each other. Especially not when he has not been introduced to this specific adult culture from childhood. The structural difference between the societies he has been introduced to, and how social constructions lead to children

and youth not being able to ‘understand each other entirely’ due to their different upbringings, are key elements in his statement. As there are no universal childhood to be found across nation states (Prout & Jenks, 2005), the Afghan individuals who come to Norway have a different view of the world based on the historical, cultural and social context they have found themselves in (Prout & Jenks, 2005). Consequently, even though Abdul now finds himself in the same environment as ethnic Norwegian youth and adults, he will not perceive or grasp the culture in the same manner they do, as his dispositions and his basis differ from theirs. Rashid has a concrete example in which he illustrates that he cannot “know everything grown Norwegians know”, as Abdul says. In Norway, a popular thing to do among children and youth is to pick apples from their neighbours’ gardens [‘epleslang’]. Rashid tells me a story of the first time he did this, and was guided by a neighbour in the experience. He says:

I went home from work in the evening, and I wanted to pick some apples from my neighbour’s house. Then this lady came and said “hey, what are you doing” and I was honest and said I just wanted some apples. She was so nice and just said that it was great and that she does the same, but it would be extra nice to ask the owner of the house [for permission]. So I went and asked. In the future now, when I have my own apple tree, maybe someone else will take care of my property like that too. In Afghanistan people wouldn’t look after you like that.

In this situation, Rashid would not know how to properly behave according to Norwegian norms and codes of conduct if his neighbour would not have guided him in the process. In this sense, he gained knowledge in interaction with an established member of community. Ahmed points to this type of adaptation as a significant part in becoming integrated, and says: “My life is here. No matter where you live, you need to belong. That’s important, when you live in a certain place”. He further says that he eventually will ‘become a Norwegian’ if he follows Norwegian rules and culture, and internalize Norwegian values. Ahmed’s reflections summarize the reflections held by all of the participants – that belonging to the Norwegian society through adapting to Norwegianness is crucial for their sense of selves and societal well-being. However, as shown, how this process actually transpires varies among the youth. Lastly, as demonstrated, the need for recognition in terms of identity building does not only concern validation from the out-group of the majority population, but most definitely concerns the acknowledgement and support they receive within their in-group.

CHAPTER 6: “IT’S OUR COUNTRY TOO, WE LIVE HERE”

The analysis chapter of citizenship will be divided into three sections: Citizenship connected to identity, citizenship connected to rights and citizenship connected to participation. This is a distinction which draws on theory from Andersen (2004). As the reader will notice throughout this chapter, the three concepts of citizenship are interconnected, and although separated for the purpose of structure, they overlap and interact. This is especially the case in regard to the interconnectedness between rights and responsibilities, which will both be connected to the UNCRC and notions of the Norwegian welfare model. Further, in the political sense, ‘proper’ Norwegianness is a category defined by the state of Norway through access to formal citizenship. However, as a social and cultural group, the dividing lines are more ambiguous and controversial (Lynnebakke & Fangen, 2011). Therefore, in this chapter, I argue that how an individual identifies himself – and how he is recognized by other members of societies in small and larger communities – have great implications for how this individual practices his citizenship. I will elaborate more on this interconnectedness in the following.

6.1 Citizenship connected to identity

The previous analysis chapter, Chapter 5, involved exploring the identities of the eight participants. This subchapter will also touch upon aspects of identity. However, this will be more related to their identities as Norwegian citizens, and how they position themselves in relation to the majority population on the societal level.

Most of the participants report that they first and foremost identify themselves as Afghans, but that they recognize themselves as member of the Norwegian society. Though, some of the participants seem to find it difficult to explain their role in the Norwegian society. Hamidullah, for instance, states that he feels like he belongs to the Norwegian society all the time, but also reports that he wishes he had friends from the majority population. As I do not question his sense of belonging, I need to consider the possibility that he rather connects his membership to the fact that he likes his new life here in Norway, and feels like he is adapting well. He says: “Everything here suits me well, what I have now. I think that’s enough. You can’t have it all at once”. Further, Farajullah expresses that one can piece together elements from both the Norwegian society and

the Afghan society, according to the individual's preferences. This reflects the dual or multi-faceted belonging immigrants hold (Engebretsen, 2002), in which they often find themselves as part of both in-groups and out-groups within certain societies (Salole, 2013). Yet, when I asked Farajullah if there are times he feels like he does not belong to the Norwegian society, he is clear in his resonance. When he is asleep and dreaming, his mind wanders elsewhere: "When I dream, I feel that I don't belong in the Norwegian society. When I sleep, I dream that I belong in Afghanistan". His sense of belonging comes to the surface in an unconscious state of mind. Other participants, such as Jamal, are able to provide argumentation for how he positions himself as a member in the Norwegian society. In addition, he places the focus more on the present context, in which he explains: "I'm an Afghan, but I live in Norway now, I have to be concerned with what is happening here (...) It's our country too, we live here". When Jamal expresses that 'it is our country too', I sense a need to find his place in society, and to take 'ownership' of his societal role.

I feel like I'm part of the Norwegian society all the time. All the time I think that I belong. All the time I'm with Norwegian people. At school I'm with Norwegians. At work I'm with Norwegians. I talk with them, sit with them, I'm with them.

Jamal, who is both a full-time student and full-time shop assistant values school and work as important citizenry efforts as it gives him first-hand socialisation with the majority population. How an individual relates to his environment is a crucial determinant for his potential as a citizen (Knudsen, 2016; Korsgaard, 2007). Jamal finds good reasons to conclude that he belongs to the Norwegian society, as he surrounds himself with ethnic Norwegians all the time. This includes engaging in what Jamal perceives as meaningful activities in important arenas, such as school and work. As the fundament is in place for him – a sense of belonging to small and larger communities within the society – he is likely to practice his citizenship accordingly (Korsgaard, 2007). Ahmed expresses a wish to do the same:

In school I try to speak to the youth, try to find Norwegian friends. It's important 'cause you connect with them, you do the same as they do, and get the opportunities they have. I like what they do. The mentality of Norwegians.

Both Jamal and Ahmed's excerpts are in line with Gullestad's (2002) reflections, that if an individual recognizes himself as the same as others, feelings of equal value may arise. Jamal appears to be feeling a sense of equal value already, whereas Ahmed actively attempts to achieve the same. The quotes and interpretations from Farajullah, Jamal and Ahmed represent three different perspectives. In his answer, Farajullah focuses on a sense of belonging to the life he lived in the *past*, on what has been. Jamal rather connects sense of belonging to what he is currently experiencing in the Norwegian society in the *present*. Lastly, Ahmed places emphasis on the sense of belonging he desires to feel in the *future*. This is important distinctions, which can say something about their current experiences of citizenship and how they position themselves in the Norwegian society.

As mentioned in the previous analysis chapter concerning identity, Samir does not like to label himself based on nationality, and emphasises that the most important thing is to be a good person. He stresses that everyone can be good persons, whether it be a Norwegian, an Afghan or a Syrian, and that, in this way, there are no fundamental differences between them. He explains that taking part in some customs and traditions contribute to him feeling more in touch with his Afghan roots, while other increase his feeling of inclusion in the Norwegian society:

Here in Norway, when they celebrate Christmas, we're with them. Easter holiday and such. Then we celebrate with Norwegians. With the staff. At Christmas Eve, every Norwegian is with their families, that day is very special to them. Christmas and 17th of May. But when we play cricket with each other, I think "oh, now I'm Afghan".

This shows the significance certain events, traditions and customs have for his societal sense of identity. Samir also directly connects 'cricket', which is a major sport in Afghanistan, as a cultural element which facilitates him to stay in touch with his roots (Engebrigtsen, 2002). Whether they incorporate Norwegian cultural elements as well can to some extent reveal their internal motivation to belong and to be a part of the togetherness. If the participants decide to not celebrate Christmas with the staff, or celebrate the 17th of May, there are no visible 'consequences'. This means that participation within these types of traditions and celebrations is dependent on their internal motivation. Do they attend these celebrations to feel like they are more a part of the Norwegian togetherness, or do they attend because participation in such events

are facilitated and encouraged? Or do they simply attend because this day entails a joyful, lively celebration? Celebrations such as the 17th of May can serve as an arena in which the youth can actively decide to participate and find themselves alongside the majority population. They may feel like a part of the Norwegian togetherness, as this day represents core ideas and perceptions about Norwegianness. As Farajullah states in a quote at page 72, he perceives that he can never be entirely Norwegian, but “we can follow Norwegian rules and traditions”. Samir also notes the importance of participating in Norwegian traditions: “17th of May then everybody comes out here, then we celebrate together, girl and boy, woman and man”. He focuses on 17th May as a day of inclusion, despite differences like gender – such meeting points for all individuals can be uncommon in the Afghan context. Lyngebakke and Fangen (2011), drawing on reflections from Eide and Simonsen (2007), also contend that the practise of customs considered to be ‘typically Norwegian’ can facilitate a feeling of inclusion in the ‘we’ of the society. However, although this day can serve as a source of inclusion, a sense of exclusion may also arise on different levels. For instance, prior to the celebration of 17th May, a debate about flag usage always prevails, in which the key issue is whether the country’s new residents are permitted to bring flags from their homelands in the parade. Here, the focus is shifted from the valuable participation of immigrants in general, to which kind of participation they bring. Karim reveals that he previously was unsure whether he wanted to take part in celebrations like the 17th of May: “In the other place I lived it was like 50/50, do I want to celebrate with them or not? But now I think like I have to celebrate, I live here! Now it’s 100% I want to celebrate”. As Karim has lived in Norway for a longer period of time at this point, he seems to value taking part in events that can lead him to feel an increased sense of belonging. A recognition of one’s citizenship from the majority population can be crucial in terms of experiencing a sense of togetherness, and being valued for their societal contribution. Research findings from Ager and Strang (2008) point to the importance of refugees feeling like their presence in certain activities or arenas is appreciated and not resented. This can give important signals for both the youth and the majority population that integration is transpiring (Ager & Strang, 2008).

When I asked the participants when they feel like they are a part of the Norwegian society, or what it implies to identify as a Norwegian, mastering the language was a highly consistent response. Abdul says: “If I get very good in Norwegian, then I can feel like Norwegian. At least a

little bit”. Hamidullah resonates in a similar matter, and says: “First you learn language. You have to work hard to be integrated in society. When you know the language, it is easier”. He adds that the pronunciation has to be ‘perfect’ in order to add up. Karim also tells me that he can only be Norwegian if his pronunciation is as perfect as the speech of the majority population. Language is an important part of an individual’s identity, and as I will elaborate more closely in the next chapter, language can serve as a means of togetherness and segregation. The tendency Hamidullah and Karim touch upon, in which they want their pronunciation to be perfect, is not unique. Rosa (2016) argues that people who deviate from the standardized language within a country may experience discrimination. It is not enough mastering the language in terms of grammar, one must also speak in accordance with a linguistic ideal. Thus, there exists a “language barrier that must be overcome in order for them to become legitimate participants in and members of the nation-state” (Rosa, 2016, p. 177). I reckon that these youth are aware of how their pronunciation separates them from the majority population, and that this seems to reinforce their feeling that they are ‘not good enough’ Norwegian citizens yet. Rashid mentions that he spoke ‘kebabnorsk’ [Norwegian slang influenced by foreign languages] when he first came to Norway. Svendsen (2014) argues that through public debates about this type of slang, and the stereotypes that emerge from them, the youth are through their linguistic style presented as ‘the others’. Based on their reflections and responses, I believe that acquisition of language skills, and mastering a ‘pure’ Norwegian linguistic style is especially important for their sense of self and sense of self in relation to the majority population. It appears as if they believe that only then will they be fully accepted as Norwegian citizens.

6.1 Citizenship connected to rights

In this section, I will explore how the participants view their place in the Norwegian society based on aspects that concerns their rights as citizens. When assessing their place in Norwegian society, and thus, their citizenry, having the same fundament as the majority population is evidently important. Abdul touches upon the significance of establishing a set of societal rights and rules that concern and are shared by every citizen in Norway:

We can’t think too political. In Norway, we can’t make our own rules for Afghans, own rules for Pakistanis, and different rules for Eritreans... We all need the same rules, the same rights and the same opportunities. People are equal. Christians and Muslims must have the same rights and rules, or else,

there is discrimination and racism. There will be conflict between the groups.

Abdul finds it crucial that there are rules which apply for everyone, despite the fact that the citizens of a certain country or community have various backgrounds in terms of political beliefs, religion and nationalities. As he grew up in Iran and Pakistan, and has his Afghan nationality, he is likely to be aware of what opposing and rivalling ethnic and political groups within a country can lead to. That is, how such differences among people can contribute to create gaps instead of bridges within society, which in turn can lead to societal instability and unsafety. Karim, who has the same background as Abdul, shares his view:

In Pakistan they don't care and it's not safe either. In Iran it is like safe, but no care for immigrants. For example I have been in school in Iran, but I didn't have the same rights as Iranians have. But here in Norway, you have same rights as Norwegians.

He further acknowledges that Norway offers both safety and care for him, in addition, he experiences that he receives the same treatment as the majority population. I interpret that, especially for the unaccompanied minor refugees who come to Norway, to experience some sort of judicial and societal safety in the sense that they are protected by equal rights and rules as the majority population is essential. This is also supported by research, as findings highlighted by Ager and Strang (2008) point to the importance of refugees sharing 'a common ground' with non-refugees in terms of rights.

Askins (2016) identifies that the lack of formal citizenship is one of the key issues in immigrants' legal struggles. Many of the participants express that having a Norwegian passport is one of the main fundamentals for being a Norwegian citizen. In order to feel like a Norwegian, Hamidullah contends that a formal citizenship must be in place. Samir also illustrates this: "I can be a Norwegian too. But not now, maybe eventually, maybe when I get married to a Norwegian girl and we get children together, and later I get a Norwegian passport". Samir is clear that the combination between having an ethnic Norwegian family and a Norwegian passport will increase Samir's connection to Norway, and contribute to strengthen his identity as an Afghan-Norwegian. Jamal states the importance of eventually holding a Norwegian passport in a long-

term perspective, and demonstrates an awareness of not only his rights, but also his *responsibilities* to achieve this:

You have to work. You have to take those tests, you have to go to school. There are 650 hours demands for Norwegian classes. You have to take that. There are many demands. And maybe you'll get a Norwegian passport.

Jamal's reflections illustrate key points from Chapter 2 in the Contextual background – that there is an important interplay between rights and responsibilities for the unaccompanied minor refugees in Norway. To gain a formal Norwegian citizenship, the individual has to put in a certain amount of work as established by the government. The legal struggles are also applied to the uncertainty regarding residence permits - on the pathway to gain formal citizenship, one must first attain a residence permit that facilitates the individuals to act as Norwegian citizens.

Samir shares his experiences from his time at the reception centre, in which the uncertainty connected to residence permits arose:

When you don't yet have residence status, you feel like you're not a part of the society. I lived with many people in the reception centres and when some guys saw that other people got rejected on their asylum applications, they thought "we're gonna get rejected as well, we don't even need to learn the language". I said to them "fine, that's your way of thinking. But you shouldn't think negatively. You can learn the language, who knows if you're gonna get rejected!" Funny thing is, everyone who think negatively, they didn't get rejected. They live around here.

Samir demonstrates that having a residency that facilitates the individual to actively feel a part of, and take a part of, the larger society, is fundamental. When the unaccompanied refugee is provided with protection and settled in a municipality, the individual can be recognized as a citizen beyond the legal challenges. Experiencing solidarity in interaction with the majority population is a key element (Askins, 2016). Although Samir mentioned concerns about residence permits among peers at the reception centre, similar tendencies can be applied to the situation they find themselves in once they receive a residence permit as well. Ahmed, though settled in a municipality, told me that he has a limited residence permit. I initially decided to not bring up

the subject of residence status, as this is a particularly sensitive topic which can potentially cause discomfort and emotional reactions among the participants. However, Ahmed was very open, and able to connect his potential for societal participation to his own limited residency. He explicitly mentions residence permit as a factor that directly influences his citizenry:

When I have the same opportunities as others, then I can achieve the goals I have, and become integrated. But there are some strict rules that ruins my progress. I have a limited residence permit (...). A Norwegian classmate of mine once asked me if I would join a high school party hosted at school. The ticket had to be paid with Vipps. I didn't have that chance because of my limited residence permit. The day when the party was, I was planning to pay up front, but the tickets were sold out... That kinda ruins your possibilities...

The limitations his residency carries makes him stand out from the majority population. The rights he is entitled to – or the rights that he is lacking – are crucial determinants in terms of equal value, as mentioned above, but also in regard to how he is perceived by the majority population (Ager & Strang, 2008). A lack of rights can result in him experiencing a lack of respect by others (Ager & Strang, 2008), and Eide (2007) argues that the way in which the unaccompanied minor children are met in the Norwegian society has great value in terms of achieving integration. Eide (2007) further connects this to Honneth's (1995) model, which was described in Chapter 3. The legal sphere is the second sphere of recognition, where equal legal treatment and respect are crucial factors for experiencing recognition by the wider society. Because Ahmed does not judicially have the same opportunities as 'every other Norwegian', or even as his fellow unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees in Norway with different residence permits, he is unable to fully practise his citizenship. This can have the implication that he might not feel fully recognized as an individual and as a social actor. He illustrates how his lack of rights eventually lead him to miss out on what could have been an opportunity for him to socialize with ethnic Norwegian youth. In this sense, he was excluded from the social arena based on his lack of rights. This draws on central research findings on the topic of citizenship, where citizenship is acknowledged as a source of both social inclusion and social exclusion (Moosa-Mitha, 2005; Lister, 2007).

It must be mentioned that Ahmed was the only participant who spoke about his residence status, but other participants could have this limitation as well. One must then keep in mind that the answers provided by the participants are based on the legal opportunities and rights they are entitled to and provided with. Having this in mind, one must also be aware of how age is a crucial element in terms of the unaccompanied minor refugee's rights and responsibilities (The Norwegian Ministry of Children and Equality, 2018). As previously emphasised in Chapter 2, the 54 rights of UNCRC are only granted to individuals below the age of 18. Ahmed is 18 years old and have a limited residence permit. He did not elaborate on the specific legalities surrounding this permit, but this is often given when there exists doubt about one's identity. This clear-cut definition of what constitutes a child, and the rights that follows, certainly have great consequences for those who are not able to prove their age and identity (Sørsveen, 2018). Concluding, "articulating refugee rights thus defines the foundation of integration policy, to which governments are accountable" (Ager & Strang, 2008, p. 175).

6.3 Citizenship connected to participation

In the previous subchapter, I elaborated on the importance of rights in regard to citizenship. Closely linked to rights are the responsibilities that follows in the virtue of being a citizen. In Norway, the unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees' participation, and hence, citizenship, may be manifested in different ways. The participants assess their societal participation according to different factors, among which, societal participation through school and work are the main determinants. This will be connected to fundamental values derived from the Norwegian welfare model.

In the contextual background in Chapter 2, I suggested that the mandatory training and education in Norwegian and Social Science in gaining Norwegian citizenship is what mostly corresponds to active societal participation for the unaccompanied minor refugees. A consistent finding in my data material, was the extent to which school participation is equated by participation in the Norwegian society in general by the participants. They all mentioned school as one the most important arenas in which they are social actors in society. Hamidullah contends: "I live here, go to school here, I am a part of the Norwegian society". For Hamidullah, it is natural that he is a citizen simply because he lives here, but he also highlights participation in school as a key

element. Ahmed tells that he feels like he is a part of the Norwegian society when he is at school, because he and his classmates do everything together and co-operate thoroughly. When asked if Ahmed feels like he is a part of the Norwegian society except for when he is in school, he responds:

Normally, no... But I feel like it's about language and about work. When I will get a job I would feel like I'm more and more a part of the Norwegian society. In school I feel like I'm a part of a shared environment in society, in daily life I don't feel this as much.

Ahmed states that collaborating and interacting with the majority population at school is the only time he feels like he is a part of the Norwegian society. It is evident that participation in society is valued because of the invaluable contact can establish between the youth and the majority population. Putnam's (1993) theory on social contact is thus relevant to implement, in which building *social bridges* between refugees and the host communities is crucial. The more a refugee is welcomed, recognized and accepted within a certain local community, the more increases the individual's likelihood to partake in integrational efforts. Ahmed mentions 'to do everything together' and co-operation as to important determinants that portray his sense of citizenship at school. This shows the importance of having natural meeting points between the youth and the majority population which facilitate societal participation and social inclusion. Ahmed shares his thoughts about successful integration in the subsequent way:

To give possibilities to the individual that makes him feel good... The individual must go to school, be a student and learn about society. He needs support, maybe from the staff so he can have someone to talk to.

In this excerpt, Ahmed touches upon this important interplay. He connects the possibilities individuals are provided with, and the responsibilities that the individuals hold, as crucial integrational determinants. Attending school is a prime example of how they manifest their citizenship, as participation in school can facilitate the youth to exercise their participation rights as set forward by UNCRC. Indeed, participation rights are acknowledged as a vital part of citizenship (Hart, 1992). As Ursin and Lorgen (In Review) argue, the participation rights are closely connected to a recognition of children as competent social actors and holders of rights.

More specifically, Articles 12, 13, 15 and 17 seek to ensure children's participation, in which freedom of speech and freedom of thought are of relevance. The exercise of these rights in the school arena can further be seen as participation in the 'small democracy'. As mentioned in Chapter 3, participation in the small democracy occurs when individuals try to empower and influence their own situation in their local societies (Petersson et al., 1989). Farajullah touches upon this in the following way: "Here is school, here is opportunities to become and do something". In this statement, Farajullah acknowledges the school's role in the Norwegian society. The school arena is especially prominent in the lives of children and youth residing in Norway, where the Education Act § 2-1 states their statutory duty to undertake primary education.

In terms of active participation in society, work is additionally relevant. As Ahmed states above, if he had a job, a feeling of greater participation in the Norwegian society would likely occur. When I asked some of the participants what they can do on their own to enhance their integration process, Karim responds that he can ensure that he takes an education and has a job. Many of the participants who currently have jobs, such as Karim, seem to take great pride in the fact that they are currently contributing to the society in terms of having acquired work. Ahmed and Karim's reflections are in line with widespread ideas on successful integration, as work is particularly emphasised in terms of its integrational outcome. Ager and Strang (2008) argue that having a job to go to can lead to a felt and actual contribution to society. Rugkåsa (2010) also places focus on how work is significant both on micro and macro level within society, and contends that high levels of employment are crucial in terms of ensuring economic growth to maintain the Norwegian welfare model. In this respect, Rashid compares the economic situation in Norway to that of Afghanistan:

There are many differences. Afghanistan is a country where you don't pay taxes. It is a country where the economy gets worse every day. A person goes outside, earns maybe 300 kroner but before he comes home, money is gone. He spent all money on food to his children. He cannot save anything.

Rashid, who has a part time job, is aware how working and paying taxes is positive for the future, and says: "Here I pay taxes, here I will be a retiree [pensjonist]". Their reflections are closely associated to the welfare system of Norway, in which perceptions of citizenship often have

derived from the Norwegian welfare model. The system is largely built up by the population working and paying taxes to receive societal benefits and to contribute to the common welfare of the society (Mathisen, 2003). Brochmann and Grødem (2017) argue that the Norwegian welfare model was developed in a time in which movement across borders was rare. As the system was meant to benefit the citizens of the country, one could easily depict who was included in the system and who was excluded (Brochmann & Grødem, 2017). However, in the current multicultural Norway, one cannot rely on the eye to identify what constitutes a formal Norwegian citizen. Instead, one can assess the extent to which the residents are *active citizens*. Samir reflects on how he views the welfare model as a given entity that must be respected and implemented in the lives of immigrants:

It's a Norwegian society, so we can't do anything to change that. School, hospitals, and the, the help we get from Norway. That's very positive. In Afghan society, if you are poor or rich, no one pays taxes. People earn a lot, but don't pay tax. So you have to pay hospital and those things yourself. It's very different from Norway. We are very grateful that we have Norway. Especially me. The society and everything. Not everybody gets those opportunities.

Samir demonstrates an awareness of how the traditional welfare model of Norway ensures opportunities to its citizens. As I mentioned in the previous analysis chapter regarding Norwegianness, Karim is convinced that the majority population want something in return from immigrants:

What I am thinking is that they want something, that we immigrants can help them. Not only come here and get money from them. We have to take education and find jobs.

Contribution, here, becomes a key concept, as contributing to the larger community is an essential part of the Norwegian citizenship. In this sense, Rugkåsa (2010) argues that there exists an ideal in which the citizens should aspire to live up to. Having established a certain ideal, one finds a contrasting 'incomplete' citizens, in which those who fail to live up to the ideals may be perceived as threats to the welfare state. Being unemployed is considered such a threat. With this in mind, one can understand why my employed participants acknowledge work as the most

important integrational act, while those of the participants who are employed highly aspire to acquire work.

CHAPTER 7: “I STARTED PLAYING FOOTBALL BECAUSE I WANTED TO GET TO KNOW NORWEGIAN PEOPLE, BUT NOT EVERYBODY WANTED TO GET TO KNOW ME”

In this chapter, I will firstly account for how the participants define successful and unsuccessful integration. It is important to give these youth the opportunity to speak up on how they operationalize such processes. Most governmental campaigns with integrational aims are set in motion based on ‘secondary’ assessments – not that of the youth who are going to integrate. Secondly, the analysis turns to the power of language, and how it may serve as a means of togetherness and segregation. Thirdly, I present the importance of social support and social networks as a key element in the integration context. Lastly, it is demonstrated that having opportunities and ambitions are crucial for the individual, and this is especially related to how education and work function as integrational facilitators.

7.1 What does successful or unsuccessful integration entail?

One of the questions I wanted to ask all of the participants, regardless of the conversation or form of interview, was how they define successful or unsuccessful integration. In expressing their observations of others or their own experiences, I wanted this to serve as an exercise that would facilitate them to reflect on their own societal position. By doing so, it appeared as if the youth gained an awareness of how ‘invisible’ processes and certain mind-sets influence integration. I acknowledge that their perspectives on this topic are of particular relevance.

The participants of this project had a lot to say when defining what constitutes successful or unsuccessful integration. A common theme can be found across several responses: Positive or negative thinking, in which positive, forward-thinking can result in successful integration, whereas negative, past-thinking may enhance unsuccessful integration. Jamal expresses that one’s thought process is a vital determinant, because if you think positive, words will eventually become action and you will find yourself moving forward. He further elaborates:

If you think negative, you’re going down, down, down... You stand in the same place. If you’re alone all the time, home alone, then you think wrong. You think something else if you’re alone all the time.

You think wrong, negative, because you're not able to think positive. If you're with friends, adults... Then you hear what they are talking about, maybe it's something positive, maybe you ask them "how can I make it go better" – you learn about life.

Jamal's perspective can be connected to reflections by Askins (2016), in which experiencing meaningful engagement with established members of a community can prevent social tension and enhance feelings of an inclusive citizenry. Abdul shares similar line of thought with Jamal, and says:

One who is badly integrated only thinks of his past. Because two years ago, one year ago, I was that person, I only thought about Pakistan, that I can't forget everything I had in Pakistan. Now all the time I think that I live in Norway, I need to follow them too. Follow the rules here.

Karim is also of the same perception, and responds: "The one who is integrated has contact with more people, but the other.. The other thinks about his home country. Thinks about old things. Not got used to the culture". The reflections proposed by Jamal, Abdul and Karim represent an axis of time and place, where turning forward to the life in Norway constitutes a successful integration, whereas the opposite, looking backwards at one's past life indicates unsuccessful integration. Berg (2010) argues that this relationship between adjusting to the host country and the wish to return to the home country is a natural part of this process. For some, it does not even need to involve a wish to return – the individuals with a temporary residence permit live with the uncertainty of return regardless. Berg (2010) mentions typical questions they make ask themselves, such as "why bother learning Norwegian if I won't stay anyway?" Such attitudes suggest a natural lack of motivation to integrate. Ahmed, who is the one participant who spoke up about his temporary residence permit mentions that his lack of equal rights as the majority population limits his societal development. The awareness of a potential return, or living with uncertainty, is likely to influence the way he responds to the integrational process. Karim argues that integration is important because he will continue to live here, but acknowledges that an individual who is uncertain about his future is not able to settle the distressing thoughts in the same way as him. Jamal, Abdul and Karim are explicitly clear about the importance of how internal processes, e.g. an individual's mind-set, can have great implications for the willingness to integrate in the Norwegian society. They also mention an important aspect, where difficult

thoughts about their home country and their past experiences have a way of causing serious consequences for their life in the present. Berg (2010), drawing on notions from Ålund (1991), contends that it is fully possible to build bridges between one's past and present, and in this sense, create a new way of existing. It appears as the above mentioned participants, Jamal, Abdul and Karim, have come to the same realisation, and once they were able to come to terms with Norway being their new home, they found that they had to focus on what lies ahead, as opposed to what previously has been.

When speaking more closely on successful/unsuccessful integration, Ahmed is influenced by what he has been taught in school when providing his answer. He tells me that, he, in Social Science class, has learned how successful integration of immigrants can prevent criminality, and how unsuccessful integration can lead to criminality. He utters "if he feels bad, he will find other ways to feel good, maybe by doing a criminal action". Here, Ahmed reproduces common stereotypes and fears among the majority population that immigration equals criminality. Gullestad (2002) argued that this shows itself when criminal actions committed by immigrants are perceived as 'typical' for their ethnicity, culture or religion. Evensen (2009) notes that this perception increased in the Norwegian context from the 1990s, and applies Cohen's (1972) concept of 'moral panic' to explain this exaggerated – and at times unjustified – fear. In regard to Ahmed's quote, it is necessary to take a look at the circumstances that may lead to these criminal occurrences taking place. Ahmed tells me:

The person feels left out of society. He doesn't feel like a part of society, because he thinks that other think he is a bad person or has a bad background. That's why he feels left out and is poorly integrated.

In light of his reflections, it is relevant to briefly place the emphasis on the magnitude of public opinions and attitudes in the integrational context. In the contextual background of this thesis, I incorporated findings from an IMDi-report which measured attitudes and perception of integration among the majority population in Norway. There were various findings, for instance, only two out of ten ethnic Norwegians believe the integration is going in the right direction (Brekke & Mohn, 2018). Engebretsen (2015) stresses that the image that is painted of immigrants in the media can have a serious impact on the majority population's attitudes and knowledge about their new residents. These attitudes are therefore seen as the fundament in which dialogue

and co-existence is built upon (Engebretsen, 2015). Ahmed says that a badly integrated person feels left out, and that this person would be worried whether the majority population believe he or his background are 'bad'. Berg (2010) states that people's attitudes towards the refugee politics, and the refugees themselves, are fundamental determinants in terms of the potential of achieving integration. It is therefore of great importance to view integration as a two-way-process, in which the individuals who are going to integrate play an active part, but also, that the majority population play an active part in facilitating the integrational efforts. In this manner, Eide (2007) makes a direct connection between recognition by other members of society and the willingness to integrate. Ahmed's reflections point to the tendency in which exclusion from small and large communities can lead to criminality. Jamal, on the other hand, links a lack of goals as an important determinant:

If you don't have any goals, what are you going to do? Then you'll go around and then, you'll start drinking and smoking and doing other stuff. Suddenly you're in a fight or something.. Being out with friends in the street, smoking, drinking... Just no.

Exclusion and a lack of goals, according to Ahmed and Jamal, can have severe negative consequences. Herein, subcultures may emerge, in which members create an identity by expressing resistance towards the establishment (Evensen, 2009). A lack of recognition and experienced exclusion influences the willingness to integrate in a significantly negative direction (Ager & Strang, 2008). Døving (2009) points to the importance that individuals who are portrayed as different will become distanced to the people he/she usually are surrounded with. Hirschi (2001) theorizes that it is easier for individuals with weak ties to the wider communities to commit criminal acts, and these weak ties can be the result of exclusion in terms of discrimination or racism (Prieur, 2004). Further, as opposed to exclusion and a lack of goals, having a social network and specific goals and ambitions will be assessed in a following subchapter.

7.2 Language as a means of togetherness and segregation

Although I never asked the participants explicitly about language, the topic always occurred several times during the interviews. They all, in diverse forms, agree upon the importance of language. As described in Chapter 6, language was also an important aspect in terms of citizenship and one's societal identity. It can be reckoned as *the* fundamental aspect in navigating

the social world and all that it entails. That is, language proficiency is a prerequisite in all arenas of society. The majority of the participants explicitly tell me that the time at the reception centres was difficult in terms of language acquisition. As Samir voiced earlier, many of the boys he lived with were convinced that they were going to get their application for residence permit rejected, and thus did not want to subject themselves to this demanding process. Other participants similarly mention the strange feeling they had when living at the reception centres, trying to acquire Norwegian language skills. Rashid was more eager than the boys Samir described, and recalls:

When I came to Norway, the first day, I took a sheet because I had to learn “what’s your name, what’s your name’, what’s your name”. Then eventually I got that ‘is’ is a verb, and then I understood that and that word as well. And suddenly by learning those few words, I could like say a lot of sentences! I kinda learned ‘kebabnorsk’ [Norwegian slang influenced by foreign languages], hehe.

Rashid tells me that he was known as ‘the interpreter’ at his reception centre, and today, he is pleased with how active and eager he was in trying to learn the language. However, several of the participants look back at the experience as challenging. Karim reminisces on how difficult it was to find himself in a store and not be able to communicate with anyone. Jamal also illustrates this in the following way:

It is the most important thing. If you live in Norway, you have to learn the language. If you’re here, you don’t speak the language and you go to a store.. What are you going to say? It’s an important thing, jeez, the language. Learn to go to the doctor, order a doctor’s appointment...

Jamal touches upon the most basic practise of language, which allows him to build bridges with the host community and the members of the majority population when doing daily tasks (Putnam, 1993). Language is the key to mutual communication and interaction with other members of society, and Jamal quickly learned that acquiring language skills was a key element in order to navigate in the local and wider communities he is a part of. At a certain point he found himself in a dark space due to his lack of language proficiency. He describes the process of learning a new language as both horrible and demanding. Yet, parallel to learning Norwegian, he gradually gained a more positive outlook on his life in Norway. Now, he speaks Norwegian all day, every

day, with class mates and colleagues from the majority population. Jamal is in a stage in life in which practising the language comes very natural to him, as he is a full time student and a full time worker. Not all of the participants feel like they are able to practice the language to the extent as Jamal. Abdul, although he speaks Norwegian very well, and has lived in a municipality for nearly three years, finds it difficult to communicate with Norwegians in daily life. He says:

It's very boring for them to be with me, and it can be boring for me to be with them. For example we don't speak like openly. When I speak with people from my culture, I speak openly.

Abdul's experience, challenges in communicating freely with the majority population, is not unique. Drawing on Hohr (2015), language can serve as a means of togetherness but also for segregation. On the basis of the multicultural Norway, one can certainly acknowledge linguistic, social and cultural codes as the centre of both togetherness and segregation (Hohr, 2015). It becomes apparent that the participants share similar line of thought. Ahmed says: "The language is like a brake for us, but I hope I can be with them in two years. Communicate in a real way with them". Ahmed and the other participants frequently refer to the majority population as 'them'. Berg (2010) describes that there exists an increasing tendency in which there are no longer only ethnic Norwegians applying processes of 'othering' through the labels of 'us' and 'them'. However, in this instance, 'them' is not used in a derogatory matter. Rather, it is used to describe a group Ahmed desires to have more contact and communication with.

Similarly to Ahmed, Farajullah mentions having a circle of friends consisting of the majority population as something desirable in a long-term perspective. To learn more Norwegian is an important step on the way for him. He says: "I can learn more Norwegian, and they are very nice, so eventually they can come visit me and I can come visit them". Based on these responses, language serves as a means of both togetherness and segregation in various arenas of society. I interpret that the segregation is an ordinary consequence in the start, as it is difficult to communicate with individuals who newly have come to the country. All of the participants had been residents of Norway for two-three years, and I recognize that they all mastered Norwegian – some were nearly fluent, with little accents identified. Still, based on their stories, language is the greatest barrier for them in socialising with the majority population. This can be the result of various elements, such as processes of 'othering', social exclusion and stigma. It can also be

based on some of the participants' lack of self esteem and a lack of recognition for their own language skills (Rosa, 2016). Samir reveals: "When I spoke to Norwegians, I used to think that they were like "he can't speak Norwegian at all!". I became scared to speak, sort of. But that was before, not now". The more he spoke Norwegian, the better he felt about himself. He also remarks the meeting points he attends to in order to practice his Norwegian and socialising with the majority population, such as the local Red Cross and the local football team. As language is acknowledged by the participants as the foundation to navigate their new lives in Norway, language training is a critical element in the Norwegian integration policy (Bjerkan, 2009).

7.3 Social networks and social support

In this subchapter, I will place emphasis on the importance of social networks and social support. As unaccompanied refugees are just that – unaccompanied – gaining and maintaining a social network in their new country is crucial. Samir reveals that his social network in Norway serves the function of a family to him:

Friends are family to me. Brother, sister, mother, father... A best friend. In Norwegian I heard there was this expression, "jenter kommer og jenter går, en bestevenn er for hundre år" [girls come and go, but a best friend lasts for a hundred years].

Samir's resonance and way of thinking are in line with claims made by Boyden and Mann (2005), which were introduced in the theoretical framework in Chapter 3. They note that the establishment of positive peer relations is vital in terms of ensuring a sense of belonging and a sense of self-esteem (Boyden & Mann, 2005). Importantly, to be a part of a social group or to have meaningful relations with peers can enhance the youth's resilience. Berg (2010) also stresses the significance that unaccompanied minor refugees ought to be offered a stable and predictable daily life with access to a lot of support to facilitate well-functioning. The majority of the participants explicitly mention friendships as one of the most important things in their lives. Farajullah says: "I need them, without them, nothing is okay, life would be boring". As Ahmed was quoted in Chapter 5 regarding identity, the unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees in Norway also share similar life experiences, and automatically have a greater understanding for what their peers are processing, as they might deal with similar issues themselves. To have peers who understand one's past and present situation can be a source of great support for them.

One can also assess friendships with peers as vital in coping with loneliness. In an earlier subchapter, I shed light on how the participants operationalize successful and unsuccessful integration, in which positive/negative thinking was a strong determinant. Within a negative line of thinking, ‘loneliness’ is a recurrent theme among the responses. Samir, for instance, touches upon loneliness as an important aspect when it comes to integration:

If you’re not integrated in a society, you feel lonely. I also felt that way, you know. I didn’t know anybody. You get sad, you think, “why am I like this?”. It’s best that you speak to people. There will come days that is very sad for you, and then you have someone who can comfort you. Anyone. They can be Afghan or Norwegian or Eritrean or from other countries. Eventually I became integrated in society, got Norwegian friends, some were girls.. It was like... It is so nice to talk to people, I think. That integration is very important.

Samir also shared with me a very recent experience where he and his Afghan classmates played football together, in which the teacher had asked them why they did not play with ‘the Norwegians’. Samir had responded that “teacher, we want to be with them, but we can’t force anyone to play with us”. After this, two ethnic Norwegian classmates had come up to them, and joined in on the game. When Samir shares these types of stories with me, it is for a purpose. No matter the negativity consistent with these vulnerable experiences, he always seems to focus on the light at the end of the tunnel, and remains inviolably optimistic of acquiring a network of ethnic Norwegians. Abdul is also optimistic. Although he in a previous chapter was quoted on Norwegian being difficult to talk to – as if they have something on their tongue and cannot get it out– he remains hopeful that he will expand his network of ethnic Norwegian friends. He does not only rely on hope, but actively makes choices that can benefit his integration. He says:

I talked to the advisor at school about some subjects, and there was this subject where I could speak my mother tongue with other Afghans, he said I should take that course, but I said no. No, no, I want to be with Norwegian youth, I want to learn Norwegian.

Many of the participants mostly have friends from Afghanistan, Eritrea and Syria, and express a wish to a greater extent have ethnic Norwegian friends in their social networks. Some of them have friendships with members from the majority population, and some are proud to even have

ethnic Norwegian acquaintances. What all of the participants share, however, is the desire to expand their circle of friends to include more ethnic Norwegians. In this sense, it is easier to master the language, as Abdul mentions, but also, it can enhance a sense of belonging to small and larger communities within the country.

Samir opens up about struggles in getting recognized by Norwegian peers: “I started playing football because I wanted to get to know Norwegian people, but not everybody wanted to get to know me”. Samir, although he favours cricket instead of football, actively sought out measures to get to know his local peers through sports. He added that in the locker room after matches, there were only two people trying to communicate with him. He also felt the need to add to the story that today, he has become friends with his teammates. This example illustrates a need for recognition in a wider community than the intimate community he shares with other Afghan youth. Berg (2012) contends that the exile process can take many forms and be shaped by several factors, but that it surely is dependent on an individual’s internal attitude towards integrating, as well as the external context the individual finds himself in. Is the individual recognized as a peer, and is he offered opportunities and inclusion in society? Døving (2009) points to the importance of immigrants being equated with the rest of the population in terms of integrational efforts. If these youth are first and foremost recognized as *different*, or as *the others*, it is easy to become distanced and sense a distance to the majority population (Døving, 2009).

7.4 Having opportunities and ambitions

In the previous subchapter, I have shed light on how social networks are vital elements in being integrated, particularly when the network consists of members from the majority population. I identified that many of the participants already socialize with ethnic Norwegians to some extent, but that they aspire to do so on a greater level. Their social desires are of special relevance in terms of integration. Further, I will also connect the social aspect to the main themes of this subchapter: School as an integrational facilitator and work as an integrational facilitator. In regard to these two topics, my data material revealed that establishing goals and ambitions within these arenas are central in the motivation to take part in the Norwegian society. As Jamal states in an earlier subchapter, “if you don’t have any goals, what are you going to do?”. Thus, the participants’ goals and ambitions are directly connected to participation in school and/or

work/career. Before turning to these two themes, I want to illustrate the significance of participation and ambitions within school and work, and the interconnectedness between these. Firstly, Jamal says: “In Norway you choose for yourself - that is freedom”, whereas Samir expresses that the Norwegian school opened up a whole new world for him. Rashid elaborates:

The future.. Oh my god, don't even ask! I have so many dreams! I have come so close to my dreams, now it's soon just to open the doors. My first dream was to get an education, and I was going to work really hard. Later I want to start my own business. That's not difficult as long as you have the economy. I'm *Alhamdulillah* [praise be to God] grateful for Norway to one day get a loan so I can start a business.

Ahmed expresses his view in the subsequent matter:

We have to give opportunities to the individual who makes him feel good. The individual must go to school, be a student and to learn about society..., and he needs to get supported, and he needs staff around him so he has someone he can talk to.

The perspective Ahmed provides is of particular concern, as he focuses on what the external environment is able to provide the individual with. Ahmed, who is an ambitious type, has certainly not a lack of aspirations in life, but acknowledges that not everything is dependent on internal motivation. This is in line with Berg's (2010) reflections, as she enlightens that the exile process for immigrants can play out in various ways dependent on a range of factors. Among these factors, one finds both the individual's own attitude towards integrating *and* the environment's attitude in terms of providing the individual with opportunities, as equally important. Ahmed adds that, when he is given the same opportunities as others have, only then will he be able to reach his goals.

7.4.1 School as an integrational facilitator

School/education is broadly considered one of the main elements in achieving a successful integration. How the participants view the school arena is highly relevant for the lives they decide to lead. Herein the type of education the unaccompanied minor refugees receive, and their

educational ambitions, are of crucial determinants in terms of integrational outcome. I will elaborate on how the participants view this interplay in the following.

All of the participants express that proper schooling and education mean much to them. The quality and the extent of the participants' education from Afghanistan vary significantly. As previously mentioned, schooling and education is a main element in a Norwegian upbringing, whereas work and assisting one's family is more the all-over-norm in Afghanistan (Landinfo, 2015). Some of the boys tell me that they had a lack of education from their home country.

Rashid says:

For myself, school is very, very important. Very important. In my home country there were no good school, and I haven't gone there much either. It wasn't good, because of Taliban and stuff, you know how it is there. It was not good. If I hadn't gone to school when I was at the reception centre, I would be nothing. I wouldn't have made it.

Rashid had his first positive experience of school in Norway, and this was the first time in his life he allowed himself to have dreams and ambitions. He expresses that his schooling is the most crucial element for him in order to manage his new life in his new country. He did not specify whether it was the language skills the education facilitated, the social arena or the goal-oriented nature school provides that make him value school so highly. I argue that the combination of all three is what makes the learning arena especially important for these youth.

Ahmed tells me:

Education means a lot. You learn so much about everything, about society... You learn how you can have a bright future. That means so much to me. It is as simple as that.

In the previous chapter concerning citizenship, Ahmed reveals that it is mainly when he is in school that he feels like he is a part of the Norwegian society. In this sense, he recognizes the role of school and education as beyond something purely academic. This is the arena in which he is able to collaborate, discuss and 'do everything' with the majority population. Thus, school is invaluable for him, as he also tells me that he has no other ethnic Norwegian friends besides his classmates. In this matter, I connect the school arena to the contact hypothesis established by

Allport (1954), which has proven that direct contact between in-and out groups is the most important determinant in order to reduce prejudice between the two. Some criteria have to be met in order for intergroup contact to serve this goal, such as equal status between the group members, cooperation to achieve a common goal and institutional support. The school arena serves this purpose for Ahmed: Here, the students are (somewhat) equal and cooperation between in-groups and out-groups are facilitated by the teachers and the institution's structure. This also corresponds to Honneth's (1995) third sphere of recognition, in which recognition in wider communities is crucial for the individual. It is hereby relevant to establish that a school is not just a school – its form, level and types of pupils have a lot to say for the youth's well-being. Four of the participants have previously been enrolled, or are currently enrolled, in the 'adult training programme' [voksenoppl ring]. They all report that this is a significant negative determinant both socially and academically. Before he told me that he was in the adult training programme, I asked Farajullah if he had some friends or classmates from the majority population, in which he responded: "No, I'm at the adult training programme, so I'm waiting for next year, so I can get to know them". Farajullah's way of describing the majority population as 'them' can point to his present sense of not feeling included in a union with the majority population. Karim, who has lived in different municipalities in Norway, previously went to a 'regular' high school. When he moved to his current home town, he had no other choice than to start in the adult training programme. He says:

It's a bit difficult to get Norwegian friends like I had there [the former Norwegian city he lived in], because when I came here, I had to go to that adult training programme. I think that's bad for me, that you're a young person and have to study with those who are much older than you.

Samir has the same kind of experience as Farajullah and Karim. Samir recalls that he was appalled when he received the message that he was enrolled in the adult training programme, as his mission was to get to know members of the majority population. His main aims, then, were to firstly learn the language, and then acquire friends as a result of newly acquired communication skills. He expresses:

In the adult training there were other people, like me, but not totally like me, because many were older. They were like my mum. And I said to my teacher: “What is this all about? I don’t want to come here anymore”.

Based on Samir’s reaction, he must have been disappointed when faced with a different learning environment than what he hoped for. School is for many unaccompanied refugees the one arena in which they ‘naturally’ socialize with the majority population, and when Samir was faced with a different outlook, attending school did not seem to be ‘worth it’. Thus, Samir seems to value the school arena mainly for the social networks with the majority population it may provide him.

Hamidullah perceives it in the same way as Samir. He elaborates:

The school has to give opportunities to learn language. Before I went to the school I now go to, I went to the adult training programme, together with many grown ups like 30 years old, men and women. They needed so much help from teacher... It wasn’t much time left for us young people at school. And of course it’s difficult to get friends when there are mostly adults in class... The school has to help us to learn Norwegian culture, then it (integration) goes faster.

Hamidullah contends that his potential development in language acquisition and gaining friendships stagnated when he was enrolled in this particular study programme. Not to mention, he was not able to learn from established members of the community, as there were no representatives present except from the ethnic Norwegian teachers. Ager and Strang (2008) acknowledge that it is crucial to be culturally guided by members of the majority population. As Hamidullah argues, how can he and the other boys be introduced to Norwegian culture when they are placed in a multicultural, multi-aged learning environment, that separates them from their peers? Samir further tells me:

Then we got an offer at that other school. I couldn’t wait! Now I go to that school, and they have done a good job, we are integrated in the Norwegian society and stuff now. We know so many people at school. If I was at that adult training school I couldn’t speak Norwegian the way I speak now. Or I wouldn’t have as many friends. There were no one I could be friends with there! You can’t learn something or be friends with someone when you sit with someone who is like forty years old.

Samir clearly illustrates the difference in his personal and social growth just by being enrolled in a learning environment that also consist of ethnic Norwegians. As Karim, Samir and Hamidullah express, the school is not an effective social arena when they are surrounded by pupils who are closer to their parents in age than themselves. Not to mention, acquiring language proficiency is not an easy task when they have no point of reference (Ager & Strang, 2008). Based on these quotes, it is evident that the school is an arena that could make them improve other areas in his life as well. Ager and Strang (2008) stress that school is an arena where one can establish vital relations and contact with members of the host communities, which further will facilitate integration. Samir in particular sees the coherence between attending school as a stepping stone to gaining language skills, friends, jobs and a promising future. Thus, to simply attend school is not enough for integrational efforts in itself, but the form of the education these youth receive has a great impact on how well they adjust to the Norwegian society in general.

All of the participants share with me their academic or occupational goals and aspirations. Their desired professions ranged from nurse, paramedic, doctor, business owner and carpenter. Many of them also demonstrate an awareness of which kind of academic programme they will have to follow in order to acquire their dream jobs, and they know the length of the studies and the admission requirements. Some of the boys also spend their spare time in trying to gain as much knowledge as possible, as Rashid expresses:

30% I like to be with my friends, but 70% I actually like to read, to read useful books or to learn something new in my life. Like, what's right and what's wrong to do in life. I learn a lot from books.

Throughout the interview, Rashid reveals that he is very concerned about his self-development and his societal development, and he mentions reading books as a tool he actively uses in order to progress. However, in my data material, Rashid's experience is rare. The others fill their spare time socializing with friends, playing sports or hanging out in each other's homes. What the participants all seem to have in common, though, is to try to have a focus on what lies ahead if they put in dedication – whether this concerns dedication to gain ethnic Norwegian friends, or acquire an education. To have some sort of future goal appears to be a consistent and important determinant to hold on to in terms of the integrational motivation and potential.

7.4.2 Work as an integrational facilitator

In this subchapter, I will attempt to find out how work affects integrational efforts. Samir, Hamidullah, Abdul, Rashid and Karim have part time jobs alongside school, whereas Jamal works in a full time position at a grocery store in addition to being a full time student. Thus, I only had two participants who currently do not work alongside school. Jamal is the participant who is the most eager in his conviction of work as the most important determinant of successful integration:

Without work, you have nothing (...). You have to try! You know, the first time I found job, I delivered CV and application three times, but I went by there ten times and talked to him [the boss].

Jamal speaks from his own experience. He said he ‘lost his way’ at one point, in which he was home alone all the time, watching videos from Afghanistan and getting increasingly depressed. He decided that he had to keep himself busy for a while, to be able to distance himself from his negative way of thinking. Although he previously mentioned hanging out with friends as important in terms of gaining positivity in an individual’s life, he actually did the opposite himself. He says that he had to stop socializing with friends for a little while, so he could place full emphasis on school and work. He recognized these two factors as the most important for him in the pursuit of a good life. Having a strict school and work regime seems to prevent Jamal from falling out or following a negative pattern.

Just as Jamal’s own experiences suggest, researchers and policy makers seem to agree upon the significance of work in the integrational process (Brekke & Mohn, 2018; Ager & Strang, 2008). Drawing on reflections of integration by Døving (2009), there exist three vital integrational facilitators. In the previous chapters I mentioned the first two, accept of difference and being recognized as an individual, whereas work employment serves as the third and final element. Ager and Strang (2008) argue that employment is important both for the individual and for the society, as it creates positive outcomes on micro and macro level. Rashid and Jamal acknowledge how important it is for them to already have an entry to the labour market, and they both tell me that they will use their experience and the money they earn to one day invest in their own business. They additionally are very proud when they tell me how they contribute to society by

paying taxes, and the network they are a part of when socialising with colleagues from the majority population. Rashid and Jamal explicitly bring up examples of the positive outcomes being employed can create. Not to mention, the latter examples they mention are directly linked to experiences of citizenship and sense of belonging and identification with the majority population. In the subsequent conclusion of Chapter 8, I will offer concluding reflections on how experiences of citizenship and identity affect integration among unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUDING REFLECTIONS

In Chapter 1, I set out three different research aims of this thesis. My overall aim was to assess how the youth reflect and experience citizenship, identity and integration in Norway. More specifically, I wanted to evaluate how these experiences of citizenship and identity may influence the integration process. To gain an understanding and an answer to the main research question, I also had to assess how the youth understand and practice their citizenship, and how they understand and experience their own identities. As there was no guarantee that I could provide an interconnected link to how the phenomena of citizenship and identity influence integration, I also added another detailed research question concerning which factors generally influence the process of integration. In this chapter, I will summarize the findings from the data material of this thesis. In addition, I will offer concluding reflections as to how the interconnectedness between citizenship, identity and integration plays out in relation to the participants.

8.1 Reflections and experiences of identity

In working through the analysis of identity, I have found three important elements. The first concerns the role of culture in identity formation, the second involves how the participants define and relate to Norwegianness, and lastly, one finds the process of socialisation. I will elaborate more extensively on these findings.

Based on the participants' reflections and experiences, I assessed that the majority of the participants maintained a pure Afghan identity, two undertook multicultural identities, whereas one participant claimed a dual Afghan-Norwegian identity. In relation to identity, which is a vital source of similarity and difference, one participant explicitly touched upon the significance culture has on his identity formation, and that his parents' wishes for him play a crucial role in his cultural conservation (Salole, 2013). Another participant, however, did not want to classify his ethnic identity, and rather recognized himself in terms of what is shared between all people of the world – that of being a human. This allows him not to define himself as on the inside or on the outside of certain communities (Lynnebakke & Fangen, 2011). Nevertheless, a transnational sense of belonging was emphasised by all participants, where they attempted to find a balance

between maintaining links to the homeland while also finding their place in a new cultural landscape. Some of the participants mentioned this struggle as more significant than others.

In terms of defining and understanding Norwegianness, and the majority population, an important finding was the processes of othering that occurred. Some of the participants touched upon how their presence may create fear and suspicion among the majority population – as their presence may be a threat to Norwegian values. A consistent tendency was to recognize ethnic Norwegians as difficult to get in contact with, and one participant perceived ethnic Norwegians as a somewhat ‘cold’ people who only wanted to maintain contact with their own in-group. The youth also identified factors that separate them from the majority population, such as appearance, their status as refugees and foreign last names. In this respect, I applied reflections from Lynnebakke and Fangen (2011), who argue that the distinction between Norwegianness as a cultural practice and Norwegianness as an ethnic group allows for different ways of taking part in the Norwegianness as a whole. Regardless, a consistent finding was that the participants were dependent on observing and learning from the majority population in order to grasp what constitutes Norwegian culture (Weaver, 1993; Ager & Strang, 2008). This was important, as cultural scriptures can be a source of inclusion or exclusion (Salole, 2013). For instance, the participants who had friend families recognized this as highly valuable, as they were introduced to both typical Norwegian foods, and typical Norwegian ways of thinking and behaving. In their study of three definitions of Norwegianness, Lynnebakke and Fangen (2011, p. 136, author’s translation) found that “through exploring the participants’ definitions of Norwegianness, we also view their understandings of national identity and citizenship”. This also corresponds to my findings, as the more they could grasp Norwegian culture, the easier it became for them to navigate in the Norwegian society. By demonstrating an understanding of Norwegianness, they were able to place themselves within the frames of society.

In the last subchapter, that of socialisation, I analysed more specifically how the participants interpret, act and adapt to Norwegian culture (Corsaro, 2009). It is common that immigrants experience a struggle in balancing the maintenance of their own culture and that of adapting to their new one in the receiving country (Valentine & Sporton, 2009). One participant noted that if he only surrounds himself with his own in-group, he does not learn anything new. Another

participant, however, learned through his Afghan peers how he should properly behave in the Norwegian society, for instance when it comes to being able to shake hands with girls. He also touches upon an important element, in which he is not able to grasp Norwegian culture and behave accordingly as that of ethnic Norwegians. The Afghan individuals who come to Norway have a different view of the world based on the historical, cultural and social context they have found themselves in (Prout & Jenks, 2005). Naturally, they may interpret and navigate in their new cultural landscape in a different way than that of ethnic Norwegians.

8.2 Reflections and experiences of citizenship

From the data material I was able to establish that the participants understand and practice their citizenship in different ways. In line with Andersen (2004), I divided this analysis chapter into three essential parts of citizenship: Citizenship connected to identity, citizenship connected to rights and citizenship connected to participation.

In terms of citizenship connected to identity, some of the participants had challenges in assessing their role in the Norwegian society. They were ambivalent, and torn between their identities as Afghans and their desire to sense a belonging to the Norwegian society as well. Many, then, note that they were able to combine elements of the Afghan society and the Norwegian society according to what suit them best. This is in line with the dual or multi sense of belonging immigrants develop (Engebrigtsen, 2002). The participants agree that there are particularly two factors that increase, or would increase, their identities as Norwegian citizens. The first is partaking in Norwegian traditions and following Norwegian norms – the 17th of May was presented as an example of such. Taking part in what is ‘typically Norwegian’ and part of the Norwegianness can facilitate feelings of inclusion. The second element is language acquisition, where it was stated that if their language skills were good enough, then this would increase the feeling of being a proper Norwegian citizen. This is in line with research conducted by Rosa (2016), in which speaking in accordance with a linguistic ideal can prevent an individual to experience discrimination.

Moving to citizenship connected to rights, it became apparent that having the same rights as the majority population is crucial for the participants. Many of the participants note that having a

Norwegian passport is fundamental in being a real Norwegian citizen, which is in line with Askins (2016), who identifies that the lack of formal citizenship is one of the key issues in immigrants' legal struggles. One of the youth touched upon the difficulties that accompany his temporary residence permit, and illustrated how this holds him back in terms of fully practicing his citizenship, as he is not presented with the same opportunities as others. This draws on Honneth's (1995) second sphere of recognition, the legal sphere, where equal legal treatment and respect are key elements in being recognized by the wider society.

Lastly, in the subchapter of citizenship connected to participation, a consistent finding was that the participants equate school participation with societal participation, as this is the main arena in which they can be social actors in society. In fact, one of the participants explicitly touch upon the school context as the only time he feels like a part of the Norwegian society. He values school due to the meeting point it creates with the majority population, and in this respect, I applied the contact hypothesis to illustrate how contact between groups can reduce prejudice. I additionally connected this to Honneth's (1995) third sphere of recognition, in terms of the importance of valuable recognition in wider communities. Moreover, having work was also an important part of citizenship and participation. Some of the participants who have jobs demonstrated an awareness of how it is important to both give and receive in the Norwegian society, and that this social democratic ideology ensures opportunities to the citizens of the country. Ager and Strang (2008) argue that having work to go to can lead to a felt and actual contribution to society, and I connected the participants' reflections to values of the Norwegian welfare model.

8.3 Reflections and experiences of integration

In the analysis on integration, it quickly became apparent that this was a phenomenon the participants demonstrated a high awareness towards. Whether they reproduced what they have learnt in Social Science class or through the public debate, or spoke on their own experiences, it was evident that this was a topic that facilitated reflection. Thus, the analysis starts by assessing how the participants define successful and unsuccessful integration. A consistent finding is that many of the participants acknowledge integration in terms of an axis of time and place. To only look back at their old lives signals unsuccessful integration, whereas looking forward to their new lives in Norway signals successful integration. Two of the participants also touch upon how

exclusion from society and a lack of ambitions and goals can have negative consequences on societal level, in which criminality may take place.

The second subchapter focuses on the power of language. All of the participants recognize language as an important factor in terms of integrating in the Norwegian society. It is a fundamental aspect in terms of building bridges with the majority population (Putnam, 1993). However, the participants perceive that their lack of language skills serves as an obstacle in interacting with the majority population on a deeper level. Two of the participants explicitly note that they are not able to speak openly with the majority population, like they do with members of their own culture, and one of the participants says he looks forward to being able to communicate in a real way with ethnic Norwegians in the future. This is in line with Horhr's (2015) acknowledgement of language as a means of togetherness and segregation. The youth all touch upon the importance of having ethnic Norwegian friends, and recognize language acquisition as an important step in acquiring this.

Moreover, the analysis turn to social networks and social support. The participants state that their friendships are the most important thing in their lives, and some of them touch upon that their friends function as their families. This is in line with findings from Boyden and Mann (2005) who argue that the establishment of positive peer relations is vital in terms of ensuring a sense of belonging and a sense of self-esteem. Honneth (1995) also emphasises that receiving emotional support is the first sphere of mutual recognition, which is fundamental for the individual's well-being and sense of self. The unaccompanied minor Afghan refugees who live in Norway share similar life experiences, and one participants acknowledged that their understanding towards each other is highly valuable. To be a part of such an in-group prevents loneliness and feelings of exclusion to occur. Further, many of the participants touch upon the struggle of being recognized by their ethnic Norwegian peers, and express a desire to have more friends from the majority population in their social networks. Some of the youth actively make choices to enhance their meeting points with ethnic Norwegians, such as starting to play football at the local team or choosing subjects at school that facilitate meeting points between groups.

The third subchapter places emphasis on the importance of having goals and ambitions in life. This is looked upon as a driving force, which allows for them to maintain a future perspective. I further divided this section into two: school as an integrational facilitator, and work as an integrational facilitator. Firstly, all of the participants touch upon their devotion to school, and how it plays the most important role for them in terms of ensuring a positive future in Norway. Nevertheless, it became apparent through the data material that the type of school they attend is a significant determinant in regard to its integrational potential. The participants who currently attend the adult training programme are disappointed in its failure to integrate them with ethnic Norwegian peers. This shows that school participation is not enough in itself: The feelings associated to it are also crucial. They additionally state that learning the language is difficult when the only ethnic Norwegian present is their teacher. Furthermore, work is deemed as an important integrational facilitator. Five out of eight participants had part time jobs, whereas one participant worked full-time while at the same time going to school. Two of the participants spoke much on how work lays the groundwork for their well-being in Norway, as they are a part of a social togetherness with their colleagues, and that their work experience may help them in investing in their own businesses in the future.

The participants' reflections about the most important factors in ensuring a successful integration also correspond to the thoughts and expectations by the majority population. Similar to the participants, Brekke and Mohn (2018), in their report which was implemented in Chapter 2, found that the majority population deem language proficiency as the most significant factor. Aspects such as work participation and having Norwegian friends are recognized as important determinants as well.

8.4 The interaction between citizenship, identity and integration

In the chapters of citizenship, identity and integration, I have presented how thought processes and an individual's mind set contribute to determine the willingness to integrate in the Norwegian society. The ways in which the participants think of themselves in terms of the identities they hold, and how they relate to their wider societies as Norwegian citizens, have been identified as crucial. This interaction is commented upon in the subsequent matter: "Citizenship encompasses both ideas about individual rights, but also ideas about social ties, identity and participation

(Brochmann, 2005, p. 29, author's translation)". To illustrate this mutual dependency, and as previously mentioned, researchers and policy makers agree upon the significance of work in the integrational process (Brekke & Mohn, 2018; Ager & Strang, 2008; Døving, 2009), as it creates positive results on micro and macro level. One of the participants even explicitly stated that when he acquires work, he will most likely feel like he increasingly belongs to the Norwegian society. Work can create a range of positive outcomes for the individual in the integration context. A felt and actual contribution to society, in line with the social democratic ideology of an ideal citizen, can be valuable both for an individual's identity and for its integrational benefits. In turn, one's personal and societal sense of self will contribute to determine the willingness to seek such efforts. The school is further illustrated as the main arena which promotes inclusion and equality between minority and majority population for the participants, as this allows them to be social actors and part of a togetherness within society. Participation in school and work contribute to manifest the youth as active citizens in the Norwegian communities they are a part of. What the data material reveals is that participation in these arenas is not enough in itself: the reflections, experiences and recognition surrounding participation are crucial. As stated above, an important point is that many of the participants acknowledge a negative way of thinking in line with unsuccessful integration, whereas a positive manner of thinking may ensure successful integration. The youth, then, demonstrate that an individual's mind set is a powerful tool in terms of willingness to partake in integrational efforts and processes.

In Eide's (2007) work on social integration, he identifies recognition as a key element, and connects notions of recognition to Honneth's (1995) model. The three spheres, which have been implemented throughout this thesis, shows the importance of the individual being recognized on different levels within society. The first involves recognition in the private sphere, the second entails recognition in the legal sphere, and the third corresponds to recognition within wider communities. I hereby argue that these spheres of recognition apply to the wider concepts of this thesis as well, in which the recognition in the private sphere is important for one's personal and social identity, recognition in the legal sphere is valuable in terms of citizenship, and recognition in the wider communities is highly relevant for a successful integration process. As Ager and Strang (2008) argue, whether these youth feel recognized by the majority population have great implications in their willingness to adapt to their new societies. Further, they conclude that

definitions of integration are dependent on the nation's sense of identity (Ager & Strang, 2008). As presented, reflections and experiences of identity, citizenship and integration do not occur in vacuum. These internal processes are a result of interaction with people in their wider environments. The work with this thesis did not seek to diminish the importance of external factors which can be measured in terms of its integrational value, such as participation in leisure activities, but rather attempted to acknowledge the mutual dependency between internal processes and external behaviour.

8.5 The question of representativeness

In Chapter 4, under ethical reflections, I placed the emphasis on several ethical considerations that have to be acknowledged. Based on the data material and the results derived from the three respective analyses, I feel it is of relevance to shed light on some of these reflections once again. Most of the participants presented a positive outlook on their current and future lives as citizens in the Norwegian society. I must open for the possibility that, among others, the picture some of the participants painted of themselves may be influenced by a value to not show signs of weakness towards a female, ethnic Norwegian researcher. How they presented themselves could be highly influenced by their unwritten moral codex, the Pashunwali, which emphasise patriarchal codes of conduct, characterized by honour. In every human interaction, one must acknowledge that the parties mutually influence each other in one way or the other (Warin, 2011). Objectivity, then, becomes an illusion (Warin, 2011). However, instead of assessing whether the findings are representative, I choose to recognize the responses and stories of the participants as empirical results in itself. The sense of self the individuals chose to convey to me is part of unconscious and conscious processes of creating and presenting their own narratives. One paints a certain picture which is in line with the way in which the individual wants to be perceived, and this is valuable information as well.

Furthermore, there is an extensive body of literature that have assessed and taken into consideration the mental health of unaccompanied minor refugees. Although I have mentioned the significance of past trauma in terms of present functioning, I deliberately chose to not engage in topics concerning mental health in the interviews with the eight participants. This group is particularly vulnerable to intrusions by researchers (Thomas & Byford, 2003), and therefore I

wanted to place the emphasis on their societal selves, rather than sensitive topics. However, one must keep in mind that the answers they have provided, and their potential to integrate in the Norwegian society, may be highly dependent on their current mental health.

8.6 Policy and research recommendations

This thesis sought out to emphasise the perspectives of the youth who are going to integrate. This is something that I recommend to increasingly do in the context of policy as well, as the data material and analyses illustrate that the participants have a lot of important reflections and experiences that should be taken into account. In later years, one has seen great efforts being made, such as the Change Factory, where children and youth travel the country to share their experiences within systems such as the child protection services and the school arena. The key focus is that the children and youth are the experts, and that they hold the answers to how one can facilitate their functioning in the best possible way. To include unaccompanied minor refugees even more so in these types of efforts, with a particular focus on integration, would be highly valuable and recommendable.

This thesis has a main limitation in which that not all voices have been taken into account, and the main focus point was to include the voices and perspectives of those who are going to integrate in the Norwegian society. The gender disparity of this thesis, who only included males, reflect wider, globalized gender trends in migration processes (Øien, 2010). The perspectives of Afghan girls' would be significantly valuable to include. Since they have grown up in a patriarchal society, it would be particularly meaningful to put their voices explicitly on the agenda. Thus, both for further policy and research recommendations, assessing girls' voices would be of great importance – either as a part of a thorough investigation into their perspectives, or as a part of a comparative approach. This also applies in terms of presenting a nuanced perspective by including other nationalities as well.

Another important dimension for policy and research recommendations would concern a comparative approach to whether there are any integrational differences between the refugees who migrate alone or those who are accompanied by parents. A hypothesis could be that migrating alone may be beneficial in the sense that one is not faced with parental expectations on the daily and strongly influenced by their way of living. However, one of the participants of this

thesis reveals that he is highly influenced by his parents' opinions on how he should behave in the Norwegian society, as to not lose touch with his cultural heritage. The impact of his parents remains strong and highly influential despite that they find themselves in different parts of the world. Comparative studies in terms of unaccompanied minor refugees and accompanied minor refugees have been conducted in the European context. Eide and Hjern (2013) refer to a Dutch study that assessed the mental health of newly arrived, unaccompanied refugee children to that of young refugee children who arrived the country with their parents. It was found that the unaccompanied minor refugees had significantly higher levels of depressive symptoms in contrast to the accompanied refugees, i.e. 47% to 27%. To take this further, and assess how such differences may show itself in the integrational setting, would be a significant contributor to the growing body of literature on integration. Because, as demonstrated throughout this thesis, and as one of my participants stated: "No matter where you live, you need to belong".

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Approval letter from NSD

Appendix B: Information sheet

Appendix C: Informed consent

Appendix D: Interview guide

APPENDIX A: APPROVAL LETTER FROM NSD



NTNU
Att: Marit Ursin
marit.ursin@ntnu.no

Frida Louise Hall Bolstad
fridahallbolstad@hotmail.com

Vår dato: 03.09.2018

Vår ref: 61363 AMSA

Deres dato:

Deres ref:

VURDERING AV BEHANDLING AV SÆRSKILTE KATEGORIER PERSONOPPLYSNINGER I PROSJEKTET: "ON THE SIDELINE OF SOCIETY OR PART OF THE TOGETHERNESS: HOW CAN EXPERIENCES OF CITIZENSHIP AND IDENTITY INFLUENCE INTEGRATION OF UNACCOMPANIED MINOR AFGHAN REFUGEES IN NORWAY?"

NSD - Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS viser til meldeskjema innsendt 28.06.2018. Meldingen gjelder behandling av personopplysninger til forskningsformål.

Etter avtale med den behandlingsansvarlige, NTNU, har NSD foretatt en vurdering av om den planlagte behandlingen er i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen.

Resultat av NSDs vurdering:

NSD vurderer at det vil bli behandlet særskilte kategorier personopplysninger frem til 31.05.2019.

NSDs vurdering er at behandlingen vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen, og at lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen er samtykke.

Vår vurdering forutsetter at prosjektansvarlig behandler personopplysninger i tråd med:

- opplysninger gitt i meldeskjema og øvrig dokumentasjon
- dialog med NSD, og vår vurdering (se under)
- NTNU sine retningslinjer for datasikkerhet, herunder regler om hvilke tekniske hjelpemidler det er tillatt å bruke

Nærmere begrunnelse for NSDs vurdering:

1. Beskrivelse av den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger

Formålet med denne studien er å avdekke hvilke faktorer som påvirker integrering av enlige mindreårige afghanske flyktninger, med et særskilt fokus på medborgerskap og identitet. Integreringsdebatten er preget av polarisering og sterkt emosjonelt engasjement, men det er påfallende at de sterkeste stemmene dessverre ikke tilhører målgruppen som faktisk skal integreres.

Studenten skal rekruttere enslige mindreårige asylsøkere fra 16 år. Inklusjon av ungdom kan skje dersom ungdommen kan forstå hva deltakelse i prosjektet betyr, gjerne i samråd med en verge.

NSD har mottatt revidert versjon av informasjonsskriv 27.08.2018. Informasjonsskrivet er godt utformet og vil sikre et gyldig samtykke.

Datamaterialet vil innhentes gjennom personlige intervjuer med ungdommene. Det skal tas opptak og intervjuene skal transkriberes. Reelle navn erstattes med fiktive navn for å sikre konfidensialitet.

Det kan registreres særlige kategorier personopplysninger, for eksempel etnisk bakgrunn og helseforhold.

2. Personvernprinsipper

NSDs vurdering er at behandlingen følger personvernprinsippene, ved at personopplysninger;

- skal behandles på en lovlig, rettferdig og åpen måte med hensyn til den registrerte
- skal samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål og der personopplysningene ikke viderebehandles på en måte som er uforenelig med
- vil være adekvate, relevante og begrenset til det som er nødvendig for formålet de behandles for
- skal lagres slik måte at det ikke er mulig å identifisere de registrerte lengre enn det som er nødvendig for formålet

3. Lovlig grunnlag for å behandle særskilte kategorier

- 1) Særskilte kategorier - Samtykke ((art. 6.1. a), art. 9.2 a))

Det fremgår av meldeskjema vi har fått tilsendt at det vil bli innhentet samtykke fra de registrerte. NSD vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger er lovlig fordi:

- det skal innhentes uttrykkelig samtykke fra de registrerte og
- forsker har oppfylt den særskilte rådføringsplikten

4. De registrertes rettigheter

NSD vurderer at den registrerte har krav på å benytte seg av følgende rettigheter: informasjon, innsyn, retting og sletting av personopplysninger, dataportabilitet, protest.

NSD finner at informasjonsskrivet vil gi de registrerte god informasjon om hva behandlingen innebærer og om hvilke rettigheter de har.

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har NTNU plikt til å svare innen en måned. Vi forutsetter at prosjektansvarlig informerer institusjonen så fort som mulig og at Nord universitet har rutiner for hvordan henvendelser fra registrerte skal følges opp.

5. Informasjonssikkerhet

NSD forutsetter at personopplysningene behandles i tråd med personvernforordningens krav og institusjonens retningslinjer for informasjonssikkerhet.

6. Varighet

Ifølge meldeskjema skal personopplysninger behandles frem til 31.05.2019. Personopplysninger som kan knyttes til en enkeltperson skal da slettes/anonymiseres.

NTNU må kunne dokumentere at datamaterialet er anonymisert.

Anonymisering innebærer å bearbeide datamaterialet slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan bli identifisert. Det gjøres ved å

- Slette navn, fødselsnummer/andre ID-nummer, adresse, telefonnummer, epostadresse, IP-adresse og andre nettidifikatorer
- Slette eller grovkategorisere bakgrunnsopplysninger
- Slette eller sladde bilder/videoopptak og lydopptak

NTNU må kunne dokumentere at datamaterialet er anonymisert.

Meld fra om endringer

Dersom behandlingen av personopplysninger endrer seg, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til NSD via Min side. På våre nettsider informerer vi om hvilke endringer som må meldes. Vent på svar før endringen gjennomføres.

Informasjon om behandlingen publiseres på Min side, Meldingsarkivet og nettsider

Alle relevante saksopplysninger og dokumenter er tilgjengelig:

- via Min side for forskere, veiledere og studenter
- via Meldingsarkivet for ansatte med internkontrolloppgaver ved NTNU.

NSD tar kontakt om status for behandling av personopplysninger

Etter avtale med NTNU vil NSD følge opp behandlingen av personopplysninger underveis, og ved planlagt avslutning.

Vi sender da en skriftlig henvendelse til prosjektansvarlig og ber om skriftlig svar på status for behandling av personopplysninger.

Se våre nettsider eller ta kontakt ved spørsmål. Vi ønsker lykke til med prosjektet.

Med vennlig hilsen


Marianne Hogetveit Myhren
seksjonsleder


Anne-Mette Somby
spesialrådgiver

APPENDIX B: INFORMATION SHEET

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet

” Hvordan kan opplevelser av medborgerskap og identitet påvirke integrering av enlige mindreårige afghanske flyktninger i Norge? ”?

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et forskningsprosjekt hvor formålet er å avdekke hvilke faktorer som påvirker integrering, med et spesielt blikk på medborgerskap og identitet. I dette skrivet gir jeg deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet mitt og hva deltakelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

Mitt navn er Frida Louise Hall Bolstad, og jeg er mastergradsstudent i Childhood Studies ved NTNU –Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet. Nå skal jeg skrive masteroppgave om integrering av enlige mindreårige afghanske flyktninger i Norge. Ved siden av studiene jobber jeg på bofelleskap for enlige mindreårige afghanske flyktninger, så integrering er et tema som ligger mitt hjerte nær. I oppgaven vil jeg belyse temaet fra ungdommenes perspektiv og understreke at det er dere som er ekspertene på deres liv.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

NTNU – Norges Teknisk-Naturvitenskapelige Universitet.

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Jeg ønsker å komme i kontakt med 6-10 afghanske ungdommer i alderen 16-18 for å skrive om deres erfaringer med integrering i Norge.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Hvis du velger å delta i prosjektet, innebærer det at du deltar i intervju og viser frem en enkel fotodagbok. Intervjuet vil vare i ca. 45-60 minutter, og det vil bli tatt opp med diktafon. I tillegg vil jeg ta notater underveis. I forkant av intervjuet vil du bli bedt om å bruke mobilen din til å ta bilder av noe som du forbinder med medborgerskap, identitet og integrering. Fotodagboken kan

ikke inneholde bilder av andre personer. Bildene vil ikke bli brukt i selve masteroppgaven eller vist frem til andre enn meg.

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet. Hvis du velger å delta, kan du når som helst trekke samtykket tilbake uten å oppgi noen grunn. Alle opplysninger om deg vil uansett bli anonymisert. Det vil ikke ha noen negative konsekvenser for deg hvis du ikke vil delta eller senere velger å trekke deg. Det får heller ingen negative konsekvenser av deltakelse.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene jeg har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Jeg behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Det er kun veilederen min, Marit Ursin, og jeg som vil ha tilgang på dine opplysninger. For å sikre at ingen andre har tilgang til materialet, vil jeg sørge for at navn og kontaktopplysninger er adskilt fra øvrige data. Datamaterialet anonymiseres, og pc-en min er beskyttet av passord.

Selv om jeg innhenter informasjon om deg i intervjuet, slik som navn, alder og bosted, vil ikke dette publiseres eller knyttes til øvrig informasjon du gir meg. Alle deltakerne vil bli gitt fiktive navn, og du vil derfor ikke kunne gjenkjennes.

Hva skjer med opplysningene dine når vi avslutter forskningsprosjektet?

Prosjektet skal etter planen avsluttes mai 2019. Datamaterialet vil først bli anonymisert, og deretter slettet når oppgaven er levert og godkjent.

Dine rettigheter i forbindelse med intervjuet og opptaket som gjøres

- Du har rett på innsyn i hvilke personopplysninger som er registrert om deg,
- Å få rettet personopplysninger om deg,
- Få slettet personopplysninger om deg,
- Få utlevert en kopi av dine personopplysninger (dataportabilitet), og

- Å sende klage til personvernombudet eller Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra NTNU ved Norsk Senter for Barneforskning, har NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Hvor kan jeg finne ut mer?

Hvis du har spørsmål til studien, eller ønsker å benytte deg av dine rettigheter, ta kontakt med:

- NTNU, Norsk Senter for Barneforskning, ved Marit Ursin på epost: marit.ursin@ntnu.no eller telefon: 73 59 62 43. Jeg kan også kontaktes på epost: fridahallbolstad@gmail.com eller telefon: 41 22 50 69.
- Vårt personvernombud: Thomas Helgesen (thomas.helgesen@ntnu.no)
- NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS, på epost (personvernombudet@nsd.no) eller telefon: 55 58 21 17.

Med vennlig hilsen

Prosjektansvarlig

Marit Ursin

Student

Frida Hall Bolstad

APPENDIX C: INFORMED CONSENT

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om prosjektet ”*Hvordan kan opplevelser av medborgerskap og identitet påvirke integrering av enslige mindreårige afghanske flyktninger i Norge?*”, og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

- å delta i intervju
- å delta i fremvisning av en enkel fotodagbok (som ikke inneholder bilder av andre personer)

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet, ca. mai 2019.

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDE

INTERVJUGUIDE

1. Generell informasjon om prosjektet og intervjusetting

- Ca. 10 minutter
- Forklare kort hva et forskningsprosjekt innebærer
- Fortelle kort om studieretning (→ Childhood studies – viktigheten av at barn blir fremstilt som eksperter på egne liv)
- Min bakgrunn som miljøterapeut på bofellesskap med enslig mindreårige afghanske flyktninger
- Har du tidligere erfaringer med å bli intervjuet? Hvordan opplevdes dette?
- Ethiske hensyn
 - Anonymisering og konfidensiell behandling av datamaterialet
 - Frivillig deltakelse og muligheten til å trekke seg fra prosjektet når som helst
 - Intervjuet skal foregå på deltakerens premisser: Viktig å signalisere at deltakeren må gi beskjed om vedkommende ikke vil svare på et gitt spørsmål, ta pause dersom situasjonen blir overveldende o.l.
- Har du noen spørsmål før vi begynner? Noe som må oppklares?

2. Bakgrunnsinformasjon

- Hva heter du og hvor gammel er du?
- Hvor lenge har du bodd i Norge?
- Hva er bosituasjonen din? (Bofellesskap, egen hybel o.l.). Hvordan trives du med denne ordningen?
- Kan du fortelle litt om din bakgrunn?

3. Livet i Norge

- Hvordan vil du beskrive deg selv?
- Hva synes du selv er typisk deg?

- Hva består hverdagen din av? Hva er en typisk dag for deg?
- Hvordan er skolehverdagen din faglig?
- Hvordan er skolehverdagen din sosialt?
- Hva liker du best på skolen?
- Hva liker du minst på skolen?
- Hva betyr utdanning for deg?
- Hva liker du best å gjøre på fritiden din?
- Hvem liker du best å være med på fritiden din?
- Hvilke håp og drømmer har du for fremtiden din?
- Har svarene på de tre spørsmålene ovenfor endret seg etter at du kom til Norge? Hvis ja, hvorfor?
- Føler du generelt at du har forandret deg etter at du kom til Norge? Hvis ja, hvorfor?
- Føler du at opplevelsene dine i fortiden har påvirket hvem du er i dag?
- Hva ønsker du å bli ”når du blir stor”, og hvorfor? Hvor ønsker du da å bo?
- Hva beskriver deg mest; beskjedent/trives best i eget selskap, eller utadvendt/trives best i selskap med andre?
- Har du et lite eller stort sosialt nettverk?
- Hvilke nasjonaliteter består dette nettverket av?
- Er du sammen med etnisk norske på fritida di?
- Er det viktig for deg å ha etnisk norske i ditt sosiale nettverk? Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke?
- Har noe overrasket deg ved Norge eller det norske samfunnet? Hvis ja, hva da?
- Hva ved Norge er mest likt hjemstedet ditt?
- Hva ved Norge er mest ulikt hjemstedet ditt?
- Hva tenker du om hverdagen ditt i Norge?
- Er det noe ved hverdagen din i Norge du ønsker kunne vært annerledes?
- Hvem går du til dersom du trenger hjelp med noe praktisk?
- Hvem går du til dersom du er trist eller trenger støtte?
- Hvordan er forholdet ditt med din kontaktperson fra kommunen? Er det noe du ønsker at vedkommende kunne gjort annerledes for å hjelpe deg i hverdagen i Norge? Føler du at vedkommende forstår deg og dine behov?

4. Integrering

- Føler du at de voksne du er i kontakt med (personalet på bofellesskap, lærere, verger, osv.) introduserer deg for det norske samfunnet? I så fall, på hvilke måter?
- Benytter du deg av ulike tilbud fra frivillige organisasjoner, slik som Røde Kors' flyktningguide, leksehjelp, språkcafé o.l.? Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke?
- Hva innebærer integrering for deg?
- Hva anser du som god integrering?
- Hva kjennetegner en person som er godt integrert?
- Hva kjennetegner en person som er dårlig integrert?
- Hvorfor er integrering viktig/ikke viktig?
- Hvis det er viktig, hva føler du at folk bør gjøre selv for å bli best mulig integrert i samfunnet?
- Hva bør andre (staten, skole, omsorgspersoner osv.) gjøre?

5. Medborgerskap

- Når mener du at man er norsk? Hva skal til?
- Mener du at man kan være både afghansk og norsk?
- Mener du at man kan være medlem av det norske samfunn, men fortsatt være afghansk?
- Hva synes du er positivt ved det norske samfunnet?
- Hva synes du er negativt ved det norske samfunnet?
- Er det noe du savner fra det afghanske samfunnet som du skulle ønske fantes i Norge?
- Hva tror du etnisk norske forventer av innvandrere som kommer til Norge?
- Hvilke forventninger hadde/har du til å bli tatt i mot av det norske samfunnet?
- Hva skal til for at du føler deg som en del av det norske samfunnet?
- Føler du deg som en del av det norske samfunnet?
- Hvis ja, når føler du deg som en del av det norske samfunnet?
 - *Eventuelt oppfølgingsspørsmål: Hvem er du med når du føler deg som en del av det norske samfunnet?*
- Er det situasjoner hvor du føler at du ikke er en del av det norske samfunnet? I så fall, når er dette?
- Tror du innvandrere generelt ønsker å være en del av det norske samfunnet? Hvorfor?

- Tror du det finnes innvandrere som ikke ønsker å være en del av det norske samfunnet? Hvorfor?
- Hva tror du hindrer innvandrere i å føle seg som et medlem av det norske samfunnet?
- I hvilke situasjoner føler du deg mest knyttet til hjemlandet ditt?
- Opplever du konflikt mellom afghansk og norsk kultur og verdier? Hvis ja, i hvilke situasjoner opplever du dette? Hvordan føler du deg da?

6. Avslutning

- Er det noe du vil legge til?
- Har du noen spørsmål?
- Hvordan synes du det var å svare på disse spørsmålene?
- Tusen takk for din verdifulle deltakelse i dette forskningsprosjektet. Dersom du skulle ha noen spørsmål i etterkant av intervjuet, må du bare ta kontakt.