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Both nowhere and everywhere - perhaps a cliché, but for me, home is my family: Mobile childhood and sense of belonging among third culture kids

Master's thesis in Childhood Studies

Supervisor: Marit Ursin

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Abstract

This master thesis aims to contribute more knowledge of mobile childhood and the experiences of both children and adults who have lived significant parts of their upbringing abroad. This research looks at participants, in other words, both children and adults, who have had childhood experiences abroad due to their parents' work. The study seeks to investigate where they feel "at home" and where they feel a sense of belonging. In literature, individuals who have lived a mobile childhood are often referred to as third-culture kids (TCK) or adult third-culture kids (ATCK).

To investigate the aim of this thesis, the research follows a qualitative approach through individually semi-structured interviews with 20 participants, children and adults from the age of twelve to seventy. The adults who participated in this research were interviewed retrospectively, and they looked at how their childhood impacted their definitions of home and sense of belonging in the present time. The children have also looked through some of their memories of their early childhood years. The thesis is theoretically anchored within childhood studies; thus, the research has emphasized children as social actors worth being studied in their own right and childhood as a social construction. In addition, I use the concepts of cultural identity and acculturation, organizational migration, third-culture kids, and reverse culture shock. Moreover, I use theories of human geography: place attachment, belonging, and national identity.

The findings indicate that home is both everywhere and nowhere at the same time. This means that having a cross-cultural childhood has impacted the participants' definition of home in multiple ways. This has been shown by the fact that some participants define home as a place, dwelling, or nation. Furthermore, the findings indicate that the participant's cross-cultural and mobile childhood have influenced their definition of home with materiality and objects, as well as their sense of home being evoked through their senses. Even though the data also shows that most participants lack place attachment and belonging the empirical data shows that relations such as friends and the nuclear family are essential regarding the participant's sense of belonging. A recurring theme is that the participants define home using the idea of the nuclear family. My findings indicate that other important aspects highlight why their cross-cultural childhood has impacted their definitions of home as relational.

Sammendrag

Denne masteroppgaven har som mål å bidra med mer kunnskap om mobil barndom og erfaringene til både voksne og barn som har bodd betydelige deler av oppveksten sin i utlandet. Denne forskningen ser på forskningsdeltakere, med andre ord både barn og voksne, som har hatt barndomserfaringer i utlandet på grunn av foreldrenes arbeid. Studien forsøker å undersøke hvor de føler seg «hjemme» og hvor de føler tilhørighet. I litteraturen blir personer som har levd en mobil barndom ofte referert til som tredjekulturellebarn (TCK) eller voksne tredjekulturelle barn (ATCK).

For å undersøke formålet med denne oppgaven, følger forskningen en kvalitativ tilnærming gjennom 20 individuelle semistrukturererte intervjuer, med forskningsdeltakere som barn og voksne fra alderen tolv til sytti år. De voksne forskningsdeltakerne som deltok i denne forskningen ble intervjuet retrospektivt, og de så på hvordan barndommen deres har påvirket deres definisjoner av hjem og følelse av tilhørighet i nåtiden. Barna har også sett gjennom noen av minnene deres fra tidligere barndomsår. Masteroppgaven er teoretisk forankret innenfor barndomsstudier; dermed har forskningen vektlagt barn som sosiale aktører som er verdt å studere i sin egen rett og barndommen som en sosial konstruksjon. I tillegg bruker jeg begrepene kulturell identitet og akkulturasjon, organisasjon migrasjon, tredje kulturelle barn, og omvendt kultursjokk. Det er også brukt teorier fra menneskelig geografi: stedstilknytning, tilhørighet, og nasjonal identitet.

Funnene indikerer at hjem er både overalt og ingensteds på samme tid. Dette betyr at det å ha en krysskulturell barndom har påvirket forskningsdeltakernes definisjon av hjem på flere måter. Dette har vist seg ved at noen forskningsdeltakerne definerer hjem som et sted, bolig eller nasjon. Videre tyder funnene på at forskningsdeltakernes krysskulturelle og mobile barndom har påvirket deres definisjon av hjem med materialitet og objekter, men også at hjemfølelsen fremkalles gjennom sanser. Selv om dataene også viser at de fleste av forskningsdeltakerne mangler stedstilknytning og tilhørighet, derfor viser empirien at relasjoner som venner og kjernefamilie er avgjørende for forskningsdeltakerne følelse av tilhørighet. Et gjennomgående tema er at forskningsdeltakerne definerer hjem ved hjelp av ideen om kjernefamilien. Mine funn indikerer også at andre viktige aspekter fremhever hvorfor deres krysskulturell barndom har påvirket deres definisjoner av hjem som relasjonelt.

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List of Acronyms

ATCK	Adult third culture kids
EU	European Union
ILO	International Labour Organization
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty organization
NORAD	Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
NTNU	The Norwegian University of Science and Technology
NSD	Norwegian Centre for Research Data
SSB	Statisk sentralbyrå (Central Bureau of Statistics)
TCK	Third culture kids
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UN	United Nations
UNPKO	United Nations peacekeeping operations

Definition of concept used in this thesis

Passport country/culture	The participant's country of origin or their parents' country of origin.
Host country/culture	The country the participants have lived in abroad

1.0. Introduction

In my early years as a student, I became interested in studying migration and investigating how culture has influenced an individual's identity, particularly children and youth, and their impacts on integration within a new society. By studying childhood studies, I developed a broader interest in how childhood is socially constructed and how childhood is viewed differently from the culture in which children are raised. Exploring various theories within the field, such as social constructionism, led me to ponder how childhood is seen differently in each culture and how childhood is constructed historically. In other words, I noticed the differences in how childhood was conceptualized during my upbringing compared to my parents' (Montgomery, 2003). Throughout my reflection on what I had learned in childhood studies, I was also reflecting on my early childhood experiences, which were influenced by two cultures due to my parents' missionary work. I realized how my five years of childhood in Argentina have impacted who I am today and my questioning about my sense of belonging and home. While reflecting on my childhood, I mostly thought back to a specific childhood memory when my family had returned to Norway. This memory was of myself lying in bed looking at pictures of my childhood in Argentina, and I thought, "When are we returning home?" After years gone by, and even though the rest of my upbringing was in Norway, I always felt that I was never "at home," even though I was. This reflection made me ponder that other children, as missionary children, probably would have the same questions about their sense of home. Thus, I desired to explore and obtain knowledge from others with similar childhood backgrounds. I want to learn from those who have had a cross-cultural childhood due to their parents' work as missionaries and military and within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Developmental Aid. In this research, my aim is, therefore, to explore and obtain knowledge of where those who had a cross-cultural and mobile childhood feel "at home" and how their childhood has impacted their sense of home, sense of belonging, and identity.

This master thesis project is a qualitative study conducted in Norway with both children and adults as participants. The focus has been on obtaining knowledge from their memories and life experiences of their childhood and upbringing. In this thesis, I will look at their place attachments, sense of home, and sense of belonging, where I want to explore and obtain knowledge of where they feel "at home". This might be different for each participant since they have had or are now living in various countries because of their parents' work. To obtain knowledge and insights into their memories and life stories, I have conducted individually semi-structured interviews with 20 adults and children in a wide age range, from twelve to seventy years old. While searching for previous research about children living abroad because of their parents' work, the term third culture kids was highly used. Therefore, the concept of third culture kids will be emphasized. In addition, look at the definition of 'home' since it is the context of this master. I will first look briefly at migration workers abroad to better understand the parent's work situation.

1.1. Context of the topic

According to Office (2021), in 2019, there were 169 million migrant workers in the world. Most worked and moved within Europe, Central Asia, and America (Office, 2021, p.20;30). Although missionaries, diplomats, aid workers, and those who work within the military migrate to work abroad, they have not been looked at by migration studies. Nevertheless, in the 1970s, these groups were looked at as career migrants or organizational migrants. This is because they migrated for work through organizations, and their work was temporarily abroad, often bringing their partners and children (Lucassen & Smit, 2015). Hence, children have historically moved and migrated abroad due to their parents' work situation (Pollock et al., 2017). Likewise, Norwegian families have migrated to work abroad as missionaries since the mid-1800s (Drønen & Skjortnes, 2010). Therefore, in the Norwegian context, the focus has mainly been on missionary children. However, there has also been interest in other groups, such as diplomat children, aid workers children, etc., in later studies (Salole et al., 2018, p.50).

At the end of the 1950s, a new concept was coined, which described children who moved with their parents abroad due to their work and career paths. Ruth Useem and her husband, John Useem, were anthropologists who researched Americans' international work in India. Useem's focus was research on how international American workers interacted with locals in India. This interaction was defined as a "third culture" by Useem. Ruth Useem found interest in American workers' children by researching in India and established the concept of third culture kids (TCK) to describe these children (Pollock et al., 2017, p.16). Eidse and Sichel (2004) have noted that millions of children around the globe were born in one nation but raised in other nations due to the parent's decision to work abroad (Eidse & Sichel, 2004, p.13). These children and their parents have temporarily migrated because, as previous research has pointed out, they usually return to their home country (Eidse & Sichel, 2004; Pollock et al., 2017). Additionally, they are used to moving back and forth between their host country and passport country. Thus, they live a highly mobile life by moving across the world and changing the environment in their daily life (Cockburn, 2002, p.477). Although they return "home," these children might not feel they are returning "home" since they lack a sense of belonging to their country of origin (Hatfield, 2010, pp.244-245), which is Norway in this research.

According to scholars, the definition of 'home' is often associated with a house (e.g., Blunt & Dowling, 2022). In Western societies, 'home' is considered the best place for children since it is associated with stability and security. In other words, it describes the familial environment and a privatized domestic place where children might feel belonging (Ní Laoire et al., 2010, pp.156-157). However, the memories and experiences of people's everyday life places, such as schools, neighborhoods, villages, towns, or places of origin can impact individuals' sense of where they feel at home. Hence, scholars mention that individuals' emotions towards these places impact their belonging and attachments (Jack, 2010, p.758). Gullestad (2006) asserts that the place people consider their origin is where they have lived throughout their childhood years. Similarly, Chawla (1992) mentions that the place people are from affects and shapes them. However, most scholars note that home is primarily about people's attachment and sense of belonging, which can be connected to both dwellings and places (Blunt & Dowling, 2022; Antonsich, 2010). Scholars have also emphasized that children who move with their families abroad often feel they belong to multiple places; thus, they have several homes (Maine et al., 2021), while others have emphasized that children who move abroad with their families often do not have any place attachments or sense of home (e.g., Eidse & Sichel, 2004).

1.2. Research aims and questions

This research thesis aims to obtain knowledge from Norwegian children and adults who have had or have some of their childhood years and upbringing abroad due to their parent's work; as mentioned, these individuals are also referred to as third culture kids (TCK) (Pollock et al., 2017). My aim for this master thesis is to understand where they feel "at home" when a home can have multiple meanings. Therefore, I will explore where they have a sense of belonging, attachments, and a sense of home. The research questions are;

- *Which experiences does TCK have with moving abroad and having a highly mobile lifestyle? How has living a highly mobile childhood impacted TCK's identity and sense of belonging?*
- *When does a place feel like "home" for TCK? How much do friendship and family relations impact where TCK feels at home?*
- *How does returning to Norway impact TCK's sense of belonging and how they identify themselves?*

The first research question delves into participants' experiences of moving abroad, transition experiences, and how their highly mobile childhood has influenced their sense of belonging and identity. This involved asking them about their moving experience and various questions about their childhood abroad, such as their experiences adjusting to a new culture and language and their school experiences. The second research question explores the participants' definition of home and determines whether friendships and family have impacted their definition of home. To answer these questions, I have had questions about home and belonging, where they feel safe, and their favorite places. I also had questions about their social relations and how they have evolved. Furthermore, I also used a helping tool during the interviews, where the participants could voluntarily bring pictures to the interviews. The questions related to the pictures were how they illustrated their sense of home. The final research question examined the participants' returning experiences and how this has impacted their identity, sense of belonging and home. To answer this research question, I have had questions about their experiences of returning to Norway and how their everyday life was in Norway after their return.

1.3. Relevant topic of the field

While preparing for the master's thesis, I searched for previous research focusing on Norwegian children who have spent their childhood abroad due to their parents' work choices. Previous research has looked at these children's sense of belonging and where they feel "at home" (e.g., Pollock et al., 2017; Pollock et al., 2003). In research on TCK originating from Norway, Skjerven (2006) focused on how TCK's mobile life has impacted adolescent identities, where she found out that her participants' identities have been constructed by living between multiple cultures. In addition, their self-understanding has been influenced by how others have looked at their multicultural identities. Skjerven (2006) also discovered that her participants' sense of belonging and relationships was tied to their identity experiences. Bjørnsen (2021) studied diplomats' children from Norway and how their childhood experiences and circumstances impacted their adult life. Some of her participants experienced mental health and well-being challenges returning to Norway. Her findings show that her participants' definition of home was combined with family relations. Wu and Koolash's (2011) focus was on how Swedish TCK identify themselves, where they belong, and feel at home after returning to Sweden. Their research shows their participants had individual definitions of home, where, for some,

relationships were essential to where they felt at home, some thought about an object, and others thought about where they spent their time.

According to Ní Laoire et al. (2010), there is a lack of research within childhood studies regarding how childhoods are influenced by migration and mobility (p.156). Thus, my research aim can contribute to filling this gap by providing insights and perspectives on highly mobile and cross-cultural childhood. This research can contribute to new insights about a mobile childhood since TCK's childhood is constructed and impacted by multiple cultures, including both their host and passport cultures, as well as the "third culture" (e.g., Pollock et al., 2017). Moreover, this research can also give new insights into how mobility life constructs TCK's social relationships and their sense of belonging. In other words, this research contributes to new aspects of how children's childhood and upbringing have been influenced by cultural differences due to their parents' career paths. Furthermore, this research can also contribute to broader aspects of mobile childhoods in a Norwegian context since most research has focused on missionary children (see Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015), regarding those children who have migrated abroad due to their parents' work.

1.4. Outline of the paper

The master's thesis project consists of eight chapters following this introduction.

The second chapter presents the background of this master's thesis. It presents a brief overview of Norway, Norwegian society and culture, a Norwegian childhood, and a Norwegian home, in addition to the participants' parent's work, including missionary, development aid, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and Military.

The third chapter describes the theory, including childhood studies and social constructionism. Furthermore, I describe relevant theories from human geography: place attachment, belonging, and national identity. I also outline different theories described in the literature, such as cultural identity and acculturation, organizational migration, third culture kids, and (reverse) culture shock.

The fourth chapter describes the methodology, including the fieldwork and a description of the participants. I also examine ethical considerations and dilemmas and describe my role as a researcher as an 'insider'.

The fifth chapter is the first analysis chapter, where I explore the participants' experiences of temporary migration, including experiences related to culture and language, school, and friendships. This chapter also explores how living cross-culturally and having a highly mobile childhood impacts the participants' identity and sense of belonging.

The sixth chapter explores the participants' definition and sense of home. I also look at the participants' elaboration on lack of belonging.

In the seventh chapter, I continue exploring the participants' sense of home as relational and how their social relationships have evolved over time.

In the last analysis chapter, I explore the experiences of participants who have returned to Norway and topics such as reverse culture shock, feeling different, high expectations, and freedom and independence.

The final chapter summarizes my findings and examines the strengths and limitations before presenting future research suggestions.

2.0. Background of the study

This chapter is divided into two sections. In the first section, I will contextualize Norway as a passport country because the participants have one or two parents who have Norway as their country of origin. In the next section, I briefly explain the parents' work since this was the reason they moved abroad. This is to understand better the life, conditions, and context of how the target group of this master thesis project grew up. However, since most of the participants have had or have parents who work within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, missionary work, and developmental aid work, I will elaborate more on these careers in a Norwegian context than the Norwegian defense.

2.1. Norway and national identity

Norway is a Scandinavian country in Europe that borders Sweden, Finland, Russia, the North Atlantic Ocean, and the North Sea. The border to the North Atlantic Ocean has had a big part in Norwegian trade history. Despite the country's small population, Norway is a long-stretching country, stretching from south to north for 1,089 miles (Bakke, 2001; Heidar, 2001). Today, the capital of Norway is Oslo, which is in the southeast of the country, and the population today is over five million people (Statisk sentralbyrå, 2022; Ringard et al., 2013). The country is perhaps most known for its fjords, cold weather, and mountains (Ringard et al., 2013, p.3). Regarding religion and culture, Norway has been a Protestant church-state since 1814. However, in 2012, the church became independent from the state, although this independence became more evident in 2017 (Barne- og familiedepartementet, 2019). Even though most of the Norwegian population does not practice religion, Christianity has significantly influenced Norway since 1030 (Heidar, 2001; Bakke, 2001, p.11). Historically speaking, Norway has been economically independent through its farming and fishing communities (Bergan & Dysthe, 1994), where the country has been dependent on the Atlantic Sea (Heidar, 2001, p.2). After World War II, the country had economic challenges and was seen as the poorest in Western Europe. However, this changed in the 1970s when Norway discovered oil in the Norwegian sector of the North Sea (Heidar, 2001; Bull et al., 2004, p.102). In the context of immigration and emigration, Norwegians have emigrated to the United States of America from the early 1800s to the early 1900s. In the 1960s, more people immigrated to Norway than people emigrated out of Norway (Heidar, 2001, p.11).

Historically, Norway has been ruled by both Denmark and Sweden (Gullestad, 1997). Norway got its independence from Denmark and got its independent constitution in 1814, which has been celebrated on the 17th of May yearly. However, the country was in union with Sweden until 1905 (Heidar, 2001, p.3). In 1905, Norway emerged as an independent country, with its independent nation, its independent kin, and its independent governance over the population and geographical areas (Hodne, 1995, p.140). The old Norwegian kingdom was founded in the eighth to tenth century by the Vikings but became under the rule of Denmark in the 14th and 15th centuries (Heidar, 2001, p.3). It can be said that the Norwegian national state was built between 1814 and 1905. During this time, Norway got its independent national identity since the country and its people wanted to be independent. However, the typical Norwegian national identity was shown long before 1814, such as the unique Norwegian nature (Hodne, 1995, p.25;33-35). The Norwegian affinity for nature has often been emphasized in national contexts (Gullestad, 2006, p.43).

Norway's national identity has also been influenced by its neighboring countries, both in language and political ways (Heidar, 2001; Bull et al., 2004). Three factors can look at the influence of Norwegian politics; the first is about national independence as well as the principle of sovereignty, the second one is about regional differences, and the last one is

about welfare values (Bakke, 2001, p.12). The Norwegian welfare system is briefly about universal adjustments; in other words, equal welfare benefits for all regarding education and health are central elements. In addition, it has had a massive influence on children's rights, where the state has had a central role in the childhood of children in Norway. Here, the Norwegian equal ideal comes through in the Norwegian idea about people's social equality (Korsvold, 2021, p.83).

2.1.1. The Norwegian society

Norwegian society and culture have been looked at by researchers who emphasized Norwegians and other Nordic countries as egalitarian individualism. Egalitarian individualism revolves around equality and sameness (Gullestad, 2002, p.46; Vike, 2001). Vike (2001) argues that the idea of sameness in Norway is an important feature of the political system and individuals' everyday lives (Vike, 2001, p.140). Kjørholt (2002) divides egalitarian individualism in two and defines it as the individual's rights of self-realization and self-determination. Additionally, it is about equality and integrity to others, where admiring personal freedom to others can be seen as central importance, as well as individualistic orientation (Kjørholt, 2002, p.68). Vike (2001) further describes Norwegian individualism as autonomy, where politics have the central basis of the decisions of the families, although welfare has also influenced individualism (Vike, 2001, pp.141-142). The influence of "Janteloven," or the Law of Jante, is also remarkable in describing Norwegian society. The law of Jante is a code of conduct describing how individuals should behave and which attitudes are allowed within the community (Vike, 2001; Avant & Knutsen, 1993). The term "Janteloven" was coined by Aksel Sandmose in 1899 (Avant & Knutsen, 1993, p.453), and he describes it as "a term that expresses and communicates the essential fear of individualism in Norwegian culture, but also the values and the Norwegian attention of that fear" (Avant & Knutsen, 1993, p.453). The law of Jante outlines ten points of how Norwegians should behave, such as that individuals should not think they are better than others (e.g., Avant & Knutsen, 1993).

2.1.2. Norwegian Childhoods

Norway has been viewed as the best country to grow up and is one of the most successful in children's welfare (Korsvold, 2016, p.11). Norwegian childhood has continuously changed, where children's position in society in the 1800s was to contribute to the families' livelihoods and learn about adult work. Over the years, since 1945, children's positions have been more institutionalized, and children have used more of their everyday lives at school. In this way, children went from being of economic value to being of more excellent emotional value. In other words, children's position and childhood were more characterized by play and other activities (Korsvold, 2021, pp.84-85; Ursin & Lyså, 2019). The school system has also gradually changed, becoming accessible for all and stretching over more years (Korsvold, 2016), as it is expected to do 13 years of education (Frønes, 2011). Since the 20th century, there has been a significant shift in children's rights in Norway, from being perceived as their parent's property to having rights as independent individuals (Ursin & Lyså, 2019).

Modern Norwegian childhood thinking and how children are being understood is shaped by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), established in 1989. These rights were ratified in Norway in 1991 and incorporated into the Norwegian Human Rights Act §2 in 2003 (Smith, 2016). According to Ursin and Lyså (2019), democratic principles and children's rights are a part of the curriculum in Norway, from the child's position in kindergarten to their higher secondary school position. Gullestad (1997) mentions that children are perceived as independent individuals capable of caring for themselves but should also be themselves. This view of children is the opposite of the previous focus on Norwegian childhood, which looked at children as dutiful and obedient

and how the children should behave (Gullestad, 1997, p.34; see also Gullestad, 2006). Norwegian children today have more self-determination and freedom to choose, such as choosing whom they want to play with, which is viewed as the importance of their participation right (Kjørholt, 2008; Gullestad, 2006). Therefore, as Gullestad (2006) points out, Norwegian childhood is characterized by safety, protection, and love of nature (p.43).

With stability, Gullestad (2006) points out that children in Norway often experience stability within the family while growing up. She also points out that it can be viewed as damaging if children frequently move in their childhood and upbringing (Gullestad, 2006, pp.43-44). Overall, children in Norway mostly live in good living conditions characterized by safety, economic, and security through welfare programs and householding. Additionally, they are given primary needs such as a safe environment where children have stable family circumstances (Fauske & Øia, 2003, p.129). According to Gullestad (1997), the Norwegian notion of a 'good' childhood is one where children can have independent free play, and children must be comfortable with nature from an early age to play outside. In this essence, Norwegian childhood is often associated with nature (Gullestad, 1997, p.27). However, there have also been concerns that children do not use nature as much as before (Fauske & Øia, 2003), possibly because of the influence of television and technology (Gullestad, 2006), but also that they spend more of their free time at school and with their families (Gullestad, 1997, p.34).

2.1.3. The Norwegian home

In Norway, home is often associated with a house. However, Gullestad (1984) points out that Norwegians often use the "house" in verbal expressions, whereas the English equivalent would use the word 'family' or 'our place'. Norwegians also use the words 'house' and 'home' as verbal expressions to describe their places (Gullestad, 1984, pp.85-86). Most Norwegians live in high-standard households, and living in a good household environment can be more important for children in Norway than in other societies (Fauske & Øia, 2003, p.130). The household is an integral part of the individual's and family's lives, both practical and ideologically. Norwegian homes are described as safe places where families can experience peace (Gullestad, 1984, p.85). Scholars also mention that the concept of coziness (*kos*) is a definition of how to describe the families in a Norwegian household, which describes the social atmosphere (Brusdal, 2006, p.37). This description could be because it is often shown that Norwegians spend much of their time at home. Thus, it is a place where most social life takes place (Gullestad, 1991). Brusdal (2006) points out that Norwegian homes are important places for social gatherings with families and neighbors. In addition, the home establishes an individual's identity and sense of belonging (Brusdal, 2006, p.36). Therefore, a Norwegian home is a family place. Thus, one will often find pictures of the family at the homes, illustrating the family through generations or pictures of the families currently living there (Brusdal, 2006, p.37).

Gullestad (1991) points out that modern Norwegians are among the world's most prolific furniture consumers per person. Decorating a Norwegian home is often an ongoing project, where people often use their free time to improve their homes, for example, by purchasing furniture (Gullestad, 1991, pp.489-490). The reasons for the improvement in such furniture are not only because of the Norwegian cold climate or their wealth but because, as mentioned, the Norwegian home is a place for social gathering. It is also a place that is important for the family. This is because the families spend much time at their homes, and it presents the families' or individual identities (Gullestad, 1991, p.490). Gullestad (1991) also points out that activities and hobbies are in places close to people's homes (p.489). In a Norwegian home, it is also essential to have private spaces, which are presented where some children and parents have their own rooms. In addition,

private spaces from the public sector can be shown as a symbol with a doorbell (Gullestad, 1989, p.53). Regarding a Norwegian home, it might be important where the house is geographically located, as some Norwegians want to live near nature. This is because nature can elevate place attachment and sense of belonging (Bergan & Dysthe, 1994), mainly as children grow up (Gullestad, 2006, p.45).

Norwegians' homes are also located in the city or the village. People often develop place attachment due to the family history connected with a particular place, such as a family farm or kinship, where the family farm is often also used as a family name (Gullestad, 2006, p.45). According to Gullestad (2006), a person's identity in a Norwegian context is often where they grew up and have had their childhood years because it is where the roots are established. In this way, a local attachment can also be viewed as a national symbol. This way of thinking, a home place in a Norwegian context, is associated with humans, the landscape, nature, cultural history, and the local dialect (Gullestad, 2006, p.45). With this said, a Norwegian home is attached to a place but also with feelings and emotions (Widerberg & Kummen, 2012, p.332), and Norwegian children often grow up in one place which they see themselves as belonging to and coming from (Gullestad, 1997, p.29).

Although researchers have associated Norwegian homes with a house, many Norwegians live in either an apartment or housing (Bergan & Dysthe, 1994, p.27). According to Brusdal (2006), most Norwegians wish to live in a house of their own, which most of them can achieve. Brusdal (2006) also points out that the ideal Norwegian home is not in the big cities, even though some families live within them. Although, young families are more likely to move to central districts when planning to have children. Furthermore, Brusdal (2006) also points out that the size of the dwelling Norwegians reflects both the cultural ideas and the increase in prosperity. Furthermore, in a Norwegian context, some families own a cabin, which also can be an essential home aspect. However, it can be crucial to point out that middle-class families mostly own a Norwegian cabin and view it as a holiday home (Vittersø, 2007). A cabin is often a place Norwegians spend their free time and is often situated near nature (Brusdal, 2006; Gullestad, 1997). As mentioned, nature has been essential for Norwegians for centuries, and spending time in a cabin during a holiday or a weekend can be important for some Norwegians to find peace (Bergan & Dysthe, 1994, p.30). In the context of how the cabins are built, they have been seen as low-standard buildings, often with traditional Norwegian materials and decorations (Vittersø, 2007).

2.2. Norwegians working abroad and their career paths

Norwegians perceive themselves as peace-loving people (Gullestad, 1997), promoting peace, international justice, and humanitarian values have been significant for the country's identity and self-image (Skånland, 2010). The Norwegian 'peace' concept has also been central in Norwegian foreign policy and how the nation wants to be perceived internationally. The peace thinking process started in the 1980s but was not promoted until the early 1990s (Skånland, 2010, p.36). After World War II, in 1945, Norway started to build a stronger relationship with the global world. This was done, for instance, by participating in international operations to promote the country as a peaceful nation. Norway has contributed to 102 international operations through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United Nations (UN). In other words, Norway is today a contributor to the UN's peacekeeping Operations (UNPKO). However, Norway only focuses on niche contributions. Peacekeeping international operations serve to discourage wars and conflicts and advance human security in the world (Gustavsen & Tollefsen, 2018). The participants in this research have had some of their childhood years in another country due to their parents working temporarily abroad. The participant's

parents have or are still working as missionaries, with developmental aid work, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the military. Generally, they are all working to develop or help others internationally and develop international cooperation with peace engagement and peace promotion (Skånland, 2010).

2.2.1. Norwegian international mission work

Several Norwegian organizations and churches send families abroad as missionary families, such as the Norwegian missionary society. Since its establishment in 1854, the Norwegian missionary society has sent families to continents such as Asia and Africa (Drønen & Skjortnes, 2010). Missionary work is often understood as preaching, where God and the Bible words are the messages to the people (Tolo, 2011b, p.97). Additionally, missionaries convey hope to people and churches internationally, mainly in low and middle-income countries (Eide, 2002, p.17). Missionaries often feel a calling from God to undertake missionary work (Mikaelsson, 2010). Even though only one member of a married couple perceives this calling, both partners become involved in the work (Eide, 2002, pp.118-119). Historically, Norwegian missionary work has also been to help the poor, as seen in the New Testament in the Bible about charity and mercy in meeting with others (Tolo, 2011b, pp.97-98). Missionary work also involves development aid, often called Christian developmental aid, first initiated in 1842. The Norwegian Lutheran Missionary Association has been involved in different forms of developmental aid work, such as education in the local community and health work (Strand, 2011, pp.22-23). Although Norwegian missions have been actively working abroad for decades, there have been notable changes and declines in the number of missionary families relocating since the late 1980s. This could be because of debates surrounding the treatment children accompanying their parents overseas got from Norwegian mission organizations. Previous research has shown several negative experiences and impacts on the childhood of these children while accompanying their parents who were engaged in mission work. Hence, fewer families have worked internationally with missionary work (Eide, 2002, p.14). Those who do mission work abroad from Norway are being referred to as long-term missionaries or short-time missionaries. In other words, it depends on how long time the missionaries are working abroad (e.g., Lilleaasen & Nandrup, 2018). In this research, most parents worked for a long time, between three years or more, depending on the contract.

2.2.2. Norwegian Developmental Aid Work

Historically, Norwegian aid work started in 1948-1949, driven by the engagement of Christian missionaries and the labor movement (Øyhus, 2016, pp. 73-74). The first work within Norwegian developmental aid was in 1952 with "Norsk Utviklingshjelp" (Norwegian Developmental Help) (Tolo, 2011a, p.10). The same year, the Norwegian developmental aid established a fund called the "Indian Fund", and cooperated with the UN and the Indian authority to start the fisheries project. However, it was not until the 1960s that formal guidelines for Norwegian developmental aid work were established. The "Fredskorpset" (Peace Corps) was established during this time. In 1965, the Norwegian government appointed a committee led by Onar Onarheim to investigate development aid guidelines. Based on the committee's recommendations, Norwegian Developmental Aid was transformed into an independent directorate known as the Directorate for Development Cooperation (NORAD) in 1968 (Tolo, 2011a; Utenriksdepartementet, 2002).

Norwegian developmental aid aims to improve social and economic conditions for people in the Global South, established through dialogue and cooperation with each country. According to Norad (1993),

The goal of Norwegian developmental aid cooperation is to contribute to the development of the partner country, where the cooperation partner is responsible for their development. Therefore, developmental cooperation should be based on equality and mutual benefit in the economy, politics, and culture (Norad, 1993, p.18).

Considering that the Norwegian economy improved due to oil production in the 1970s, Norway had a budget of over 2 million for aid work in the 1980s (Utenriksdepartementet, 2002). In the early 1990s, Norway mainly had aid work in countries in East and South Africa, Central America, and a few countries in Asia. NORAD has established multiple cooperation agreements within Norway and the Global South. These cooperations included the health, oil, and fisheries sectors (Norad, 1993, p.14). The Norwegian developmental aid work has contributed to reducing infant mortality and illiteracy and peacemaking and stability through national cooperation (Utenriksdepartementet, 2002). Organizations conducting Norwegian developmental aid work in different countries are situated under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, where the work aims to promote national interest internationally.

2.2.3. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and diplomats

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs started in 1906 with only 16 employees, while in 1998, it had over 990 employees who worked abroad (Bátora & Neuman, 2002, p.28). Today, there are over 2500 men and women working within the Norwegian foreign services, where they have a duty to work both internationally and in the local departments in Norway. The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs highlights the government's foreign services and development politics internationally, and those who work within the Ministry are referred to as foreign servicemen. Those who work within foreign services internationally focus on promoting Norwegian interests internationally, which can be established through a range of economic and political interests (Deloitte, 2021; Utenrikstjenesten, 2023), as well as to establish peace and safety (Utenrikstjenesten, 2020). The workers (called aspirants) work within the embassy, on delegations, or as consultants internationally and can have different titles such as ambassador, secretary, and consular (Deloitte, 2021; Neumann, 2005; Utenrikstjenesten, 2023).

In 2021, researchers stated that there are 81 countries where Norwegian foreign services are working. Each country has different ambassadors, and Norwegians work for different foreign stations. They are working, as mentioned, with different tasks abroad, like diplomatic, consultation, and administration, which are the primary tasks they are given, besides other activities. Nevertheless, the usual work is diplomatic work abroad (Deloitte, 2021, pp.81-84; 87). According to Hauge and Neumann (2011), a person who is working as a diplomat is "an official representative for the country internationally through organizations like the European Union (EU), NATO and UN" (Hauge & Neumann, 2011, p.10). Aspirants are expected to be trained for three years before working internationally for three years. After this, they have more freedom of where and how long they want to work abroad. However, they must move, which can impact the family situation. Hence, in many cases, the aspirants bring their partner and their children abroad (Utenrikstjenesten, 2023), as this research study also indicates.

2.2.4. The Norwegian defense work internationally

The Norwegian defense conducts military operations internationally as part of the Norwegian foreign policy objectives. The primary goal is to promote Norwegian interests, focusing on peacemaking efforts and fostering international connections, where they support NATO and the UN (Sunde, 2012, pp.6-7). In other words, the Norwegian defense's focus is peacemaking and international cooperation, as the other works mentioned above. Norway has been active in international operations since 1947

(Gustavsen & Tollefsen, 2018). Since 1990, most of the Norwegian defense work has been done in Europe. However, they also work within Africa and South Asia (Gustavsen & Tollefsen, 2018, pp.12-13). There are different types of international operations, and Norway has participated in operations under the aegis of the UN (Gustavsen & Tollefsen, 2018, p.16). Families living abroad due to work within the Norwegian defense have the right to live abroad with help from the employer if the employee has received an order for more than two years to live abroad (Forsvaret, 2024).

2.4. Chapter Summary

This chapter has emphasized a brief view of Norway and Norwegian national identity, how the Norwegian society views themselves, and how researchers view Norwegian society. Furthermore, I have examined how scholars view Norwegian childhood and Norwegian home. I have also looked at the participants' parent's work to contribute a better understanding of the impacts of living abroad, where I have illustrated how their work has been described in the literature.

3.0. Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I will provide an overview of the theoretical framework of this thesis. I start by positioning it within childhood studies looking at the theory of social constructivism. Then, I elaborate on theories borrowed from human geography, such as place attachments, belonging, and national identity. Lastly, I will examine how the literature describes some theoretical concepts. These concepts are cultural identity and acculturation, organizational migration, third culture kids, and reverse culture shock.

3.1. Childhood studies

The field of childhood studies¹ was primarily called “the sociology of childhood”, even though later the field was also called “social studies of childhood” or “childhood studies” (Abebe et al., 2019, p.23). Since most scholars now refer to the term childhood studies, I will use this term further in this research to describe the field. Childhood studies emerged in the 1980s and the 1990s (James & Prout, 1997; Hammersley, 2017). The reason for the “new paradigm” is that the field views childhood differently and allows children to be subjects in research. This does not mean that children were not of interest to researchers in previous times. Instead, this means that children should be studied in their own rights (James & Prout, 1997, p.7). In addition, the new paradigm insisted that childhood should be viewed as socially constructed and that children are social actors with their agency (Punch & Tisdall, 2012, p.241).

The field emerged based on criticism of how research has been conducted on children and childhood, mainly researchers’ focus on child development (Tisdall & Punch, 2012). The criticism claimed that traditional disciplinary research formerly excluded children and childhood (Hammersley, 2017). In other words, childhood studies view childhood differently than previous times, allowing children to be subjects in research and viewing that children should be studied for their rights as human beings. That children are viewed as ‘human beings’ does not mean that childhood studies do not see children as ‘human becoming’s. Instead, it means that their childhood lives are worth studying; in other words, studying children and their childhood in the present time (James & Prout, 1997, p.7; Qvortrup et al., 2009, p.5).

However, it is also essential to point out that childhood studies have been criticized for being uncritical on the theoretical level (Tisdall & Punch, 2012, p.251). Prout (2005) criticizes childhood studies and mentions that “childhood studies need to move beyond dichotomies and deploy non-dualistic analytical resources” (Prout, 2005, p.59). With this, Prout (2005) suggests that the field should not narrow between the dichotomies between, for example, psychology and sociology. He explicitly critiques the perceived social, cultural, and natural divisions, limiting our understanding of childhood (Prout, 2005; Tisdall & Punch, 2012, p.253). Prout (2005) suggests that childhood studies adopt more dynamic and interdisciplinary approaches that draw on concepts such as mobility.

¹ The field where primarily called the “sociology of childhood”, even though later the field where also called “social studies of childhood” or “childhood studies” (Abebe et al., 2021, p.23). Since most scholars now refer to the term childhood studies, I will also use this term further in this research to describe the field.

3.1.1. The social construction of childhood

As mentioned above, childhood should be understood as socially constructed (Punch & Tisdall, 2012; James & Prout, 1997), differing across cultures, history, and social contexts (Montgomery, 2003, p.46). This view is rooted in the theory of social constructionism, which emerged in the 1970s and 1980s in different fields of social science (Hammersley, 2017, p.117), where researchers have looked at and tried to understand human's social lives, both culturally and historically (Burr, 2015, pp.1-2;4). Social constructionism evokes a "look at how categories are constructed, how bodies of knowledge are built up, and how childhood and adulthood are seen and understood in any given society" (Montgomery, 2003, p.46). Social constructionism takes a critical viewpoint on how people understand themselves but also the world (Burr, 2015). Within the field of childhood studies, this means that social constructionism is looking at the ideas of childhood rather than assuming universal facts about childhood. This means that perceptions of childhood vary across different societies (Montgomery, 2003, p.46). However, ideas of childhood and children change since children are dependent on their cultural, historical, and social context (Montgomery, 2003, p.46).

Social constructionism first emerged by sociologists Berger and Luckman in 1967. They use the term sociology of knowledge to describe human knowledge and reality since they argue that people's reality is socially defined. The term sociology of knowledge was coined by Max Scheler in the 1920s, and the term is about the relationship between people's thoughts and the social context where the thoughts arise (Berger & Luckman, 1967, p.16; 134). Berger and Luckman (1967) argue that the sociology of knowledge is a way of understanding human reality as socially constructed. Furthermore, they emphasize that society would not exist without knowledge about reality. This means that individuals learn about their everyday lives and reality through interactions with others and their society. In other words, human knowledge about their worldview is socially established or constructed through interactions with others (Berger & Luckman, 1967).

This is similar to how Burr and Dick (2017) describe the essence of the social constructionist approach as people's understanding of the world (Burr & Dick, 2017, p.59). Furthermore, they mention that people's understanding of the world is both historically and culturally categorized (Burr & Dick, 2017). This means that social constructions of how women, men, and children are being understood in different cultures and societies are changing over time (Burr, 2015). Philippe Ariés (1962) was one of the first historians to point out the idea of childhood as socially and historically constructed. Through his analysis of European art in the Middle Ages, Ariés claimed that childhood was not distinct from adulthood (in Montgomery, 2003). Furthermore, he stated two key propositions in his thesis. The first idea was that childhood should be seen as culturally and historically contingent. The second idea is that how adults behave around children will shape their experience and how they view themselves (James & James, 2004, p.13). His thoughts about how childhood changed over time have been critiqued because he used paintings to illustrate his point. However, it has also opened up ideas that childhood is socially constructed. Hence, his work became important in the early years of childhood studies (Montgomery, 2003; Hammersley, 2017).

Another central concept of social constructionism is discourse. According to Montgomery (2003), discourse is associated with social constructionism, being referred to as "a whole set of interconnected ideas that work together in a self-contained way, ideas that are held together by particular ideology or view of the world" (Montgomery, 2003, p.47). In other words, discourse is not a statement. However, it can be understood as ideas humans own in their understanding of the world because of their historical, social, and political positions. In addition, how people use their knowledge and language about things affects their lives and others. Discourses about childhood are how each culture

reflects on the child and how they are compared to others in their peer groups (Bery, 2003, pp.47-48). Both adults and children make sense of their experiences through discourses (Montgomery, 2003, p. 46; 51). Social constructionism of childhood is, therefore, the ideas about children and childhood, which differ across societies and cultural contexts, but these ideas have also changed historically (Montgomery, 2003). This research uses social constructivism as a theoretical lens to unearth the participant's childhood experiences living in different cultures.

3.2. Place attachments

Scholars have described the concept of place attachment as comprehending different aspects of the bond between people and place (Low & Altman, 1992, p.4). Although there are different aspects, most scholars look at people's emotions toward a place (Low & Altman, 1992). Low and Altman (1992) describe the word place attachment by dividing the words and referring to the word "attachments" as an influence or affection, while the word "place" is the environmental setting or a space that gives meaning to people but also cultural processes (Low & Altman, 1992, p.6). Thus, a place has cultural meanings, such as a home.

According to Blunt and Dowling (2022), "Being home refers to the place where one lives within familiarity, safety, and protected boundaries" (Blunt & Dowling, 2022, p.26). Berger (cited in Rapport & Dawson, 1998) has looked at people in a movement, such as travelers and migrants, and argues that they feel at home in movements since they do not have a home base they can return to. He further mentions that people who live a mobile life can feel at home in movement, but also that movement can be the individual's home since people's identities are shaped by the move (Rapport & Dawson, 1998, pp.27-28). Thus, their home can be anywhere, including their opinions, stories, and actions. He also argues that if people on a movement have their life experiences untold, their home, sense of belonging, and identity are not expressed (Rapport & Dawson, 1998).

Scholars have also looked at memories and place attachment since people's memories of a particular place, such as a childhood home, can influence where they might feel "at home" and their sense of belonging (Jack, 2010, p.757). Marcus (1992) points out that

Individuals hold onto childhood memories of specific places as a psychic anchor, reminding us of where we came from and what we once were (...). Whatever befalls us in later life, those memories remain (Marcus, 1992, p.89).

Furthermore, childhood memories of the emotions associated with a specific place and the social significance attached to these places by children and other individuals (e.g., parents or peers) can also impact their place attachments as individuals grow up (Jack, 2010, p.758). For example, Marcus (1992) argues that a person's place attachment to their childhood home is because of memories of family relations or other fulfilling human relations (Marcus, 1992, p.107). Previous research has also found that the most common place attachment is associated with the person's family and security (Chawla, 1992, p.74). By this, place attachment can also be understood as the physical place and the attachments individuals have to other people, ideas, earlier experiences, memories, etc., which are connected to a particular place or environment (Low & Altman, 1992, p.10). In other words, individuals can strengthen their place attachments to a place due to relationships.

According to Chawla (1992), children have attachments to their childhood home because of caring family members. Chawla (1992) further points out that children's place attachments are connected to their emotional expressions, such as forming a stronger place attachment when they express that they are happy at that place (Chawla, 1992, p.64). Research also indicates that adolescents develop a stronger attachment to their

community when they are accepted by adults, which can influence their desire to continue living within the community (Chawla, 1992, pp.68-69). Based on empirical sources, scholars highlight that place attachments can be vital because they add to the quality of the child's life, and place attachments can influence people as they grow up (Chawla, 1992, p.73).

A place is also essential in people's self-understanding and where they belong (Anderson, 2021, p.47). In other words, place attachment is also tightly connected to place identity, sense of place, and rootedness (Low & Altman, 1992, p.3). Places can reflect a person's identity because of the personal connection and memories people might have with the place. Even though individuals can have a plural sense of places, one of the places can be more important than the other (Low & Altman, 1992; Anderson, 2021). According to Jack (2010), people's sense of belonging to a place is how they understand themselves. Hence, people's identity is understood by their sense of belonging, such as their origin country, the city, the landscape or village they live in, the schools they have attended, and the house(s) they have grown up in (Jack, 2010, p.756). Thus, the places people come from can impact their identity (Chawla, 1992, p.66).

3.2.1 Belonging

The academic literature describes belonging as a complex and multidimensional concept (Antonsich, 2010). However, geographers approach this concept differently, such as focusing on individuals' emotional attachment and sense of belonging to a place or group (Youkhana, 2015, p.11). Hence, in this thesis, I will look at belonging associated with people's individual and emotional attachments and how belonging is connected to citizenship, nationality, and home.

Scholars have emphasized that humans need to belong, and if they experience a lack of belonging, they often feel left behind, in danger, and cannot express their identity (Wright, 2015, p.395; Watt & Badger, 2009). Additionally, lack of belonging can lead to several mental health issues, such as depression, anxiety, and loneliness (Halse, 2018, p.15). Thus, belonging is important, and people experience belonging when they are accepted, recognized, cared for, and valued by others. It also encompasses other aspects, such as individuals' freedom, agency, and safety (Bruhn & Gonzales, 2023, p.6). According to Yuval-Davis (2006), individuals can belong in multiple ways. Although belonging is also an individual thing, it differs for each person. Hence, a person can have multiple scales of belonging in the range of a nation and transnational networks. Belonging can also appear in attachments to other humans, such as family, peer group, or social institutions (Halse, 2018, p.6).

Antonsich (2010) has looked at belonging through individuals' emotional attachments to a place, which he terms as place-belongingness. He highlights five factors that influence individuals' feelings of place-belongingness: auto-biographical, relational, cultural, economic, and legal factors. *Auto-biographical* factors are a person's attachments to their past experiences, relations, and memories; for example, places people grew up in can hold significance in their sense of place-belongingness. *Relational factors* indicate personal and social attachments that enrich a person's emotional life, such as relationships with friends or family members, often need to be long-lasting to get a sense of belonging to these relations (Antonsich, 2010). A sense of belonging to others is, according to Wright (2015), about relatedness and emotional attachments. Similarly, Cuervo and Wyn (2014) point out that an individual's relational belonging can be illustrated through people's sense of belonging to others built by trust.

Antonsich's (2010) third factor is *cultural factors*, including language, traditions, religions, and food, which can contribute to a person's sense of belonging. For example,

people can feel a sense of belonging when they understand the same language as others. *Economic factors* can contribute to a sense of place-belongingness, creating a safe and stable environment for a person or family. *Legal factors*, such as citizen permits and rights, can be another dimension of feeling safe in establishing belonging. That is, where a person feels (legally as well as economically) safe can indicate it may feel belonging (Antonsich, 2010, pp.647–648).

Belonging has also been looked at as feeling at home. Even though a home is described as a material dwelling (e.g., Blunt & Dowling, 2022), Antonsich (2010) looks at home as associated with individual emotional aspects and as a symbolic space, pointing out that individuals build a sense of home when they have a sense of belonging to a specific place. Additionally, individuals build a sense of home through familiarity, comfort, and emotional attachments (Antonsich, 2010, p.646; see also Cuervo & Wyn, 2014). Similarly, Yuval-Davis (2006) looks at belonging as being connected to individuals' emotional attachments, sense of home, and safety experiences. Home is essential for individuals in producing belonging, and a sense of home might arise through interactions with place and feelings (Wright, 2015, p.395). Belonging has also been viewed by scholars. Belonging is also associated with the material aspects of the home. Taylor (2015) defines the "material home" as the physical things humans live within and their experiences. Her examples are landscapes and other materials that evoke people's sense of home, such as smells that trigger memories of home (Taylor, 2015, pp.88-89; see also Youkhana, 2015).

Belonging is also connected to citizenship, where many scholars argue that belonging is tied to an individual's relationships and experiences as a citizen and within geographical contexts (Wood & Black, 2018, p.171). This is because they argue that belonging is a synonym of the concept of citizenship, viewing the relationship between citizens and the nation-state (Antonsich, 2010; Youkhana, 2015, p.12). Crowley (1999) argues that the concept of belonging is a "thicker" concept than citizenship because the idea of belonging encompasses both the right and duties of having citizenship and the emotional aspects that membership can evoke (Crowley, 1999, cited in Yuval-Davis, 2004, p.215). In this sense, geographers have looked at a sense of belonging linked to citizenship, as well as national identity (Antonsich, 2010), which will be looked at further below.

3.2.2. National identity

As mentioned, belonging can also be viewed within the concept of national identity. Scholars have debated the concept of national identity and suggested abandoning it due to its complexity and competition with other identity concepts. Despite the debate, scholars agreed that the concept of national identity describes: "a sense of belonging to and being a member of a geopolitical entity" (Verdugo & Milne, 2016, p.3). Similarly, Triandafyllidou (1998) describes: "a sense of belonging people have to a nation, binds individuals together, which is supposed to constitute the essence of national identity" (p.595). Thus, belonging is associated with a nation and looks at an individual's self-understanding (Triandafyllidou, 1998).

Bond (2006) argues that individuals present three identity markers to others, representing their national identity: a person's place of birth, current residence, and ancestors' heritage. Through these identity markers, individuals claim national belonging (Bond, 2006, pp.611-612). Zeugner-Roth et al. (2015) describe national identity through other scholars:

The importance of national affiliation and the subjective significance of an inner bond with the nation indicates the extent to which people identify with and have a positive feeling of affiliation with their own nation, as well as the importance they attach to this feeling (Zeugner-Roth et al., 2015, p.28).

People might feel they belong due to their inclusion and citizenship to a nation (Bond, 2006, p.610). Thus, national identity views who is a community member, which often indicates standard features such as shared languages (Triandafyllidou, 1998). A person's national identity is a continual social process and can be constructed through their everyday lives (Bechhofer et al., 1999). According to Bechhofer et al. (1999), a person is not born with a national identity but is shaped by cultural representation. Furthermore, Bechhofer et al. (1999) argue that an individual's national identity is constructed of who they are and who they want to be within the context of their nations (Bechhofer et al., 1999, p.530). According to Halse (2018), a person's sense of belonging or lack of sense of belonging to a nation-state is often influenced by a combination of forces, such as geographic borders, political systems, and the perceptions of others.

3.3. Description of theoretical concepts

In this section of the theoretical framework, I will examine different theoretical concepts defined in the literature that are relevant to this study. These concepts are cultural identity and acculturation, organizational migration, third-culture kids, and reverse culture shock. I will elaborate on these concepts to better understand the participants' mobile and cross-cultural childhood experiences.

3.3.1. Cultural Identity and Acculturation

To understand whether a person has a sense of belonging or not, it can be essential to look at concepts such as cultural identity. First, I will examine the concepts of culture and identity, followed by cultural identity and acculturation. According to scholars, the concept of culture can be challenging to define since it is a broad concept with different meanings (Causadias, 2020). In this thesis, culture is defined as:

The complex whole consists of knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, and custom, as well as any other capabilities and habits acquired by a person as a member of society (Taylor, 1871, cited by Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015, p.35)².

Culture is thus not something humans are born with but a complex created within society (Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015, p.35). However, a child living cross-culturally is being influenced by multiple cultures. In this way, children are being influenced by multiple values and morals within different societies (Salole, 2020). This may impact their identities, who they become, and their sense of belonging. The concept of identity concerns how individuals look at themselves, whom they think they are, and how they interact with others (Vignoles et al., 2011, p.2). In other words, it is about how a person perceives themselves and how others perceive them (Salole, 2020, p.211).

Identity development is a lifelong experience; thus, identity can be influenced in adolescence and challenged throughout life. This means that a child's identity is influenced by class, nation, and culture, and their identity evolves from their experiences of the world (Cutcher, 2015, pp.121-122). However, children can also experience negative responses to their identities, especially if they are reinforced by, for example, the school and school peers (Cutcher, 2015, p.122). A Collective identity refers to a person's identity within a group he or she belongs to, in other words, their identification within a social group and their ethnicity (Vignoles et al., 2011, p.3). Connecting culture and identity is the definition of cultural identity, which is adopting the beliefs and practices of one or more cultural communities. Although, a person also needs to identify which cultural community they belong to (Jensen et al., 2011, p.286). This is because they express that, for example, adolescents will experience confusion with their identity if exposed to multiple cultural identities (Jensen et al., 2011, p.294).

² Translated from Norwegian.

Acculturation is a concept that can be highlighted associated with cultural identity. The concept describes cultures encountering one another because humans live in a globalized world (Jensen et al., 2011, p.291). Acculturation refers to individuals' self-adjustments and sociocultural adaptations to cultural changes (Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015, p.104). Ward and Geeraert (2016) refer to acculturation as

changes in an individual `cultural patterns` (i.e., practices, values, identities) resulting from sustained firsthand intercultural contact and subsequently affecting the individual's psychological well-being and social functioning" (p.98).

Furthermore, Berry (1997) has presented the four patterns of acculturation. The first is assimilation, which occurs when an individual assimilates into a new culture, embraces their new culture, and wants to maintain their original cultural identity. The second is about separation, which involves a person holding on to their original culture and avoiding the new cultures they have immigrated to. The third pattern is integration, which indicates that a person is maintaining their original cultural identity and adapting to the new culture. The last pattern is marginalization, where a person has little interest in their original culture and rejects the new culture. However, individuals can also be rejected by the new culture. In this phase, Berry argues that those who have experienced marginalization often do not feel at home in either their passport culture or the new culture they have immigrated to (Berry, 1997, cited in Jensen et al., 2011, pp.291-293).

3.3.2. Organizational migration

In this research, I look at families that have moved abroad due to their parents' work. Traditionally, this group of migrants has lacked attention in migration research since they have not been considered migrants. This is because their migration interest is to help the population in those countries they move into. Additionally, they migrated temporarily because they intended to return home after completing their organizational mission (Lucassen & Smit, 2015, p.29). Because of their temporary migration, they have, in recent years, been described as organizational migrants (Lucassen & Smit, 2015). Lucassen and Smit (2015) define organizational migrants as:

People (and their dependents) whose migratory behavior is primarily determined by the interests of the organization they have joined (...). There are many kinds of organizations that employ people and send them to different destinations to fight, negotiate, work, or help others (Lucassen & Smit, 2015, p.6).

Lucassen and Smit (2015) refer to missionaries, diplomats, aid workers, and soldiers as organizational migrants since they work within an organization. A feature of organizational migrants is that they do not always choose where to move (as this is done by their organization) and, therefore, lack agency in migration. An example is soldiers who work within military rules (Lucassen & Smit, 2015, p.1;21).

Organizational migrants are assumed not to produce social ties in the countries they move into and do not join many new communities, even though their motives are to contribute and give resources and benefits to the societies they live in (Lucassen & Smit, 2015, p.2). In migration studies, children who move with their families are reckoned as part of transnational families, which indicates that they are members of two nations and are achieving socioeconomic goals (Dobson, 2009, pp.356–357). These children are also called TCK in the literature; hence, I will look more at this concept.

3.3.3. Third culture kids

As mentioned in 1.1, Useem created the concept of TCK. She defined TCK as “children who accompany their parents into another culture” (Pollock et al., 2017, p.16). TCK refers to a life situation where children live internationally due to their parents' work. TCK lives cross-culturally (between cultures) and has a highly mobile childhood (Cockburn, 2002). Thus, they often identify with others in the same shared mobile experiences, not those living in their host or home (passport) culture (Pollock et al., 2017, p.17). Useem observed that the children found a sense of continuity within their families or the international school and not in the culture they were living in since they were often on a movement, naming this phenomenon “interstitial culture” (cited in Bell-Villada & Sichel, 2011, p.7).

D. Pollock (1989) has further developed the term and described third-culture kids as:

A person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the parent's culture. The TCK frequently builds relationships with all the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture may be assimilated into the TCK's life experiences, the sense of belonging is (often) in relationships with others of similar backgrounds (Pollock, 1989, cited in Pollock et al., 2017, pp.15-16).

This means that even though the child lives in a country, they establish relations with their parent's passport country and the country they live in. Although they might not feel like they belong to these cultures, they can feel more of a sense of belonging to the third culture, which is the culture associated with others with shared experiences as themselves. This could be because most TCK often live in multiple cultures due to their parent's work situation before returning to their 'home' country. Hence, they are being raised in a highly mobile life. Not just because they often move between the “home” and the host country every two or three years, but some also have a highly mobile life since they travel between the boarding school and where their parents live in the host country. Additionally, they experience a highly mobile life because people around them also move back and forth often (Pollock et al., 2017, p.18; 81-82).

Because of high mobility, TCK often struggles and has challenges with, for example, their identity, sense of belonging, etc. Still, they can feel a sense of belonging to multiple places (Kwon, 2019, p.113). They often struggle with the concept of “home” and question their belonging and identity since they never feel they belong anywhere (Eidse & Sichel, 2004, p.16). TCK and ATCK often refer to home as associated with relations. Additionally, they have feelings of rootlessness and restlessness. This is because they have high migration instincts since most have moved many times and do not have any place attachments (Pollock et al., 2017, pp.185-189; 192). Furthermore, scholars have found that TCK has different experiences with their sense of belonging when returning to their home countries, such as reversed culture shock (Fail et al., 2004, p.321).

However, they also have positive experiences. Previous literature and research have shown that TCK grows up to value the interactions between many cultures (Bell-Villada & Sichel, 2011). In later years, Pollock et al. (2017) made a clarifying and more updated definition of the term:

A traditional third culture kid (TCK) is a person who spends a significant part of his or her first eighteen years of life accompanying parent(s) into a country or countries that are different from at least one parent's passport country(ies) due to parents' choice of work or advanced training (Pollock et al., 2017, p.27).

Here, they use the word work instead of career to clarify that the parents could have different kinds of work, although they are temporary immigrants (Pollock et al., 2017, p.27). Furthermore, they also use the term adult third-culture kids (ATCK), which refers to adults who have grown up as third-culture kids (Pollock et al., 2017, p.24). It can be

essential to mention that there has been discussion about the term "third culture" since it can cause misunderstandings and confusion. One common misconception is that children labeled as TCK have only grown up in third-world countries. However, this is not the case; it is essential to note that the term "third culture" does not specify which countries TCK has lived in (Pollock et al., 2003, p.27). In later years, terms such as *global nomads* and *cross-cultural kids* have been developed. McCaig developed the term global nomads, which is similar to the term TCK, which defines a person who has lived internationally because of their parent's work. She focuses on the individual's childhood experiences rather than diving between the child and adult experiences (Bell-Villada & Sichel, 2011, p.8). Cross-cultural kids define children and youth's childhood lives impacted by two or more cultures (Salole, 2020, p.24). Van Reken developed the term to bind different cross-cultural childhood experiences under one term (Bell-Villada & Sichel, 2011, p.7).

3.3.4.(Reversed) culture shock

Before looking at the concept of reversed culture shock, it can be essential to first look at the term *culture shock* defined by Oberg in the 1960s as "precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse" (Oberg, 1960, p.177, cited in Gaw, 2000, p.85). In this way, culture shock is understood as the person's concern about what is familiar. When moving into a new culture, culture shock can arise since it is unfamiliar to them. Adler's (1975) definition of culture shock is:

Culture shock is primarily a set of emotional reactions to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from one's own culture, to new cultural stimuli that have little or no meaning, and to the misunderstanding of new and diverse experiences. It may compass feelings of helplessness, irritability, and fears of being cheated, contaminated, injured, or disregarded. (Adler, 1975, p.13 cited in Gaw, 2000, p.85).

Adler's definition of culture shock looks at more of the emotional reactions humans get when meeting with an unfamiliar culture. Reversed culture shock is a similar definition to culture shock. However, reversed culture shock looks more at the individuals' difficulties in re-adapting and re-adjusting to their own culture. In other words, the "most" difference in the terms is that reverse culture shock explains humans' expectations of their home country (Gaw, 2000, pp.85-86). Individuals can experience reversed culture shock when they return to their country of origin because of the expectations of their familiarity with their culture. Hence, those who travel back to their origin country have expectations of a lack of change in the culture of the origin country (Gaw, 2000, p.86).

Reversed culture shock is "the process of readjusting, recalculating, and reassimilating into one's own home culture after living in a different culture for a significant time" (Gaw, 2000, pp.83-84). According to previous research studies, children and adolescents experience reversed culture shock more often than adults. Their experiences of returning home can impact their cultural identity, mental health, personal identity confusion, and academic performance, to name a few (Gaw, 2000, pp.84-87). As mentioned earlier, TCK experiences reverse culture shock returning to their passport countries (e.g., Fail et al., 2004), which can be because they are out of cultural balance. Hence, I will look briefly at the term *cultural balance*. According to Pollock et al. (2017),

A person with cultural balance knows who they are in relationship to the culture. Having cultural balance gives the individual confidence, stability, and belonging. In this way, a person understands how the culture works" (Pollock et al., 2017, p.59).

Peterson and Plamondon (2009) mention that since most TCKs are close to their parents because of their highly mobile lifestyle, it can be important that they have parental support when it comes to cultural balance. This is because their parents can help their children integrate into the host culture since the parents are in cultural balance in the passport culture (Peterson & Plamondon, 2009, p.756). Even though Pollock et al. (2017) point out that several TCK can feel out of cultural balance because of their highly mobile

lifestyles, they often have learned new cultures, have different worldviews, and must re-adjust themselves to the culture they currently live in. This is because they do not quite understand how the culture works and have to think differently about each culture since cultures are different. Their experiences of being out of cultural balance can make them feel ashamed that they should, for example, have more knowledge about the culture than they have (Pollock et al., 2017, pp.59–61)

3.4. Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have unfolded and explored the theoretical framework utilized in this thesis. The research is situated within the field of childhood studies; therefore, I have elaborated briefly on the field and drawn a theory connected to it: social constructionism. This theory offers diverse perspectives on childhood memories and understanding where the participants belong. Moreover, I have incorporated theories from the field of human geography, place attachment, belonging, and national identity, which provide valuable insights into the experiences and knowledge of the participants' sense of belonging and sense of home. Lastly, the chapter delves into concepts examined by the literature: cultural identity, organizational migration, third-culture kids, acculturation, and reverse culture shock. These theories have been examined to understand better the participants' mobile and cross-cultural childhood experiences.

4.0. Methodology

This chapter presents my thesis's methodological approach, the fieldwork process, the process of conducting and recruiting the participants, and the conduct of the interviews, which were both digital and physical. I also look at ethical considerations with children and adults and discuss some ethical dilemmas encountered in this research project. Lastly, I will present the progress of producing and interpreting the data.

4.1. The fieldwork process

Information about the fieldwork process will be elaborated, where I will look at the recruitment and access to the participants, as well as the description of the participants.

4.1.1. Recruitment and access to participants

Considering that this research is about Norwegian children and adults who have lived abroad due to their parents' work, I thought contacting different organizations in Norway would be best. Before the recruitment of the participants, the first process to get access to the fieldwork was to send a notification form for my project to the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) (now called SIKT). While waiting for the approval, I prepared an informed letter³ I could send to several organizations. The informed letter details the master thesis aims and description of who I was as a researcher, as well as outlines the chosen research method and what it entailed. It also included information about the expected duration of interview participation and emphasized participants' ethical rights, such as voluntary participation and anonymity. Additionally, the informed letter mentioned that I would like to use an audio recorder if they consent to it. It also had information about the helping tool (pictures) that I wanted to use during the interviews. However, it was informed that it was voluntary for the participants to bring these pictures, which could perhaps be a supporting tool in their elaborations and explanations of their sense of belonging and sense of home. Later in the same year, the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD)⁴ approved the project.

To gain access to participants with similar childhood backgrounds, I reach out to several Norwegian organizations by sending emails with written information letters about the master project. These organizations included Norwegian mission organizations and churches, developmental aid organizations, and Ministry of Foreign Affairs organizations. These organizations were contacted during the Norwegian summer break; therefore, it took some time before they answered. Thus, I also used the snowball method as a recruitment process to find participants for this research. According to Biernacki and Waldorf (1981), the snowball method is "a study sample through referrals made among people who share or know of others who possess some characteristics that are of research interest" (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981, p.141). This involved me posting the same informed letter I gave to the organizations on a private Facebook group I had given the organizations. Additionally, I contacted friends, family members, and acquaintances, who also contacted other people of interest for this current research (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981, p.150). From the several organizations I contacted, I eventually received responses from a few of them, which granted me access to some participants. One organization that works with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs also had information about the project, which was presented on a private Facebook page. From there, I received a few emails from adults who were diplomats' children and were interested in being a part of this current research. Additionally, some parents contacted me about their children's

³ See Appendix 2 and 3 for informed letter (both in English and Norwegian).

⁴ See Appendix 1 for the NSD approval.

interest in participating in the research. There was much more interest than I imagined, and I ended up with 20 participants whom I interviewed.

After accessing the participants, I informed the participants and parents more about my master's thesis project in written form and orally through phone calls. This was because I was unsure of the extent of information provided by the organizations. Through email and phone calls, I also answered their questions and scheduled interview meetings. Additionally, I informed them about the opportunity to have digital interviews on Zoom since I had obtained approval from NSD. Due to economic limitations, I offered to meet the participants in cities east or west of Norway. Corsaro and Molinari (2008) emphasize the importance of gaining the trust of adult gatekeepers to obtain access to children in research. In this research, the gatekeepers who had to negotiate the children's access were their parents, which can be a complicated process (Ennew et al., 2009). Therefore, I asked if the parents wanted to meet on Zoom or in person before I interviewed their children. One parent opted for this, and we had a meeting on Zoom. However, this research was different since the parents contacted me about their children's interest in participating in this research.

4.1.2. Description of the participants

I ended up with a total of 20 participants; the age range was quite broad, consisting of three children (aged 12 to 17 years) and adults (aged 18 to 70 years). The participants consisted of six men and 14 women. Even though all the participants had Norway as their passport country since one or both of their parents had Norway as their country of origin, their life situations were significantly different. This is due to the parents' working as missionaries, diplomats, developmental aid, or the military. Although all participants spent some of their childhood years abroad, a few still live abroad due to school, work, or their parent's work, while others live in Norway. Additionally, even though a few young adult participants live in Norway, either one or both of their parents work abroad.

To ensure the participants' anonymity, I will not mention which countries they have lived in specifically. They have, in total, lived in 24 different countries in Africa, America, Asia, and Europe, where nine of the participants have lived within two countries or more, in addition to Norway. In other words, the participants moved abroad either once or several times, depending on their parents' work. Due to their parents' work, the participants have also moved either to the same host country or new host countries. Hence, some have been influenced by more cultures than others. The average age of the participants' first move was three years old, although some elaborated on being born abroad or moving abroad at a very young age because of their parents' work. At the same time, the average age of their second move was nine years old.

Due to their parent's work, the participants have also lived in several places or dwelling abroad, while others have lived in several countries or even both. However, the average duration of their stay abroad was approximately seven years and varied depending on the parent's work contract length. Additionally, some participants returned to Norway because they or their siblings had to get a diploma from a school in Norway to get access to education. When it comes to where the participants went to school abroad, most participants have gone to international or boarding schools abroad, while a few went to local schools and kindergartens. The participants also elaborated that they were homeschooled, where they retained the Norwegian language but also had Norwegian subjects. Other participants explained that they retained the Norwegian language and were taught Norwegian subjects through 'global school', an online tutoring system.

4.2. Methodological approach: Qualitative interviews

In this research, I aimed to explore and gain knowledge from both children and adults from their cross-cultural childhood memories and upbringing. To achieve this, I chose qualitative research interviews. Qualitative interviews focus on knowledge from participants' perspectives in interaction with the researcher through conversations. Thus, qualitative interviews enable me to understand better different aspects of cross-cultural childhood and life experiences (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Brinkmann, 2013). I desired to understand participants' perspectives on their sense of belonging, sense of home, and identity, aiming to understand where they felt "at home". This was achieved through 20 individually semi-structured interviews with children and adults, where the homogenous age gap was from 12 to 70 years old. However, most of the participants in this research were adults who participated in a retrospective interview. One of the reasons most adults participated might be because experiences of 'home' or elaborating on where one feels a sense of belonging can be complex themes to discuss for TCK, as previous literature has shown (e.g., Pollock et al., 2017). Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) described a semi-structured interview as "a technique of to have a better understanding of the participant's everyday lives, neither it is an everyday conversation nor a closed questionnaire" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.31).

According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), epistemology is "the philosophy of knowledge and involves long-standing debates of what knowledge is and how it is obtained" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.55). They argue there are two different ways of creating knowledge in interviews where a researcher is either a 'miner' or a 'traveler' as: "(..) two different epistemological conceptions of interviewing as a process of knowledge collection or as a process of knowledge construction" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.57). I consider myself a traveler since I sought and obtained new knowledge through conversations in the interviews with the participants about their life-world stories and childhood stories. Additionally, the interview process, in turn, changed my own outlook and understanding in relation to the master's theme since I reflected on what I had learned through the participants' stories. In other words, as a traveler, my empirical data emerged through my fieldwork journey, where interactions with participants were guided by my questions related to the master's aims (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.58).

One of the advantages of having qualitative interviews is that the method helps understand the participant's individual cross-cultural childhood experiences (Brinkmann, 2013, p.47). Individual interviews allowed me to go more in-depth into the themes of the research aim. Additionally, it was easier to have follow-up questions (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015), which can be helpful when questions about feeling "at home", when questions about 'home' can be difficult theme as mentioned. Therefore, another advantage of individual interviews is ensuring the participants' confidentiality, mainly since home and identity questions can be sensitive and personal (Brinkmann, 2013, p.27). Another advantage of qualitative interviews is that having face-to-face conversations (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015) helped me observe their non-verbal language as a researcher. This enabled me to understand their emotional attachments to different themes and topics and observe their reactions to some questions (see for example, 6.1.3.).

One of the disadvantages of using individual interviews is that because of the age gap in this research, the method might not be suitable for all the participants. Other methods, combined with interviews, could better allow the children in this research to express themselves. According to Ennew et al. (2009), children have the right to a method where they can express themselves. Even though I thought of other methods to include, the children in this research turned out to be able to express themselves through the semi-structured individual interviews. Another disadvantage of only using one method is that other methods could strengthen the data materials in this research (Brinkmann, 2013,

p.48). However, I have chosen to use only qualitative research interviews because of the geographical distance. Considering that the participants in this research were in another country or different cities in Norway, I ended up having most of the interviews digitally. Hence, I thought it would be difficult to have other methods digitally. The second one was that I wanted to listen to the participants' stories in their own words during a conversation; therefore, I thought the interview was suitable for obtaining knowledge of their life stories. During the interviews, I also had a helping tool, which I have called "pictures," where the participants could voluntarily bring with them pictures that illustrated 'home' for them. This tool was mainly a helping section for the participants if they had challenges describing their sense of home during the interviews. However, this helping tool was not perceived as planned. However, a few participants brought pictures, which gave me, as a researcher, a better understanding of their definitions of a sense of home (see more on this in 4.2.1.2).

In this research, the children were viewed as social actors and were given their right to express themselves and their own stories through the interviews. In addition, they were given the opportunity to express their understanding of where they belong and their definitions of "home" since they are experts in their own lives (James, 2007, p.262). It can also be mentioned that the adult participants have had the right to express their childhood experiences throughout their retrospective memories in this research (see Korsvold, 2021). Hence, it can be said that the adults are giving their inner children voices. After all, participants are approved to give their voices and be heard in what they have to say and think is relevant to the research study (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.113).

4.2.1. Qualitative research interviews

I will provide further detail about this study's qualitative research interview process by examining the structure and content of the interviews and elaborating more on the helping tool "pictures" used with a few participants during the interviews. Additionally, I will look at the differences between the conducted interviews since the adult participants participated retrospectively. Lastly, I will elaborate on how the interviews were conducted physically and digitally through Zoom.

4.2.1.1. Interview structure and content

Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) refer to an interview guide as a script, which is the structure of the interview. For this master's thesis project, I aimed to have a semi-structured interview guide, where the interview guide⁵ was in Norwegian since the participants have Norwegian passports. Nevertheless, I was also prepared that a few might feel comfortable speaking in English. The interview questions were not formulated in academic language, and I tried to have 'easy' formulated questions, in addition to avoiding 'yes' and 'no' questions (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). The questions were inspired by the research questions and the theme of the master project, as well as questions related to my childhood experiences, such as questions about homeschooling. The interview guide included prepared information that I intended to convey to the participants, such as the master's aim and what it would be used for. Moreover, the interview guide outlined a schedule allowing participants to ask questions before conducting the interview. Because the questions in this research can be sensitive and challenging, I tried to have a relaxing atmosphere, and I laughed when they laughed. Additionally, before the interviews, I elaborated on my childhood, explaining that I was a former missionary child. This let the participants know that I might understand their childhood and what they wanted to express.

⁵ See Appendix 8 and 9 for the interview guide (both in English and Norwegian).

Throughout this research, I have tried to use a semi-structured interview guide and have enough questions to obtain enough knowledge about the participants' childhood memories and experiences. Therefore, the interview guide started with open-ended questions about the participants' backgrounds and facts about themselves. An example of that is their age and where they live now. Furthermore, the questions were about their childhood years in Norway before they moved abroad. In the next section, there were questions about their childhood years living abroad, while the third section was about their childhood years in Norway after they had returned from their childhood years living abroad. The interview guide had the same questions about school, hobbies, family situation, etc., although I rephrased them to better align with where they lived (Norway or in the host countries). This was to get a greater knowledge of the differences between their childhood years abroad and in their host countries, as well as how their cross-cultural and mobile childhood has influenced their sense of belonging and identity. In the last section of the interview guide, I prepared questions about a sense of belonging and a sense of home. In this section, I tried to avoid the question, "Where are you from?", because previous research has shown that some TCK find it challenging to answer this question (e.g., Pollock et al., 2017).

The interview guide also had a final question at the end, which allowed the participants to elaborate on things they felt they had not been questioned about (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). A few of them expressed new themes and thoughts at the end of the interview, which gave me a new perspective on their cross-cultural childhood experiences, which I further asked the next participant. During the interviews, I also had prospective interview questions (see Scott & Alwin, 1998). I also asked a few adult participants whether their responses regarding home and sense of belonging would be similar to their answers during the interviews if they were asked the same questions as children or years prior. These questions were asked to a few participants, even though I did not have these questions written in the interview guide since it was not my first intention to ask them.

With the semi-structured interview guide, I intended to have a guide to return to, where I could have a more open-free conversation with the participants and have more dialogue. This was something that I tried in a few interviews, asking the participants if they wanted me to ask questions or if they wanted to share their own stories surrounding a specific theme such as 'home'. However, a few interviews became different than I imagined, and I found myself relying on the interview guide as it helped me as a new researcher when I was nervous. However, I deliberated on asking each participant different follow-up and prohibited questions based on their responses (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018). This was to gather more information to strengthen my data. In addition, as each participant had their childhood memories, I wanted to examine deeper the specific details and meanings behind their childhood experiences. Additionally, if they shared something particularly interesting, I explored more details to deepen my understanding. Additionally, to ensure that I fully understood them and avoid any misunderstandings, I asked the participants to elaborate on the meanings of specific themes.

4.2.1.2. Pictures as a "helping tool" during the interviews

As mentioned, I had prepared a helping tool where the participants could show me pictures that illustrated their sense of home during the interviews. This helping tool was described in the informed consent and informed letter, as well as I had prepared questions related to it in the interview guide. My plan for this tool was that the participants could either show me pictures during the interview or describe the illustrations of the pictures they had brought, which illustrated their sense of home. This tool was mainly considered helpful for the participants because previous research has shown that TCK has challenges with questions about home (e.g., Pollock et al., 2017).

However, I experienced that this helping tool was not achieved as I predicted since only a few participants participated with pictures during the interviews.

Therefore, it can be pointed out that one of the disadvantages of this helping tool is that I could have highlighted more about it before the interviews were conducted. This is because I realized during the interviews that when I asked them if they had brought pictures, most participants did not know that this tool would be utilized, even though it was written in the informed consent. Nevertheless, a few participants described what pictures they would have brought that illustrated home for them, even though the pictures were unavailable. Most of them explained that they would have brought them pictures of their families and friends, while others pointed out that they would have brought pictures of some objects or nature. Even though these participants did not bring pictures to the interview, their explanations of which pictures they would have brought with them provided me, as a researcher, with a better understanding of their descriptions of home. However, others felt this helping tool was unnecessary, perhaps because they felt they could define what home is for them without it during the interviews. Although most participants did not use the helping tool, a few brought pictures that illustrated their sense of home, which helped them think about new aspects of home. Thus, the advantage of this "helping tool" in the interviews was that some participants felt it was easier to talk about "home." The pictures also helped me, as a researcher, better understand their descriptions of their sense of home and belonging.

4.2.1.3. Retrospective interviews with adults and interviews with children

The interviews with adult participants were primarily focused on their childhood memories; thus, I used a retrospective interview. According to Scott and Alwin (1998),

Retrospective data is often used as if it is a synonym for collecting information about past events and experiences. Yet, this fails to capture the distinctive meaning of the term "retrospection" in that it also involves reviewing things past and reporting present reactions (Scott & Alwin, 1998, p.104).

In this research, the participants looked back on their cross-cultural and mobile childhood experiences due to their parents' work abroad and analyzed their childhood memories in the present day (Scott & Alwin, 1998). Memories are a source that gives opportunities to look at the inside of the childhood experience, according to Korsvold (2021). However, memories are also how participants remember different situations and can be reflected on in various ways as time goes on. Memories are also a way for the participants to explain their childhood; in other words, they tell their own stories (Korsvold, 2021, pp.80-81). Thus, this research has seen the children's view of cross-cultural childhood through the adults' point of view in a retrospective perspective. Through this approach, I have gathered insights into how they remember their mobile childhood experiences. Additionally, I have gathered insights into how these memories and experiences have shaped their viewpoint on home, identity, and sense of belonging in their adult lives (Scott & Alwin, 1998; Korsvold, 2021).

During the research, a few of the adult participants highlighted that after they voluntarily accepted to be part of this research, they had reflected more about their sense of belonging and sense of home. Moreover, during the interviews with the adults, I asked a few participants if they would have the same answer about their definition of home now versus as children or youths. This resulted in different answers than they had already elaborated on, while others said they would answer the same. Even though this question was asked to a few participants, as previously mentioned, the questions were not included in the interview guide. After all, I sensed during the interviews that these questions could be important to get a deeper perspective and knowledge about the participant's sense of home and sense of belonging. During the interviews, I also asked a potential question, focusing on the future, in other words, a prospective interview

question (Scott & Alwin, 1998). The prospective interview questions were as if they thought they would have the same reasoning about their sense of belonging and sense of home five or ten years from now. Reflecting on my fieldwork process, I realized I did not ask all participants prospective interview questions. These questions could have been more focused, considering that a few participants elaborated that they might have had a different answer about their sense of belonging and sense of home. Especially the young adults who indicated that their definitions of home might evolve as they establish their own families.

Throughout the interviews, I experienced on a few occasions that a few participants did not initially elaborate on all the countries they had lived in abroad due to their parents' work. Thus, it was unclear to me primarily when they mentioned a country I had not heard about previously, but it was confirmed that these countries were places where they lived with their parents abroad due to their work. From my understanding, during the fieldwork, they might have focused mainly on the countries where they had more memories or positive memories and experiences from. I also experienced confusion when some participants elaborated on countries they lived in without their parents. Throughout the interviews, I learned these countries were significant because the participants have lived abroad due to school or work. This aspect will be looked at in chapter nine.

All the interviews with the children were conducted digitally through Zoom. During the interviews with the children, questions were asked about their childhood and childhood memories more in general, rather than in a structured form where I asked the adults about their childhood in Norway versus abroad. Additionally, I had more age-related questions and words (see Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015), such as some Norwegian words. This was because some Norwegian words could be more challenging to understand than others for a 10–12-year-old, mainly because they have been influenced by multiple cultures. Hence, I asked them whether they were familiar with the meaning of certain words, and I tried to explain the word through synonyms before asking related questions. All three children participants mentioned that they had an easier time making themselves understood in English due to their enrollment in English international schools, yet they all wished to be interviewed in Norwegian. Despite this, I had to use some English words occasionally, this was because I observed and sensed that some words in English were more understandable than in Norwegian.

The interviews with the children had more focus on questions about their free time and hobbies to make them feel more comfortable. This was also carried out because I wanted to absence myself from the power imbalance between them and myself as a researcher, since children might feel there is only one right answer to questions asked by adults, according to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015). Thus, I informed them evenly, especially when I observed they were hesitating, that I was interested in hearing their experiences and stories and that they were not a 'correct' answer. Moreover, I also tried to make them comfortable in the interviews by letting them finish their elaborations on specific themes, as well as asking them further questions about certain themes they were interested in. This was because I observed it was important for them, even though it was outside the research aims (Christensen, 2004; Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

The interview with the children was about their self-understanding of their childhood experiences. Letting them express their own experiences of their current cross-cultural childhood has influenced their sense of identity, home, and belonging (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; James, 2007). In this way, the children also look at their childhood through their memories and experiences. According to Greene and Hill (2005), a researcher sees the child as a human being when the researcher is looking at their experiences. Moreover, they mention that research on their experiences indicates that not all children are identical (Greene & Hill, 2005, pp.19-20). In this research, even though the children

have some of the same shared experiences since they all have lived abroad due to their parents' work, they all experience this lifestyle individually. However, the interviews were also focused on their living experiences and how their surroundings influence their view of home. During the interviews with children, I was concerned that questions about 'home' and 'sense of belonging' would be difficult themes since some adult participants elaborated on challenges. However, I experienced that the children were well-spoken and open-minded, which might be because of their cross-cultural childhood experiences, as previous literature has also pointed out (e.g., Pollock et al., 2017). Lastly, I want to point out that there were not many differences in the participant's elaboration on their definitions of home between the adult participants and child participants. However, the difference was mainly that it was more visible through the data that the adults defined home as relational than the children.

4.2.2.4 Conducting the interviews digitally and physically

As previously mentioned, I have had interviews digitally through Zoom and physically. The reasons I chose to have interviews digitally were both practical and economic. Additionally, most participants lived geographically dispersed, in both Norway and abroad. This resulted in 13 of 20 digital interviews, while seven were conducted in cities on Norway's east and west coasts. The interviews lasted between 30 minutes to over 2 hours, depending on how much the participants had to convey. Additionally, I time-wised the interviews with the children who participated because I observed they lost their concentration. Even though I informed the parents and the children that the interview could be 45 to 60 minutes. Before conducting the interviews, a few participants asked if they could have the interview questions to prepare themselves. This affected the result of the data positively, which I detected since the participants had the time to prepare the questions beforehand, and I experienced that some were more comfortable in the interview setting. Especially when it was challenging questions, such as about belonging and home; this could also be why a few participants narrated their childhood experiences throughout the interviews without needing many interview questions.

Throughout the interviews, I used an audio recorder and wrote keywords in a notebook to remember the interviews better. According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), an audio recorder is a tool that can help the interviewer pursue and focus on the interview and how the participants express themselves. Before I started the recorder, I showed each participant the audio recorder, both digitally and physically. Moreover, I explained that I wanted to use the audio recorder to remember their information better, which they understood and voluntarily consented to. Out of 20 interviews, one of the interviews were not audio recorded. This was because the last interview was scheduled much later than the others. Additionally, the last participant contacted me after I had returned the audio recorder to the school, which is in another city in Norway than I live in. Therefore, I decided that the best way of giving the participant the opportunity to share her childhood memories was through transcribing the interview while it was conducted. Furthermore, I will examine the digitally and physically interviews' advantages and disadvantages.

The advantage of digital interviews on Zoom was that it was easier to have interviews with participants who were not in Norway or in the same geographical location as I was, which also Gray et al. (2020) pointed out. Gray et al. (2020) also point out that digital interviews allow the participants to be in a safe environment, which I also observed during the digital interview since it seemed that the participants were in comfortable atmospheres. This might make them speak more personally because of their comfortable surroundings, which would probably be different from meeting the individuals in an interview in person. Another advantage was that all participants used a camera. Hence, it felt like a face-to-face interview, which made it easier to observe the participants and

their non-verbal language (Gray et al., 2020) rather than only their verbal language. A disadvantage of digital interviews is technology challenges (Gray et al., 2020), for instance, my own and the participants' internet delay. In some cases, the participants needed a new Zoom link, and I also struggled with the sound quality and had to ask the same question again.

As mentioned earlier, the interviews physically were conducted in three different cities in Norway. The participants chose the locations themselves, which were in public spaces and in one's home. One of the advantages of physical interviews was that I could observe the participants' non-verbal language clearly, such as when they were nervous. Hence, I tried to discuss other themes than the research aims before conducting the interview. This is another advantage of having face-to-face interviews. It might be more comfortable for the participants to communicate about 'normal' conversations before and after the interviews, making them more comfortable in the interview setting. However, I noticed that some participants elaborated more about their childhood experiences after the interview was conducted. Despite this, I intentionally decided not to include this additional information in the analysis and transcriptions since I had emphasized that I turned off the audio recorder (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p. 106; 155). Additionally, I chose not to include their elaborations because I felt it may not appear as professional as a new researcher in the field.

One disadvantage of conducting physical interviews was that I did not hear everything the participants expressed since four interviews were conducted in public locations. This led me to be repetitive in some questions they had already answered. Another disadvantage of having physical interviews is that it was time-consuming. By this, I mean that I chose to conduct four interviews in one day in the same city, which caused me to feel tired and might have affected my ability to conduct the interviews effectively. However, having four interviews in one day is my responsibility, where I could be more reflexive and schedule the interviews on different days. However, this decision was made because of economic limitations.

4.3. Ethical considerations

According to Staksrud et al. (2021),

Researchers have a responsibility towards individuals' involvement in research, and they should respect the participants' human dignity and consider their personal integrity, safety, and wellbeing (Staksrud et al., 2021, p.18).

In other words, the researchers are responsible for ensuring participants' protection, especially with children as participants (Ennew et al., 2009). According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), there are ethical issues throughout the qualitative interview process. In this section of the chapter, I will elaborate on informed consent and voluntary participation, privacy, and confidentiality. Furthermore, I will examine my role as a researcher looking at being reflexive as a researcher, and the consequences of harm in research. Additionally, I will elaborate on the ethical dilemmas I experienced during my fieldwork.

4.3.1. Informed consent and voluntary participation

Informed consent is ethically fundamental in research, ensuring that the participants are informed that their participation is voluntary and that they are properly informed about the research (Alderson & Morrow, 2011). This involves participants' agreement to participate in the research after they have understood and been informed about the research purpose, the methods used, and how their information is being utilized (Brinkman & Kvale, 2015; Ennew et al., 2009). Before the research is conducted, the

participant must provide informed consent voluntarily (Ennew et al., 2009). Therefore, before conducting the interviews, I verbally informed the participants about the master's aim and their anonymity in the final product. Moreover, I informed them about their rights to withdraw at any time.

The informed consent⁶ was either emailed or handed in person when I met them, which obtained information about their ethical rights and research aims. A few of the adults with whom I had a digital interview on Zoom provided consent on the audio recorder or through a written consent form. The voice-recorded oral consent was digitally stored and not transcribed (see Alderson and Morrow, 2011). Due to ethical considerations, I informed them that the recording of the research would be deleted after the study was finished and assured them that I would keep their information private and safe. This was facilitated through a program system provided by my educational institution. An ethical dilemma could be that they might have thought I was recording them with video since the digital interview was on Zoom. However, I informed the participants that I would be recording the interview using an audio recorder rather than a video recording. This was also shown when I showed each participant physically the audio recorder prior beginning each interview.

In research involving children, researchers need to obtain informed consent through adult gatekeepers, such as parents (Punch, 2002, p.323). Although it is not sufficient to only have consent from the gatekeepers, researchers need to obtain consent from children (Ennew et al., 2009). The parent's informed consent was obtained through email, and I also obtained the children's consent orally before the interview was conducted. Additionally, I informed the children about the research purpose and aim and their ethical rights, with their anonymity, and that they could withdraw at any time, as mentioned (Ennew et al., 2009). Before obtaining informed consent from some parents, I experienced some children expressing that they did not want to participate. This might suggest that the children understood that the participation was voluntary. Similarly, another situation I experienced was after the parent had already given informed consent to the child's participation, the child expressed not wanting to participate. Hence, I informed them that I understood and that the research participation was voluntary and that there would not be any harm to the child. According to Staksrud et al. (2021), a child can deny participation in the research even though the parent has informed consent. When the interviews were conducted, I elaborated to all participants again about their opportunity to look at the transcription of the interviews to see if the information was accurate, which a few of them agreed to (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015).

4.3.2. Privacy and confidentiality

Another important ethical consideration in research is confidentiality and privacy. Alderson and Morrow (2011) describe privacy as the researcher's respect towards the participant's personal life. Confidentiality is about concealing the participant's information that can identify them, such as gender, name, and age. In other words, confidentiality and privacy are about the participant's anonymity in research (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.95). According to Ennew et al. (2009), the participants' names in research are not relevant; however, their gender and age could be important. Hence, I kept their anonymity by using a color code describing each participant during the fieldwork and transcription, which I also informed the participants during the interview. Additionally, it was written in the informed consent. Moreover, I have also kept their anonymity in the final product by using pseudonyms. Confidentiality is also about data protection; the participant's information will not be transferable to others (Ennew et al., 2009). Hence,

⁶ See Appendix 4 and 5 for informed consent for adults (both in English and Norwegian). See Appendix 6 and 7 for informed consent for children (both English and Norwegian).

when I met the participants personally, I brought an envelope where I kept their informed consent. This demonstrated that I wanted to keep their confidentiality and private information safe.

In this research, I experienced an ethical dilemma with privacy during the interview with the children. This dilemma arose from the presence of the parents nearby, as preferred by the children themselves, which is not unusual, according to Alderson and Morrow (2011). With this said, I did not observe any parental influence on the children's responses during the interviews since I observed that the children were in a comfortable setting. However, on a few occasions, I noticed that the children lost concentration because of sounds in the same room.

Another ethical dilemma arose during the digital interviews with a few adult participants due to concerns about their privacy. These concerns were primarily related to their colleagues' or family members' presence. Although it seemed this lack of privacy did not visibly bother the participants, there were occasions where I could seemingly observe a few holding back in their responses or wanting to answer "accurately." By "accurate", I mean that some participants seemed to be influenced by their surroundings, leading them to shape or modify their answers to what they thought were the suitable answers to some questions due to the circumstances. Another ethical dilemma I experienced with confidentiality and privacy was with two of the interviews conducted physically in public spaces. Due to the interview being in a public space, I cannot possibly know that the information the participant gave was overheard. As Abebe (2009) mentions in his research, as a researcher, I could be more flexible in the research space and where these interviews were located. However, I also tried to ask the participants if they wanted to relocate, even though they expressed and showed me where they wanted to be interviewed before the interview was conducted.

4.3.3. The role as a researcher

As a researcher who can identify with the participants in this research, it can be important to be reflexive and critical to my role (Punch, 2002). This can help to understand the participants' perspectives better, and being reflexive of the researcher's position might affect the interview and the research process (Berger, 2015). Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) point out that "a researcher that can identify with their participant does not maintain a professional distance but instead report and interpret everything from their participants perspective" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.97). Therefore, since I was a researcher who identified with the participants due to similar childhood backgrounds, I tried to be reflexive in my questioning and behavior. Additionally, I tried to keep a professional distance from the participants' stories and thoughts and make sure they could elaborate on their own stories since I was interested in hearing their childhood experiences (see Berger, 2015).

Due to my shared childhood experiences with the participants in this study, my role as a researcher thus positioned me as an 'insider' since I have some knowledge of cross-cultural and mobile childhood (Berger, 2015, pp.222-223). This can lead the study in a few directions, which is why I will look at the advantages and disadvantages I experienced in this study. The advantage of having a role as an "insider" researcher is that I have a particular understanding of the participants' childhood experiences. Thus, I can relate to some of their reactions and expressions when they share their childhood experiences and memories (see Berger, 2015). One example from my fieldwork was that some participants found it challenging to express their feelings and were frustrated that they could not elaborate on what they meant to say. Thus, some have said, "I know it sounds weird, but this is how I feel". As an insider researcher, I could occasionally understand their expressions, what they wanted to elaborate on, and why they were

frustrated, which perhaps other researchers would not understand without the same childhood background experiences. Another advantage could be that I felt it was easier on some occasions to have follow-up questions than on others.

Being an "insider" occasionally led me to ask questions with an assumption. Hence, the participants could either rely on or deny the assumption and elaborate on their experiences around the assumptions. By this, I mean that I asked questions similar to my childhood experiences, such as if they were graded at primary school. This advantage can also be a disadvantage because this also led some participants to assume that I understand their elaborations, in addition to holding back some information on some questions. In other words, I got the impression that they thought I would know what they would express occasionally. A similar experience was shown in Berger's (2015) research, where her participants sometimes did not finish the sentences because of her 'insider' role as a researcher (Berger, 2015, p.223). Regardless, this led me to, in a few circumstances, ask them to describe what they meant, while in other circumstances, I thought I understood the participant's meanings during the interviews. However, when I transcribed the interviews, I discovered I had not fully understood all their intended meanings since they did not complete their sentences before beginning on a new one, for example.

4.3.4. Assessment of harm and consequences

In qualitative research, respecting the participants and not causing any harm is important. Some examples are being aware of the participants' openness and intimacy and the information they might give that they will regret later (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.96). This was shown during this research, where I experienced that a few participants had strong emotions toward specific themes and, therefore, talked for a long time outside of the research aims. Hence, I tried to structure the conversation toward the research aims and ask questions of relevance to this research (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.15). This can be easier done in an individual interview than for example a group interview (Brinkmann, 2013, p.27).

On a few occasions, I felt that I was almost like a therapist for the participants, which can be understandable since most of the participants elaborated on the lack of interest from others to hear about their childhood experiences. Hence, when the participants gave me their intimate information outside the research aim, I expressed my appreciation for their openness and trust. Additionally, I informed them that if they regretted any information they had given me after the interview, they could inform me. During the interview, I also experienced a few participants reacting emotionally to a few questions, especially about home. This resulted in asking them a different question and apologizing, even though they openly answered these questions. The emotional reaction to some questions could be because it triggered something or an experience in their childhood memories, even though I first thought I had effortless questions in my interview guide. Moreover, I also experienced during the interviews that most participants struggled when they spoke about their sense of belonging. However, I did not intend to ask questions that were harming them.

4.4. Interpretation of the data materials

Interpretation of the data materials already starts during the interviews, where the researcher tries to understand and interpret the participants; additionally, the participants interpret themselves, where they might discover new meanings of their experiences (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.221). The first step the researcher does is interpreting data materials through transcription after conducting the recorded data materials (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.221). Transcriptions of interviews are made from

oral to written form, and the conversations in the interviews are structured, which is helpful in the analytical process, according to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015). In this research, I transcribed the interviews myself due to confidentiality. This gave me a better understanding of my interview quality (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.207; 213). The transcriptions of the collected data materials were transcribed during and after the fieldwork process. I chose to transcribe some interviews during the fieldwork process because I knew I had many interviews to transcribe after all the interviews were conducted. Additionally, since some transcriptions were transcribed during the fieldwork, I remember more details of each participant's interviews, including their expressions and body language. This facilitated more accurate transcription.

Understanding the emotional aspects of the participants' responses, in addition to their choice of words, proved to be a valuable asset during the transcriptions and interpretations of the collected data materials. This gave me a deeper understanding of the participants' elaborations (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015), which might have enriched the quality of the research materials. According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), there is no "right way" to transcribe interviews, although I used a verbatim transcript; in other words, I wrote every word the participant said. This was because I intended to transcribe the interviews as accurately as the oral interviews. Hence, I wrote the transcriptions in Norwegian, since the interviews were in Norwegian, and added laughs, pauses, and silences. Additionally, sounds they made during the interviews when they were thinking, such as "um" and "mhm" (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.204; 207). Counting nonverbal expressions in the transcription can be as important as verbal expressions. Previous research shows that participants express more through body language than words. Nevertheless, it can also be challenging to transcribe such expressions (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, p.116;155). However, to save time, since I had 19 of 20 interviews to transcribe (since one of them was transcribed during the conduction of the interview), I chose not to transcribe narratives accurately unrelated to the research aims. Instead, I summarized these narratives in keywords or sentences. According to Brinkmann and Kvale (2015), the transcription of interviews from oral to written form is also important to look at the reliability of the written form (p.210). Hence, besides writing as accurately of the participants' expressions, I used dots and commas when they were finished with sentences before they began with a new one. During the transcriptions, I also realized on some occasions that I could have had more follow-up questions in the interview than I had, which perhaps might have given more strengthened data material.

4.4.1. Analysis of the individual interviews

The next step in producing and interpreting data materials was to analyze them. I have used thematic analysis to analyze the qualitative interviews in this research. Braun and Clarke (2006) describe thematic analysis as "a method for identifying, analyzing, and reporting patterns (themes) within data" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.79). Thematic analysis is a widely used tool in qualitative research, even though there is no right or wrong way to describe how pervasive a theme is. It is important that a researcher uses the same approach for all excerpts (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis can be a good tool for analyzing participants' life experiences and seeking their meanings, thoughts, and feelings about a specific topic (Clarke & Braun, 2017, p.297). Therefore, this tool can be confidently used in this research to analyze the participants' cross-cultural and mobile childhood experiences, as well as their definitions of where they feel "at home".

Braun and Clarke (2006) elaborate that a theme "captures something important about the data in relation to the research question and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.82). Furthermore, Braun and Clarke (2006) mention there are two main ways to detect themes: the inductive approach, a bottom-up way, or the deductive approach, a top-down way. In

this research, I used the inductive approach in the analysis, searching for themes, which indicates that the themes have been detected through the data. Unlike the deductive, the themes are not driven by theories but are data-driven from the individual interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp.83–84). Although, as a researcher, I have been somewhat influenced by some theories. Similarly, Braun and Clarke (2006) mention that: “researchers cannot free themselves of their theoretical and epistemological commitment” (p.84). Hence, some of the themes and patterns I found through the data materials have also been shown in previous literature.

I have adapted Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six phases of implementing a thematic analysis to analyze the data materials. The first phase, they point out, is about familiarizing myself with the data materials (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp.87-88). Therefore, I have familiarized myself with the data materials through the transcription and by reading the transcription repeatedly. Furthermore, before analyzing the data materials, I sat down for about five to ten minutes to ponder what was said during the interviews (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015, pp.155-156), which also helped me familiarize myself with the data materials. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest generating initial codes in the next phase. Before coding, I made color code suggestions with different themes in mind from the research questions in a document since I wanted to code manually.

To code, I highlighted with colors what I thought was relevant to my research, and from my research questions, I highlighted patterns I found in the data materials. Examples are that orange was highlighted every time they elaborated upon a meaningful person, such as friends, family, or acquaintances, and red was highlighted every time they elaborated on ‘culture’, such as an experience within the host country or Norway. Additionally, I highlighted every time the participants said the word ‘home’ or elaborated on home with yellow and every time they talked about a meaningful place or house. Furthermore, green was highlighted every time they elaborated on things related to belonging or a sense of belonging. Moreover, I wrote keywords and sentences beside each color coding and described the participants’ meanings. Hence, the coding was done in semantic content, where the themes looked at the meanings of the participant’s elaborations. Thus, I did not look at anything that was said beyond their meanings. Their meaning was also looked at within previous literature on TCK (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p.84; 88).

The third phase Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest is to search for themes after all the data has been coded. To look at similar codes to find themes, I decided it was effortless to first make a written document with different themes and patterns the participants expressed. In the next step, I made a thematic map⁷ with all the themes I had written down in the document which showed that a few could be sub-themes. The next phase I did was to review the themes I already had, which made me realize I had similar themes. Additionally, I looked at the data materials to see if I had enough data to support the suggestions of the themes. In this process, I also saw that some themes might fit better with other themes. The next step Braun and Clarke (2006) present is defining and naming themes; hence, in this phase, I determined which themes and patterns I want to present in my analysis by defining and naming the themes, where I determined each of each theme in context with the data materials. In other words, how the themes capture the data materials. This was also made to give you, the readers, a better understanding of the data analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 89-92). The final step by Braun and Clarke (2006) is the production of the thematic analysis report, in other words, the findings of my analysis (chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8).

⁷ Thematic map appendix 10

4.5. Chapter Summar

This chapter outlines the recruitment and access of the participants via organizations, Facebook posts, and the snowball method through personal contacts, as well as a description of the participants. Furthermore, it outlines the qualitative method used in this research, explains why this method was chosen and reflects on the advantages and disadvantages of this method. Moreover, I described the structure of the interview guide and the content and looked at the helping tool used, "pictures," which was used with a few participants during the interviews. The chapter also details the physical and digital interviews conducted, and I have looked at the advantages and disadvantages of the physical and digital interviews in this study. Additionally, I described how the interviews with the adults and children differed since the adult participants participated retrospectively. I have described ethical guidelines, some ethical dilemmas I encountered during fieldwork, and the importance of reflexivity in research due to my role as an 'insider' researcher. Lastly, I have described the interpretation of the data materials and how I have implemented the data in this research. The following four chapters are the analysis chapters.

5. The impact of temporary migration

In this analysis chapter, I will look at the participants' memories and experiences of living abroad temporarily due to their parent's work. The experiences I explore are how their childhood years abroad and their experiences of moving into a new country have impacted their sense of belonging and identity. This chapter will, therefore, respond to the following research questions: *Which experiences does TCK have with moving abroad and having a highly mobile lifestyle? How has living a highly mobile childhood impacted TCK's identity and sense of belonging?* In this chapter, I will first examine the participants' experiences of moving abroad, specifically their transition from Norway to the host country. Moreover, I examine their experiences learning a new language(s), with culture shock, at school, and making new friendships.

5.1. Moving abroad experiences

As mentioned earlier, the participants in this research lived temporarily in the host country(ies) with their parents because of their parent's work within different organizations (see Lucassen & Smit, 2015). As outlined in the methodology chapter, the participants were either born abroad or moved abroad at a young age, while others were born in Norway but spent some of their childhood years abroad due to their parent's work choices. Despite having one or both parents of Norwegian origin and holding Norwegian citizenship, their cross-cultural childhood has been influenced by living a highly mobile life (see Pollock et al., 2017). This means they have experienced moving back and forth between Norway and one or more host countries and lived in Norway and had Norway as a base between their movements. In other words, they have lived some of their childhood abroad, moved back to Norway, moved abroad again before returning to Norway when their parents' work contracts were finished, or they returned for different reasons, as will be elaborated in chapter eight. The participants have also been used to visiting Norway on holidays while living abroad. This indicates that the participants had Norway as the country they returned to.

Those participants who either were born in Norway or lived in Norway in their early childhood years expressed some challenges with their first memories of moving abroad. Two of them were Anja and Astrid. Anja first moved abroad at five years old, while Astrid moved abroad at eleven years old. When I asked them how their movement experiences were, they said:

Anja (18): I remember thinking it was tough at first. The first year, I wanted to go back to Norway and the group of friends I had there, but since I was so young, I managed to adapt quite well because it was an international environment, and everyone was used to seeing people come and go.

Astrid (31): The language was challenging, as was moving from friends and making new friends. Our everyday life changed (...). When we moved, I decided not to talk to Mom and Dad for a week because I did not want to move (laughter). It was a tough transition.

Anja and Astrid experienced challenges moving abroad because their everyday life changed from living in Norway with familiarity to culture and language. In addition, they had to say goodbye to their established friend group, which has been seen as a common transition experience for immigrants (see Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015). Pollock et al. (2017) argued that "everything that feels familiar and 'home' is gone. Third culture kids do not lose one thing at a time; they lose everything at once" (Pollock et al., 2017, p.87). This suggests that Anja and Astrid might have felt they lost everything familiar when moving from their established "home". Additionally, they had to be adaptable to learning a new culture and language (Cockburn, 2002, p.480). Astrid's expressions of irritation with her parents can be seen as natural in the moving process, according to Salole (2020). She was irritated at her parents because they moved her from the familiar and safe place she

was living to a new country, where she had to start over again. On the other hand, Anja managed to adapt to the international environment, which might be because the international environment is used to welcoming new people from different cultures (Pollock et al., 2017). Anja (18) further said that:

It was challenging not to be in your home country when you are young because it is also an important phase, a way to connect to one's own country. When you are not there, I do not know..., you kind of get a weird feeling.

Anja might have found it challenging not having some of her childhood years in Norway because it might have influenced her place attachments and probably her identity since, according to Salole et al. (2018), people's identity is being "challenged" in the moving process (Salole et al., 2018, p.211). According to Gullestad (2006), a 'good' Norwegian childhood is one in which the child does not move many times throughout their childhood. Connecting this to Anja's elaboration, she might have been confused since she lived in an unfamiliar country and had experienced changes in her life regarding culture and languages (Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015; Ward & Geeraert, 2016). Moreover, it can be argued that Anja has probably resonated now in adult life that her childhood living in an unfamiliar country and her highly mobile lifestyle has impacted her sense of belonging and lack of belonging towards Norway (see more on this in chapter 6).

Some participants were also born in their host countries, although they have also experienced moving from their host countries to Norway, where they lived for several years before their next move due to their parent's work. Eveline (18) elaborated on a challenging transition from Norway even though she was originally born abroad due to her parent's work. When I asked her if she knew why they moved abroad, she said:

When I lived in [country] from when I was born until I was five years old, it was almost normal because I had not experienced anything else, so I think I did not wonder why I lived there. But when we moved to [country], it was the first time I experienced that I moved. I remember being sad when I moved from Norway and my friends I had there, so I had a bad attitude moving abroad. I remember the talk, the first weeks, I had to keep that I was moving a secret from my friends, so they did not know why I was sad all the time.

Eveline explained that her first moving experience was when she was older since she lived her early childhood years abroad. Thus, it seems that moving from Norway was challenging not only because she might have established some roots in Norway but also because it seemed it was her first time experiencing that she was moving from a country. In addition, she had to say goodbye to the familiar life she had established in Norway (see also Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015). Additionally, due to her emotional attachment to her friend group (Wright, 2015), she found it challenging to keep it a secret from them that she was moving abroad. Another participant who elaborated on a challenging transition the second time was Åge (45). He moved abroad for the first time at seven years old and was ten when he returned to Norway:

It was the opposite again. It was hard to move [from Norway] because you would break out again abroad, and then you would have to go out again for three years. I had reached puberty, a different age then, then my parents lived in the countryside while me and my brother lived in the capital and went to school there. It was painless to move, and all the periods were great. You get breakups and new friends, and that does something to your sense of belonging.

Åge explained his challenges moving abroad as a "break out", illustrating how moving away from his friendships and familiarity in Norway for the second time was more challenging because of his age as a teenager (see also Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015; Pollock et al., 2017). It can also be argued that he found it challenging moving for the second time, since he was a teenager, he might not see his childhood, which have been influenced by frequent moving, as a "normal" childhood (see also Gullestad, 2006). Living in a different place than his parents, in a place that might have been unfamiliar, might also have

impacted his sense of belonging the second time he moved abroad. Although, it seems that Åge was used to moving at this point, where he had more knowledge of how things went (cf. Pollock et al., 2017, p.232), in addition to his knowledge that they were going to live abroad for three years. However, his cross-cultural transitions, repeatedly saying goodbye to friendships, and making new friends may have impacted Åge's sense of belonging (see more on this in chapter 6).

5.2. School experiences

The data shows that school experiences impacted most participants' childhood years while they lived abroad. Some participants went to boarding schools, others went to local schools, while most went to international schools. A few went to both international schools and local schools or kindergartens. The participants had different experiences with which school they went to abroad, including culture shock, which I elaborate in 5.4. Here, I will look at how boarding school experiences have influenced the participants and how the "global school" and home-school experiences have impacted their language barrier.

Two participants who elaborated on the boarding school experiences were Else and Ella. Else was born abroad, while Ella moved at a very young age. They both went to a Nordic-speaking boarding school and lived without their parents. Hence, they pointed out that this has impacted their everyday lives living abroad:

Else (70): My sister and I traveled alone for two days to the boarding school; no one traveled with us, but we were followed to the train. We only saw our parents three times a year, which were Christmas, Easter, and summer vacation. Within two years, I only saw my parents six times. I missed home very much; however, we wrote them letters.

Ella (44): We were at home four times a year. The Christmas holiday was for six weeks, and the Easter holidays were for four weeks.

Although Else and Ella lived in two different countries, they shared the same experiences: they lived at the boarding school, where they lived alone without their parents. This might have influenced their attachments since they saw them a few times a year. Else further said: "My letters which were sent to my parents could get a stone to cry". Similar to these participants' experiences, qualitative research with missionary children in the 1950s and 1960s shows a girl who missed her parents while living at the boarding school, and, like Else, she sent letters to her family. However, the staff censored these letters before they were sent (in Skjortnes, 2010, pp.239-245). In Else and Ella's case, the organization, the parents, worked within significantly influenced how much they could see their parents. This was shown through Else's elaboration as she explained that the mission paid for the children's trip to see their parents. However, they were unwilling to pay for some trips, such as one of the Christmas trips to her parents. Else stated that her father managed to arrange for her to see her parents at Christmas. Else further explained that she reacted to her childhood experiences when her first child was seven years old:

When my eldest was seven years old, I had a reaction and pondered a lot. Then I asked my mother, "How could you sacrifice us?" She then said: "Do you think we had a good time?". And then I thought, you were a victim, too [her mother].

Else experienced a reaction from her childhood years and living at boarding school without her parents through her firstborn child. As Else points out, she thought that her mother was also a victim throughout her mission life as an adult. Ella also specified that she got a reaction about her childhood in the present time. Else (70) explained one of her experiences with the housewife who took care of all the children at the boarding school she went to:

One time, I remembered the housewife sitting by my bed, and I started to cry. Instead of receiving comfort, she singled me out. Then I decided never to cry again when I was here [boarding school]. You are seven years old, but the truth was that we became very independent from the two years at school. We had no adults to help us with homework. There was no one we could go to if we hurt ourselves, therefore we became independent.

Else became independent from her experiences at the boarding school. It seems it is because she had to take care of herself; when she was sad, she had to comfort herself, which is usually the caregiver's responsibility. This can be connected to Pollock et al. (2003), who argue that TCK becomes independent earlier than, for example, their peers in their home countries. This is because it is a result of their living situations at the boarding school (Pollock et al, 2003, p.116). At the boarding school, Else's sister became her caregiver instead of the housewife. She explained that she sought comfort from her sister when the family returned to Norway since this was something she was used to. This has influenced Else's attachment (Antonsich, 2010) to her sister while distancing her from her parents. Both Else and Ella pointed out that they had a good relationship with their parents after a while. This indicates they might have distanced themselves from their parents, but as they both pointed out, their parents apologized to them. This indicates that this has gradually brought their relationships closer. Else said that her mother started to cry when she asked for an apple, illustrating that her mother might not have known about the strictness at the boarding school.

Some participants also elaborated that they were homeschooled in the Norwegian language or subjects, while others had something called "global school", which they referred to as a Norwegian tutoring system. These differences in how they were tutored in Norwegian and Norwegian subjects varied due to it being dependent on which organizations their parents worked within. Two of the participants who had "global school" were Hedvig and Maria, and they explained:

Hedvig (24): I had something called global school, which is like an online Norwegian school. It was in addition to school. I went there from 6th to 10th grade. It was tiring, but then I got proof that I had also attended a Norwegian school. Then I could, for example, study in Norway.

Maria (24): We went to the global school, which is a Norwegian school online, where we had Norwegian, religion, and I do not remember the others subject, but I remember I did not have any interest in it. I wanted to do something else, but my parents forced me to do it because the [organization the parent's worked within] had paid for it. And I said to them: "No I have enough school". I went to an English school, and not a Norwegian school, so the global school was very boring.

From Hedvig and Maria's explanation, it is arguable that they had to have the Norwegian tutoring school online to have the opportunity to go to school in Norway when they returned. The organizations the parents work at pay for their opportunity to learn the Norwegian language and Norwegian subjects abroad. However, this was time-consuming for these participants since they went to school abroad while they had to spend their time in the "Global school". Hedvig (24) explained that "the global school did not work that much. It was pretty much. You had to take your own initiative. When you are 13-14 years old, it does not work". In other words, it seems that they had to take their own initiative as children to learn about the Norwegian school system to gain access to the education systems in Norway.

This is traditionally not something a teenage girl or boy thinks about as important. Especially when they have other commitments, such as going to school in the countries they live in abroad since they are using their time and full attention to learn a new language in their host country, but also finding settling in at the school. In this way, it can be understood that they also did not want to be looked at differently than their peers (Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015; Pollock et al., 2003). Some participants also had homeschooling.

Sara (29): We were homeschooled in Norwegian until the 10th grade since I attended an international school. It went well, but I always blamed it on the fact that I was not so good at Norwegian that I was homeschooled (...). I was much better in English than Norwegian since I went to an English school throughout my childhood, so I spoke very much English-Norwegian because I did not know the Norwegian words.

Åge (44): My mother was my Norwegian teacher, but I do not know how it worked. I had some Norwegian lectures and read a bit, became a lot of Donald and stuff to maintain the Norwegian language, but I cannot remember it being entirely thorough, at least not when I was that little. In a way, English became my mother tongue because that was what I spoke all the time. The dialogue I had at home was Norwegian, but it was mostly in English with others who spoke English.

As Hedvig and Maria, it can be argued that Sara and Åge struggled with holding on to their origin language since English was their primary focus. This is probably because they communicated in English with friends, peers, and teachers. Therefore, they probably did not understand the importance of speaking Norwegian since their everyday lives were in the school where others spoke English. According to Pollock et al. (2003), TCK parents are responsible for teaching their children their origin language (Pollock et al., 2003, p.167), which in this research is Norwegian. Connecting this to the participants it can be said that their parents are trying their best to teach them Norwegian or push them towards online tutoring. However, this can also lead to confusion and can be time-consuming. Thus, it can be argued that they are language confused by focusing mainly on one language, as Sara said when she switched between English and Norwegian. They strive to assimilate into the culture (Jensen et al., 2011), and they focus on the culture and language of their host culture, which is, according to Eriksen and Sajjad (2015), the characteristics when people immigrate to a new culture and want to achieve belongingness. Therefore, it can be understood that preserving the Norwegian language was hard for them since their main focus and everyday life was in the host country.

5.3. Learning a new language

Since most participants went to boarding and international schools, most did not learn or practice the local language in their host countries. Most of the participants learned, for example, English or French, two of the languages spoken in international schools. The data shows that the participants often had language difficulties when they first moved abroad. Some participants elaborated that since they were young, they adapted to the language abroad, such as Anja. She lived in two countries; her first move was when she was five. When I asked her about her experiences with language, Anja (18) said:

It was extremely difficult at the beginning because I did not know English or French. It was very tough not knowing the language, but I think when you are put in a situation, you must teach yourself the language, and since I was younger, it was not that difficult either.

Anja might have learned the language quickly abroad because at the time she was a child, she had a long-term memory; in other words, she could remember information, as Gualtieri and Finn (2022) noted. Even though children take longer to learn a new language, they manage it better than adults (Gualtieri & Finn, 2022, p. 1322;1328). It seems that Anja learned the language quickly to assimilate into the international community (Jensen et al., 2011). Olivia (18) also explained that learning a language abroad was difficult. Even though she also went to an international school, she explained that she learned the local language in her first host country. Olivia first moved abroad at the age of four, she elaborated:

In [country] it was very difficult. I do not remember how I reacted, but I know it was difficult and different. I have been told it was a lot of screaming after the first days at school. When you are at the kindergarten in Norway you do not learn [language], so when you are in a place where no one speaks Norwegian, it is hard to get used to it.

It seems that Olivia has heard stories about her experiences with learning the language abroad. Although it can be understood that she knew, it was challenging for her. Arguably, since Olivia could not speak the Norwegian language she was familiar with, she found it challenging at school. As mentioned earlier, this experience might have impacted Olivia's transition experience (see also Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015), where her familiarity with the language and everything that feels 'home' is gone (see Pollock et al., 2017).

Although some expressed challenges with learning the languages, others explained that it was simple. Astrid (31) learned the language quickly, stating, "I think we were lucky kids. We were out playing in the street with the neighboring children. Therefore, when school started, we already spoke the language well." According to Eidse and Sichel (2004)

Some children navigate the transition by managing superficial changes with ease, seemingly conforming to the host culture but camouflaging their inner lives. They learn new languages, wear proper clothing, and play the part like the seasoned performers they have become (Eidse & Sichel, 2004, pp.153-154).

Astrid managed her transition experiences by learning the language through her peers. Some participants also learned several languages simultaneously since they integrated into the local community (see Jensen et al., 2011). However, they also had to learn the language at the international school (while also speaking Norwegian at home). Two participants who elaborated on this were Brita and Eveline. Eveline was born abroad, while Brita was born in Norway; they stated:

Brita (20): The school we went to was English and had a French line, so I started on the French line. Of course, we also had English in kindergarten. And I kind of learned Norwegian too, since I was so little. Since it was French, English, and Norwegian at the same time, I probably talked a lot about all three together.

Eveline (18): In [country], they speak French, and I went to a local kindergarten, therefore I learned French before I learned English. At the same time, I learned Norwegian. My first language was Norwegian, but at the same time I learn French. After kindergarten, I also started preschool because the school system is a little different. At the preschool, I learned English.

Brita and Eveline learned three languages in their early childhood. This can be confusing when they must speak languages at school and kindergarten and learn Norwegian simultaneously since Norway is their country of origin. It seems that Brita and Eveline integrated into the new culture, holding on to their original culture and combining it with the new culture by learning new languages at school (Berry, 1997, cited in Jensen et al., 2011).

5.4. Culture shock

Some participants were born or raised in a culture abroad during their early childhood years. Therefore, they did not experience the same challenges with the cultures, while others described culture shock experiences. Although the participants have lived in both Global South and Global North countries, most experienced culture shock when moving to Global South countries. Sara (29) elaborated: "It was very shocking to come where there is poverty. You have always heard about it, but it became much more real when you see it". Sara might have heard about poverty from her parents or others before moving abroad at 13. However, it was a different experience witnessing it, which might trigger culture shocks. It can be seen that this experience might have probably changed and shaped her worldview (see also Pollock et al., 2003). Astrid (31) also expressed an experience of culture shock within the local community:

The culture was a culture where everyone spoke their mind (laughter). Like neighboring ladies and mothers having something to say about how I behaved, it was a culture of the ladies. They asked me

why I washed the pavement. They also came in and interfered with what I should do, an opinion in such things. It was very unusual because in Norway you hardly greet the neighbors while there it was something you should say about everyone.

Astrid experienced culture shock since it was unfamiliar to her (cf. Gaw, 2000) that others in the community had something to say about how she acted and her appearance. This resonates with the definition of culture shock as "precipitated by the anxiety that results from losing all our familiar signs and symbols of social intercourse" (Oberg, 1960, p.177, cited in Gaw, 2000, p.85). Adler (1975) has a different definition of culture shock, where he defines it as:

Primarily a set of emotional reactions to the loss of perceptual reinforcements from one's own culture, to new cultural stimuli that have little or no meaning, and to the misunderstanding of new and diverse experiences (Adler, 1975, cited in Gaw, 2000, p.85).

Connecting this to Astrid's elaboration, it seems that her culture shock arose when she faced the experience that the local community's interaction with her appearance and behavior gave no meaning since she was not used to others reacting to this in Norway. Astrid (31) further said: "When you entered a church there, it was an idea about how I should cut my hair, not a negative opinion, but..., it was a shock to get used to it in the beginning". Throughout Astrid's transition from the Norwegian culture to a new culture and community, she has experienced a difference in how she interacts with others in a community because of the social constructs native to that new culture.

The concept of social constructionism shows how childhood differs across societies, cultures, and throughout history (James & Prout, 1997), exploring "how categories are constructed, how bodies of knowledge are built up, and how childhood and adulthood are seen and understood in any given society" (Montgomery, 2003, p.46). In other words, social constructionism is critical in exploring people's understanding of the world and themselves, which is integrated into society in individual lives (Burr, 2015; Berger & Luckman, 1967). This suggests that the people in the local community Astrid met had a different social construct of childhood and upbringing than the view Astrid has been raised in Norway. Astrid learned about society's construction of childhood through meeting these local people and customs. Ariés pointed out that children will shape their experiences, how they view themselves, and how adults behave around them (in James & James, 2004, p.13). This suggests that Astrid's view of herself and her identity might have been influenced by her meetings with others in the local community. This indicates that Astrid might have constructed how she should behave and appear and her reality of the world, which changed within the new culture because of different routines.

Some participants, such as Astrid and Eveline, experienced culture shock at school abroad. Astrid went to a local school abroad because of her father's interest. Eveline was very young when her family moved abroad for the first time, and she went to a local kindergarten and later an international school. Astrid and Eveline said:

Astrid (31): I especially remember the school; it was a culture shock. Norwegian schools are unique in their environments and in how their teachers work. I remember math, which you do not necessarily need a language for, but there were many levels (..)..., but then I remember it was tough, sitting in class and not understanding. It was also a high level, and I worked hard with the school for the first two years, so it was a tough transition.

Eveline (18): Perhaps the biggest culture shock came from the school system. I noticed it was much more formal than the Norwegian school. You do not call teachers by their first names, and there were certain words you were not supposed to say.

Both Astrid and Eveline had a hard transition in the school system, where the schools were stricter abroad than they were used to in Norway; in other words, they experienced unfamiliarity with the school system (cf. Gaw, 2000). Pollock et al. (2003) elaborate that the school is where children learn about cultural values and society's way of being. This

suggests that even though they both experienced unfamiliarity, they might have learned how to adapt to society and learn the culture's values through schooling. However, it can also be argued that even though they both experienced unfamiliarity, they went to different schools, which also can be a different environment and how the teachers' tutors (Pollock et al., 2017, p.68). Astrid furthermore explained:

The grades are different. (...). It looked like a prison (laughter); it was locked up, and you could not get in and out as you wanted. You had to have proof to get out. There were exams in all subjects every year. If you failed two out of three subjects, you had to go through the grade again. A completely different reality with school and working. It was a shock when you came from primary school in Norway.

Astrid expressed that she experienced culture shock from the school system and school buildings (see Gaw, 2000). Weaver (1993) points out that culture shock can cause individuals to lose not only their identity markers but also disrupt their frames of reference, making communication challenging. This can result in people experiencing identity crises as they lack cultural competencies while trying to understand the new society (Weaver, 1993, cited in Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015, p.103). This suggests that Astrid experiences cultural shock because of her lack of cultural competence and her struggles with understanding the local school system since she is within an unfamiliar culture. In other words, this culture shock experience might influence her attachment to and sense of belonging to the school since she might feel insecure there (Chawla, 1992). This illustrates how she had to integrate into society and accept how differently the school culture was ruled (see Jensen et al., 2011). Her experiences can also be looked at using the theory of acculturation since the Norwegian culture has been encountered within the host culture (Jensen et al., 2011). Astrid's meeting with the school system in the host country required a process of acculturation, having to self-adjust her view of her everyday life, according to Eriksen and Sajjad (2015).

5.5. Making new friendships abroad

Several participants specified that forming new friendships was easy, mainly due to the same childhood experiences. Sofie (12) was born abroad because of her father's work and lived in two countries before moving back to Norway at age ten. She went to an international school with children with similar temporary migration experiences. She stated that she found it easy to make new friends: "I went to an international school where I met many children who had lived abroad, but we had to speak English to each other". This indicates that although finding friends was easy, she found it challenging to speak in English, which might have influenced the character of the friendships. Sofie also explained that she met new friends through her parent's friendships. In other words, her family and her friend's family spent much time together, probably because they were in the same mobile life situation. As previous research has pointed out, children who live internationally often recognize themselves in each other because they share the same mobile experiences. Therefore, they do not recognize themselves with either the host or home cultures (Pollock et al., 2017, p.17). This might be why Sofie and her parents made friendships in the same "third culture". This was also shown in a study by Lijadi and Van Schalwyk (2014), where one of their participants found socialization important through her international school and her parents' friends (Lijadi & Van Schalwyk, 2014, p.11). Sofie's parents perhaps reached out to other expatriate families because of the distance from other relatives and if they needed support with everyday life situations and the challenges of living abroad, which is also described in previous research (Pollock et al., 2017).

Another participant who mentioned it was effortless to make new friendships abroad was Linda (45). She was born abroad due to her father's work and described that making

friends was easy since the children in the neighborhood had the same life background as her:

We lived in blocks of flats, and we also lived in terraced houses, it was only children with the same background as me. There was always someone to play with in the neighborhood. There was always someone to be with, friends were easily made, and we were in the same situation moving all the time. Therefore, everyone was used to starting over. You could live in one place for one year, half a year, then you had to move again (silence), new school, new friends, it was very inclusive, therefore it was easy to make friends.

Linda described that she made friends with other children who also moved temporarily; hence, it was easy for her because they shared the same childhood experiences. She continued explaining: "When we came to a new place, I always asked my mom "how long are we staying here?" because I was afraid of not making new friendships, I remember". According to Antonsich (2010), a person needs time to develop a sense of belonging with friends. On the other hand, Pollock et al. (2017) find that TCK puts more emphasis on friendships since they live highly mobile lives and know that one stay can be temporary (p.195). Hence, it could be that Linda and her friends made strong friendships, not only because they are in the same situation but also because the sense of mobility makes friendships desired, perhaps as a coping mechanism. Knut (53) was born abroad due to his parents' work. He spent part of his childhood and youth years abroad, moving back and forth to the same country. Thinking back on important relationships in his childhood, Knut (53) stated the following:

There is one I had, one of the other missionary children with whom I was very good friends with before we went back home when I was six years old before I turned seven years old. I have had very little contact with him afterward, but it is my story like everyone else's, that friendship is there and then. When I think back. I have not maintained the circle of friends now which I had when I grew up. Because everyone knew this was temporary. Some travel, some stay.

Knut knew as a child that the friendship he had made may be just temporary, even though he also emphasized that this friendship was a good one. One of the reasons that Knut had a good relationship with another child who had the same childhood experience as him could be because they shared the same high-mobility life (Pollock et al., 2017). It is hard to stay connected with friends when constantly moving (Lijadi & Van Schalwyk, 2014, p.12; Pollock et al., 2017). Knut continued saying that he measured all later friends with that particular friendship, the ideal friend. This suggests that Knut had a relational belonging to his friend, being a good and trusting relationship (Cuervo & Wyn, 2014), serving as an image of how other friendships should look.

For some participants, it was challenging to make new friendships because of the language barrier. Noah (13), described:

It was tough in the previous country I lived in because I could not speak the language, but activities outside school like football, at least in the country I live in now, helped a lot. Since we played football together, from the first day at school, they started talking to me, and we became friends very quickly. After the first week, I had a group of friends whom I am still very good friends with.

Noah went to an English international school in both countries. It was hard for him with the English language at first, while in the country he lives in now, it has been easier for him to make new friends because of the same interests in football. Football as an activity was a space where he could socialize with peers, facilitating friendships (Fattore et al., 2017, p.165). Linderman (2011) also found that her participants highlighted outside activities as high points of their lives abroad (p.215). Another participant who described the language barrier with making new friendships abroad was Anja. As elaborated earlier, since she went to an international school where they spoke English and French, it was hard for her at first since she could not speak either language. Anja (18) elaborated:

I remember one of my girlfriends who spoke a different language, but the language was similar to the Norwegian language, therefore we managed to say "hello" and "goodbye". Because of that, I managed to pick up words and such from the sentences, even if I did not speak the same language.

In the beginning, it was pleasant for Anja to meet another child with a language similar to hers since it made it easier to understand her. She mentioned that even though they did not understand each other, they could understand each other through non-verbal communication, with body language, which could make it easier for them to play together. On the other hand, the language barrier also brought some together, such as Brita (20), who became friends with a girl in the neighborhood because of the same level of "language confusion".

5.6. Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I looked at the participants' experiences with moving abroad, their temporary migration, and mobile childhood. Since most participants made friends with people who shared the same childhood experiences, they have not been influenced by the local community. However, they have increasingly been influenced by the "third culture", or the interstitial culture, as Useem describes it (cf. Pollock et al., 2017). Moreover, since the participants are used to the highly mobile lifestyle, they have experienced different challenges when starting over again. They had to integrate into a new culture, language, and school, which was another culture shock they experienced. Lastly, the participants who went to boarding school had different challenges than those who went to local or international schools.

6.0 When home is everywhere and nowhere

In this chapter, I will elaborate on different perspectives of the participants' sense of belonging, place attachments, and what they refer to as *home*. Furthermore, I will look at the participants' lack of belonging. This chapter will, therefore, respond to the following research questions: *When does a place feel like "home" for TCK?* Before showing the data regarding where the participants "feel at home", I want to point out that most participants have multiple answers on how they define home. In other words, they have multiple belongings. Thus, they do not have specific elaborations when describing where they feel at home. Hence, for some, home is everywhere and nowhere at the same time.

6.1. Home as house, place and nationality

In this chapter, I will first look at dwellings that have been important for the participants in their childhood and how they refer to these dwellings as home. Moreover, I will look briefly at some participants who define homes as places. Furthermore, I will look at the challenges of describing belonging and the sense of belonging associated with a place since the data show that this expression was difficult for some participants. In the last section, I will look at participants who define home in terms of nation and nationality in Norway and their host countries.

6.1.1. Meaningful houses and places that feel like home

The data materials indicate that some participants refer to 'home' or a sense of home associated with memories of dwellings that held a significant meaning during their childhood. These dwellings were not necessarily where they lived during their childhood years; however, they expressed their emotional attachment to them because they were either their grandparent's houses, their own childhood houses, or family cabins. One of the repeated dwellings was the family cabins; they described it as a sense of safe space. Although some participants do not necessarily mention the cabin as home, they specified the cabin as one of their favorite places or a place where they have spent much time with their family and/or friends. One participant who elaborated on that was Maria (24) when I asked her if she had any places she felt comfortable in Norway:

In eighth grade, we bought a cabin, where I still feel comfortable. I always went to the cabin with my mom when I did not get invited to things, therefore it became a safe space. As well as my grandmother also came with us many times to the cabin. There I had my own room, we watched TV, played games, and we could draw and enjoy ourselves. It was a place where our dog spent a lot of time.

Maria does not explicitly refer to the cabin as a home, yet she points out the cabin as a comfortable dwelling in her childhood and it still is. Therefore, it can be argued that she perhaps had a sense of home at the cabin since it was a place where she spent time with some of her family members and her dog, in addition to feeling safe there. This can be connected to Antonsich (2010), who points out that home is not only a physical space but also a symbolic space where a person is comfortable, has an emotional connection, and is familiar (Antonsich, 2010, p.646). Additionally, in a Norwegian context, the cabin is looked at as a home aspect (Brusdal, 2006; Gullestad, 1997). Since Maria feels comfortable in the cabin and has memories of things she used to do at the cabin, she might feel a sense of belonging and being "at home" there.

This can also be shown through Sara and Anja's elaboration on important dwelling in their childhood years:

Sara (29): One of my favorite places in Norway is at our cabin. The place that has always been constant, the house that has been there for my whole life, the one that we had from when I was a

child until now. I do not have any childhood homes. We have always been back to the cabin every summer. It may or may not be a place like home, but it is a physical place that I can return to. It has always been a place where it has been focused on the family.

Anja (18): I think it was a safe place at my grandparents because it was in a way the house that was a safe environment because we had moved from house to house many times. We have never lived in a house for a long time, but at my grandparents' houses, it was those houses that were in my life in my childhood years (...) I think I always was relaxed when I was at those houses. It was in a way a safe place that I have had all my life.

Pollock et al. (2017) point out that "we have noticed an attachment that children will make to a particular place in the collective family history that feels 'homey' to them" (Pollock et al., 2017, p.189). Connecting this to Sara and Anja's experiences, it can be argued that they both make the cabin and the grandparents' homes 'homey'. This can be because of their place attachment to them due to their emotional bonding to these buildings (Low & Altman, 1992; see also Antonsich, 2010). Additionally, it can be argued that they did not have other dwellings as permanent homes in their childhood since they were highly mobile and unrooted (Pollock et al., 2017; Eidse & Sichel, 2004). Hence, they might find these dwellings meaningful and "constant" since they are used to moving back and forth between Norway and their host country and need a place or dwelling of rootedness. Sara (29) furthermore pointed out in the interview that she has had multiple addresses throughout her life, even though she elaborates more that her family is defined as home:

When I visited my parents in Asia, I always said I was going *home*, even though I did not live there. (...). I am not visiting my mother and father, I am going home, even though I do not live in the same household as them anymore.

Although she will spend time with her family members in another dwelling, she is still going home in her mind because her parents lived there. Gullestad (1984) notes that Norwegians frequently employ verbal expressions like "house" or home," whereas the English equivalent would typically use the term "family" (Gullestad, 1984, pp.85-86). This suggests that she sees her parents as home, not the dwellings per se. Similarly, Anja (18) also raised this sentiment in connection with her grandparents' houses, stating: "Home is at my grandparents". It seems that Anja feels at home at her grandparents' houses because these dwellings have been familiar dwellings throughout her childhood, in addition to her place-belongingness and her experiences of being comfortable in these dwellings (Antonsich, 2010). As to why both Sara and Anja mention these dwellings as safe and favorite places, may be because they think that a home needs to be a materialistic house since homes often are referred to as a house (Blunt & Dowling, 2022). Although they have moved to new places and have lived in different dwellings, they have place attachments to the mentioned dwellings because of their emotional attachments (Antonsich, 2010), even though they have never lived there.

The data also shows that a few participants talked about their childhood homes as their favorite places when growing up or where they feel at home. One of them was Adam (45): "Home is where I live now, in this city, it is the place I grew up in Norway". That Adam feels at home where he lives now might be because of the place attachment he made as a child where he grew up (Low & Altman, 1992). Adam also stated, "after going to college abroad, I moved back to Norway and have gotten rooted again. I feel at home now". It seems like Adam felt rooted in Norway as a child and rebuilt this place attachment, his emotional bonding to the place (Low & Altman, 1992), as an adult after living abroad by himself due to studies. Adam's statement about a home can be interpreted using previous research with TCK, as Eidse and Sichel (2004) describe, "these children seek the security of roots in adulthood and teach themselves to stop in one place" (Eidse & Sichel, 2004, p.16), as TCK tend to be restless and rootless (Eidse & Sichel, 2004). Åge (44) also elaborated on home as a place, stating: "Home is where you

live, but now I am thinking about [city]". It seems that Åge is referring to one of the places he grew up in Norway; thus since he is not currently living there, he might phrase his elaboration to emphasize the importance of that special place in his childhood. This suggests that Åge has a place attachment to the city he elaborated on (Low & Altman, 1992).

Eveline (18) also elaborated on a sense of home in Norway; however, she described home as a building rather than the place where she grew up. When I asked her if she had any favorite place, she felt safe in Norway, Eveline said: "It is really feeling at home, at the house we have had throughout the whole time period (laughter). It is like the place I think of as home and security". That she thinks of her parent's house in Norway as a sense of home might be because, as earlier mentioned, it is a house she is familiar with (Antonsich, 2010). During a conference about TCK in 1987, the U.S. ambassador to Ecuador stated:

I think every expatriate family should buy a home before going abroad so their children will have the same base for every home assignment. My kids feel very strongly that Virginia is home even though they have lived outside the States for over half their lives (in Pollock et al., 2017, p.185).

Connecting this statement to Eveline's elaboration, it could be argued that her family's decision to maintain the same house when they were living in Norway has enabled her to have a sense of home in Norway. This was despite having rented out the house for long periods as she has lived most of her childhood and adolescent years abroad. Sofie (12) described different places defining home when I asked her what she thought about when she heard the word *home*:

That is a difficult question, but I think sometimes about the city where I live now in Norway, sometimes the city where I used to live in Norway, and sometimes the second country I lived in abroad, but not the first one because I do not remember anything from that time. Sometimes I think about the cabin. There are a lot of places I can call home.

Even though Sofie found the question difficult, she defines home with place attachments through her memories of childhood homes. This may be because she has a personal connection to these transnational homes (Blunt & Dowling, 2022). It seems Sofie recalls these different dwellings and refers to them as home because of her understanding that home is associated with houses in the cities she has lived in (Blunt & Dowling, 2022). According to previous research studies on migration and mobility, scholars have found that immigrants create multiple spatial belongings, which are transformed due to the migration lifestyle. Maine et al. (2021) highlight the concept of multi-sited belonging, which emerged from studies on migration and mobility. This concept indicates that immigrants have multiple belongings in several homes or home countries and feelings of in-betweenness (Maine et al., 2021). The notion of in-betweenness was found in Hopkin's research (Hopkins, 2010 cited in Huot et al., 2014), where her study indicates that due to immigrants' insecurity with identity, place, and belonging, they do not fully settle in their host country while still maintaining a sense of belonging to their home country. Her research suggests that immigrants feel they belong to multiple places, thus reflecting their feelings of in-betweenness. Likewise, Sofie has multi-cited belonging, as she defines home in multiple places. This is reasonably influenced by her childhood experiences of migrating with her nuclear family due to her parent's work. It is also notable that Sofie expressed that she does not see the first host country as home, which can be because of her lack of memories of that country. Thus, it seems Sofie has built a stronger sense of belonging to the dwellings and places of the countries she has memories of. This might be because of her childhood memories of the feelings surrounding these places (Jack, 2010). Sofie's description of her multi-sited belonging to several homes may be from a lack of specific place attachments or rootedness due to her sense of in-betweenness. This

is also shown by previous research on TCK, as it suggests that these children feel they belong to multiple cultures and countries (e.g., Kwon, 2019).

6.1.2. Difficulties to belong to a place

The data materials strongly indicate that most participants found describing their sense of belonging challenging. Especially defining where they belong and which places they could call home. These challenges were repeated by both the adult and the young adult participants. In other words, those who have returned to Norway after having lived some of their childhood years abroad, whom Pollock et al. (2017) define as adult-third culture kids (ATCK). Despite the fact that they are not currently living abroad with their parents (as TCK), they had experienced living outside their parent's culture during their childhood (Pollock et al., 2017, p.15). Astrid, Jakob, and Maria were among the participants who elaborated on the challenge with place attachment, stating:

Astrid (31): I do not belong to any place. It has always been something I have worked on. I get an impulse to move, but I do not get the attachment to a place.

Jakob (22): The thing about belonging is difficult for me, it has been like that all my life. I have not connected anywhere.

Maria (24): I do not feel I belong anywhere if that makes sense (silence). I do not feel that a place is a home, where I belong.

The participants' absence of place attachment and a sense of belonging to places might be because of their childhood experiences living a highly mobile lifestyle (see Pollock et al., 2017). Living a highly mobile lifestyle means they are used to traveling back and forth between their host countries and Norway and seeing others moving constantly (Salole, 2020). By this experience, they are not entirely imprinted by their host culture or their parents' home culture (Pollock et al., 2003). Pollock et al. (2017) state that:

Each movement makes third culture kids have questions about where they belong and having questions about their identity because they are changing themselves in their relationships with others. This can have some challenges in developing a true sense of a core identity (Pollock et al., 2017, p.75).

Connecting this to the participant's elaboration on challenges in constituting place attachment and belonging might arise from their experiences of constantly adapting to multiple cultures. Thus, within each cultural context and interaction with others, they might adjust themselves. This might have prevented them from developing an attachment to their home or host culture. This can be because they have moved back and forth between Norway and their host country or lived in multiple countries. Their interactions with others in the wake of each movement can be seen as a continuous re-understanding of where they should belong and who they are. According to Antonsich (2010), the search humans experience for who they are is closely related to where they belong (p.646). These participants might have felt a lack of belonging throughout their childhood and adulthood because they are having challenges finding who they are due to a lack of permanent roots (see Pollock et al., 2017). Low and Altman (1992) mention that place attachment is tightly connected to place identity, sense of place, and rootedness since the place can reflect how people identify themselves (pp.1-3). This suggests that the participants do not have a sense of belonging to any places because they do not identify themselves with these places. The fact that they probably do not feel any belonging as adults to their passport country will be explored in depth in chapter eight.

Eriksen and Sajjad (2015) describe that cross-cultural children are often rootless because of their cross-cultural childhood experience attaining many roots. Because of their highly mobile lifestyle, some of these roots have probably not been maintained (Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015, p.158). This suggests that the participants do not belong to either country

they lived in during their childhood. Their lack of belonging and feeling of rootlessness can also be because they belong to the interstitial community, signifying the environment with people with whom they share the same highly mobile experience and can recognize themselves (Pollock et al., 2017, p.68; Bell-Villada & Sichel, 2011). Eidse and Sichel (2004) further mentioned that TCK, even in adulthood, will not establish permanent roots because of their restlessness. Hence, TCK and ATCK find rootedness and their home in relationships or memories rather than geographical (Eidse & Sichel, 2004, p.154). This suggests that the participants' absence of place attachment, feeling restless and unrooted, results from their cross-cultural and mobile childhood.

The feeling of being rootless and restless was also visible throughout the data materials. Astrid (31) elaborated that:

I feel restless every third or fourth year, but now in my adult life, I have realized that it is just a feeling, it is not a dangerous feeling, and it does not mean that I am the least bit happy where I live. It would not get better by moving to a new place, I am fine where I live now, but I probably need some impulses to experience new things.

Astrid points out her "inner clock" where she feels restless during a period. According to Pollock et al. (2017), this is a "migratory instinct". Feeling restless in a period was found in Westropp et al. (2016), who describe a woman who used to move every three years and therefore struggled in the place she lived since it was her fourth year there, wanting to move again (Westropp et al., 2016, p. 340). Furthermore, Astrid views her restlessness and migratory instinct as "destructive" since it is normal in a Norwegian context to grow up in one place, which is the place people often feel they come from and have established roots (Gullestad, 1997; Gullestad, 2006). TCK often feel restless because they search for a place they can finally call home (Pollock et al., 2017). Astrid has accepted and realized that she probably will not find a place to call home the next place she moves to. This can be because she feels at home in the movement; in other words, because of her mobile lifestyle, she might not feel at home in a place (Berger cited in Rapport & Dawson, 1998). Although Astrid has arguably accepted her feeling of restlessness since she has an established family and has children and needs to find roots in one place for them, despite her impulsive "inner clock" that she needs to have new experiences (Pollock et al., 2017, pp.189-190). As Eidse and Sichel (2004) mentioned, Astrid's feelings of being rootless, restless, and lacking in belonging will always be there since she had an unrooted childhood.

The feelings of being impulsive were something Anja (18) also elaborated:

You are used to having constantly new impulses, and if you do not get them, it is a bit like an addiction, that you feel a bit tired of being in the same environment for a long time and that you feel in such a way that you must replace things all the time. It is kind of a weird side effect of moving so much.

It seems that Anja's childhood of living a highly mobile life has led her to have an "addiction" to constantly wanting to move. She also further explained that:

I feel in a way I can never 100% settle down or move somewhere and be there for the rest of my life because you get a need for change all the time. I cannot live in the same place for the rest of my life because that is not very normal.

Anja explains her lack of place attachment or that she does not find any roots in one place because she is restless due to her cross-cultural and mobile childhood in two different ways. She even stated that living in one place for her entire life is not something that she considers natural. Within the concept of social constructionism, the concept of discourse is central. Montgomery (2003) explains the concept of discourse as "the ideas that work together in a self-contained way. Ideas that are held together by view of the world" (Montgomery, 2003, p.47). It can be argued that Anja has a discourse

(idea) of how her life should be, and this idea might have been constructed within the social environment she has been in, namely the “interstitial culture”, where she has socialized herself with others with the same life experiences (see Pollock et al., 2017). In her worldview, it is normal to have a mobile childhood and not settle down in one place because of her knowledge of her cross-cultural life (see also Montgomery, 2003, p.47). Since Anja, and the other participants in this study, are used to experiencing new cultures and environments, they might feel they need changes after a certain period because this is their reality of the world they know, something which is socially defined (Berger & Luckman, 1967), and that they have in common with others who also live highly mobile life. The restlessness and rootless experiences of some participants have also been shown to be transferable to other areas of life. Ella (44) elaborated that:

Jobs are very much a three-year thing for me. I would like to move, refurnish a lot, it is a kind of inner unrest. We lived at our last house for four years, but I do not quite find the peace in a new house.

Ella has the migratory instinct, in her case, to jobs, decoration, and housing. Pollock et al. (2017) found out that some adult TCKs cannot stay at one job long enough to establish their career because of their migratory instincts. This is often because they think the *next* place will be the perfect fit for them (Pollock et al., 2017, pp.190-191).

6.1.3. Home as a Nation

Although some participants expressed a lack of belonging or did not feel “at home” in a specific place, a few defined home as a nation. One of them was Noah (13), who currently lives abroad with his family due to their working situation. Despite this, he feels at home in Norway:

I feel my home is still where I lived in Norway because I still feel I am Norwegian. I still feel like I am from there, therefore it is still my home, even after seven years of living abroad. That neighborhood there was very...., yes, I feel at home there.

Although Noah was born abroad due to his parents’ working situation, he also lived some of his early childhood years in Norway. Thus, this can be one of the reasons he views the nation as his homeland (Blunt & Dowling, 2022), even though he has not lived in Norway for several years. According to Blunt and Dowling (2022), multiple home belonging is viewed as multi-scalar, where they define a sense of belonging that is created in various scales. Home is not just a household but also a person's imaginaries of home and homemaking are constructed on different scales, such as neighborhood, city, and nation (Blunt & Dowling, 2022, pp.30-31). Noah has a multi-scalar of belonging because he sees both Norway as a nation as home and the neighborhood he lived in as home. His sense of belonging to these multiple scales is how he understands himself (Jack, 2010). Noah looks at himself as Norwegian and feels rooted in Norway, even though he spent most of his childhood abroad. His national identity seems Norwegian due to his sense of belonging and rootedness in the nation (Koroleva, 2019; Verdugo & Milne, 2016). This might also suggest that he does not feel rooted in the country(ies) he has lived in abroad. Noah furthermore said that:

Living in [country] for three years, makes me miss Norway more and more. I see Norway more as home after each month, I also miss the Norwegian society. The society here does not make it any better.

Noah experiences a sense of belonging in Norway due to the memories he has and the challenges he encounters in the society he lives in now. Since he does not identify himself with the culture and community he lives in abroad, his cultural identity is primarily tied to the Norwegian community (Jensen et al., 2011). Thus, Norway is the nation he feels an inner bond with, and his attachment to the country is because he identifies himself with the nation (Zeugner-Roth et al., 2015, p.28).

Noah further said: "In Norway and [country], I could do almost everything I wanted without being, yes..., looked at, but it is something I do in [country]". It seems that Noah had more freedom in Norway and in the previous host country he lived in, which could be one of the reasons he longed for Norway. By this, it seems he felt safer in the two countries he mentioned than in the host country he currently lives in. This indicates his sense of belonging to Norway because he feels safe there (Antonsich, 2010). Anja (18) also elaborated on her national identity towards Norway. However, she elaborated on having an attachment to the country through her contact and having a friend she had in Norway. She explained that since this friendship was established before she moved abroad, she had, in a way, a connection to Norway (see more on this in 7.1.). It can be understood that through Anja's relationship with her childhood friend, she felt she had a national identity in Norway. In this way, it can be argued that she wanted to have a sense of belonging to Norway to understand who she was (Jack, 2010; Triandafyllidou, 1998). According to Chawla (1992), our country of origin shapes people's identity and our understanding of who we are (Chawla, 1992, p.66). This might suggest that Anja wanted to understand herself and find her identity and who she was through her attachment to a Norwegian friend. It can be understood that, in her understanding, she continued to be Norwegian even though she had not lived in Norway for three years. This might also reveal an insecure national identity because of repeated transnational migration movements.

Sense of home and sense of belonging were also described towards the nations they lived in abroad. Astrid (31) elaborated on the host country as home, stating: "When I travel to [country], I get very emotional, and I get a feeling that this is home". Astrid's attachment to the host country could be because her father is from the host country she lived in during her childhood. Hence, she might feel a national identity and belonging to the country (see Bond, 2006). It can also be argued that Astrid's attachment to the country is due to her childhood memories and experiences in the host country (Antonsich, 2010; Low & Altman, 1992). In this way, it can be understood that Astrid has a sense of belonging and emotional attachment to the host country. Hence, she considers the country home (Antonsich, 2010). Ella, Else, and Eveline also described their host country as home. When I asked them what they thought of when I mentioned the word *home*, they said:

Ella (44): If you ask where I feel most at home, I will probably say the country I lived in Africa. It would not have mattered if I was going to live there for the rest of my life, but I would probably miss Norway too, it is always a place you miss. I am pulled in two directions; I want to be here because my family and friends live here.

Else (70): Home can be in the country I lived at in Africa, and Norway. I feel at home in Norway, but I am an immigrant here.

Eveline (18): The first thing that came to mind was the last country I lived in Africa. Right now, I think about that country as home, but then I also notice that if I had been in that country I would probably have said Norway is my home.

The similarities I see with these three participants is that even though they explained their sense of home in their host country, or one of their host countries, and have a strong place attachment to these nations (Low & Altman, 1992), they still point out their place attachment to Norway. This could be because of their sense of belonging with their families in Norway. Furthermore, it can be argued that the participants express their national identity based on places they have lived in and where their parents are originally from. These places might contribute to their national belonging (see Bond, 2006). Eriksen and Sajjad (2015) point out that the presence of a family that moves across borders will be in two places at once, where a person will always miss someone or a place because they have attachments and a sense of belonging to several places. In this way, it can be understood that they define their national identity within the two nations;

in other words, they have a sense of belonging towards them both (Verdugo & Milne, 2016).

These participants were either born in the host countries or moved abroad at a young age. This might be why they feel at home there, having a lot of childhood memories (Blunt & Dowling, 2022), and even sometimes identify more with the culture they lived in abroad than the Norwegian culture. Else elaborates that she feels at home within the two nations. Thus, she has a cultural identity belonging to her host country since she was born there, perhaps, and to Norwegian culture, which she has integrated herself into (Jensen et al., 2011, p.291). Else (70) also pointed out that her attachment to the host country is also due to some of her family members being born there, additionally working in the same country as missionaries. She stated:

I feel like I am [the host country's nationality]. This is because my roots are in [country], both because the third generation was born there and my grandparents are buried there. (...). So, you can say my roots are buried there.

It seems Else has a national belonging to her host country because she was born there, but also because of the family's history of working as missionaries, and her family members are buried there. Else pointed out that she feels like her nationality is from her host country, which suggests that she sees herself as a member of the community; thus, her national identity might be to the host country (Bond, 2006; Triandafyllydiou, 1998). Ella is also still strongly connected to her host country. When confronted with the statement that it seemed that the country that she had lived within in Africa was special to her, Ella (44) began to cry and said:

I think about that country every day. It has been worse the last couple of years because you go through your life. I would like to be there every day, work there permanently, never live in Norway again, and feel like a stranger.

This shows that the country means a lot to her. Ella feels like a stranger in Norway because she does not fit in with others and might feel she cannot express herself. Thus, she does not consider Norway as her home (Wright, 2015; Salole, 2020). She also stated during the interview that she felt more comfortable in the host country's culture, illustrating her attachment to the country (Antonsich, 2010).

6.2. Home feeling defined objects and material home

As seen in this chapter, the participants define *home* and their sense of home differently. In addition, a few of them describe their sense of home through objects and materials. Two of them were Hedvig and Malin. When I asked them what they thought about when they heard the word home, they elaborated;

Hedvig (24): I think about furniture. It is a little bit strange, but also art that we had in our houses wherever we have lived. Especially the art and the furniture we have had through the years. But it is a painting that we have had for as long as I can remember. When the painting came into place in the house, it brought a home feeling, so it is mainly visual.

Malin (36): It is a house or a mailbox with my name, then one is also sure that the sign on the mailbox will be on for a while.

For Hedvig and Malin, specific objects and materials evoke their sense of home. This aligns with previous research suggesting that individuals need to relocate their sense of belonging to something realistic (Maine et al., 2021). This suggests that they might be longing to find a place to call home, which they have put into their attachments to these certain objects. Youkhana (2015) describes belonging as something personal and routed in the individual's life. With this, she looks at individual attachments to, for example, things (as objects) they meet in everyday life (Youkhana, 2015; see also Halse, 2018). Malin and Hedvig's sense of home and belonging are "achieved" by their attachments to

the objects as described by living with them in their everyday life (Youkhana, 2015). These objects give them a sense of home because of their memories of their life experiences, either by seeing the photographs or looking back on the memories with the furniture (Blunt & Dowling, 2022, p.310).

When I asked Malin if she had any pictures or illustrations that show her definition of home, she said she would likely choose a picture of the mailbox, stating: "The mailbox is a symbol of something permanent". Malin seems to view certain objects as indicators of long-term residence, perhaps resulting from her highly mobile childhood experiences (see Pollock et al., 2017), showing her need for rootedness (see Eidse & Sichel, 2004). Malin expressed her current living situation, explaining that she was used to living in a suitcase; thus, she felt excited about moving into a new house. In Hedvig's description of home as materialistic, it seems that furniture imbues her with a sense of belonging due to her longstanding familiarity with it, having been surrounded by the same materials throughout her childhood, but also adulthood. Furniture can give a feeling of homeyness when people have "lived with them", rather than the furniture being merely a superficial fashion statement (Blunt & Dowling, 2022, p.107). Hedvig (24) further describes that:

It helps to have things that you appreciate, like material things. I had a pillow that I had in the house in Norway when I moved abroad, and I took it with me when I studied abroad, as well as taking it with me to Norway again.

In every place Hedvig has lived, she has taken the same material things with her, and the furniture is seemingly important to her for having a sense of belonging in the places she has lived. This was also shown when asked if she had any photos illustrating her sense of home. Hedvig mentioned she did not have it with her, but she knows there are pictures of her in the first country she lived abroad, explaining:

In the pictures, you can see the same furniture I have talked about, as well as it is a picture of me where I am painting. My feeling of home is shown through these photographs because I am surrounded by familiar things.

For Hedvig, these pictures illustrate her sense of home since she is surrounded by familiar furniture from her childhood, regardless of where she has lived throughout her life.

6.3. Sense of home through senses

Some participants also elaborated on their sense of home through their senses, such as smells, views, and food. When I asked them if anything else came to mind when they thought about home, Sara, Malin, Jakob, and Åge elaborated:

Jakob (22): In Africa, what also can feel a little like home is the smell of burnt garbage, it is an awful smell (laughter), but I get a nostalgic feeling. As well as the smell of wet asphalt, which has been there for a while, the smell is also very good.

Malin (36): The smell of spices is pretty close to being home when I think about smell versus home, as well as the perfume my mom used to use.

Sara (29): I get a home feeling with sheep smell. When we touch down at the airport in East Asia it stinks of sheep, it is like "welcome home". I knit with such untreated yarn, which gives the smell of an airport in East Asia.

Åge (44): I have two strong feelings about home when it comes to senses. The first one is when I see the mountains where I lived in Norway as a child, that is an "I am coming home feeling". The second is when I am on vacation in Africa, then it is the smell and the heat when I come out of the airport that hits me. It is a feeling of being at home.

These participants seemingly get a sense of home when they think about the memories that they have of these certain smells because they probably have been surrounded by them throughout their childhood. Hence, these smells remind them of home. According to Blunt and Dowling (2022), home can be experienced through senses, such as smell, as described here by the participants. Åge mentioned that his sense of home evokes viewing a certain landscape in Norway, additionally to a certain smell in Africa. However, Åge also expressed that it was challenging to get a sense of belonging because of the highly mobile lifestyle (see 5.1.), and that he feels at home in one of the cities where he grew up in Norway (see 6.1.1). Thus, even though he had challenges with his sense of belonging as a child, he feels at home in both Norway and Africa due to his feelings of home evoked by his senses today. Sou and Webber (2023) stated that: "the senses are integral to how humans perceive and experience places" (Sou & Webber, 2023, p.950). This suggests that Åge's sense of home is because of the senses he associates with the mentioned places. Ben-Ze'ev (2004) stated in her study with refugees that: "taste, smells, plants, and foods are anchors or memory, invoking a much wider context for the refugee" (Ben-Ze'ev, 2004, cited in Taylor, 2015, p.89). This suggests that the participants' childhood memories of certain smells could bring a sense of home or evoke something they miss.

Else (70) mentioned that, "The mimosa flower makes me happy; it reminds me of [country]", showing that a smell or taste can be remembered for decades later (see also Taylor, 2015). Else's pleasant feeling of seeing a particular flower reminds her of the nation she has a sense of belonging and roots in, as mentioned in 6.1.3. She also further explained her sense of home evoked when she traveled back to her host country:

We were in [country] in the 1980s. When I got off the plane, a strange feeling came; I felt I was home. It was wonderful hearing the language. It was like 35 years of my life had disappeared.

Her sense of home was evoked after hearing the language and being in the same country in which she has roots again. It seems that Else met something she longed for, something she has lost, and after decades in Norway, she still has memories of things as they were (see Taylor, 2015). Another sense that evokes a sense of home for the participants is food. Even though most described it as something they missed, Anja (18) elaborated more on a tradition with food that evokes a sense of home for her, explaining:

During Christmas time, we always eat turkey because when we lived abroad, we did not have access to cod, ribs, or lamb ribs. We have maintained this tradition every year since, so it brings a home feeling.

Anja's sense of home is evoked through a tradition the family has had since her childhood years abroad. Anja gets a sense of home since the family has maintained the tradition of eating turkey as Christmas food (see Taylor, 2015). Although these participants elaborate a positive memory with senses that evoke a sense of home, Ella (44) described a challenging experience associated with a scent:

I received a gift from a friend, and it was a set of soaps. When I smelled one of them, I could not stand the scent. It was very clean, but it brought back negative memories of the [country]. I could not stand it, but I am not sure what it reminded me of.

It seems that Ella has negative associations with a specific place triggered by a particular smell (c.f. Sou & Webber, 2023). Moreover, Ella also described that she could not stand the scent of diesel because it reminded her of the cars in the host country. By this, it can

be argued that even though Ella has a strong attachment to the host country, as elaborated in 6.1.3., she seems to have some negative experiences that she is unaware of. It can also be argued that these scents evoke a specific memory associated with a place or scenario. Thus, she has a negative association with that scent.

6.4. Chapter Summary

The data materials show that the participants express multiple ways of belonging and a sense of home. At the same time, home has been described through dwellings, nations, objects, and materiality. Additionally, the sense of home has been described as evoked through their senses, such as smells and views. In other words, there is not just one definition of where home is for them. Whereas home for some participants has been easy to elaborate on, others have found it challenging, arguably because they do not feel belonging or attachment to any place. In contrast, others feel that they belong to many places. Those who do not belong to any place or are struggling with defining home might find belonging to their families and friends, as will be elaborated on in the next analysis chapter.

7.0. Home associated with social bonds

The data shows the importance of relationships and social bonds the participants' had through friendships and family. This was especially visible when it comes to how it has been impacting their sense of belonging and their definition of *home*. To get a better understanding of the participants' sense of belonging and where they feel "at home", I will explore the impact of their relationships in this chapter. First, I will explore their relationships with their nuclear family and look at how it has evolved after living abroad, then I will look at the participant's relational belonging, which was mainly about the friend group. In this chapter, I will look at the research question: *how much do friendship and family relations impact where TCK feels at home?*

7.1. Social bonds with friends before moving abroad and how the friendships evolved

In this chapter, I will look at the participants' social bonds with friends to better understand how their cross-cultural and mobile childhood has influenced their sense of home and belonging. This is because friendship was a repetitive theme during fieldwork. As mentioned, some participants were born and raised in Norway during some of their childhood, thus having memories of their friendships before moving abroad. One of them was Brita (20), stating: "I remember my best friend from kindergarten, and I thought it was very sad that I had to leave". Brita expressed sorrow when leaving her best friend from kindergarten because it was a relationship she valued and had meaning for her (Bruhn & Gonzales, 2023). She also expressed that this friendship was reinvigorated when she returned to Norway. Even though it was a different dynamic since she was a teenager and not a toddler, it was nice for her to reconnect with a familiar face. Brita has a trusting relationships with this friendship because this person has meant something to her in her childhood (Fattore et al., 2017; Cuervo & Wyn, 2014).

Anja (18) also mentioned that she had friendships through kindergarten in Norway. Even though she has brief memories of her childhood in Norway before moving abroad at five years old, she remembered her friendships. When I asked her if she had any essential relationships in Norway before moving abroad, she said: "Yes, I had two girlfriends in kindergarten that I was pretty close with, as well as a girlfriend from the neighborhood with whom I had pretty good contact". Anja described these friendships as a previous friendship, stating that they did not keep in touch with each other. When I asked her if she had maintained these relationships, she replied:

I did not maintain contact with the girls in kindergarten. It may not be so strange because we lived in a different place when I moved back to Norway. There was one who lived in the neighborhood I had some contact with or not that much, but we met once in a while. It was cozy and nice that there was someone you had contact with before you moved out, that you had, in a way, a connection to Norway.

Returning to Norway, Anja did not return to a familiar neighborhood and a familiar place, which indicates that she had to handle even more new experiences after having a high-mobility life with moving (Useem & Downie, 2011), making it difficult to maintain her friendships. She also indicated that her connections with her friend in Norway were also, in a way, a national attachment she had to Norway (as mentioned in 6.1.3.). Astrid (31) also explained that it was difficult for her to maintain her relationships. Before moving abroad, she had two close friends who were important to her. When I asked her how it was for her to return to Norway, she answered:

One of my friends, we did not have the same interests, we had grown up differently. I moved during primary school and came back to secondary school, it was the same school and the same class with everyone, but they made new groups of friends.

Astrid's friendships at school changed due to the years she lived abroad, from when she lived in Norway to when she returned to Norway, as Astrid and her friends had changed. This could be because Astrid has a different cultural view (Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015) since she grew up in a different society. Additionally, it could be that her identity has changed since identity is linked to a societal level (Hengst, 2009). Therefore, she also has different interests than her friend from early childhood. Astrid's experience with her early childhood friendship is quite similar to Anja's experiences. It is not that unusual to grow apart from friendships after living abroad for many years due to living differently and having different childhoods, but also because individuals change. Similarly Lijadi and Van Schalwyk (2014) study showed that there were many of their participants' who did not maintained their friendship because of the distance, but also because they have grown apart from these friendships (Lijadi & Van Schalwyk, 2014, p.13).

Even though a few participants did not maintain their friendships in Norway while living abroad, others did, such as Sara (29). She moved abroad at thirteen, stating: "I had two friends [before I moved], who I am still friends with today. They are my closest friends". She expressed that she is social and likes to spend time with friends. Sara further elaborated on how it was possible to keep in touch while she was living abroad:

I had three friends, two from kindergarten with whom we are still in touch today. We sent letters to each other. Now I felt very old, but at that time, we sent letters (laughter). I remember I got milk chocolate sent in the mail it was a highlight. And I have also been..., we have not seen each other every day, but when we do see each other, it's like there have not been any days between.

Sara managed to maintain her friendships from kindergarten in Norway while living abroad because of their communication through letters. However, it can be stressful and overwhelming to maintain friendships in another country for TCK, as confirmed by previous research (Pollock et al., 2017). Additionally, it was important for her to receive a Norwegian product such as chocolate since that could be something she missed while living abroad, a product that reminded her of Norway, a reminder of her "home." Maria (24) also maintained her relationship with one of her friends through letters and social media, even though it was hard to keep in touch because of the distance. When I asked her if she remembered any of her friendships in Norway, she answered:

I have always had some older friends, I do not remember anyone from my class. I had a friend group, we were six to seven [...], and then when we moved abroad, they went to school. And I had contact with one of them but not the others. Also, eventually, that relationship just died out because you make new friends and things like that.

Friendships are not binding but voluntary (Fattore et al., 2017). Thus, it might be natural that friendships end when someone moves. Maria's experience confirms previous research with TCK that it can be challenging to sustain friendships, even though social media in modern days can be "easier" maintaining friendships (Pollock et al., 2017, pp. 196-197). Theodor (17) specified his focus on making new friends abroad. He now lives abroad with his family due to his father's work in Asia. Although he was not born in Norway, he spent six of his childhood years in Norway. After living in Norway for a while, he and his family moved abroad when he was eleven. When I asked him about his friendships in Norway, he mentioned:

I had some friends, maybe three or four friends I was quite close to, I also knew most of the people in the class and such, but there were a few, we went to swimming training together for example. We also had some similar interests in sports and subjects and then, there were quite strong relationships.

It seems that these strong relationships were established by relatedness; hence, it can be understood that Theodor had attachments to these relationships (Wright, 2015) since

he related with them because of the same interests in sports. When I further asked him if he had maintained these friendships, he answered:

No, not really, I felt after we moved abroad when I started in 6th grade in [country], I spent a lot of time making new friends and learning English so I could talk to new friends. Therefore, I kind of did not have the time or energy to maintain my old friendships.

Even though Theodor had a strong friendship from early childhood, it seems it was time-consuming to maintain these friendships since he was living in another country than them. This suggests that it is difficult to sustain relationships across borders when he has a new school, a new language, and new friendships to make (see also Pollock et al., 2017; Lijadi & Van Schalwyk, 2014).

7.2. Stronger relation with the nuclear family during/after living abroad

Many participants described having good relationships with their nuclear family and extended relatives before moving abroad. However, most participants' relationships with their extended family changed since they moved abroad. Hedvig (24) elaborated: "with cousins, we have grown apart in a way, because it has been a bit like that now, you move abroad, etc., therefore we only see each other a couple times a year". Hedvig does not have the same sense of belonging to her cousins as she did when she was younger because they have lived far away from each other for a long time. Being abroad prevented her the time to get the same emotional attachment to her extended family (Antonsich, 2010). Although Hedvig, like most participants, Hedvig grew apart from extended relatives, the data show that most participants' relationships with their nuclear family have strengthened. This might not be "unusual", considering that they have spent their childhood years abroad primarily with their nuclear family, without extended relatives in the same country. This can be shown through Eveline's and Anja's experiences. When I asked them if their relationship with their nuclear family had changed after living abroad, they said:

Eveline (18): I think maybe I have a better relationship with them now because I remember when we lived in Norway, both of my parents had jobs, therefore there were not many hours we saw each other during the day. When we moved to Africa it was, like the first move, I noticed my dad was home because my mom worked at the embassy. Then I noticed that there was more time with the family. When you move to a new country with your family, you have to stick together a bit. Therefore, I think I have come closer to them because we lived abroad.

Anja (18): Yes, they are very important, especially mum and dad. Mum did not work for a while when we moved back to Norway. She was always home after school. Therefore, I could tell her everything that had happened at school, which helped a lot. It was a very close relationship.

Both Eveline and Anja explain that they got more time together with one of their parents because they did not work. This suggests that they felt safer and got more of an emotional attachment to their family since they spent more time together with one of their parents (Yuval-Davis, 2006; Wright, 2015), which probably has also made their relationships closer. Furthermore, the participants think they have a closer relationship with their nuclear family because they share the same life experiences. Anja and Theodor explained:

Anja (18): I think you get an even stronger bond when you have, in a way, lived abroad because everyone understands or has gone through the same situation then. Therefore, everyone [in my family] understands when you say something. Because not everyone understands when you say something when you have not gone through it yourself. It is very nice to have safe supporters who help you.

Theodor (17): In recent years, we have had to experience the same challenges [...] you get to know each other a little better and can look back on it later and can and somehow, I do not know how to say it, you have the same experiences with difficult things. Then you have a slightly tighter bond.

In Useem and Downie's (2011) research with TCK, 90% of the children felt emotionally attached to their parents due to the high mobility of moving every two or three years (Useem & Downie, 2011, p.20). This finding resonates with Anja's and Theodor's descriptions that their families share the same understanding of what they have gotten through by living abroad. In this sense, both Anja and Theodor have a sense of belonging to their family as sharing the same life experiences has brought them closer to their nuclear family (Useem & Downie, 2011; Wright, 2015).

That Anja and Theodor, as well as others in this research, mentioned they got closer to their nuclear family might also be because their family was the only one they had continuous relations with (Useem & Downie, 2011; Wu & Koolash, 2011). This could be due to their highly mobile life (see Pollock et al., 2017); their friendships might not be as long-lasting as their family relations. When I asked Theodor (17) what he meant by the same experiences and if he had some examples, he described it as:

Out on the street, you do not understand things, besides each other and that we can help each other. Order food or get in at a museum. Those things, like being in quarantine together. Then you are sitting close to each other, you have things to talk about with each other and look back at it.

Arguably, Theodor feels that the nuclear family has become closer because they are doing stuff together in an unfamiliar country where they only understand each other. Useem and Downie (2011) point out that previous research has shown that TCK are more emotionally attached to their parents not only because they share the challenges in an unfamiliar country but also because they support each other. This was something Noah (13) elaborated on when I asked him about his relationship with his nuclear family:

The relationship with the family is very similar to when I lived in Norway, but I think it has gotten a little better over time because I have not had other people to speak the same language with. I speak English at school, and when I come home, I speak Norwegian.

Noah feels more related to his nuclear family because the language barrier has bound them together. This is probably because he can express himself more in his main language, Norwegian, which he can do with his nuclear family (see also Antonsich, 2010).

7.3. Relational belonging and attachment

To construct a better understanding of the participant's description of home as relational, I explore their sense of belonging through relations. Most participants reflected on relations when they talked about their sense of belonging. One of them was Brita (20). When I asked her what she thought of when I said the word *belonging*, she answered:

The first thing that comes to my mind is my small group of friends because I feel that somehow, we are a little together wherever we are. It sounds a bit cliché. They have moved now, but we are still a group, and we understand each other and have a good relationship, therefore I do belong to that group. I also belong to my family, therefore belonging is people.

Brita's sense of belonging is tied to people. Even though she does not currently live in the same country as her friends, she still feels a sense of belonging to them. This group of friends came from different cultures, supporting earlier findings that mentioned TCK often make friendships with those with the same life experiences (see also Pollock et al., 2017). Additionally, Brita expresses her sense of belonging to her family. This could be connected to the findings mentioned earlier, such as being raised within the same culture

and sharing the same experiences of high mobility (see also Useem and Downie, 2011). Astrid (31), also mentioned her sense of belonging to people:

I think it is probably important for me to have friends where I can be myself completely. I carry with me several other cultures which are difficult for many others to understand, I am a bit different. I connect very well with other people from other cultures, it is a bit weird. That is why I am good friends with another one who is also a missionary child.

Like Brita, Astrid has relational belonging to others with the same cultural experience as her since they probably can understand each other better since they have had the same childhood experience of living a high-mobility life. Astrid seems to establish friendships with those not initially from Norway or has been raised in Norway since she spent some of her childhood and teenage years in another culture. This was also found in Wu and Koolash's (2011) research, where one of their participants found it much easier to establish contact with those from foreign backgrounds (Wu & Koolash, 2011, p.48).

When I asked Jakob (22) if he had any particular places he felt safe in Norway, he answered:

It is the cabin. An old, tired cabin that is very old. It is very quiet there, very nice nature. It is there that I feel at home, especially when Mom and Dad are there. My nuclear family is home to me.

Perchance Jakob feels safe at the cabin for two reasons. The first one is because there is a quiet atmosphere there. After all, it is near nature, where Norwegian cabins are often located (Brusdal, 2006; Gullestad, 1997). The second reason is connected to his sense of belonging to his parents; hence, he feels at home in the cabin because of the relational factor. As Moore (2011) pointed out, she felt at home in places where she was surrounded by people she loved. This also resonates in Jakob's description, as it might be argued that he probably would not feel at home at the cabin if his parents were not there. Like Jakob, Sofie (12) also described her emotional attachment to the cabin. When I asked her if she had any favorite places in Norway or abroad, she answered:

I have two favorite places, one in Norway and one in the second country I lived in. My favorite places in Norway are my family, my dad, my mother, my brother, and my cat. We traveled to a place where we had a cabin because my grandparents had a cabin there. The second place is abroad; where we had to rent a cabin, and we did that with our friends, we got living abroad, which was fun.

Sofie's sense of belonging to these cabins might be because of the memories she shares with her nuclear family and the friends she made while living abroad. In other words, it seems her attachment to the cabins is connected to her intimate and personal attachment to her friends and the nuclear family (Antonsich, 2010). Sofie also described her nuclear family and her pet as her favorite places, which can be argued because she lives with them in the same dwelling in Norway, as she explained during the interview. This indicates that she looks at these relationships as significant to her. Hence, she arguably also mentioned the cabin as one of her favorite places in Norway because of her memories of the place connected to her nuclear family. This can be connected to Chawla (1992), who mentions that people's place attachments are often associated with their family and where they feel secure (Chawla, 1992, p.74). Additionally, the cabin abroad is a meaningful dwelling for Sofie because of the memories of her friends connected to the cabin. Hence, it can be understood that Sofie's sense of belonging to the cabins is because of the places, both in Norway and abroad, but also because these places are connected to individuals with whom she has emotional attachments (see also Moore, 2011; Low & Altman, 1992).

Relational belonging and attachment were also elaborated by a few participants regarding the nannies they had in the host country. Olivia (18) described a close relationship with her nanny because she spent much time with her. The nanny had a central role in Olivia's childhood abroad since she picked her up at the kindergarten,

taught her the local language, and much more. When I asked Olivia if the nanny had a part of her upbringing, she said: "Yes, but it was only in [country]. I remember her very well. She was like a grandmother to me in a way, so I saw her as a family then". Olivia seems to have developed a strong attachment with her nanny due to viewing her as a family member, possibly because of Olivia's time with her. Olivia's sense of belonging to her nanny might be because of the care, value, and safety the nanny provided (Bruhn & Gonzales, 2023). This was shown when I asked Olivia if she felt safe with the nanny, and she said: "Yes, very much. I remember I had a temper tantrum, and she was the only one who managed to calm me down". This indicates that this relationship was meaningful and essential in Olivia's childhood (Halse, 2018). Similarly, Pollock et al. (2017) elaborated on one TCK who expressed that she sought comfort with her nanny when she was sorrowful (Pollock et al., 2017, p.66).

Pollock et al. (2017) mentions that TCK's who have other caregivers, such as nannies, often learn the local language through them (p.65). This was shown through Else (70) who also elaborated on her relational belonging with her nanny. When I asked her how she learned the local language, Else showed me a picture of her nanny and said: "I had a nanny who only spoke [language] to me. She often carried me on her back, and we spent much time together". Like Olivia, Else formed a strong attachment with her nanny and might have relied on her as a caregiver in her early childhood, especially since they spent much time together and learned the local language through her. By this, the nanny became a meaningful person in Else's life (see also Halse, 2018). This was also shown when Else explained that the nanny was the first person she missed when she returned to Norway. Moreover, Else explained that she was sorrowful when she and her family returned to the host country because the nanny had passed away. Both Else and Olivia seem to have a relational attachment to their nannies because they feel a sense of belonging to them because of their emotional attachment to them (Wright, 2015; Antonsich, 2010).

7.4. Home defined as relational

Although it was difficult for some participants to answer questions about *home* and *belonging*, most of them elaborated that their sense of home is through social bonds with either friends or family. One participant who defined home relationally was Linda (45): "Home is when I am with those who I am happy with, those I love. My mother, my children, and my boyfriend". Linda associates' home with an emotional attachment to those she loves, both the family she was born into and the family she has created on her own. In this way, she has a social attachment to these persons that has evolved (Chawla, 1992, p.68). She also mentioned earlier in the interview that home and her sense of safety are strongly connected to her mother because of her trust in her and her siblings (see also Cuervo & Wyn, 2014). Linda might have a stronger relationship with her mother and siblings due to her father being absent in her childhood since he worked a lot during their living situation abroad. Linda (45) also elaborates: "I do not have any places I call home", which could be because of her high mobility life. This supports previous research, documenting that TCK with high mobility often defines their home with relationships rather than geography (Pollock et al., 2017, p.185; see also 6.1.2.). Similarly to Linda, both Knut and Astrid (as the other participants who have created their own families) elaborates that home is defined through their own family they have created when I asked them what they think about when they hear the word home:

Knut (53): Now in adulthood, I think about where my children and wife are. But the first thought about home is the city I grew up in on the west coast of Norway, even though I have not lived there for many years, it is a thought number two. Had we [him and his family] moved to another city..., if the wife and children were there it would be home.

Astrid (31): I think of where my children and husband are right now, but I struggle with it when people ask me; "where are you from?". Home is on the west coast of Norway because here lives the family I have created.

Even though Astrid struggles with answering questions about home, she defines it as where the family she has created is located, which Knut also elaborates on. Astrid and Knut seem to have built social attachments to the family they created; thus, they see them as home in adulthood (see also Chawla, 1992). This was also shown in Taylor's (2015) research, where one of the participants stated that the home was located where the family was, but also that home was her daughter (Taylor, 2015, p.119). In this way, it seems that Knut and Astrid have created a sense of home through meaningful relationships (Blunt & Dowling, 2022). However, Astrid also views her host country as home (see 6.1.3.) and has explained her challenges with belonging to a place (see 6.1.2), which could be the reason she defines home as relational.

Another participant who defines home through relations was Jakob (as has been elaborated in 7.3.). He defined home as relational to his parents. He found his family to be very important individuals in his life. When I asked him further if he thinks his childhood has influenced his home feelings, Jakob (22) said:

I think so, home feeling is mom and dad, but many people connect it to a place, but I can live anywhere. If I must live in another country that is fine too. I think that having grown up abroad has affected the sense of home and belonging away from a place and put in mum and dad and my siblings. That is what home is to me.

Jakob expresses that even though he does not live in the same house as his parents in the present time, he still thinks about them and his siblings as home. In other words, home is relational for him. This can be because of his personal and social attachment to his family (Antonsich, 2010). Also, as partly described earlier, since he has lived with them in a highly mobile life, he might feel a stronger connection to them, influencing his relational sense of home (Pollock et al., 2017). Moreover, they have been the continuity relationships in his childhood (Useem & Downie, 2011). He also pointed out that people often connect home to place, which is not outlandish since most literature associates home with dwellings (e.g., Blunt & Dowling, 2022). Additionally, it is common for Norwegians to associate home with a household (Gullestad, 1984). He said: "I think if I had a childhood in Norway since birth, in the same city, I think it would have been home for me". In other words, if he had not had a high-mobile life, where he moved abroad with his nuclear family, he thinks he would have another place attachment and a geographical sense of home than he has now due to his childhood experiences. In this way, he would probably have a more place attachment to his childhood home in Norway because he probably would be more rooted in one place (Eidse & Sichel, 2004).

Brita (20) also defined home relationally: "It is a cliché, but it is them [nuclear family] who are home for me" (cf. Pollock et al., 2017). During the interview, she also emphasized the places she or her parents have lived when I asked her what she thought about when she heard the word *home*:

I think in a way of the house where I live now in Norway, but then comes to the image of..., or visually I imagine the house here. I also imagine the house in Africa and the house in the first country I lived in. But if I have to think about home, it will be where my parents are, then it will quickly become the house in America because I was there a lot with them. Therefore, in a way, home is where the room is, but I also think, there has been a lot of thinking about the theme in recent years. But I do not feel at home anywhere (...). And in a way home is nowhere or everywhere, it depends on how I feel that day. I think cliché as it is, home is with the people with whom I sort of have a good relationship, who are my parents, to a certain extent my brother, and two or three of my best friends.

Brita first expressed that she finds it difficult to pinpoint where she feels belonging despite having thought about it much in recent years. This can be because she is now an

ATCK, but she also has the need to belong more now than when she was a child; in other words, she seeks her roots (see Eidse & Sichel, 2004). She seemingly visualizes the houses and the rooms she has had in the houses she has lived in with her parents. This is a common Norwegian thing to do, where home is often associated with a house (Gullestad, 1984). Hence, in her common sense, she might think that home must be associated with a house or a place. According to Blunt and Dowling (2022);

transnational homes are a site of memory that can be understood as embodied, affective, and sensory spaces within both personal and inherited connections to other remembered or imagined homes that are enacted and reworked (Blunt & Dowling, 2022, p.254).

Connecting Blunt and Dowling's (2022) allegation to Brita's description of 'home', she arguably has a connection to the transnational homes due to her memory, hence she can have a belonging to the visuality of her previous homes. However, she seems to visualize these transnational homes because of her relational belonging to her parents and brother (cf. Moore 2011). Brita also mentioned that home for her can be nowhere and everywhere. This suggests that she does not have a certain place attachment or a place she refers to as home since she has attachments to several places (Pollock et al., 2017, p.188). However, when she thinks about the question, she ends up answering that home is defined through relations. Although she finds it challenging to answer questions about her sense of home, she concludes that home is found in her relations (e.g., Pollock et al., 2017).

Theodor (17) first elaborated on home: "Home for me is where I live now, I feel at home here". Since he lives abroad with his parents due to his father's work, the home might be in the dwelling he currently lives in because he is surrounded by his family (cf. Moore, 2011). When I asked him to elaborate more, he said: "I think mostly about relations, especially where my family and friends are; that is why I think home is here." This shows that he defines home relationally and that he finds a sense of belonging with others with the same life experiences (cf. Pollock et al., 2017). Anja (18) also first defines home through relations, explaining that "it is my family that is my home or at my grandparents', but home is where my family is". However, she also says she has different homes, stating:

I will say I have several homes if that makes sense. One of them is in the last country I lived abroad with my parents for the last four years of my school days, and because of that, I built strong relationships there. Therefore, I would say I have a strong feeling for that country and Norway because my family is there now. It is like, you have a lot of different homes then. I cannot define it as a place and if I were to do it, I would define it to where my nuclear family is.

Anja describes several homes because of the memories she has of these places. This was something previous research has found out as well, that migrants have attachments to multiple places, and therefore, home is shaped by those memories (Blunt & Dowling, 2022, p.269). As Eidse and Sichel (2004) mention, TCK has shifting definitions of home. Connecting this to Anja, it can be argued that she shifts her definitions of home due to her memories. Anja's experience is similar to Sofie's, as stated earlier in 6.1.1, with multi-sited belonging. This suggests that Anja has a place attachment through her memories of these dwellings from her childhood. Therefore, she defines home in several ways (Maine et al., 2021). However, these attachments to her description of 'home' seem to be because of her sense of belonging to social bonds. Anja also expresses that she cannot define home as a place, indicating that she has no place attachments. Therefore, she defines home as where her nuclear family is. This could be because of her strong relationships with them because of the high mobility childhood experience, as previous research has stated (see Useem & Downie, 2011). However, Anja also stated further that she felt at home in the international community:

Since I do not have a strong connection to Norway, I feel that it was more of a "coming home feeling" for me when I returned to the international environment than it was to return to Norway from [country]. I got a strong attachment to the city in the last country I lived in. I felt I could be myself and I did not need to hide who I am. I could be normal and fit in with all the others.

Anja's sense of home can be viewed as relational since she first described it with her nuclear family and then with the international community (cf. Pollock et al., 2017). It can be argued that Anja's sense of belonging to the international community is because of her lack of belonging to Norway additionally, she did not develop a rootedness in Norway as a child due to her childhood abroad, as she expressed in 5.1. Hage (1997) mentions that a community means that people live among others whom they can recognize themselves (Hage, 1997, cited in Taylor, 2015, p.121). This can also suggest that Anja has found a community where she has been accepted by others and thus has a sense of belonging to the international community (cf. Taylor, 2015).

When I asked Anja further why she had an attachment to the city in the last host country she lived in, she mentioned: "It is because it is where my social network is, and all the memories from the past four to five years are from there. Which has been extremely important in my evolution and where I am now". It seems that Anja feels at home in this city because it is where she has found her identity. Hence, it can be seen that she belongs to this place since identity is strongly tied to belonging (Low & Altman, 1992). As Jensen et al. (2011) pointed out, "Those who do not identify with a cultural community will express confusion with their identity because they are exposed to multiple cultural identities" (Jensen et al., 2011, p.294). This suggests that Anja has found her identity, and thus her belonging (Low & Altman, 1992), within the international community, a multicultural community. It also seems that Anja has found a sense of home and belonging to the international community since she has experienced restlessness and rootlessness, as mentioned in 6.1.2. Similarly, Eveline (18) also explained her definition of home with friends. As previously mentioned in 6.1.1., Eveline first explained that she had a sense of home in the house she grew up in Norway. Moreover, she expressed her sense of home in her last host country (see 6.1.3.). However, Eveline's sense of home shifted when I asked her if she had any pictures she had brought with her. Through her illustrations, Eveline showed a picture of herself and her friend group and said: "Home for me is where my friends are. I think when I am talking about it now is home where my friends are too". In this sense, she has different ways of explaining what home is for her, which are also seen by scholars who mention that migrants have several homes, which can be because of their memories and attachments to more than one place (Blunt & Dowling, 2022, p.269). In other words, Eveline has multiple belongings that her highly mobile childhood has impacted.

7.5. Chapter Summary

This chapter has examined the participants' description of home as relational to their family and friends. The chapter has looked at how their friendships in Norway have evolved and which tools they have used, such as letters, to keep in touch with these friendships. Others have expressed that keeping in touch with friends over borders is time-consuming. The chapter also looked at the participants' closer relationships with their nuclear family because of their shared experiences living abroad in an unfamiliar country. This also has been indicated as the reason they view their family as home. In addition, they do not have any place attachments or are rooted anywhere. Moreover, the data also showed that the participants view friendships as home or as individuals to whom they have an attachment or sense of belonging. This has also been mainly because of their shared childhood experiences by living a highly mobile lifestyle.

8. What happens now, when I am “home”

In this chapter I will present and outline the analysis of the data materials the participants experiences and impacts of returning to Norway after living abroad. This chapter will therefore respond to the following research question: *How does returning to Norway impact TCK's sense of belonging and how they identify themselves?*

8.1. Why are we going back to Norway?

According to Pollock et al. (2003), TCK stands out from immigrants since they return to their “home” country, which in this study is Norway. The data shows that the participants moved back to Norway for different reasons. Some participants elaborated that they returned to Norway because their parents' work contracts were finished. Others said that their siblings had to go to school in Norway, while some participants had to move to Norway to finish school themselves. However, Eveline (18) mentioned it was a personal choice for her to return to Norway:

It was a personal choice. I struggled to decide what I wanted to do after high school, and there was little time to decide. I wanted to study a place where I felt at home, which led me to our old house. I want to live abroad too because Norway is a place I will always return to, and my friends moved to another country. But I noticed I wanted to be home too [in Norway].

Eveline wanted to live in a house where she felt at home and where she felt a place attachment (see 6.1.1), therefore she decided to move to her childhood home in Norway. In this sense, it can be understood that Eveline has an emotional attachment to the house she lived in during her childhood in Norway (Antonsich, 2010), and perhaps she longed for a sense of belonging in one place due to her mobile childhood (see also Pollock et al., 2010). Nevertheless, because of her highly mobile experiences (see also Pollock et al., 2017; Kwon, 2019), Eveline has a multiple sense of home as she feels like she belongs to many places and in multiple ways, as mentioned in 7.4. (cf., Maine et al., 2021). Some participants returned to Norway after their parent’s work contract ended. Brita (20) mentioned that:

I always knew it was four years, but I was very.... In the end, I was quite angry with my father because he no longer had a job and we had to go back home since I did not remember much from Norway (...). I remember that my best friend was also mad at me because I was leaving her, so it was a little tough.

It seems that even though she specified Norway as her home here, Brita was also quite anxious to return since she had few memories of her childhood in Norway. Additionally, it seems that Brita was sorrowful about leaving her best friend abroad, and her best friend was sorrowful that Brita was leaving her, causing her anger towards her father. According to Pollock et al. (2003), TCK has sorrow about losing the world they have been familiar with, and they have concerns about transitions because they must get to know new people and settle into a new place (Pollock et al., 2003, p.184). Brita (20) further explained that she maintained contact with her best friends for five years through email and letters, but the friendship slowly ended because of the distance. She also explained that:

It is normal to have friends that are not permanent, especially in an international school. Typically, people come and go, and friendships are usually two to three years anyway, so you get used to it.

Even though she was used to her highly mobile lifestyle, the transition was hard for her because she felt a sense of belonging to her best friend abroad (Wright, 2015).

8.2. Experiences of returning to Norway

The data materials showed that almost all the participants expressed difficulties returning to Norway. These included reversed culture shock, struggles with the Norwegian language, feelings of difference from their peers, difficulties making new friends, and high expectations towards Norway. Although they elaborated on their experiences with difficulties, a few participants also experienced freedom in Norway. I will look at reversed culture shock first.

8.2.1. Reversed culture shock

Even though some participants elaborated that they got culture shock when they first moved abroad, most of it arose when they *returned* to Norway. The reverse culture shock arose for different reasons, as mentioned above. Most participants specified it was challenging to start over again in Norway, where they had to learn the language, make new friends, etc. Jakob (22), stated:

It was challenging to start over again. After I came back again when I was 14, it was very difficult to make friends. It was secondary school, and I did not quite fit in. I looked weird with my hair (laughter). It was difficult to be a teenager, in a cold culture, it was not easy to fit in unless you dressed properly and played football and stuff, that kind of thing. I found that very difficult. I do not miss that time.

Jakob found it challenging to return to Norway for several reasons. The first one is that he had to start over again and restart the process of making friends and integrating into society. Additionally, he was a teenager when he returned to Norway for the second time. Salole (2020) mentions that:

a person's identity can be challenged when they are moving or have lost something. Changing language and place of home is complicated, which can lead to identity disturbance when a person is exchanging between cultures (Salole, 2020, pp.211-212)⁸.

This suggests that Jakob had an "identity disturbance" when he returned to Norway since he had to start over again. By this, it seems Jakob had to customize himself into society for the second time. In contrast, he had challenges with his identity since he pointed out that he was different, and the culture he moved into was different. This can also be connected to previous research on TCK, which highlighted that their national identity is being challenged when returning to their passport country (Fail et al., 2004). Jakob expresses that the Norwegian culture was "a cold culture" in his experience since he might have had some of this upbringing in a culture where the society was more open. Similar to Jakob's expressions of Norwegian culture, another study about immigrants in Norway by Villarroel (2013) shows that some of her participants explained Norwegian society as cold and that they experienced challenges getting to know individuals (Villarroel, 2013, p.57). Jakob's elaboration on the Norwegian culture suggests that he experienced reverse culture shock since he had to re-adjust and re-adapt to his culture of origin. This might have impacted his cultural identity, as previous research has found (Gaw, 2000). According to Jensen et al. (2011), people who belong to multiple cultures will experience confusion with their identity and need to identify which cultural community they belong to. Connecting this to Jakob, he might also have "identity disturbance" because he was confused as to which culture he felt he belonged to.

Sara (29) explained her culture shock when she returned to Norway:

It is a bigger shock to come home than when you move abroad. When you move abroad you are prepared for it, because everything is so different. But when you come, you are coming home. You are

⁸ Translated from Norwegian.

kind of prepared for things to be different, but at the same time you are not prepared, because you are thinking you are going home. It was easier coming home when I was 20 than when I was thirteen years old.

Sara experienced a bigger culture shock in Norway than abroad because she had expectations that she was going home. It can also be argued that her reverse culture shock was associated with her age and identity since she expressed that it was more challenging returning to Norway as a teenager than as an adult. Sara further explained that she was a different person since she had different values. However, she also pointed out that the people she met were also different in the way they dressed. It seems that Sara found it challenging not to be accepted by others due to the different fashion elements in Norway. It has been pointed out that TCK might have experienced more problems moving to their passport country than moving into their host countries. This is because they expect to be foreign in their host country, but when they move into the passport country, they see themselves as a member of the community (Pollock et al., 2017, p.73). This suggests that Jakob and Sara probably thought it would be uncomplicated to return to their passport country since they are Norwegians and would be accepted as they are. In other words, they did not expect the need to re-adjust and re-adapt themselves to their culture (see Gaw, 2000). Previous research has shown that adolescents show stronger attachments to their community after they receive acceptance from community members (Chawla, 1992). This suggests that Jakob and Sara's reverse culture shock experiences might have influenced their attachment to the community, as well as having questions about their identity.

Brita and Knut elaborated on reverse culture shock and unfamiliarity. When I asked them how it was for them to return to Norway, they said:

Brita (20): I think that I thought it was quite scary but especially very strange and a little unfamiliar. It is a small detail, but we built the apartment when we were living abroad. Even though it was the same house, the same garden, and the same neighbors, there was a new interior. My room was not in the same place, and the sofa was in a different place. Therefore, it added a bit of confusion, and it was more distant in a way. It was not a feeling of coming home again but a feeling of moving again.

Knut (53): it was strange returning to Norway because it was not warm in Norway. In [country] it was brutally hot (...). People drove on the wrong side of the road, and there was no one to be seen. When I traveled abroad, 100 Norwegian kroner was a lot, so when I took the bus for the first time in Norway I said: "Sorry but I do not have less than this", then the bus driver looked at me strangely (laughter). In those five years, 100 Norwegian Kroner were worth much less, and I was also five years older.

Although Brita and Knut elaborate on two different experiences with unfamiliarity, they both return to Norway meeting unexpected things. Reversed culture shock is "the process of readjusting, recalculating and reassimilating into one's own home culture after living in a different culture for a significant of time" (Gaw, 2000, pp.83-84). According to Gaw (2000), individuals experience reversed culture shock because they expect things will be permanent and that nothing has changed (Gaw, 2000, p.86). Brita was moving into unfamiliarity with the fact that her room was not in the same place as before, while Knut had to readjust and reassimilate himself, getting knowledge that things had changed in the last five years. Pollock et al. (2003) define TCK as "hidden immigrants" in their home country. They have looked at TCK's experiences returning to their home country. The concept was established because TCK expressed their expectations of being the same as those in their passport country. This is because they think that they look the same and think the same as individuals in their home country (pp.184-185).

8.2.1 High expectations

The word "different" was a repetitive word throughout the data materials because the participants felt different from Norwegians. Additionally, they elaborated on their high expectations towards Norway. It can be argued that the participant's high expectations were an experience of reversed culture shock. Anja, Brita, and Jakob expressed:

Anja (18): I had high expectations of Norway, but then I think I was a bit disappointed when I came to Norway; it was not what I expected at all. It did not quite live up to the expectations then after the idyllic home one had heard much about.

Brita (20): It sounds bad to say, but I was disappointed with Norway when I returned. Because I had idealized it, and things were different. The people had changed, and when I was 15-16 years old, I had more relationships with things, and seeing how the people were, like the government, was a bit sad. All those things were like "Is this the country I have been proud of?" and I came home, and it was just difficult to see that Norway was far from perfect.

Jakob (22): When I returned, it was exciting, and I was happy, but I had a little too high expectations. I was really sad when I got back. I was really upset during that period, but I was 14 years old.

The participant's high expectations were not met when they returned to Norway. Pollock et al. (2017) argue that TCK who travel back and forth between the host country and the passport countries think they know how it is to live in the passport country permanently. Furthermore, they point out that when TCK are in their home countries for a limited time, they start to think that the privileged activities relatives and friends invite them to are normal in their everyday lives (Pollock et al., 2017, p.76). This suggests that the participant's high expectations could be because they imagined a different everyday life than the one they met. Gaw (2000) argues that "returnees who have spent most of their lives abroad have expectations based on what they think home is supposed to be as communicated by others, such as their parents, peers or media" (Gaw, 2000, p.86). Connecting this to Anja's, Brita's, and Jakob's high expectations of Norway, it can be argued that they have their expectations based on what they have heard or seen about Norway. However, these participants have lived in Norway before and between movements towards their host country. It can be argued that they experienced reversed culture shock because they assumed things were the same as before they moved abroad (Gaw, 2000).

Brita (20) further explained that her life in Africa was filled with fear. Hence, she was looking forward to returning to Norway. She explained:

It was good coming back home to Norway after being in a place with terrorism and full of fear. Therefore, getting away from it was nice, but I had idealized Norway. Therefore, it was good coming home again but also disappointing because all my problems were not fixed when I returned to Norway. I was 15 years old, and I had an identity crisis.

Brita's explanation of an experience of fear in Africa might be the reason she had high expectations of Norway. It seems that she was waiting for her fears and experiences in Africa to vanish on her return; however, as she explained, her problems were not fixed. In addition, her high expectations of Norway and those of Jakob and Anja can be associated with questions about who they are as individuals after their cross-cultural childhood since all of them pointed out their ages. Pollock et al. (2017) stated that TCK has questions about who they are and where they belong after their transitions (Pollock et al., 2017, p.75). This suggests that because of their movements, they have questions about their identity. This could be questions about their cultural identity and which culture they should belong to (Jensen et al., 2011). However, it can also be because they are figuring out who they are in that period of life and having experiences of moving between cultures and countries, which also can be a part of them having questions about their attachments and where they should belong.

8.2.2. Why I am different?

As mentioned, the word *different* was repeated throughout the fieldwork. However, this was primarily shown when the participants talked about their experiences in Norway. Anja further elaborated on her experience of fitting in and feeling different. This was something Eveline and Astrid also elaborated on, they said:

Anja (18) It does not sound that big, but when you are young and you feel like you have all these things you want to tell but no one understands, you realize you have had different experiences. If you say different things and they do not understand you have not seen the same childhood TV programs or know the same children's songs, or why you cannot sit in a Norwegian class because you cannot the double consonant, they could for two years ago. Then, you naturally feel it is not easy to adapt to that environment.

Eveline (18): I noticed that I am a little different from those who have lived their whole lives in Norway because I missed a bit of fashion trends and media. I remember coming home for a holiday, and my friends asked me if I had watched "Shame" [a Norwegian TV show for youth], which I had never heard of before.

Astrid (31): I remember when I came home, the style was completely different; I dressed differently from the others. What was popular in [country] was not popular in Norway. I stood out in terms of style for a period. I guess it was a culture shock for a teenager (laughter).

Anja, Eveline, and Astrid explained that they felt different from their peers in Norway because they had different fashion elements. However, they also explained that they felt different because they did not share the same cultural references. Pollock et al. (2003) also looked at this, where they pointed out the term "reflection", referring to when people in TCK's home country see them as themselves because of their same national background (p.185). Similarly, Halse (2018) argues that individuals who appear differently in clothing style are viewed as strange by the majority of the nation. These experiences might impact their sense of belonging. This suggests that Anja, Eveline, and Astrid's experiences of not fitting in because of cultural differences have impacted their sense of belonging. Skjerven's (2006) research found out that one of her participants experienced difficulties being confused and feeling left out due to a lack of common references to children's songs, television programs, or fairytales (Skjerven, 2006, p.53). In addition, Anja elaborated that she probably felt left out because she had to learn the language differently than her peers since she was not at the same level as them, which was seen as strange by her peers. Neither of the children in Norway understood why Anja, Eveline, and Astrid were different from them since they were Norwegians. At the same time, the participants in this research might feel different from their peers because of the non-cultural balance in their passport culture (see Pollock et al., 2017).

Pollock et al. (2017) argue that being in cultural balance means that individuals know who they are regarding the culture they live in and understand how the culture works (Pollock et al., 2017, p.59). This suggests that the participants experienced culture shock and reverse culture shock when encountering unfamiliarity, although they also returned to their parent's passport countries. They experienced reversed culture shock since they had to reassimilate and readjust themselves to their own culture (Gaw, 2000, pp.83–86). All these experiences might have influenced their sense of belonging to Norway and their relations with others, such as their peers. Additionally, their experiences seem to have impacted how they see themselves since identity is connected to belonging and how a person perceives themselves towards others (Salole, 2020). Feeling different than others within the Norwegian community was also shown through Maria and Anja's elaboration:

Maria (24): In international schools, it is common to say how many languages you know, and where you have lived, etc., there is such hunger to find someone who is like you, but in Norway... No one has warned me that you should not ask these questions in Norwegian schools. I went up to others and asked them these questions because that is how I talked to people. One of the individuals in school called me arrogant, but I did not understand what that meant. He said, "You think you are better than all the rest of us". I remember that broke me.

Anja (18): When I came to Norway, I could talk a little about my childhood experiences from living abroad with others, but you notice that there are not that many people who want to hear, or there are not that many people who care. It becomes, in a way, if you tell everything, it can be seen as bragging. That was the impression I got. Therefore, I felt that when I returned to Norway, I had to hide a side of myself; it was as if I had lived another life that no one knew about. You feel like that is something about yourself that no one understands, and then I felt different. Because there was not much openness, I had other experiences.

Arguably, Maria and Anja experienced adversity with other peers because of the Norwegian mindset, which stems from *Janteloven*, the law of Jante. The law of Jante is a code of conduct about how individuals should behave and the attitudes allowed within the community (Vike, 2001; Avant & Knutsen, 1993). *Janteloven* describes ten points of how Norwegians should behave; for example, individuals should not think they are better than others (Avant & Knutsen, 1993). Maria and Anja were seen as arrogant since they wanted to express their experiences and knowledge of living abroad. Their different communication skills might have been seen as arrogant. Their peers or others in the local community might have assumed that Maria and Anja appeared with an attitude that illustrated that they think they are "better" than them. This shows societal behavioral expectations are socially constructed (Montgomery, 2003). The expectations of the peers Maria and Anja met have been constructed by society, influencing how they understand others but also themselves (Burr, 2015). Therefore, the peers viewed them as arrogant. However, in Maria and Anja's reality (see Berger & Luckman, 1967), the Norwegian view of them as being "arrogant" or that they "bragged" is the way they have been used to communicate with others abroad and in the international community. In their constructed reality of the world, this is how they make new friendships (Burr, 2015; Berger & Luckman, 1967).

Anja and Maria might have had cultural balance in the "third culture" (e.g., Pollock et al., 2017; Pollock et al., 2003), where they knew what worked within the international community and might have a sense of belonging to it (see also Pollock et al., 2017). However, they might feel they are out of cultural balance in Norway. Pollock et al. (2017) argue that TCK feels out of cultural balance because of the highly mobile lifestyle they have had many cultural changes. By this, they mean that TCK meets new ways of invisible and visible layers of culture in different and multiple ways (Pollock et al., 2017, p.61). In other words, they are influenced by multiple cultures (Salole, 2020). This suggests that Maria and Anja might have felt misunderstood by their peers since they might not have learned Norwegian culture's visible and invisible layers. Maria and Anja's experiences of being labeled as arrogant might have impacted their sense of belonging since they were being misunderstood, as Anja expressed that she had to hide a part of herself. It seems that Anja had to hide some of her characteristics and parts of her identity. In other words, she felt she could not show her personality to others as she wanted (Salole, 2020).

The data also shows a marked difference when discussing the Norwegian school system. Knut and Linda were born abroad due to their parents' working situation, while Adam was born in Norway but moved abroad at seven. They elaborated:

Knut (53): In high school abroad, there was Mr. and Mrs., and we went by surname, whereas in Norway, it was by first name, at least in the schools I attended. It was a weird experience; it almost felt like cursing in the church using the teachers' first names.

Linda (45): Coming to Norway was like entering another world (laughter). (..). I did get to call teachers by their first names. It was three school days, and we finished school at 2 pm; it was early.

Adam (45): It was strict at the boarding school abroad; therefore, I thought my fellow students did not behave in Norway. They spoke rudely to the teachers, but I understood it was like that. It was a shock the way they spoke to the teachers, but I maintained the behavior I have learned, that you should be polite.

This is similar to Eveline's experience with culture shock abroad, as elaborated in 5.4., where she expressed that the school abroad were more formal than in Norway. Knut, Linda, and Adam's experiences were reversed. They experienced reversed cultural shock in the Norwegian school because it differed from what they were used to (see Gaw, 2000). In other words, their reality of how the school was socially constructed was different abroad than it was in Norway (Burr, 2015; Montgomery, 2003). Hence, the school life they knew was changed; it went from a different respect for the teachers abroad to having a less "formal" relationship with the teachers where they could use the teacher's first names.

8.2.3. Independence and Freedom

Although the participants elaborated on their difficult experiences by returning to Norway, a few also elaborated on the freedom in Norway. Anja, Brita, and Eveline said:

Anja (18): It was another freedom in Norway. I could cycle to school and walk after school. In [country], you were driven to and from school. If you were going to be with friends..., the parents arranged the playdates, where you played for two hours, where the parents were with the children. It was not the same arrangement as in Norway because it was distances there. It was a completely different environment. I think I got greater freedom and independence because I could join people home from school and cycle home from school or after training.

Brita (20): The second time I moved to Norway, I was looking forward to coming to a place where I was a bit freer in a way because in Norway, I could go places when I wanted to. If I wanted to visit someone after school, I could call my mum, and they did not need to come and pick me up by car. Taking the bus to school was also very nice. It was nice having the freedom and security that you kind of take for granted when you have it.

Eveline (18): I feel much safer in the streets of Norway, take a bus or train, and know I will arrive at the destination safely and alone.

Anja, Brita, and Eveline have lived in countries where it was unsafe for children to take transportation alone. They felt more freedom in Norway because their parents were not following them to school or playdates, as Anja experienced. The participants' parents gave them more independence and freedom in Norway. According to Gullestad (2006), Norwegian children are seen as independent because they can care for themselves when their parents need them to be autonomous and have more self-determination than in other societies. In Norwegian society today, children are raised with defined boundaries and are taught to set their own boundaries. It is expected that children are going to be themselves. This is because children's lives in Norwegian society are more institutionalized (see Korsvold, 2021), and they have limited time with their parents. The boundary setting is for the good of the children. The idea is that children need certain boundaries to structure their habits, time, and space in order to develop their potential. Within these limits, they are expected to be free (Gullestad, 2006, p.50). In other words, the participants' experiences of independence and freedom in Norway are influenced by society's view of children and childhood. Their experiences of independence and freedom can also be connected to their sense of belonging since, according to Bruhn and Gonzales (2023), belonging consists of the individual's freedom, agency, and safety (Bruhn & Gonzales, 2023, pp.6-7).

8.3. Moving back abroad by themselves

Many participants explained that they missed the international community when they returned to Norway. This was mainly because they missed others with similar life experiences (see also Pollock et al., 2017). This might be one of the reasons many of the adult participants declared that they moved back abroad by themselves because of work, but most moved abroad because of their studies. Anja (18) said: "I chose to move out

again because I have a stronger attachment to the international community than the Norwegian community". Due to her parents' working choices and her childhood abroad, Anja has built a stronger attachment to the international community and thus chose to move abroad. According to scholars, attachment is not only to a physical place but also to a person's life experiences because people have lived in a movement. With this said, attachments can be seen as something individuals have to other people, but also to their earlier experiences and memories, which are connected to a place (Rapport & Dawson, 1998; Low & Altman, 1992). This suggests that Anja's attachment to the international community is because of her earlier childhood memories of a particular place. She may also be attached to the international community because of her memories of a childhood in movement (see also Rapport & Dawson, 1998). When I asked her if she had any thoughts about why she has more attachment to the international community, she responded:

I think it is because when I moved back to Norway, it was tough. I had difficulty getting into the Norwegian environment because I did not have all these childhood experiences; I had not gone to school with the others from first to seventh grade (.). Whereas when I was in the international community, I was the same as everyone else, being different, because everyone was different, and there was nothing different about me. However, in the Norwegian environment, I was different, and I think, in a way, it was difficult to find a place then.

The international community she refers to is one where people share the same "third culture"; in other words, they have the same highly mobile style, as pointed out earlier (see also Pollock et al., 2017). It seems, as previous research has pointed out (see Pollock et al., 2017), that Anja does not have any belonging to Norway or the host countries she has lived in. In contrast, she has relational belonging to the international community, where she has a sense of belonging to her friends. This means that Anja has found a community of friends where she feels recognized and accepted (Bruhn & Gonsales, 2023) since she does not feel different within the community because everyone is different, as she explained. Since everyone in the international community is from a different culture, they do not have one culture that defines them but has created their own culture, a "third culture". The "third culture" stands for their shared living experiences, in other words, living a cross-culturally and highly mobile lifestyle (Pollock et al., 2017; Bell-Villada & Sichel, 2011). By this, it can be understood that the "third culture" refers to TCK cultural identity since they have a sense of belonging to a cultural group (Jensen et al., 2011; Selmer et al., 2021).

Hedvig (24) has studied abroad in two countries. She expressed that she has moved back and forth between Norway and countries abroad due to her parents' working situation and also individually, which can be because she is used to her highly mobile childhood (see Pollock et al., 2017). Hedvig said that:

I am grateful for my childhood experience, but it has some consequences to my choices. I have not wanted to study or live in Norway because I moved to Norway when I was ten years old and lived there [in Norway] since high school and studies. I do not feel at home in Norway, so I wanted to go back abroad.

Like Anja, Hedvig wanted to live and travel abroad due to her studies because she did not feel at home in Norway. This can be because her parents still live abroad, and she feels a stronger sense of belonging to the international community (see also Bell-Villada & Sichel, 2011). It can also be argued that both Anja and Hedvig decided to move abroad by themselves because they were used to moving due to their parents' work. In this way, it can be understood that their parents work, and that they have lived highly mobile life in their childhood have influenced them to move abroad due to their studies. In this way, it can be understood that Anja and Astrid have an attachment to their childhood

memories which is in movement (see also Pollock et al., 2017, p.190; Rapport & Dawson, 1998). Additionally, because of their understanding and appreciation of different cultures (Selmer et al., 2021, p.335). In other words, it can be viewed that their decision to live abroad is also cultural inheritance. Hedvig (24) further said that she struggled for a long time to know in which country she was going to study:

I will be more of an outsider in Norway than in [country] because everyone comes from different places. Everyone has different backgrounds; this was many years ago; it was my thoughts as a 16-17-year-old. I probably do not think the same now, but that is what I thought then. It was strange to be with people who knew each other from before and went to the same school and kindergarten; therefore, I thought it was not the right decision for me, but that is how I saw it then.

Since Hedvig felt like a stranger in Norway, she did not feel at home there as a teenager. Hedvig (24) further specified she had attachments to the country she studied: "I feel I can be myself there". Even though she felt different from the Norwegians as a teenager, she still has an attachment to the country she studied abroad. Both Anja and Hedvig seem to have attachments and a sense of belonging to the international community or the place they studied because they felt they did not fit in Norway. Additionally, their highly mobile childhood and upbringing abroad might have made their decision to study abroad easier (Selmer et al., 2021, p.332). Their decision to study abroad can also be connected to their collective identities, such as their belonging to a group (Vignoles et al., 2011). This can be understood because of their attachments to the people in the international community, as well as others who have the same shared mobile childhood (Bell-Villada & Sichel, 2011).

8.4. Chapter Summary

In this chapter, I have looked at the participants' experiences when they returned to Norway. They experienced reversed culture shock, having high expectations of Norway that were unmet, leading to feelings of being different from people in the Norwegian community. The participants felt different in Norway because of how others looked at them as foreign and how they appeared; thus, they had experiences of being hidden immigrants (e.g., Pollock et al., 2003). This impacted their sense of belonging in Norway and their identity. Their mentality of feeling like hidden immigrants in Norway might impact their definition of home; perhaps this is why most of them elaborate that home is relational (see chapter 7.4.) and that they feel rootedness and restlessness (see chapter 6.1.2.). Some participants have moved abroad again because of work or studies, driven by feelings of being different from Norwegians and a stronger attachment to the international community. All of their experiences in Norway, which have been looked at in this chapter, have made some choose to move back to the international community, where they met people who shared the same mobile childhood experiences.

9. Concluding Remarks

This thesis aimed to explore where those who have had a cross-cultural childhood due to their parents' work feel at home and where they have a sense of belonging. This has been explored through three research questions. The first one was: *Which experiences does TCK have with moving abroad and having a highly mobile lifestyle? How has living a highly mobile childhood impacted TCK's identity and sense of belonging?* The second one was divided into two chapters looking at: *When does a place feel like "home" for TCK? How much do friendship and family relations impact where TCK feels at home?* Lastly: *How does returning to Norway impact TCK's sense of belonging and how they identify themselves?* The findings of these research questions will be summarized into three sections. While these questions are distinct, they are also interconnected since the primary focus of the thesis was to examine how participants' cross-cultural childhood has influenced their sense of home and where they feel at home.

9.1. Summarizing the findings

Although I have done research with both children and adults, I have tried to construct knowledge about the impacts of their cross-cultural childhood through their memories and life experiences across age differences. In other words, the participants have expressed how their childhood has impacted their current lives and the children have expressed their current childhood. Thus, the adults in this research have reflected on their childhood experiences retrospectively.

9.1.1. Living a highly mobile childhood

My thesis first explored: *Which experiences does TCK have with moving abroad and having a highly mobile lifestyle? How has living a highly mobile childhood impacted TCK's identity and sense of belonging?* Although I investigated all the participants' memories and childhood experiences individually, my findings indicate that their cross-cultural childhoods due to their parents' work led them to live a highly mobile lifestyle. This lifestyle has also impacted their identity, sense of home, and sense of belonging. In this sense, they have been influenced by their host country and passport country, as well as the "third culture", the interstitial culture, as Useem has pointed out (see Pollock et al., 2017). Hence, this research indicates that multiple cultures have shaped the participant's experiences during their childhood. Therefore, it can be important to note that there is no universal truth regarding their childhood experiences; instead, their childhood can be viewed as influenced by high mobility (Montgomery, 2003).

My findings indicate that moving and living in an unfamiliar environment as a child has had several impacts on the participants' childhood, such as how they identify themselves and their definition of home. Moreover, my research reveals that despite diverse childhood experiences abroad and living in various countries, the participants have had shared childhood experiences. Most participants found it challenging to move abroad due to leaving familiar lives and friends in Norway. It has also been shown that moving abroad for the second time was as challenging as the first time they experienced moving abroad. The findings also indicate that most participants found it challenging to learn a new language since it was unfamiliar, even though a few expressed that it was easy or that they could learn the language quicker because of their age. Another aspect that was challenging when it comes to language was learning three languages at once. Most of the participants' childhood experiences abroad differed based on factors like their school. For example, those who went to boarding school struggled with their sense of belonging to their parents, which also influenced them to become more independent. It has also been pointed out that different cultural shocks arose at the school, which were caused by

strictness and formality, as well as the environment and buildings of the school. The culture shock was also experienced within the local community, as it was unfamiliar how the local people reacted to different behaviors and childhood due to their differences in the construction of childhood. Additionally, it interfered with their experiences of viewing poverty, as the example given. However, my findings also indicate that living within different cultures and experiencing culture shock have impacted and constructed the participant's worldviews. Moreover, the participants found it easy to make friendships abroad, mainly due to the same childhood experiences. In other words, they mainly made friends with other TCK abroad because they live within the same "third culture" community and have interacted with each other due to the influence of their parent's work. Additionally, most went to international schools with other children who lived abroad due to their parent's work, making friendships easier with those who were similar. Others made friends through activities at school, which made it easier when they did not speak the same language.

9.1.2. When home is nowhere and everywhere

Secondly, my thesis explored: *When does a place feel like "home" for TCK?* My findings indicate that the participants have multiple definitions of home and a sense of belonging, influenced by their highly mobile lifestyle and cross-cultural childhood. Home has been defined through specific locations, places, and dwellings, such as where they had some of their upbringing in Norway. Other participants define home with specific dwellings, finding comfort and familiarity in the dwellings they formed an attachment to during their childhood, such as their grandparents' homes and cabins. These place attachments have been described as being influenced by their mobile and cross-cultural childhood; therefore, they have not had a permanent home. Hence, they look at other dwellings they themselves have not lived in as homes and favorite places.

The participants' description of 'home' has also been shown to be associated with nations; some feel they belong to Norway, while others feel they belong to their host countries. My findings show that there are several reasons for their national identity and belonging to Norway and their host countries, such as their attachments due to social relationships, that they were born in the country, as well as their experiences in either their host country or Norway, which have made their attachments to the opposite country stronger. A few participants also defined home with materiality, such as the examples shown through a mailbox and furniture, which I interpreted as a response to not being permanently rooted anywhere. Lastly, my findings indicated that the participants' sense of home could be evoked through the senses, such as the senses that remind them of their host country or traditions they have made in their host country, as well as in Norway.

Regarding the participants' cross-cultural childhood, my findings indicate that the parent's decision to move temporarily abroad due to work has influenced their children's childhoods, especially regarding their sense of belonging and sense of home. This was especially shown when the participants elaborated on their lack of belonging and place attachments, but also that most define home as relational. Thus, they experience rootlessness and restlessness. By this, I mean their mobile childhood has influenced where they should seek roots or why they feel rootless as adults and young adults. Some of the adult participants have found roots in their own families, although some have moved their restlessness and rootlessness into other things, such as their work. My findings also show that adult participants' cross-cultural childhood has influenced their definitions of home as adults versus children, where they have multiple senses of belonging and sense of home—feelings at home in several places and multiple ways. Thus, this research indicates that having lived a cross-cultural and mobile childhood impacts that home is everywhere and nowhere simultaneously.

The participants expressed the word 'home' differently, such as using the word to describe Norway, even though some participants do not feel at home in the country in present times. This is especially evident when they elaborate on previous memories associated with the country and their elaborations on returning to Norway. Additionally, the word 'home' was used to describe places where the parents and participants had lived abroad and in Norway. However, it has also been shown that most of the adult participants use the term 'home' to describe where their parents live even though they do not live in the same place or house as them. In this essence, they have used the word 'home' as associated with which location, country, or dwelling the parents live or have lived in; thus, they refer to these places as home because their parents live there. In other words, from my interpretation, they use the definition of 'home' as a verbal expression of the places their parents live in rather than where they themselves feel at home. The difference between adult and child participants' definitions of home in this research is that most adult participants define home as relational. In contrast, most children define it as a nation, place, or dwelling. Among the child participants, individual definitions varied on home: Noah defined with Norway, Sofie with places both in Norway and abroad, and Theodor described home as relational. Thus, my findings have shown that the older the child is, the more relational the description of the home is. Despite some finding it challenging, the child participants provided specific elaborations on the theme. The differences between the adult and child participants might be because the adults looked at their childhood retrospectively and how their childhood has impacted their sense of home in the present day, thus as relational. This has been because they do not have feelings of place-attachment, as mentioned.

9.1.3. Home described with relationships

The third question my thesis explored: *How much do friendship and family relations impact where TCK feels at home?* My findings indicate that social relationships have been significant, especially regarding their sense of belonging and sense of home. Almost all participants described home as relational, describing their sense of home as friendship, although their nuclear family was mainly highlighted. This was shown because most participants had a sense of belonging with others who shared highly mobile lifestyle experiences. Hence, they feel belonging to the international community or to others who also have lived cross-culturally and highly mobile lifestyles due to the parents' work choices (TCK). The participants feel at home or have a sense of home with their nuclear family because of the continuous relationships and shared experience of facing an unfamiliar culture and country. Their continuity with their nuclear family is because of the high movement between their host countries and Norway, resulting in most of the participants not maintaining their friendships in either Norway or abroad. This has shown because it was time-consuming, but also because their social relationships ended over time. The emphasis on the relational may be due to their highly mobile lifestyle which has led to a lack of place attachments and feelings of rootedness and restlessness. Therefore, many of them do not have any permanent roots, as previous research has shown (see also Eidse & Sichel, 2004). Lastly, they have experienced feeling different than others in Norway when they returned as teenagers. Therefore, the data indicates that their childhood memories and experiences of returning to Norway have influenced and impacted their definitions of home as relational in the present day.

9.1.4. Impacts on interactions and relations of their sense of belonging and sense of home

Lastly, my thesis has explored: *How does returning to Norway impact TCK's sense of belonging and how they identify themselves?* My findings show that most of the participants' sense of belonging and sense of home towards Norway has been influenced by their experiences when they returned to Norway. Returning to Norway has brought

several experiences, both positive and negative. The positive experiences have been that they felt more independent and had more freedom in Norway compared to abroad. These experiences were due to the result of their living circumstances abroad, such as they could take public transport alone or go to another place by themselves more safely in Norway. The challenges the participants experienced were mainly that they felt different than others in Norway and were misunderstood by peers and others in the community, leading to an experience of reverse culture shock. Their feelings of feeling different have shown because of how others looked at them, where they experienced being "hidden immigrants" (see Pollock et al., 2017; Pollock et al., 2003). This was because even though the community viewed them as Norwegians, they themselves have had the same experiences as most immigrants meet within a new culture. Hence, they have had feelings and experiences of not being accepted as themselves within the community or by peers.

Experiences of reverse culture shock have also been shown through the challenges starting over in Norway, such as with school experiences, and changes within the community. Moreover, participants had high expectations towards Norway, which were not met since they expected Norway to be, for example, idyllic. My findings indicate that these challenges have impacted their sense of belonging, identity, and sense of home in Norway. My findings show that because of the challenges some of the participants met in Norway, has resulted them to move abroad again by themselves because of studies or work. This has shown because of their attachment and sense of belonging to the international community. However, this decision might also be because of their highly mobile childhood and the impact of seeing their parents working within organizations that help others worldwide.

9.2. Strengths and limitations

A notable strength of this thesis research is that I obtained knowledge from the participants' cross-cultural and mobile childhood experiences through individually semi-structured interviews, such as several views on the same theme, such as home as relational. It also led me to observe how several themes have impacted them, which could differ from what I had discovered using a different method such as a group interview. It can also be a strength that this research has brought new aspects of how mobile and cross-cultural childhood have impacted an individual's childhood and adulthood. In the sense that living with impact by multiple cultures, without having any full ownership in any of them (Pollock et al., 2003). However, the fact that I only used one method can be seen as a limitation in this research. Therefore, I highlighted some examples as future research recommendations (see below). Another strength of this research is my abundant empiricism and the honest and insightful tone among the participants. This is because the participants were open-minded during the interviews and wanted to share their childhood stories. Likely, other research methods would probably not have achieved such depth of insight.

Another strength, which can also be considered a limitation, is my shared childhood experiences as the participants in this study. The strength of having the role of an insider researcher was that I could understand, on some occasions, the elaborations of their childhood experiences, especially regarding their sense of home. Another limitation of this research was that I was not able to do research on my primary focus, which was on TCK and their current living experiences. In other words, those children who are currently living as TCK abroad. The limitation of having the role of an 'insider' researcher is that I might have looked at other themes and had a different research strategy than those who do not share the same childhood background as the participants. By this, I mean that others would probably look at other sides of the participant's childhood, which

I consider a “normal” childhood. However, my position role also made me curious about their childhood stories, and I looked at the similarities between the participants. This led me to visualize how I wanted to structure and analyze the data materials. Moreover, it can also be pointed out that through this project, I have struggled with my mental health, which has impacted the thesis writing process. However, I have tried and desired to lift the participants' childhood experiences from their perspectives. Therefore, I hope to bring more knowledge about cross-cultural and highly mobile childhood, where children have lived in different cultures due to their parents' work situation, to light in research, especially in childhood studies. Another limitation of this study is the tool “pictures,” which I tried to combine as a helping tool during the interviews. Despite the attempts to integrate this tool into the interviews, it was not perceived as planned, as earlier mentioned. Thus, it can be relevant for future research to include this helping tool if their research method is mainly qualitative research interviews. Another possible limitation is also that most of the participants were interviewed digitally, which may have hindered my ability to connect with them as deeply as desired before the interview was conducted. This limitation could have influenced the findings, particularly as I encountered challenges and ethical dilemmas due to participants being surrounded by colleagues and family during the interviews.

9.3. Suggestions for future research

It could be relevant for future research to conduct qualitative research viewing the differences between Norwegian childhood and those who live cross-cultural childhood, where the aim is to look at similarities and differences regarding their sense of home. Moreover, it could be relevant for future research looking at other perspectives of TCK, such as qualitative research on those children who currently live abroad and look at their experiences at that time and not as retrospective. Most research on TCK has focused on their return experiences, which also has been highlighted by others (e.g., Jones et al., 2022). In this current research, this mentioned focus was not something I was able to manage equally. Hence, looking at TCK's current childhood lives and experiences can direct research in various ways. Examples can be their school experiences abroad since this research has shown that TCK's school experiences varied, or looking more at the friendships and their relationship with peers could bring interesting insights.

It could be relevant for future research to look further in TCK's at “materiality of home” (e.g., Taylor, 2015), such as how their sense of home is evoked through senses, as well as how materiality and objects can evoke a sense of home. These aspects could be interesting, but this study was not fully explored as anticipated. By this, I mean that it could be interesting to look at different traditions TCK and their families have made abroad. Moreover, it could be interesting to look at how TCK's everyday surroundings, like objects abroad, influence their sense of home later in life, such as nature, objects, or activities. It could also be relevant for future research to combine more methods or include other methods. My future suggestion is that drawing could be a good tool, especially for younger children and some adults, since I have experienced a few of the participants in this research starting to draw. Another tool is photographs, which could be relevant for future research to explore more aspects than I did in this research. This could help the researcher better understand the participants' lives, primarily if they use retrospective interviews. An example is asking the participants to take photographs illustrating their sense of home instead of bringing pictures to the interviews. Combining these methods with an interview, for example, will be a valuable way to explore the topic further, leading to richer data material and coverage of the topics by examining it from different angles. It could also be relevant to future research to look at longitudinal studies, where they, for example, interview the same children and young people and see if their descriptions of home and sense of belonging change over time.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Confirmation from NSD (now called SIKT)

Appendix 2: The letter of information about the project (Norwegian)

Appendix 3: The letter of information about the project (English)

Appendix 4: Consent form for adults (Norwegian)

Appendix 5: Consent form for adults (English)

Appendix 6: Consent form for children (Norwegian)

Appendix 7: Consent form for children (English)

Appendix 8: Interview guide (Norwegian)

Appendix 9: Interview guide (English)

Appendix 10: Thematic mind map

Appendix 1: Confirmation letter from NSD (now called SIKT, 2024). The first one is an overall confirmation letter from NSD. The second confirmation letter is about the acceptance of having participants' who could participate digitally through Zoom. The last is the last confirmation letter since I had to postpone the thesis.

17.04.2024, 22:44

Meldeskjema for behandling av personopplysninger



Vurdering av behandling av personopplysninger

Referansenummer

509801

Vurderingstype

Standard

Dato

11.08.2022

Tittel

Place attachment and belonging for third culture children from Norway: when does a place feel like "home"

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet / Fakultet for samfunns- og utdanningsvitenskap (SU) / Institutt for pedagogikk og livslang læring

Prosjektansvarlig

Marit Ursin

Student

Lydia Marie Elvik

Prosjektperiode

01.09.2022 - 31.05.2023

Kategorier personopplysninger

Alminnelige

Lovlig grunnlag

Samtykke (Personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a)

Behandlingen av personopplysningene er lovlig så fremt den gjennomføres som oppgitt i meldeskjemaet. Det lovlige grunnlaget gjelder til 31.05.2023.

[Meldeskjema](#)

Kommentar

OM VURDERINGEN

Personverntjenester har en avtale med institusjonen du studerer ved. Denne avtalen innebærer at vi skal gi deg råd slik at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet ditt er lovlig etter personvernregelverket.

Personverntjenester har nå vurdert den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at behandlingen er lovlig, hvis den gjennomføres slik den er beskrevet i meldeskjemaet med dialog og vedlegg.

VIKTIG INFORMASJON TIL DEG

Du må lagre, sende og sikre dataene i tråd med retningslinjene til din institusjon. Dette betyr at du må bruke leverandører for spørreskjema, skylagring, videosamtale o.l. som institusjonen din har avtale med. Vi gir generelle råd rundt dette, men det er institusjonens egne retningslinjer for informasjonssikkerhet som gjelder.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGER OG VARIGHET

Prosjektet vil behandle alminnelige personopplysninger frem til 31.05.2023.

LOVLIG GRUNNLAG

Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 nr. 11 og 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse, som kan dokumenteres, og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake.

For alminnelige personopplysninger vil lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen være den registrertes samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 a.

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER

- dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet
- lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet.

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER

Vi vurderer at informasjonen om behandlingen som de registrerte vil motta oppfyller lovens krav til form og innhold, jf. art. 12.1 og art. 13.

Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18) og dataportabilitet (art. 20).

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER

Personverntjenester legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1 f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må prosjektansvarlig følge interne retningslinjer/rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER

Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til oss ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Før du melder inn en endring, oppfordrer vi deg til å lese om hvilken type endringer det er nødvendig å melde:

<https://www.nsd.no/personverntjenester/fylle-ut-meldeskjema-for-personopplysninger/melde-endringer-i-meldeskjema>

Du må vente på svar fra oss før endringen gjennomføres.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET

Vi vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Kontaktperson hos oss:

Henriette S. Munthe-Kaas

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Vurdering av behandling av personopplysninger

Referansenummer
509801

Vurderingstype
Standard

Dato
22.08.2022

Tittel

Place attachment and belonging for third culture children from Norway: when does a place feel like "home"

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet / Fakultet for samfunns- og utdanningsvitenskap (SU) / Institutt for pedagogikk og livslang læring

Prosjektansvarlig

Marit Ursin

Student

Lydia Marie Elvik

Prosjektperiode

01.09.2022 - 31.05.2023

Kategorier personopplysninger

Alminnelige

Lovlig grunnlag

Samtykke (Personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a)

Behandlingen av personopplysningene er lovlig så fremt den gjennomføres som oppgitt i meldeskjemaet. Det lovlige grunnlaget gjelder til 31.05.2023.

[Meldeskjema](#) 

Kommentar

Personverntjenester har vurdert endringen registrert i meldeskjemaet.

Det er vår vurdering at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet vil være i samsvar med personvernlovgivningen så fremt den gjennomføres i tråd med det som er dokumentert i meldeskjemaet med vedlegg. Behandlingen kan fortsette.

ENDRINGENE

Oppdateringene i meldeskjemaet er som følger:

- Det vil innhentes personopplysninger om tredjepersoner. Disse består av nær familie og venner. Disse vil informeres og det er lagt opp til samtykke.
- Zoom er lagt til som databehandler i meldeskjemaet. Ved bruk av databehandler (spørreskjemaløser, skylagring, videosamtale o.l.) må behandlingen oppfylle kravene til bruk av databehandler, jf. art 28 og 29. Bruk leverandører som din institusjon har avtale med.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET

Vi vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Kontaktperson: Henriette S. Munthe-Kaas

Lykke til videre med prosjektet!



Vurdering av behandling av personopplysninger

Referansenummer
509801

Vurderingstype
Standard

Dato
10.01.2024

Tittel

Place attachment and belonging for third culture children from Norway: when does a place feel like "home"

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon

Norges teknisk-naturvitenskapelige universitet / Fakultet for samfunns- og utdanningsvitenskap (SU) / Institutt for pedagogikk og livslang læring

Prosjektansvarlig

Marit Ursin

Student

Lydia Marie Elvik

Prosjektperiode

01.09.2022 - 15.05.2024

Kategorier personopplysninger

Alminnelige

Lovlig grunnlag

Samtykke (Personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a)

Behandlingen av personopplysningene er lovlig så fremt den gjennomføres som oppgitt i meldeskjemaet. Det lovlige grunnlaget gjelder til 15.05.2024.

[Meldeskjema](#)

Kommentar

Personverntjenester har vurdert endringen i prosjektslutt dato.

Vi har nå registrert 15.05.2024 som ny slutt dato for behandling av personopplysninger.

Hvis det blir nødvendig å behandle personopplysninger enda lengre, så kan det være nødvendig å informere prosjektdeltakerne.

Vi vil følge opp ved ny planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Lykke til videre med prosjektet!

Appendix 2: Letter of information about the project (Norwegian)

Informasjonsskriv til organisasjoner/andre som kan hjelpe meg å finne informanter

Forespørsel om hjelp til å finne forskningsdeltakere

Mitt navn er Lydia Marie Elvik og jeg er student på masterprogrammet i Childhood studies ved NTNU i Trondheim. Bor for tiden i Tønsberg og av denne grunn tar jeg kontakt med deg, fordi jeg er på utkikk etter deltakere som er tidligere eller nåværende misjonærbarn, bistandsbarn, militærsbarn, diplomatsbarn, og som ønsker å delta i masterprosjektet.

Målet med masterprosjektet er å finne data for å forstå mer om hvilken tilhørighet og tilknytning disse barna (nevnt ovenfor) har til land, kulturer, relasjoner osv., men også å finne informasjon og få kunnskap om hva de referer til som "hjem". Mitt mål er å se mer på deres emosjonelle stedsans eller tilknytning til det de referer til som "hjem".

I forbindelse med mitt prosjekt, lurer jeg på om dere har mulighet til å sette meg kontakt med misjonærbarn, bistandsbarn, diplomatsbarn eller militærsbarn (10-25 år) eller voksne som har vært misjonærbarn, bistandsbarn, militærsbarn, eller diplomatsbarn. Hvis barn deltar, kan foreldre få opplysninger om intervju spørsmålene, og andre spørsmål eventuelt som kan bli stilt i forkant av intervjuet, kan de ta kontakt med meg, Lydia Marie Elvik på email som er:..... Prosjektet er blitt godkjent av Norsk senter for forskningsdata (NSD).

Forskning deltagerne som ønsker å være en del av masterprosjektet vil det foregå ett intervju på ca.45-60 minutter. Ved å delta på intervjuet vil jeg stille spørsmål som handler om deres erfaringer og opplevelser i sin oppvekst og barndom, før, under og etter deres utenlandsopphold. I tillegg vil jeg stille spørsmål som handler om tilknytning, tilhørighet og hjemfølelse. Forskningsdeltagerne kan også bestemme selv, frivillig, om de har lyst til å ta med ett eller flere bilder av det de tenker på når de hører ordet «hjemfølelse». Opplysningene deltakerne deler med meg om vil bli notert i en notatblokk, og hvis de samtykker vil også intervjuet bli tatt opp med en lydopptaker. Det er helt frivillig å delta i dette masterprosjektet, og deltakeren kan trekke seg hvis de ønsker uten å oppgi noen grunn for det, og så i tilfelle vil alle deres personlige opplysninger bli slettet. Hvis de ønsker å delta vil de være helt anonym i masterprosjektet.

Med vennlig hilsen Lydia Marie Elvik
Student ved masterprogrammet i Childhood Studies, NTNU Trondheim.

Håper dere har mulighet til å hjelpe meg med å komme i kontakt med potensielle forskningsdeltagere.

Appendix 3: Letter of information about the project (English)

Letter of information to the organizations and others whom I contacted to help me find research participants

My name is Lydia Marie Elvik and I am a student in the masters program in Childhood studies at NTNU in Trondheim. Currently living in Tønsberg and for this reason, I am contacting you because I am looking for participants who are former or current missionary children, aid children, military children, children of diplomats, and who want to participate in the master thesis project.

The master's thesis project aims to find data to understand more about belonging and attachment that these children (mentioned above) have to countries, cultures, relationships, etc., but also to find information and gain knowledge about what they refer to as "home". I aim to look more at their emotional sense of place or attachment to what they refer to as "home".

In connection with my project, I am wondering if you have the opportunity to put me in contact with missionary children, aid children, diplomat children or military children (age of 10-25 years), or adults who have been missionary children, aid children, military children or diplomat children. If children participate, parents can get information about the interview questions, and any other questions that may be asked ahead of the interview, they can contact me, Lydia Marie Elvik, on my email which is:... The project has been approved by the Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD).

Research participants who wish to be part of the master thesis project will have an interview of approximately 45-60 minutes. By participating in the interview, I will ask questions about their experiences in their upbringing and childhood, before, during, and after their stay abroad. In addition, I will ask questions about attachment, belonging, and a sense of home. The research participants can also decide themselves, it is voluntarily, whether they want to bring one or more pictures of what they think about when they hear the word "home feeling". The information the participants share with me will be noted in a notebook, and if they agree, the interview will also be recorded with an audio recorder. Participation in this master thesis project is completely voluntary and the participant can withdraw if they wish without giving any reason for it, in which case all their personal information will be deleted. If they wish to participate, they will be completely anonymous in the master thesis project.

Sincerely, Lydia Marie Elvik. Student at the master's program in Childhood Studies, NTNU Trondheim.

Hope you have the opportunity to help me get in touch with potential research participants.

Appendix 4: Consent form for adults (Norwegian)

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet som handler om

«stedstilknytning og tilhørighet for de som har hatt en del av barndom i et annet sted enn Norge: når føles et sted som `hjemme`»?

Dette er et spørsmål til deg om å delta i et masterprosjekt hvor formålet er å forstå hvordan tilhørighet og tilknytning er for de som har oppvokst i et annet land på grunn av foreldrenes karrierevalg/jobbvalg (eksempel på det er misjon, bistand, militæret og diplomat). I dette skrivet gir vi deg informasjon om målene for prosjektet og hva deltagelse vil innebære for deg.

Formål

Dette prosjekter er et masterprosjekt innenfor studiet Childhood Studies (barndomsstudier) ved NTNU i Trondheim. Formålet med prosjektet er å se hvordan tilhørighet og tilknytning til plass eller sted er for/ eller har vært for de som har oppvokst i utlandet og har flyttet med familien på grunn av foreldrenes karrierevalg. Formålet med prosjektet er også å få kunnskap om hva betydningen av «hjem» eller «hjemfølelse» betyr for deg. Jeg er også opptatt av å forstå hvordan identiteten kan ha bli utviklet ved å ha hatt tilknytning til flere kulturer og steder, i tillegg er jeg opptatt av å forstå hvordan tilhørighet og tilknytning eventuelt har endret seg, eller påvirket barndommen.

Hvem er ansvarlig for forskningsprosjektet?

Lydia Marie Elvik (student), Marit Ursin (professor/veileder), og Ida Marie Lyså (førstemanuensis/veileder). Institutt for pedagogikk og livslæring, Norges tekniske-naturvitenskapelig universitet (NTNU).

Hvorfor får du spørsmål om å delta?

Årsaken til at jeg spør akkurat deg om å være en del av dette masterprosjektet er grunn av din bakgrunn, ved å ha eller har hatt en barndom i ett eller flere land på grunn av dine foreldres karrierevalg. Av den grunn har jeg interesse å få mer kunnskap i fra dine erfaringer og opplevelser av hvordan din barndom har vært, i forbindelse med spørsmål angående tilhørighet og tilknytning og hjemfølelse.

Hva innebærer det for deg å delta?

Hvis du velger å delta i dette masterprosjektet, innebærer det å delta i et individuelt intervju, hvor du kommer til å få noen bakgrunns spørsmål (f.eks. alder), så spørsmål som handler om før, under, og etter utenlandsopphold. I tillegg til vil det være spørsmål om tilhørighet, tilknytning og hjemfølelse. Hvis du også ønsker, er det frivillig valg å ta med seg ett eller flere bilder på intervjuet, som illustrerer hjemfølelse, eller tilhørighet for deg. Det er også en mulighet at du beskriver illustrasjonen av bildene hvis du ønsker dette. Hvis det er noen spørsmål du ikke ønsker å svare på, er dette helt greit. Din deltakelse til dette prosjektet vil være anonymt. Hvis det er greit for deg vil jeg gjerne ta lydopptak og notater fra intervjuet. Hvis du ikke har noe imot dette, kan du underskrive på samtykkeerklæringen (helt nederst på siste side), eller la være hvis du ikke samtykker til dette. Dine opplysninger vil bli anonymisert når lydopptaket blir transkribert. Lydopptaket vil bli slettet ved prosjektslutt. Hvis du er under 18 år, har dine foreldrerettigheter til å få informasjon om master prosjektet, i tillegg til å gi deg tillatelse til å være en del av prosjektet. Dine foreldre kan få se intervju spørsmålene på forhånd av intervjuet ved å ta kontakt med meg Lydia Marie Elvik på min e-post:

Det er frivillig å delta

Det er frivillig å delta i prosjektet, du kan trekke deg når som helst fra forskning deltakelsen, uten å gi noen forklaring på det. Hvis du velger å trekke deg fra deltagelsen vil det ikke oppstå noen konsekvenser, og alle dine personopplysninger vil bli slettet umiddelbart.

Ditt personvern – hvordan vi oppbevarer og bruker dine opplysninger

Vi vil bare bruke opplysningene om deg til formålene vi har fortalt om i dette skrivet. Vi behandler opplysningene konfidensielt og i samsvar med personvernregelverket. De som vil ha tilgang til

datamaterialene ved behandlingsansvarlighet er jeg Lydia Marie Elvik (masterstudent) og mine veiledere Marit Ursin og Ida Marie Lyså.

Hva gir oss rett til å behandle personopplysninger om deg?

Vi behandler opplysninger om deg basert på ditt samtykke.

På oppdrag fra NTNU har Personverntjenester vurdert at behandlingen av personopplysninger i dette prosjektet er i samsvar med personvernregelverket.

Dine rettigheter

Så lenge du kan identifiseres i datamaterialet, har du rett til:

- innsyn i hvilke opplysninger vi behandler om deg, og å få utlevert en kopi av opplysningene
- å få rettet opplysninger om deg som er feil eller misvisende
- å få slettet personopplysninger om deg
- å sende klage til Datatilsynet om behandlingen av dine personopplysninger

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

- Marit Ursin (veileder og prosjektansvarlig), du kan nå ho på telefonnummeret:, eller Hun kan også nås på e-post:
- Ida Lyså (veileder), du kan nå ho på e-post som er
- Du kan også kontakte meg (student), Lydia Marie Elvik, på telefon:, eller e-post som er

Hvis du har spørsmål knyttet til Personverntjenester sin vurdering av prosjektet, kan du ta kontakt med:

- Personverntjenester på epost (personverntjenester@sikt.no) eller på telefon: 53 21 15 00.

Med vennlig hilsen

Marit Ursin

Lydia Marie Elvik

(Forsker/veileder)

(masterstudent)

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har mottatt og forstått informasjon om masterprosjektet stedstilknytning, tilhørighet og hjemfølelse i masterprogrammet childhood studies, og har fått anledning til å stille spørsmål. Jeg samtykker til:

- å delta i intervju
- lydopptak

Jeg samtykker til at mine opplysninger behandles frem til prosjektet er avsluttet

(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

Appendix 5: Consent form for adults (English)

Do you want to participate in a research project about "place-attachment and belonging for those who have had their childhood in another place than Norway: when does a place feel like "home"?"

This is a question for you about participating in a master project where the purpose is to understand what belonging and attachment are for those who have grown up in another country due to their parents career choices (examples for this are missions, aid, the military and diplomats). In this document, we provide you with information about the aims of the project and what participation will mean for you.

Purpose

This project is a master thesis project within Childhood Studies program at NTNU in Trondheim. The purpose of the project is to see how belonging and attachment to place is for/or has been for those who have grown up abroad and have moved with their family due to their parents career choice. The purpose of the project is also to gain knowledge about what the meaning of "home" or "home-feeling" means to you. I am also interested in understanding how identity may have been developed by having been connected to several cultures and places, in addition, I am interested in understanding how belonging and attachment have possibly changed, or influenced your childhood.

Who has the responsibility for the research project?

Lydia Marie Elvik (the student), Marit Ursin (professor/supervisor) and Ida Marie Lyså (associate professor/supervisor). Department of Pedagogy and Life Learning, Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU).

Why do you get asked to participate?

The reason I ask you to participate in this master thesis project is because of your background, with having or have had a childhood in one or several countries because of your parents carrier choices. For this reasons I have an interest to get more knowledge about your experience and of your childhood, associated with questions about your attachment, belonging and home-feeling.

What does it mean for you to participate?

Your choice to participate in this master thesis project, implies to participate in a individual interview, where you are going to get questions as for example background questions (as age), then questions about before, under and after your childhood experiences by living abroad. In addition to, it will be questions about belonging, attachments and home-feeling. If you want to, it is voluntarily to bring a picture or two in the interview, which illustrates your home-feeling or belonging. There is also an opportunity for you to describe the picture, if you want to. If there are any questions you do not want to answer, this is okay. Your participation for this master thesis project is anonymous. If it is okay for you I want to record the interview using an audio recorder and take notes. If there are no objections, you can sign the consent form (at the very bottom of the next page), or not if you do not agree to this. Your information will be anonymized when the audio recording is transcribed. The audio recording will be deleted at the end of the project. If you are under 18 years old, your parents have the right to receive information about the master thesis project, as well as to give you permission to be a part of the project. Your parents can see the interview questions in advance of the interview by contacting me, Lydia Marie Elvik, on my email which is:

It is voluntary to participate

It is voluntarily to participate in this project, you can withdraw any time from the research project, without giving a statement. If you chose to withdraw from the participation there will be no consequences, and your personal data will be deleted immediately.

Your privacy – how we store and use your personal information

We will only use the information about you for the purposes we have described in this paper. We treat the information confidentially and in accordance with the privacy regulations:

- Those who want to have access to the data materials in the case of processing liability are myself Lydia Marie Elvik (masters student) and my supervisors Marit Ursin and Ida Marie Lyså

What gives us the right to process personal data about you?

We process information about you based on your consent. On behalf of NTNU, the Privacy Service has assessed that the processing of the personal data in this project is in accordance with the privacy regulations.

Your rights

As long as you can be identified in the data material, you have the right to:

- Access to the information we process about you, and to be given a copy of the information
- To have information about you corrected that is incorrect or misleading
- To have personal data about you deleted
- To send a complaint to the Norwegian Data Protection Authority about the processing of your personal data.

If you have any questions about the study, or want to know more about or exercise your rights, please contact:

- Marit Ursin (supervisor and project manager), you can reach her on the phone number:, or You can also contact her on email which is:
- Ida Lyså (supervisor) you can contact her on email which is:

If you have any questions related to Personal Protection Services assessment of the project, you can contact privacy services by email: personverntjeneste@sikt.no or by phone: 53 21 15 00.

Best regards

Marit Ursin
(supervision/ researcher)

Lydia Marie Elvik
(master thesis student)

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the masters project: place attachment, belonging and sense of home in the masters program childhood studies, and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I agree to:

- Participate in the interview (check here)
- Sound recording (check here

I agree to my information being processed until the project is finished

(Signed by the project participant, date)

Appendix 6: Consent form for children (Norwegian)

Vil du delta i forskningsprosjektet som handler om

«stedstilknytning og tilhørighet for de som har hatt en del av barndom i et annet sted enn Norge: når føles et sted som `hjemme` »?

Mitt navn er Lydia Marie Elvik, og jeg er student ved masterprogrammet childhood studies (barndomsstudier på norsk) i Trondheim, men bor for tiden i Tønsberg. Jeg holder på med et forskningsprosjekt hvor jeg ønsker å få mer kunnskap om dine erfaringer av å ha hatt eller ved at du har en barndom i utlandet på grunn av dine foreldres jobbvalg (eksempel på det kan være diplomat, misjonær, bistandsarbeid m.m.). Det jeg ønsker å få mer kunnskap om er dine tanker om tilknytning, tilhørighet og hjemfølelse. Og de datamaterialene som samles, vil kun bli brukt til min masteroppgave ved NTNU. Med andre ord det du nevner til meg, kommer kun til å bli brukt ved forskningsprosjektet.

Ved å delta i forskningsprosjektet vil det foregå ett intervju på ca. 30-60 minutter. Et intervju, er mer en samtale, hvor du kan svare på de spørsmålene jeg stiller deg. Det vil være spørsmål som hvor gammel du er, til hvordan barndommen din har vært i Norge og i utlandet. Med andre ord der du har bodd med familien din. Det vil også være spørsmål om hva du tenker om ordet `hjem`, altså hva `hjem` betyr for deg, men også spørsmål om tilknyttet og tilhørighet. Tilknytning kan være for eksempel en plass du føler deg trygg på men også personer du føler deg trygge. Og tilhørighet kan være et sted eller plass du hører til, eller en plass du også føler deg trygg på. Hvis du også ønsker, kan du selv bestemme om du ønsker å ta med deg ett bilde eller to, som illustrerer (viser), hjemfølelse for deg. Med andre ord, kan du bestemme selv om du ønsker å ta med bilder som viser til, det du tenker på er hjem for deg. Hvis du ikke ønsker å vise meg bilder, kan du forklare meg hva som er på bildet.

Når vi skal ha intervjuet ønsker jeg gjerne å ta opp lyden på en lydopptak, samtidig som jeg noterer informasjon, slik det blir lettere for meg å huske hva som blir sagt. Det er kun jeg som kommer til å se og lytte på lydopptaket, og det vil bli slettet ved prosjektslutt, som er rundt mai 2023.

Det er helt frivillig å delta i prosjektet, som vil si at du bestemmer selv om du ønsker å være med eller ikke. Hvis du ikke ønsker å delta under eller etter intervjuet er ferdig, da vil jeg slette mine notater og lydopptaket jeg har av deg. Du vil også være anonym i prosjektet. Det vil si at jeg bruker fargekode når jeg skriver ned hva du har sagt til meg, slik at ingen skal kunne vite at det er akkurat du som er en del av prosjektet.

Du har også rett på å lese hvilken opplysning som har blitt skrevet av deg, slik du kan si om dine opplysninger stemmer eller ikke stemmer. Du kan også klage til Datatilsynet, hvis du tenker at dine opplysninger har blitt behandlet på en uriktig måte.

Hvis du ønsker å delta i prosjektet, eller har noen andre spørsmål til prosjektet kan du og dine foresatte/foreldre ta kontakt med meg på epost:....., eller på mitt telefonnummer: Veileder for masteroppgaven ved NTNU i Trondheim er Marit Ursin, men også Ida Lyså. Ida kan du kontakte på

Norsk senter for forskningsdata (NSD) har godkjent prosjektet. Hvis du lurer på hvorfor de har gjort dette kan du kontakte dem ved deres epost: personverntjeneste@sikt.no eller telefon 53 21 15 00.

Med vennlig hilsen Lydia Marie Elvik.

Masterstudent ved masterprogrammet Childhood Studies ved NTNU.

Samtykkeerklæring

Jeg har lest og forstått informasjonen som har blitt gitt om masterprosjektet om stedstilknytning, tilhørighet og hjemfølelse. Jeg har fått mulighet til å stille spørsmål, og ønsker å delta. Jeg samtykker til;

Å delta i intervju

Lydopptak

Barnets navn

Foreldrenes signatur og dato

Appendix 7: Consent form for children (English)

Do you want to take part in a research project about "place-attachment and belonging for those who have had their childhood in a different place than Norway: when does it feel a place is like "home"?"

My name is Lydia Marie Elvik, and I am a student in a master's program in childhood studies (barndomstudier in Norwegian) in Trondheim, but now I currently living in Tønsberg. I am working on a research project where I wish to learn more about your experience of having or you having had a childhood abroad because of your parents' work choices (for example diplomats, mission etc.,). I wish to learn about your thoughts regarding attachments, belonging and home-feeling. The data materials that are being gathered, will only be used for my master thesis assignment by NTNU. In other words, what you are telling me, will only be used in this research project.

By participating in this research project you agreed to an interview lasting about 30-60 minutes. An interview is more a conversation, where you are answering questions that I am asking you. It will be questions about how old you are, questions about your childhood in Norway and abroad. In other words, where you have lived with your family. It will also be questions about the word "home" and what "home" means for you, but also questions about belonging and attachment. Attachment can, for example, be a place you feel safe at, but also people you feel safe with. Belonging can be a place you belong to or a place you feel safe at. If you want to, you can also decide to bring a picture or two, which illustrates (shows) your home-feeling. In other words, you can decide for yourself if you want to take pictures with you which shows what home is for you. If you do not want to show me pictures, you can explain to me what is happening in the pictures.

During the interview I wish to record the sound on a sound recorder, in addition to this I wish to note the information you give me, so it is easier for me to remember what is being said. It is only I who will see and listen to the sound recorder, and this will be deleted when the project ends, which is around May 2023.

It is voluntary to participate in this research project, which means it is only you who decide if you want to participate or not. If you do not wish to participate after the interview is finished, I will delete the sound recorder and delete the notes that I have from you. You will also be anonymous in this research project. That means that I will use color codes when I am writing down what you have said to me so that no one can know that it is you who has been a part of this project.

You also have the right to read the information written about you, so you can say if your information is accurate or not. You can also complain to the Norwegian Data Protection Authority if you think your information is treated improperly.

If you want to participate in this project, or you have questions about the project, can you and your parents contact me on my email: lydiame@ntnu.stud.no, or on my telephone number which are: My supervisor for my master thesis project by NTNU in Trondheim is Marit Ursin, but also Ida Lysp. You can contact Ida on email:.....

The Norwegian Center for Research Data (NSD) have approved the project. If you are wondering why they have done this you can contact them on their email: personverntjeneste@sikt.no or on their telephone 53 21 15 00.

With best regards Lydia Marie Elvik

Master thesis student by the master thesis program Childhood Studies by NTNU.

Consent form

I have read and understood the information that has been given about the master thesis project about place-attachment, belonging and home-feeling. I have also given the opportunity to ask questions, and I wish to participate. I consent to;

participate in the interview

sound recorder

The child's name

The parent's signature and date

Appendix 8: Interview guide (Norwegian)

Intervju mal for masteren i hjem og tilhørighet:

Introduksjon

- Fortelle litt til deltakeren hvem jeg er som forsker.
- Informasjon om mål med prosjektet (master om sted- og tilhørighet, og følelse av når ett sted/plass osv., følelse som «hjemme») og intervjuet.
- Informere deltakeren om informert samtykke – skriftlig (samtykkeerklæring), før henting av data. Samtidig informerer deltakeren underveis i intervjuet at de kan trekke seg når som helst, og at jeg har taushetsplikt som forsker. Ikke være mulig å identifisere deltakeren i den ferdig teksten.
- Diktafon, hva opptakene skal brukes til (master) → transkribering, slettes når informasjon er hentet. Hvis deltakeren har lyst å lese transkriberingen analysen av datainnhenting kan de det, for å se om informasjonen stemmer.
- Spørre informantene om de har noen spørsmål før intervjuet starter.

Først skal vi ta noen bakgrunn spørsmål.

1. Hvor gammel er du?
2. Hva bruker du hverdagen din på? Har du noe du liker å gjøre?
3. Hvor bor du i dag? (land)
4. Hvor bor din familie i dag?

Nå skal vi ta noen spørsmål om din barndom før utreise med familien din

1. Hvor bodde du før utreisen? Og med hvem?
2. Hvordan var hverdagen din?
3. Gikk du på skole eller barnehagen?
4. Hvilke relasjoner var viktige i livet ditt?
5. Hvordan var relasjonen din til din familie?
6. Hvordan var relasjonen til venner? Hvem lekte du med?
7. Hadde du et favorittsted du likte å være på? Enten alene eller med andre?
7. Hadde du en favoritt lek i barndommen din før utreise?

Nå skal vi snakke litt om barndommen da du bodde i utlandet

1. Hvor reiste du/din familie til? Og hvem var med på reisen/flyttingen til et annet land?
2. Hvorfor reiste dere?
3. Hvor lenge bodde dere i et annet land (pga. dine foreldres karrierevalg)?
4. Bodde dere forskjellige plasser i samme land eventuelt?
5. Gikk du i barnehage eller skole? Eventuelt hadde du hjemmeundervisning?

6. Hvilken fritidsaktivitet hadde du? Hadde du noen hobbyer?
7. Hvem var du med på fritiden din?
8. Var det ett eller flere plasser du følte deg trygg?
9. Hvordan var det å flytte til en ny kultur?
10. Hvordan var dine erfaringer med å lære deg et nytt språk?
11. Hva var det beste med å flytte til ett nytt land?
12. Hva var det mest utfordrende med å flytte?
13. Savnet du noe? Hvis ja, hva?

Nå skal vi snakke litt om barndomstiden/ungdomstiden din etter utreise

1. Hvordan var det for deg å reise tilbake, ta farvel med stedet og landet du og familien bodde i?
2. Hva følte du når du visste dere skulle reise tilbake?
3. Hvorfor reiste dere tilbake igjen?
4. Hvordan var det for deg å komme tilbake?
5. Hvordan var skolelivet?
6. Hvilke fritidsaktiviteter eller hobby hadde du?
7. Har relasjonen til familien endret seg eller var det lik før utreisen?
8. Hvordan ble relasjonen til de vennene du hadde før utreisen? Hvordan var det å snakke med de igjen?
9. Var det enkelt å få nye venner?
10. Var det enkelt for deg å lære deg nye rutiner?
11. Var det enkelt for deg med språket og kulturen?
12. Hva var det beste med å flytte til Norge igjen?
13. Hva var mest utfordrende med å flytte til Norge igjen?
14. Hadde du ett spesielt sted du likte å være, der du følte deg trygg?

Nå skal jeg stille deg noen spørsmål om "hjem" og «tilhørighet»

1. Kan jeg spørre deg hva du tenker på når jeg sier ordet «hjem»? hva betyr det for deg?
 - Er hjem for deg ett sted, plass, musikk, mat eller relasjoner (familie, venner osv.)?
2. Hva betyr tilhørighet for deg? Enten til ett sted, plass, eller ting eller relasjoner?
3. Føler du tilhørighet til en plass mer enn et annet?

Bilde spørsmål (som deltakeren tar med selv, hvis de ønsker) – «følelse av hjemme»

- Spørre deltakeren om å fortelle om bildet(ene) selv, hva de tenker.

1. Hvordan er din følelse av tilknytning og tilhørighet illustrert på bildet?
2. Hvordan er «følelse av hjemme» illustrert på bildet for deg?

Avslutning: er det noe du mer du har lyst til å tilføye/fortelle eller har du noen spørsmål?

Appendix 9: Interview guide (English)

Interview guide for masters in home and belonging:

Introduction

- Tell the participants who I am as a researcher.
- Information about the goals of the project (master's about place and belonging, and the feeling of being in one place etc., their feelings of being "at home") and information about the interview.
- Inform the participants about informed consent – in written form (declaration of consent), before data collection. At the same time, inform the participants that they can withdraw at any time, and that I have duty of confidentiality as a researcher. Additionally, that it should not be possible for them to identify themselves in the finished text.
- Dictaphone, what the recordings will be used for (the master thesis project), in other words the transcriptions. The recordings will be deleted when information has been retrieved. Inform the participants that they can read wants the transcription if they want to, to see if the information is correct.
- Ask the participant if they have any questions before the interview starts.

First, I will ask you some background questions

- 1) How old are you?
- 2) What do you spend your time on? Do you have something you like to do?
- 3) Where do you live today? (Country)
- 4) Which country does your family live in now?

Now I will ask you some questions about your childhood before you moved abroad with your family

- 1) Where did you live before you moved abroad, and with whom?
- 2) How was your everyday life?
- 3) Did you go to school or kindergarten?
- 4) Which relations were important in your life?
- 5) How was your relationship with your family?
- 6) How were your relationships with friends? Who did you play with?
- 7) Did you have a favorite place you liked to be? Either alone or with others?
- 8) Did you have a favorite activity/toy in your childhood before you moved abroad?

Now we are going to talk about your childhood abroad

- 1) Where did you/your family move to? Who was with you in your movement to another country?
- 2) Why did you move?
- 3) How long did you live in another country (because of your parents' career choices)?
- 4) Did you live in the same place in the same country?
- 5) Did you go to school or kindergarten? Were you homeschooled?
- 6) Which leisure activities did you do? Did you have any hobbies?
- 7) Who did you spend your free time with?
- 8) Was there a particular place or places where you felt safe?
- 9) What was it like moving into a new culture?
- 10) What were your experiences with learning a new language?
- 11) What was the best part of moving to a new country?
- 12) What was the most challenging part about moving?
- 13) Did you miss something? If yes, what?

Now we are going to talk about your childhood/youth returning to Norway

- 1) What was moving back like and what was it like to say goodbye to the place and country you and your family lived in?
- 2) What were your feelings like when you knew you were returning to Norway?
- 3) Why did you move/travel back?
- 4) How was it for you to return to Norway?
- 5) How was the school life?
- 6) Which leisure activities or hobbies did you have?
- 7) Have your relationship with your family changed or was it the same as when you lived in Norway before you moved abroad?
- 8) How was your relationship with your friends you had before you moved abroad? How was it like talking with them again?
- 9) Was it easy making new friends?
- 10) Was it easy for you to learn new routines?
- 11) Was it easy for you with the language and culture?
- 12) What was the best part about moving to Norway again/returning?
- 13) What was the most challenging part about moving/returning to Norway?
- 14) Did you have any places you liked to be, or a place you felt safe at?

Now I will ask you questions about "home" and "belonging"

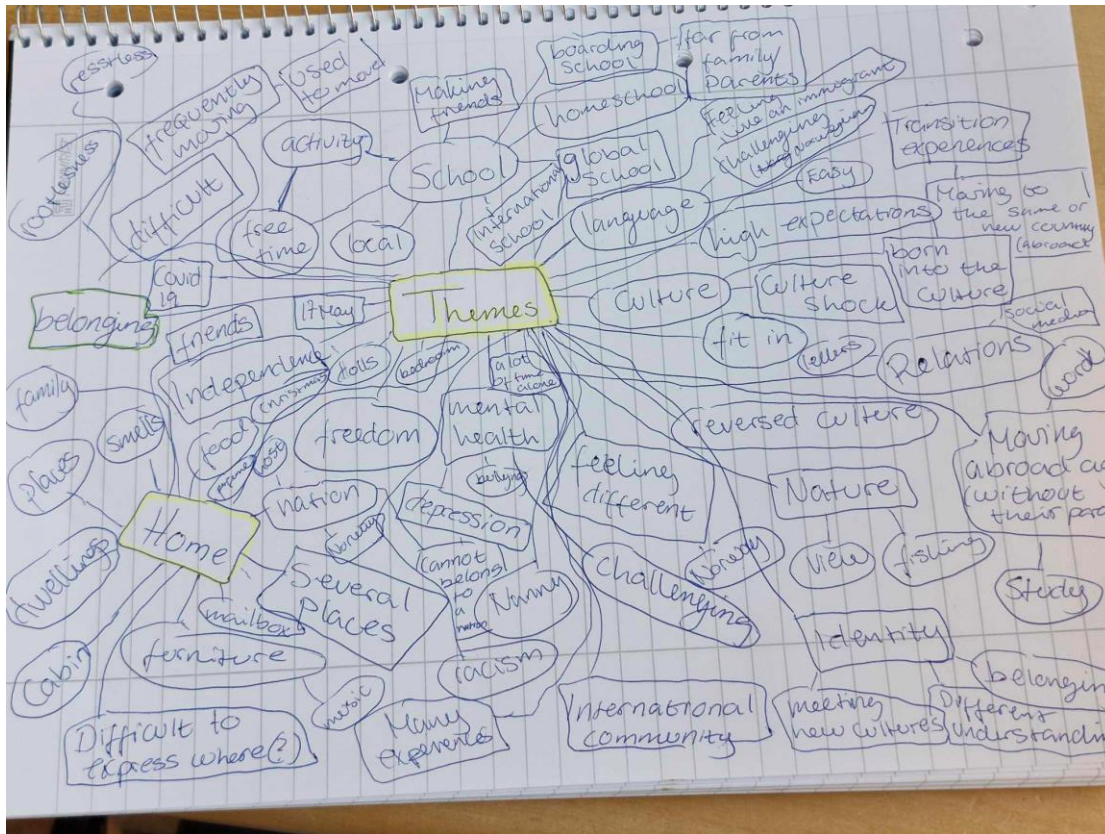
- 1) Can I ask you what you think about when I say the word "home"? what does it mean to you?
- 2) Are home a place, music, food, or relationships (family, friends, etc.,)?
- 3) What does belonging mean to you? Is it a place, a thing, or a relationship?
- 4) Do you feel you have belonging to one place more than another?

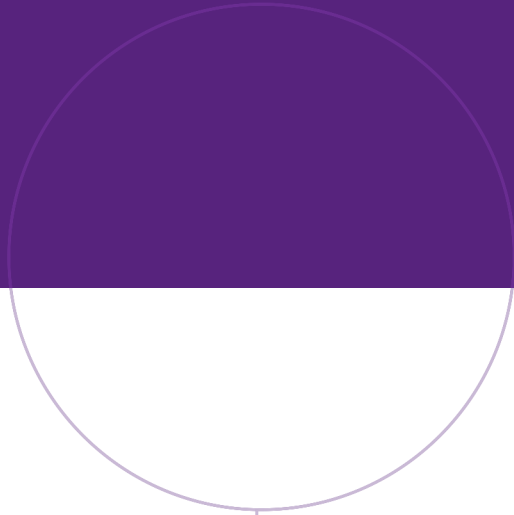
Photographs questions (which the participants bring themselves if they want to) – "home-feeling"

- Ask the participant to describe the picture(s), what they think.
 - 1) How are your belongings and attachments illustrated in the picture?
 - 2) How is your home feeling illustrated in the picture for you?

At the end I will ask: is there something more you want to tell/add, or have you any questions for me?

Appendix 10: Thematic mind map. Suggestions of themes that where repetitive under the analysis materials.





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