"It's like you have to fit in either way in both cultures. You have to find a way in between"

An exploration of young immigrant women's experiences negotiating cultures in Norway

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Master thesis

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Spring semester 2019

Foreword

The idea behind this thesis came from my own experiences as an immigrant woman in Norway as well as my education in health promotion. The research process was both rewarding and challenging for an inexperienced researcher like myself. I learned a lot about qualitative research and gained insights into my strengths and weaknesses as a researcher.

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Abstract

Young refugee women from countries in Africa and Asia represent an important group for integration and inclusion in Norwegian society. There is a need for more qualitative research regarding the ongoing process of negotiating cultures and the resources necessary for managing this process. Using acculturation and salutogenic theories as a framework, this study explores young refugee women's experiences regarding negotiating between their ethnic culture and the Norwegian culture. Data collection involved qualitative observations and semi-structured interviews. Data was analyzed using thematic network analysis.

This study found that the immigrant women experienced feelings of marginalization. They also identified bicultural experiences such as finding a third way in between the two cultures and switching their identity based on the cultural context. Findings showed the women possessed some resources for negotiating cultures, but also lacked other key resources. Resources they had, included education, social network, Norwegian language skills and openness towards other cultures. Resources they lacked included cultural competence, an inclusive host society and employment opportunities. This study concluded that while policies in Norway support integration and inclusion, reality indicates a need for building a more inclusive and open society. Community-level interventions should focus on empowering young immigrant women, helping them to build up, recognize and access the resources they have available for negotiating between cultural identities for increased participation and well-being.

Keywords: Immigrant, refugee, young women, acculturation, integration, bicultural experiences, negotiating cultures, health promotion, salutogenesis, sense of coherence, resources

Sammendrag

Unge flyktning kvinner fra Afrika og Asia er en viktig målgruppe for integrering og inkludering i det Norske samfunnet. Det er behov for mer kvalitativ forskning på prosessen å veksle mellom flere kulturer, og ressursene som er nødvendig for å håndtere denne prosessen. Ved å benytte akkultrasjon og salutogenese teorier som rammeverk, utforsker dette studie unge flyktning kvinners opplevelser med å veksle mellom deres etniske kulturer og den Norske kulturen. Dette er gjort ved bruk av kvalitative observasjoner og semistrukturerte intervjuer. Dataen ble analysert ved bruk av tematisk nettverks analyse.

Studien fant at kvinnene opplevde følelser av marginalisering. De identifiserte seg med flerkulturelle opplevelser som å finne en tredje vei mellom deres etniske kulturer og den Norske kulturen i tillegg til at de opplevde å bytte identitet i forhold til den kulturelle sammenhengen. Dette studiet fant at kvinnene hadde tilgjengelig noen ressurser for å veksle mellom flere kulturer, men manglet også andre viktige ressurser for denne prosessen. De hadde ressurser som utdanning, sosialt nettverk, norske språk ferdigheter og positive holdninger til andre kulturer. Ressurser de manglet var kulturelle ferdigheter, et inkluderende Norsk samfunn og jobbmuligheter. Studiet konkluderte med at Norges innvandringspolitikk støtter integrering og inkludering, men virkeligheten er mer polarisert. Det er behov for å bygge et samfunn som er mer åpent og inkluderende. Tiltak bør fokusere på å myndiggjøre unge innvandrerkvinner gjennom å bygge opp deres ressurser for å veksle mellom flere kulturer, for økt deltakelse og velvære.

Keywords: innvandrer, flyktninger, ungekvinner, akkulturasjon, integrering, flerkulturelle opplevelser, negotiating cultures, helse fremmendearbeid, salutogenese, sense of coherence, ressurser

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Immigration and integration

Immigration is the act of permanently moving to a foreign country (United Nations, 2019). Reasons for immigration include work, war, conflict, poverty, natural and man-mad disasters and famine. Increases in political, ethnic and religious conflicts in areas throughout the world have led to an increase in asylum seekers and refugees (Berry & Sam, 2016a). Refugees are a specific type of immigrant defined as "someone who has been forced to flee his or her country due to persecution, war or violence" (USA for UNHCR, 2018, p. 1). While, first generation immigrants are a more general term referring to "a person born abroad by foreign born parents" (Statistics Norway, 2014, p. 1). For the purposes of this study, I use the terms immigrant and refugee interchangeably.

While immigrants frequently migrate to improve their situations, it is unusual for them to face challenges regarding negotiating different cultures (Berry & Sam, 2016a). Immigration to a new country involves a shift in both culture and social setting (Abebe, 2010). Culture serves as the unwritten rules of society and refers to social norms, and specific ways of thinking, feeling and acting (Riedel, Wiesmann, & Hannich, 2011). When immigrants arrive to a host country, they have different ways of thinking, feeling and acting compared to the host culture (Riedel, et al., 2011). Host culture is defined as the majority culture in the new country where immigrants are living (Riedel et al., 2011). To integrate, immigrants must learn how to combine aspects of the new, host culture into their lives and identities while also maintaining parts of their culture of origin (Riedel et al., 2011). In this study, I use the term ethnic culture to refer to the culture of origin or the culture immigrants present with upon arrival to Norway. Ethnic culture in the context of this study refers to aspects such as language, values, beliefs and religion (Riedel et al., 2011; Van Oudenhoven, Stuart, & Tip, 2016). Studies show that major cultural differences can lead to refugees experiencing stress related to culture shock and cultural conflicts (Dona & Young, 2016; Riedel et al., 2011). Major cultural differences may also cause local populations to perceive immigrants as outsiders (Dimitrova & Lebedeva, 2016), which is not conducive to integration. Integration requires host societies to be open and receptive (Berry & Ward, 2016).

1.1.1   Immigration and integration in Norway

Individuals with refugee background represent 4.3% of the total population of Norway (Statistics Norway, 2019) and 30.6% of all immigrants in Norway (Statistics Norway, 2018).

The areas of the world most represented among refugees in Norway are Eastern Europe, Africa and Asia including Turkey (Statistics Norway, 2019). Overall, immigrants from Africa (10.0%) and Asia (6.2%) represent the highest number of unemployed immigrants (Statistics Norway, 2019). As of 2017, the total number of employed refugees was 48.5% of the eligible population of all refugees compared to an employment rate of 71.5% among the Norwegian population as a whole (Statistics Norway, 2019). According to these statistics, refugees from Africa and Asia represent a target group for participation and inclusion in Norwegian society.

In regards to policy, Norway's government pursues integration, inclusion and diversity (Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, 2013). The government's integration strategy is "to ensure that all people who live in Norway are able to utilize their resources and participate in the community" (Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, 2013, p. 3). However, while the Norwegian government supports integration and diversity (Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, 2013), reality indicates the need for a more open and inclusive society (Andersson, 2012).

1.1.2 Refugee women

While women represent a smaller portion of overall asylum seekers (30%) and refugees (45%) across Europe, they are a vulnerable group with unique immigration challenges (Tronstad & Liebig, 2018). Non-EU immigrant women tend to have lower rates of education and employment compared to their native-born peers in the host country (Tronstad & Liebig, 2018). While the majority of immigrants in Norway are employed, immigrant women from Asia and Africa represent a large portion of the unemployed (Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, 2013). In addition, refugee women who are employed are more likely to be over qualified for their jobs (40%) and work part-time (40%) compared to their native-peers (20%) (Tronstad & Liebig, 2018). Further, 1 in 5 refugee women in Norway and Austria classified their health as bad or very bad compared to 1 in 8 men. Poor health has been shown to have negative implications for employment (Tronstad & Liebig, 2018). In addition, data from Austria, Germany and Norway indicate a strong connection between refugee employment and social network, specifically with native-born peers. Statistics show, that refugee women have fewer networks than refugee men. Further compounding the situation, refugee women often receive less overall help with integration, language training and coming into the labor market compared to refugee men. In response to increasing numbers of refugees, Canada and countries in Europe are targeting refugee women

with interventions to build up their skills and resources for better integration and participation in society (Tronstad & Liebig, 2018).

1.2 Health promotion

Health promotion as a field focuses on empowering individuals and communities to take control over their own lives and improving their own health (WHO, 1986). The term "health" in health promotion refers to a continuous process created in one's daily life and surrounding context (Lindstrom & Eriksson, 2010; WHO, 1986). Health promotion focuses on social, physical and cultural contexts as determinates of health (Lindstrom & Eriksson, 2010; WHO, 1986). It moves away from a focus on the absence of disease, viewing health as a resource for coping with everyday life to achieve physical, social and mental well-being (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2018). There is a focus within health promotion on social and personal resources for empowering people to achieve the best health possible (WHO, 1986). Health promotion goes beyond health care settings to public health agendas for creating the opportunities necessary to foster health (WHO, 1986). Two major goals of health promotion are reducing inequality in health and improving overall population health. On the society level, health promotion is directed towards social, environmental and personal health determinants as well as improving individuals and the local community's control over their own lives and health (Lindstrom & Eriksson, 2010; WHO, 1986).

The Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion is a series of guidelines established in 1986 that guide research, policy and practice in the field of health promotion (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2018). The Ottawa Charter acknowledges the impact of socioecological factors and social determinates on health and individual behaviors. It focuses on building healthy public policy, creating supportive environments, strengthening community actions, developing personal skills and reorienting health services for health promotion (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2018). Specifically, community-centered approaches focus on mobilizing the resources and assets in refugee and immigrant communities to build up the capacity in local society. Developing personal skills such as language competence and promoting cultural competence in local communities are focus areas for promoting immigrant health (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2018).

1.2.1   Health and immigration

As a result, of increasing international migration there is an increased focus on the relationships between immigration (Riedel et al., 2011) and intercultural contact on health

(Ward, Tseung-Wong, Szabo, Qumseya & Bhowon, 2018). Health "is influenced not only by biological factors, individual behaviors, access to health services, but also by…social, political and economic factors", (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2018, p. vi). Immigration and the following displacement, are seen as social determinants of health. Evidence shows that the stressful conditions surrounding immigration can pose a threat to immigrant health (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2018). "Social, and cultural barriers to integration, low socioeconomic status, acculturation stress, exclusion and discrimination are examples of factors that impact the health of refugees and migrants" (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2018, p. vi).

Some individuals with immigrant background report feeling excluded from Norwegian society (Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care Services, 2015). Perceived social isolation and discrimination are negatively associated with health and well-being (Abebe, Lien, & Hjelde, 2014; Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care Services, 2015). The challenges and stressors related to negotiating between two cultures are referred to as acculturative stress (Tummala-Nara, Deshpande, & Kaur, 2016). Ongoing exposure to acculturative stressors and stress is associated with lower reported mental health status among immigrants (Sam & Berry, 1995). Immigrant mental health status can be influenced by language difficulties, low education levels, problems getting foreign degrees approved, lack of work experience in Norway, cultural shock, job insecurity, homesickness and a lack of social network (Abebe, 2010). Getting accustomed to new food, language, values and norms can also be experienced as stressful (Van der Zee, Benet-Martinez & Van Oudenhoven, 2016).

Young immigrant women from Asia and Africa represent a group with lower employment and participation in Norwegian society. There is little qualitative research in the way of young women's experiences regarding integration and the processes involved. Experiences regarding this process are important for understanding how women negotiate cultures and which resources they have at their disposal for successfully negotiating this process. My study attempts to explore the experiences of young, immigrant women in Norway regarding the process of negotiation between cultures with a focus on the resources the women have available.

1.3 Summary of thesis contents

In the introduction chapter, I discussed and defined key terms regarding my research question topic. I also provided background information regarding key topics regarding immigration

and integration in Norway. I also highlighted the importance of integration and resources for negotiating cultures in light of health promotion. In the following chapter, I discuss the theoretical frameworks of acculturation and salutogenesis used to guide this study. In the literature review, I present studies done in the field surrounding my research topic and discuss gaps in the existing research. I then present the purpose of my study and my research question. The methods section discusses which methods I utilized and why. In the results section, I provide the findings from observations, interviews and the analysis. In the discussion chapter, I discuss the results in relationship to previous findings and theory as well as the limitations of my study, application to health promotion and recommendations for further research. The conclusion summarizes the main ideas and takeaways from this study.

2.0 Theoretical frameworks

The researcher's choice of theory influences both the research process and the development of the research questions themselves (Creswell 2014). Theoretical frameworks provide the context and background for discussing findings and generating themes (Creswell, 2014). The use of theoretical frameworks also helps the reader understand the researcher's worldview, which shape the study and its interpretations (Silverman, 2013).

In this chapter, I discuss the theoretical frameworks I used to inform my study. My study did not seek to quantify or measure aspects of acculturation or salutogenesis, but rather included key aspects of the two theories as a guide in developing my study as well as for understanding and explaining my findings. My study incorporates concepts from the theories of acculturation and salutogenesis for exploring the experiences of young immigrant women negotiating cultures in Norway. Combining salutogenesis and acculturation, helps move acculturation research in the direction of health promotion, focusing on the resources immigrants have at their disposal, for successfully taking control of their own lives and health.

2.1 Acculturation theory

Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits (1936) defined acculturation as "those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups" (p. 149). Acculturation is considered a two-way process affecting both the incoming (immigrant) and receiving (host) populations presenting economic and social challenges for society (Dimitrova, Chasiotis, Bender, & Van de Vijer, 2014). The process of acculturation occurs at both the individual and group levels (Sam, 2006). Changes at the individual level include identity, values, attitudes and behaviors and are studied in the field of psychology (Berry & Sam, 2016b; Sam, 2006; Vijver, Berry & Celenk, 2016). Acculturative changes on the group level are studied in the fields of anthropology and sociology (Vijver, et al., 2016) and include physical (i.e. housing), biological, political, economic, social and cultural changes (Berry, 1990; Berry & Sam, 2016b; Sam, 2006).

The concept of acculturation is a complex, two-dimensional process, with changes occurring at both the individual and group levels and interaction between the two levels (Berry & Sam, 2016b). The two levels are interrelated, so factors on the group level are necessary for understanding the phenomena on the individual level (Vijver et al., 2016). The changes that

result from intercultural contact, lead to both cultural (group level) and psychological (individual level) changes and various forms of adaptation (Berry & Sam, 2016b). Acculturation rate varies due to factors such as characteristics of the host society, characteristics of the immigrant culture, and differences amongst individuals themselves (Van de Vijver et al., 2016). The general framework below **(Figure 1)** helps to conceptualize the components of acculturation and relationships.
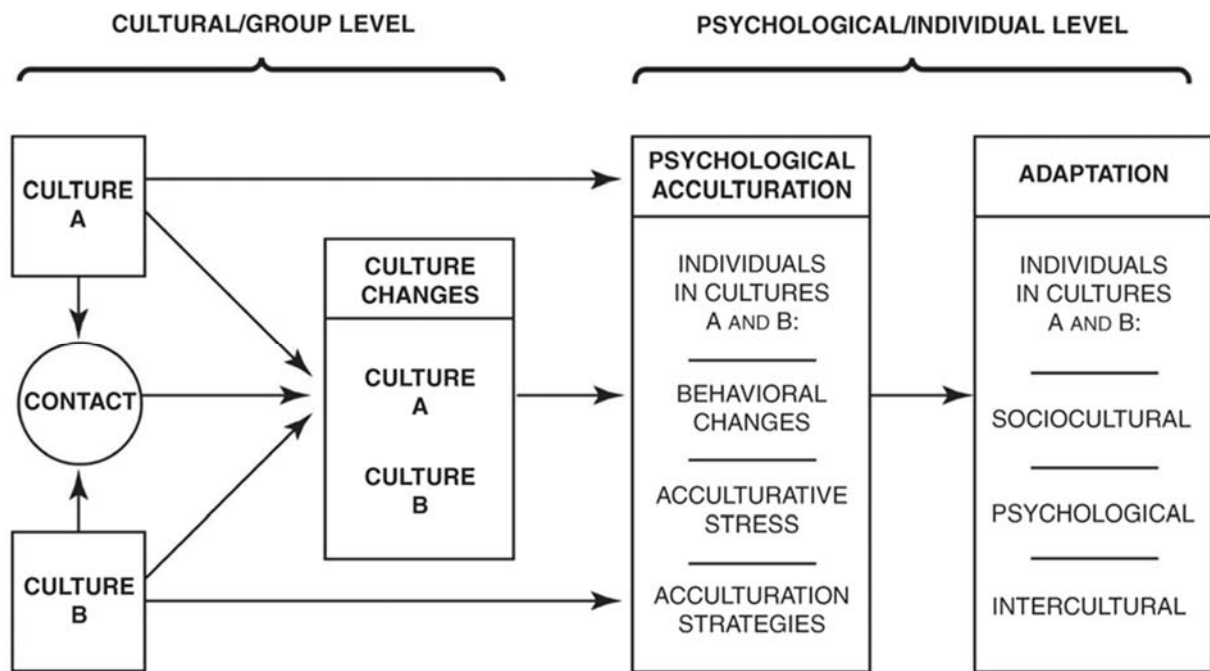
Figure 1: Framework for conceptualizing acculturation components and relationships (Berry & Sam, 2016, p. 14)

Berry (1997) developed four acculturation strategies to explain the process of psychological acculturation at the individual level. These strategies are a component of psychological acculturation in the general acculturation framework. The four-acculturation strategies are assimilation, separation, integration and marginalization. Assimilation is when individuals identify only with the dominant (host) culture, abandoning their ethnic culture (Berry, 2006b). Separation occurs when individuals orient themselves in their ethnic culture only, separating themselves from the dominant culture. Integration occurs when individuals are oriented in both cultures, retaining aspects of their ethnic culture and at the same time adopting parts of the dominant culture. Lastly, marginalization occurs when individuals are separated from both their ethnic and the dominant culture (Berry, 2006b). The figure below **(Figure 2)** shows the interplay of individual acculturation strategies with the strategies of the larger society.

ISSUE 1:

MAINTENANCE OF HERITAGE CULTURE AND IDENTITY

ISSUE 2:

RELATIONSHIPS SOUGHT AMONG GROUPS

+ ←——————→ −   + ←——————→ −

INTEGRATION   ASSIMILATION   MULTI-CULTURALISM   MELTING POT

SEPARATION   MARGINAL-IZATION   SEGREGATION   EXCLUSION

STRATEGIES OF ETHNOCULTURAL GROUPS

STRATEGIES OF LARGER SOCIETY
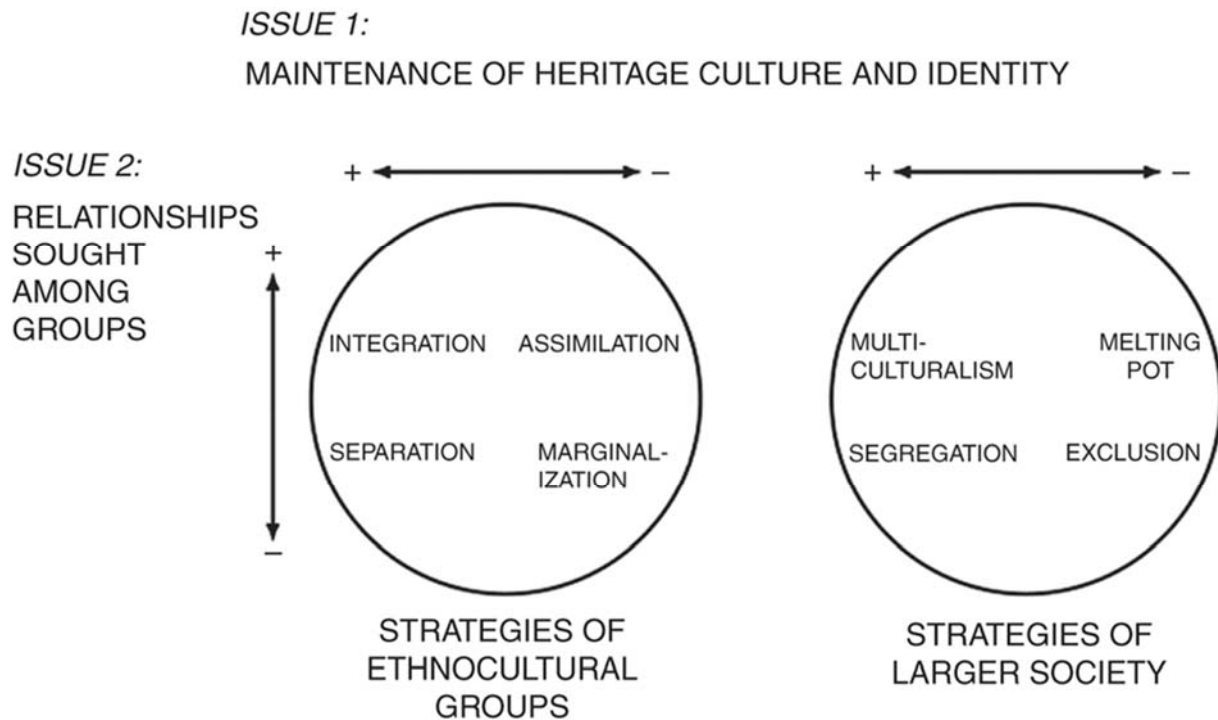
Figure 2: Acculturation strategies in ethnocultural groups and the larger society (Berry & Sam, 2016, p. 22)

While integration is the strategy most associated with health and well-being at the individual level, it is dependent on the receptiveness and inclusiveness of the host culture (Berry, 1990; Berry & Sam, 1997; Berry, et al., 2006; Sam & Berry, 2010). Berry (2005) emphasized the importance of multicultural societies and mutual accommodation between groups for successful integration. Host societies need to view diversity as a positive, and employ policies that support cultural maintenance and equal participation in society (Berry, 2005).

2.1.1 Biculturalism

Biculturalism is often used interchangeably with the term integration in acculturation literature (Hong, Morris, Chiu, & Benet-Martinez, 2000). Someone who is bicultural has been exposed to and internalized at least two cultures (Hong et al., 2000). There are several aspects to consider regarding biculturalism including identity, behavior, and the degree of conflict between cultures or cultural distance (Benet-Martinez & Van Oudenhoven, 2016). Cultural distance refers to how different the host and ethnic cultures are regarding values, beliefs and norms (Van de Vijver et al., 2016). Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee, and Morris (2002) developed the bicultural identity integration (BII) scale, which has been widely used in the field of biculturalism. The BII explains how blended individuals' cultural identities are versus fragmented and compartmentalized. It also considers perceptions of compatibility or harmony

versus opposition and conflict between individuals' cultures (Benet-Martinez, 2012; Ward, Ng Tseung-Wong, Szabo, Qumseya, & Bhowon, 2018). Individuals who are considered blended biculturals, identify equally with the host culture and their ethnic culture and perceive compatibility or harmony versus conflict between the two cultures (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997). Alternating biculturals switch between cultures based on cultural cues and context (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997). This process of alternating between different cultures is also referred to as cultural frame switching (Hong et al., 2000, Van de Zee, et al., 2016). Overall, biculturalism is concerned with how individuals combine or alternate between the host culture and their ethnic culture (Van De Vijver et al., 2016).

According to, Bhatia and Ram (2009) acculturation research and theory has historically viewed acculturation as a linear process with a fixed outcome such as integration. In addition, there has been little focus on the actual of process of acculturation and the complexity of cultural, social and political contextual factors affecting this process. They also criticize acculturation research and theory for assuming that all immigrants go through the same psychological processes regarding acculturation despite varying cultural backgrounds and life situations (Bhatia & Ram, 2009). Based on immigrant experiences in their own research, Bhatia and Ram (2009) view acculturation as a constant negotiation "between here and there, past and present, homeland and host land, self and other", (p. 141-142), which they felt the existing literature neglected to recognize. They proposed that the acculturation experience is a continuous negotiation influenced by social and structural context rather than a fixed outcome such as integration (Bhatia & Ram, 2009). Acculturation as a field, is also criticized for being top-down focused instead of generating theory from the bottom-up with qualitative research from immigrant perspectives (Stuart & Ward, 2011). Despite the criticisms and limitations of traditional acculturation models, Berry's acculturation framework (1997) represents important aspects and goals of the acculturation process. Using Berry's acculturation model (1997) as a framework, I also take into consideration the ongoing nature of the acculturation process highlighted by Bhatia & Ram (2009) and the complex contextual factors that influence it.

2.2 Salutogenic theory

The salutogenic theory or salutogenesis focuses on the origin of health and how one uses the resources they have available for achieving better health (Mittelmark & Bauer, 2017). Aaron Antonovsky developed the salutogenic theory in the 1970s. His research, caused him to wonder how some individuals managed to stay healthy and thrive when faced with adversity, while others did not (Vinje, Langeland, & Bull, 2017). He was interested in finding out what

factors led to health. He developed the theory as an alternative to the traditional pathogenic mindset in the medical field, which is concerned with the origin of disease and its risk factors. Historically, the medical field has focused on the assumption that stress leads to disease (Mittelmark & Bauer, 2017). Antonovsky challenged this mindset by proposing that stress is a normal part of life (Eriksson, 2017). He saw individuals in constant interaction with their environment and saw chaos and change as normal parts of life (Eriksson, 2017).

Antonovsky saw health existing on a continuum, which he referred to as the Ease/Dis-ease continuum. On this continuum, individuals move between two poles, health and disease (Lindström & Eriksson, 2005). The challenge for the individual, is to manage the chaos of everyday life with the resources they have available, preventing stress from becoming tension and moving towards health on the Ease/Dis-ease continuum (Mittelmark & Bauer, 2017). Antonovsky was specifically interested in how people managed the stress of daily life to avoid tension. He developed the concept of Sense of Coherence (SOC) to describe how individuals managed and coped with the chaos of life (Eriksson, 2017).

2.2.1 Sense of coherence (SOC)

Sense of coherence is defined as:

> "a global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a pervasive, enduring thorough dynamic feeling of confidence that one's internal and external environments are predictable and that there is a high probability that things will work out as well as they can reasonably be expected" (Antonovksy, 1979, p. 123).

In 1979, Antonovsky published Health, Stress and Coping in which he presented the salutogenic model with the sense of coherence (SOC) as a key concept in the model (Mittelmark & Bauer, 2017). The salutogenic model focuses on the origins of well-being (Antonovksy, 1987). He presented the idea that an individual's life experiences make up their sense of coherence (SOC) (Mittelmark & Bauer, 2017) and used the terms comprehensibility, manageability and meaning to describe the components making up the SOC (Lindstrom & Eriksson, 2005). In other words, SOC is a measure of the degree to which a person comprehends or understands their situation, their capacity to assess and use resources available to them and their capacity to find meaning in their situation to move towards health on the Ease/Dis-ease continuum (Lindström & Eriksson, 2005). While SOC develops throughout the entirety of life, it appears to stabilize in adulthood (Antonovsky, 1979) or more specifically around age 30 (Antonovsky, 1987). A strong SOC is connected with wellness and

good health (Lindström & Eriksson, 2010). The strength of an individual's SOC is shaped by the both negative and positive life events encountered and the internal (e.g. personality) or external resources (e.g. social support) available to them. In short, salutogenesis proposes that the life events one encounters, as well as the resources they have available to them, make up a person's SOC. Antonovsky wrote that a strong SOC facilitates adaptive coping in stressful situations leading to positive health outcomes (Antonovsky, 1987). A strong SOC helps individuals to utilize resources at their disposal to cope with stressors they encounter in life and to manage tension (Mittelmark & Bauer, 2017). SOC and the utilization of resources for coping help to determine individuals' movement on the Ease/Dis-ease continuum (Lindström & Eriksson, 2005).

Below is a highly simplified depiction of the concepts and processes behind the Salutogenic Model, including SOC, which Antonovsky proposed in Health Stress and Coping (1979). The simplified model **(Figure 3)** shows that the availability of resistance resources (RR) **(see 2.2.2)** facilitates coping with stressors, increasing SOC, which further facilitates individuals to "reach out" and apply resources to appropriate stressors (Antonovsky, 1996). **(See Appendix 1 for a full diagram of the Salutogenic Model of Health).**

$$RR \rightarrow \uparrow SOC \rightarrow \uparrow \text{use of } RR \rightarrow \uparrow \text{Health}$$
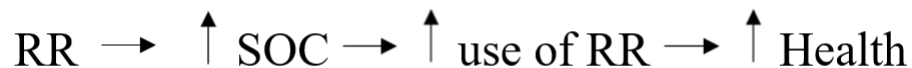
Figure 3: Highly Simplified Salutogenic Model of Health (Mittelmark, Bull, Daniel, & Urke, 2017, p. 71).

2.2.2 Generalized resistance resources (GRRs)

Antonovsky (1979; 1987) developed the idea of generalized resistance resources (GRRs), which "comprises the characteristics of a person, a group, or a community that facilitate the individual's abilities to cope effectively with stressors and contribute to the development of an individual's level of (SOC)" (Idan, Eriksson, & Al-Yagon, 2017, p. 57). According to Antonovsky, GRRs provide individuals with the life experiences that give consistency (comprehensibility), opportunity for participation and shaping outcomes (meaningfulness), as well as underload/overload balance regarding resources available for tackling demands (manageability) (Antonovsky 1987; Idan et al., 2017). As described above, these three factors contribute to the development of SOC (Idan et al., 2017). Emotional closeness, is an additional component of the SOC. It was added by Sagy and Antonovsky (2000) is important

for developing a sense of belonging regarding social groups and contributes to the meaningfulness component of SOC (Idan et al., 2017). Antonovsky (1979; 1987) identified resources as physical, material (e.g. money), cognitive (e.g. knowledge and intelligence), social (e.g. social support), cultural (e.g. connection to cultural roots, cultural stability), religious or philosophical, relational, inside individual themselves, in others around them or in the structure of the larger society (Idan et al., 2017). Below is a mapping sentence that Antonovsky created to depict what a GRR is **(Figure 4)**:

```
                        ⎧ 1. physical
                        ⎪ 2. biochemical
                        ⎪ 3. artifactual-material
                        ⎪ 4. cognitive              ⎫ characteristic
A GRR is a              ⎨ 5. emotional              ⎬ of an
                        ⎪ 6. valuative-attitudinal  ⎭
                        ⎪ 7. interpersonal-relational
                        ⎩ 8. macrosociocultural

⎧ 1. individual  ⎫
⎪ 2. primary group ⎬ that is      ⎧ 1. avoiding ⎫ a wide variety
⎪ 3. subculture  ⎪ effective in   ⎨ 2. combating ⎬ of stressors
⎩ 4. society    ⎭                ⎩             ⎭

        and thus preventing tension from being transformed into stress.
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Figure 4: Mapping sentence definition of GRRs (Antonovsky, 1979, p. 103)

According to Antonovsky, the occurrence of balance versus overload between resources and stressors is important for creating positive life experiences. Positive life experiences help individuals to create meaning in their life (Idan et al., 2017). In addition, the resources that individuals are able to access and mobilize help them to tackle life experiences, leading to mastery and the development of additional resources (Idan et al., 2017). In this way, salutogenic theory views stressors as potentially health promoting rather than a source of disease or risk factors (Idan et al., 2017).

2.3 Salutogenesis and culture

Antonovsky (1979) and later Mittelmark and Bull (2013), saw culture as an important determinant in an individual's life situation with important implications for SOC and health. While it was difficult to find a clear definition of culture from Antonovksy's writings, he wrote about culture's role in developing SOC (Mittelmark & Bauer, 2017; Mittelmark & Bull, 2013). Culture and historical context are core in the Salutogenic Model of Health and are seen as key factors in generating both stressors and resources (Mittelmark & Bauer, 2017).

According to Antonovsky, culture has the potential to weaken SOC through the presence of stressors and conflict or strengthen it through the availability of resources (Riedel, et al., 2011). He also saw culture as playing an important role in how individuals subjectively evaluate situations (Riedel, et al., 2011). Additionally, Antonovsky felt that immigration resulted in a radical change in an individual's sociocultural context, potentially threatening or weakening their SOC (Riedel, et al., 2011).

Salutogenesis is not without its critics. While Lindstrom, Eriksson, and Antonovsky himself viewed the SOC as a globally relevant, cross-cultural instrument (Lindstrom & Eriksson, 2005), other studies have shown variation in levels of SOC between cultural groups. Meaning, some cultures have been shown to have higher SOC than other cultures (Braun-Lewensohn & Sagy, 2011). There is also little research regarding salutogeneis and sense of coherence at the society level (Braun-Lewensohn & Sagy, 2011).

2.4 An integrative framework of acculturation and salutogenesis

Immigrating to a new country is a critical transition in life. Challenges related to immigration can outpace the development of GRRs and SOC (Bauer, 2017). The immigration experience may threaten the ability of immigrants to comprehend their situation and the availability of resources for coping (manageability). This may lead to a struggle to find meaning in their new life. However, if acculturation is successfully managed, immigration presents the opportunity to strengthen SOC through mastery and the development of additional resources (Riedel, et al., 2011).

In attempt to explain variation in results regarding immigrant mental health and move away from a focus on immigration as a source of stress and risk factor for health, Riedel et al., (2011) proposed a framework for integrating the theories of acculturation and salutogenesis **(See Appendix 2)**. The integrative framework assumes that immigration is not an inherent risk factor for mental health problems. The goal of their framework was "to explain how migrants are able to successfully adapt to new cultural contexts by productively managing tension states that cultural conflicts bring about" (Riedel et al., 2011, p. 556).

While the authors felt that the integrative framework of acculturation and salutogenesis was too complex to test empirically, they felt it has value for illustrating how the two theories interact, explaining the relationship between different acculturation strategies and SOC. Culture 1 in the model **(See Appendix 2)** represents the ethnic culture and Culture 2 the host culture. The authors proposed that individuals already have a SOC in culture 1 and the

strength of the SOC in culture 1 and GRRs available in culture 1 determine which acculturation strategy individuals choose. A strong SOC in culture 1 is more indicative of successful migrant adaptation (Riedel, et al., 2011). Acculturation strategies employed (e.g. integration, marginalization) help determine the acquisition of culture 2 resources (Riedel, et al., 2011). A positive acculturation outcome in culture 2 or the host culture is an additional resource for coping in the future (Riedel, et al., 2011). By focusing on the positive aspects that contribute to immigrants adaptation, salutogenesis moves acculturation theory in the direction of health promotion, helping to explain how individuals successfully adapt and integrate. It also encourages empowerment by building up the resources individuals have for controlling their lives and movement towards health.

This chapter summarized key theoretical concepts within acculturation, biculturalism and salutogenesis. Acculturation theory proposes that integrated/bicultural individuals have better health and well-being than individuals who pursue other acculturation strategies (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Van der Zee, et al., 2016). Salutogenesis is concerned with the positive factors that lead to health. Salutogenesis uses the SOC and the resources that strengthen SOC to explain how individuals cope with the stress of everyday life (Antonovsky 1987; Idan et al., 2017). The integrative framework of acculturation and salutogenesis combines the two theories focusing on the positive factors that facilitate immigrant coping during acculturation for better health outcomes (Reidel et al., 2011). In the following chapter, I present relevant literature regarding research within biculturalism and salutogenesis with a special focus on qualitative studies.

3.0 Literature review

The objective of a literature review is to identify relevant themes, conceptual models/theoretical frameworks and research gaps, which help to justify the focus of the study. Previous research also helps the researcher justify their methods and the context for interpreting findings (Ryan, Coughlin, & Cronin, 2007).

The study of acculturation is vast with research done on many different topics within the field. My study and literature search were limited to the topic of biculturalism within acculturation. Within this phenomenon, I was specifically interested in how young immigrant women experience negotiating between their ethnic cultures and the Norwegian culture in which they live. Using concepts surrounding the phenomena of negotiating cultures, salutogenesis and biculturalism, I identified key words to help locate relevant literature and research. I begin the next section by describing how I performed my literature review and move into summaries of important literature in the field of biculturalism, general qualitative research regarding acculturation experiences, salutogenesis and culture and finish with a summary of my literature review.

3.1 Literature search methods

My search focused on research regarding biculturalism, the experiences of young immigrant women negotiating between cultures and research on salutogenesis and culture. I focused on relevant research articles from the last ten years to provide a picture of the recent literature in the field. Older articles were included if they were seminal studies of particular importance to the field. I also included a doctoral thesis, as it was a qualitative study of relevance to my topic. Search results from Norway and Scandinavia were limited, so I included research from Canada, New Zealand and other Western countries as they have similar social structures and acculturation issues.

I performed a systematic search of the literature to ensure that I included as much relevant literature as possible. A systematic search begins by exploring keywords that are relevant for the research question. I used different combinations of the keywords immigrant, migrant, refugee, women, young women, experiences, culture, bicultural, cross-cultural, multi-cultural, acculturation, salutogenesis, sense of coherence, and resources. I searched first in ORIA through the University of Bergen for relevant literature to get a general idea of research on my topic. I then continued my search for peer-reviewed articles through specific electronic databases such as PsychInfo, Web of Science, Social Citations Index, PubMed and Proquest. I

found that PyschInfo and the Social Sciences Citation Index through Web of Science provided the most relevant results. I also searched reference lists of relevant articles and journals, books and literature reviews (Aveyard, 2014).

3.2 Review of literature

3.2.1 Biculturalism

This section focuses on the important and recent research done in the field of biculturalism. Phinney and Devich-Navarro (1997) performed a seminal study within the field of biculturalism. The aim of the study was to identify how minority adolescents dealt with being part of two cultures. The study was qualitative and interviewed 46 Mexican-American and 52 African-American adolescents. The findings revealed three types of bicultural strategies. Blended biculturals identified equally with their ethnic and host cultures and did not view the two cultures as conflicting. While, alternating biculturals found it hard to have two cultures at the same time, finding the cultures to be in conflict with one another. Alternating biculturals saw their two cultures as having distinct values, ideas and norms and they viewed themselves differently based on the context or situation. They often felt like one person at home and another at school. Essentially, their two cultures took turns in directing their thoughts and feelings and they switched cultures based on cultural cues in their social context (Phinney & Devich-Navaro, 1997). Seperated biculturals were found to not really be bicultural. They did not identify with the host country culture, and only identified with their ethnic culture (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997). While this study provided valuable insight into bicultural strategies for managing multiple cultures, it is criticized for confounding differences in identity and behavior, which are independent concepts in biculturalism (Van der Zee et al., 2016). The label of blended and alternating tap into different aspects of the bicultural experience and individuals engage in the behavior of cultural frame switching or identity switching based on the context of the situation (Van der Zee et al., 2016).

A doctoral thesis from the University of Toronto used eight in-depth interviews to explore the acculturation experiences of young Iranian women in Canada (Pajouhandeh, 2004). The women were in their early 20's and immigrated between the ages of 13-20. The study was interested in understanding how the women negotiated their identity after immigration. Self in flux and reconstructing the self were two main themes that emerged. The self in flux theme represented identity transformations due to changing cultural contexts (Pajouhandeh, 2004). They women reported difficulties regarding conflicting expectations between Iranian and

Canadian cultures, gender-based expectations, constructing "the self" in relation to what was expected and accepted by both cultures and experiences of being "the other" in relationships with Iranians and Canadians. The women experienced the remaking of "the self" as traumatic and struggled with ongoing cultural expectations, contradictions, complexities and uncertainty regarding their identity (Pajouhandeh, 2004). They reported developing fragmented selves as a method for coping with different expectations, and they often felt alienated or disconnected from both cultures. However, they also reported experiencing empowerment in various areas of their life as well. They had positive experiences regarding gaining independence, control and autonomy after moving away from family. The women also reported choosing friends and social situations where they felt understood and not judged (Pajouhandeh, 2004). This study highlights the complexity of negotiating cultures and the importance of contextual factors. The experiences of the women in this study suggest an ongoing negotiation and back and forth between cultures (Pajouhandeh, 2004). While this study was not peer-reviewed and a bit outdated, it represented a qualitative study regarding negotiating cultures with relevance to my study.

Using three samples of 975 immigrants, international students and ethnic minority groups in New Zealand, Ward, Stuart and Kus (2011) developed the Ethno-cultural Identity Conflict Scale (EICS) to measure cultural identity conflict. EIC is a type of identity crisis "related to less identity clarity, coherence, and integration and greater identity distress (Ward & Mak, 2016, p. 319). Results from testing the EICS agreed with research in the field, indicating that integrated immigrants experience less identity conflict than those who were separated, assimilated or marginalized (Ward, et al., 2011). Identity conflict was negatively associated with psychological and sociocultural adaptation in immigrants. A limitation of this study was that the EICS needs further testing regarding validity. The study was only measured in the context of one country. There is also some evidence that participants provided desirable answers. In light of the limitations, the authors suggest that EICS be used with caution (Ward, et al., 2011).

Stuart and Ward (2011) conducted a mixed methods study with open-ended survey responses, interviews, focus groups and projective techniques to explore the acculturation experiences of Muslim youth in New Zealand. They utilized a mixed methods approach in attempt to add more qualitative data to the field. One of the concepts they studied was the process of negotiating multiple social identities. Using thematic analysis, they found that young Muslims attempted to balance potentially competing demands from family, friends and their Muslim

community and the wider society. They also tried to balance multiple identities and retain religious and cultural elements when defining themselves and integrating into the wider society. The authors found that the process of achieving balance is reached through the use of three strategies: alternating, blending and minimizing differences. In alternating their identities, they reported sometimes being Muslim and other times being Kiwi. Some combined their Muslim-ness and Zealand-ness to form a blended or hybrid identity. Others minimized the differences and importance of cultural identity, viewing themselves as an individual (Stuart & Ward, 2011). The authors found that intergenerational conflict in regards to acculturation, exacerbated EIC. Family cohesion, ethnic identity centrality and ethnic group belonging served as protective factors (Stuart & Ward, 2011). One major limitation of this study is that it was conducted in New Zealand, which is a very tolerant, multicultural country. Research from the United Kingdom indicates that New Zealand Muslims experience less discrimination and have better adaptation than Muslims in the United Kingdom (Stuart & Ward, 2011), so the transferability of findings varies by context.

Another study conducted by Nguyen and Benet-Martinez (2013), was a meta-analysis of 83 studies in the field of biculturalism with the aim to address the issue of what impact (if any) that biculturalism has on individuals' adjustment. Their results found a strong, significant and positive association between biculturalism and psychological and sociocultural adjustment. Having two cultures or being bicultural was associated with better adjustment than having only one culture (dominant or heritage) (Nguyen & Benet-Martinez, 2013). Based on their findings, they felt that better adjusted individuals with higher self-esteem, may be more likely to be bicultural. They proposed that better adjusted individuals are able to use resources for coping with adaptation and participating in both cultures. They also highlighted the importance of the dominant group's attitude towards acculturation (Nguyen & Benet-Martinez, 2013). Lastly, the researchers found that one's ideal acculturation strategy may not be the strategy that they use in reality. A limitation of the meta-analysis is the limitations of the individual studies included. There was also an over-reliance on Latin and Asian samples in the studies included. Lastly, the studies analyzed were correlational and cross-sectional, so the directionally and causality regarding biculturalism could not be studied (Nguyen & Benet-Martinez, 2013).

Ward and Mak (2016) reviewed unpublished studies from New Zealand examining identity negotiation for immigrant groups. According to Ward, Szabo, Tseung-Wong and Bhowon (2014) the utilization of both hybrid or alternating strategies is predicative of immigrants'

motivation to integrate. The hybrid strategy involved combining or blending individuals'
identities into an integrated, bicultural identity, and was associated with well-being. While the
alternating strategy was associated with more ethnocultural conflict (EIC) and lower levels of
life satisfaction (Ward, et al., 2014). In another study, Qumseya and Ward (2015) found that
Arab youth who perceived their social environment as embracing cultural diversity, were
more likely to combine or blend their identities and have less identity conflict. This highlights
the importance of societies who embrace diversity for supporting integration (Ward & Mak,
2016).

Ward, Tseung-Wong, Szabo, Qumseya, and Bhowon (2018), aimed to address the question of
how individuals actually achieve integration. They proposed that individuals utilized either a
hybrid or alternating identity style for managing multicultural identities in a desire to achieve
integration. They conducted two studies in an effort to advance theory and examine the
strategies and processes used to achieve integration. Their samples were diverse, including
first and second-generation immigrants from New Zealand, Mauritius, and Israel. They refer
to a blended identity as a hybrid identity in which individuals pick and choose elements from
two or more cultures and blend them in a way that suits the individual (Ward et al., 2018, pg.
1405). In their first study, they presented the construction of the Multicultural Identity Styles
Scale (MISS) and validation of the Hybrid Identity Style (HIS) and Alternating Identity Style
(AIS) subscales. They found that the HIS was more associated with blendedness assessed
with the Bicultural Identity Integration Scale (BIIS) and more common with second-
generation immigrants compared to first-generation immigrants (Ward et al., 2018). AIS was
associated with less cultural harmony and was more common with first-generation
immigrants. The HIS seemed to be associated with positive identity and well-being outcomes.
Results indicated that AIS has negative implications for identity and adjustment and might not
really be an acculturation strategy at all as individuals retain two cultures (Ward et al., 2018).
The HIS was more common in older participants indicating it as a possibly more mature
response. The authors also concluded that alternating occurs in both the behavior and identity
domains unlike (Benet-Martinez, 2012) who confined alternating to the behavioral domain.
Their second study proposed and tested a mediational model in which cultural identity
outcomes mediate the impact of cultural identity styles on well-being. Using PATH analysis,
they found motivation to integrate predicted the use of both the HIS and AIS (Ward et al.,
2018). Overall, the HIS was associated with more cultural identity combining and better well-
being. The AIS was associated with more cultural identity conflict and poorer psychological

adaptation. The authors suggest that alternating identities comes with a psychological cost (Ward et al., 2018). These studies provide an advancement in the theoretical knowledge on biculturalism, focusing on the process of negotiating cultural identities (Ward et al., 2018). Strengths of the study include external validity across diverse ethnic backgrounds, religious, and sociopolitical settings. Weaknesses include the use of convenience samples and differences among recruitment of samples and age ranges. The authors suggest pursuing more qualitative research for thicker descriptions of identity styles (Ward et al., 2018).

Ozyurt (2013) conducted a qualitative study to examine how Muslim women in the Netherlands and United States reconstruct their identities and negotiate between their traditional and modern identities. The study looked at how the women created a self-narrative about their bicultural experience and highlighted the influence of contextual factors on the negotiation process for bicultural individuals. Muslim women in the US developed hybrid identities as they experienced American civic culture and religious and cultural values in Islam to be compatible (Ozyurt, 2013). However, Muslim women in the Netherlands described more marginalization and incompatibility between cultures. The Muslim women in the Netherlands experienced an in-between-ness and found it difficult to develop a bicultural self. However, two women living in the Netherlands were able to successfully manage negotiating between two identities rather than merging them. They accomplished this by perceiving "themselves as cultural mediators and moved between the two cultures, two identities and two worldviews to increase understanding, cooperation and commitment between them" (Ozyurt, 2013, p. 261). By mediating the separate identities, the women were able to create a self-narrative regarding who they are and how they belong in two separate cultures at the same time. Using these self-narratives, they were able to function in both communities without experiencing alienation. This study explains how Muslim women are able to successfully manage and negotiate two competing cultural identities, using psychological and cognitive strategies to develop a self-narrative as a mediator between the two cultures (Ozyurt, 2013).

Another qualitative study performed 10 in-depth interviews with second generation Eritrean and Ethiopian young women in Canada regarding the process of "bridging several worlds" (i.e. cultures) in developing their identities (Goitom, 2018). The interviews looked at their social and cultural experiences regarding maintaining their traditional culture. The complexities of family relationships emerged as a major category in this study. Parents, who maintained a strong connection to their traditional culture, also expected their daughters to do

so. Conflict occurred when the parents were afraid of losing their daughters to the host culture, which happened in part due to daughters acculturating faster than their parents (Goitom, 2018). Regarding cultural resistance, communication was found to help create a balance between conflict and harmony in families. The author concluded that this study highlighted the need for more understanding regarding the role of intergenerational relationships and values in immigrant families. Findings can contribute to research and clinical practice regarding immigration and the role of immigrant families in the development of cultural identity and the ongoing settlement process (Goitom, 2018).

An older qualitative study in the US, studied the cultural adjustment of eight Japanese immigrant youth (Yeh, Arora, Inose, Okubo, Li & Greene, 2003). Utilizing semi-structured interviews, the authors explored the experiences of the youth with respect to adjusting to life in the US, dealing with discrimination and coping with cultural challenges. The study attempted to understand how the youth negotiated competing and conflicting cultural contexts. The results indicated that the youth maintained and managed bicultural identities to help them cope. They also reported experiencing some degree of racism, prejudice, language barriers and conflict regarding identity and values. Regarding racism and prejudice, youth were more likely to report seeing it happen to others than themselves. However, over half of the youth reported that their experience of living in the US was positive. They relied mostly on friends for support. A few of the youth reported that it was important to have friends with similar cross-cultural adjustment problems to talk with. The studied also highlighted the importance in considering culture when interpreting the results, as it is not always deemed appropriate in some cultures to discuss family and issues with others, which could affect the interview responses (Yeh, et al., 2003).

3.2.2   Qualitative research and acculturation experiences

This section summarizes general qualitative research my literature search uncovered regarding acculturation experiences and resources for managing the acculturation process. My research returned results, which focused more on the outcomes of adaptation and adjustment rather than the ongoing process of negotiating cultural identities.

A qualitative study from Norway, utilized in-depth interviews with 14 Filipino immigrant women ages of 24-49 regarding juggling multiple transnational roles and looked at impact of contextual factors on stress, distress and coping with living abroad (Straiton, Ledesma & Donnelly, 2017). The results indicated that all of the women experienced some degree of

stress or distress related to acquiring a sense of belonging and securing a future for themselves in Norway. Their distress was increased by juggling multiple roles such as workers, breadwinners, daughters, wives and mothers. Religion and support from friends and family helped the women cope with the challenges of being immigrant women (Straiton et al., 2017). Common themes included missing their home country, family and feeling lonely. The women reported that frequent contact with family in the home country helped them to maintain family ties (Straiton et al., 2017). Family members and a close-knit network of Filipinos in Norway served as a protective buffer for the women's loneliness and adjustment and the church was a network for making new friends and support (Straiton et al., 2017). According to the women, the Norwegian language was the most important aspect of functioning in Norwegian society. However, even those who were proficient in Norwegian, experienced feelings of alienation (Straiton et al., 2017). The women also experienced a degree of stereotyping related to their ethnicity and gender. Finding initial work was a reported stressor. Many of the women were in jobs lower than their education or experience from their home country and struggled with an uphill battle to obtain the additional education necessary to pursue a career in Norway (Straiton et al., 2017). The authors found that the women adapted to being away from family and to the new culture. Even though the women in the study faced pressures from their competing roles, the researchers concluded that they displayed resilience and strength. The women reported positive mental health experiences such as empowerment, independence and growth as a result of the their experiences as an immigrant women (Straiton et al., 2017). This study emphasizes the importance of the context of young immigrant women's lives for understanding the impact on mental health and coping (Straiton et al., 2017).

Sinacore, Titus and Hofman, examined the roles of relationships in the cultural transitioning of immigrant women (2013). They employed a phenomenological methodology with semi-structured interviews, focusing on women's experiences of transitioning to Canadian society in the Quebec area. The study found that it was important to consider gender role expectations in the home culture versus the host country culture when attempting to understand how immigrant women negotiate transitioning cultures. Family members were identified by the women as key to developing their social networks and negotiating cultural differences. However, depending on how supportive family members were of their integration, they could facilitate or hinder the women's cultural transition. If the women did not receive support from their own cultural community or family, peer relationships were important for exploring opportunities in the host country (Sinacore et al., 2013). Women coming from traditional

cultures, with defined gender roles, reported that relationships with peers who shared non-traditional values were important to their cultural transitioning (Sinacore et al., 2013). Some women also reported feeling disappointed when they experienced stereotyping, discrimination and gender bias as they did not expect to experience this in Canadian society. Overall, the women reported difficulty establishing peer relationships with Canadians, which they considered key to transitioning cultures (Sincacore et al., 2013). The experience of being an insider versus an outsider was identified as a key transitioning factor in this study. This study found that societal, educational, cultural community, and familial contexts are an important consideration as they can either facilitate or hinder cultural transitioning for immigrant women (Sinacore et al., 2013).

In a literature review of the experiences of immigrant women in Canada, Rezazadeh and Hoover (2018) looked to describe the factors that affected all aspects of the adjustment and well-being of immigrant women. They analyzed 166 peer-reviewed articles, all of which described some aspect of foreign-born women's experiences in Canada. I focused on the thirty-nine articles in the review, which addressed cultural transitioning. The review of cultural transitioning literature found that foreign-born women experienced both opportunities and challenges as they transitioned to life in Canada. This transitioning required that they navigate new roles, new language, identities and social ties. This had the potential to affect the women's relationships with their families and cultural groups in complex ways. The review also found that foreign-born women showed a strong desire to participate in Canadian society through work and volunteering as well as a desire to learn the language (Rezazadeh & Hoover, 2018). Those women who were visible minorities, reported experiencing marginalization and discrimination in various contexts. The review found that women experienced more discrimination at the group or society level versus the individual level (Rezazadeh & Hoover, 2018). The women tended to minimize their personal experience with discrimination, but when they did experience discrimination, it pushed them to identify more strongly with their ethnic communities, retaining their ethnic culture. The review highlights a need for more studies to explore the impact of discrimination and marginalization on women's adjustment and well-being (Rezazadeh & Hoover, 2018). Some of the research from this review was a bit outdated, which should be taken into consideration regarding its current relevance.

3.2.3   Salutogenesis and culture

This section highlights the research my literature search uncovered regarding salutogenesis and the role of culture in developing SOC. Benz, Bull, Mittelmark & Vaandrager, (2014) performed a synthesis of Anthony Antonovsky's writings exploring the role of culture in his work. Overall, he wrote extensively regarding how one's life situation influences the development of SOC and wrote about social and demographic factors such as culture, social position, gender, age and genetics (Benz et al., 2014). His writings focused on the role of culture in shaping life situations, giving rise to stressors and resources, contributing to predictable life experiences, providing balance between resources and stressors, developing meaningful roles, facilitating the development of the sense of coherence and shaping perceptions of health and well-being. The synthesis of Antonovsky's writings, found that cultural stress is an issue for immigrants and minority groups (Benz et al., 2014). He also looked at the potential for stress due to rapid cultural change associated with immigration and health consequences due to adjusting to society's new values, demands and expectations (Benz et al., 2014). The authors indicated that he viewed complex cultures as having the potential to increase stress due to many norms and values. According to the synthesis, he also saw culture or specifically cultural stability as an important asset or GRR. Where, individuals, who are not integrated, are constantly confronted with new and incomprehensible information and feel powerless in society. On the other hand, more integrated minorities and immigrants, perceive their environment as understandable and manageable (Benz et al., 2014). However, he saw that it is not always easy for cultural minorities to participate in mainstream society as participation is dependent on the receptiveness of the majority culture. According to Benz et al. (2014), limited or no access to cultural institutions and a limited voice in mainstream society can lead to feelings of marginalization, which is an integration strategy associated with poorer health. A limitation of this synthesis is the interpretation regarded to explore Antonovksy's ideas about culture due in part to his changing use of terminology. The authors of this synthesis also found that Antonovksy wrote disjointedly about culture, never focusing an entire piece on culture.

Braun-Lewensohn & Sagy (2011), explored the role of the culture in determining the resources most appropriate for preventing stress from becoming tension. In the study, they explored the role of resources in the aftermath of a stressful bush fire among young people from three different cultural groups in Mount Carmel, Israel. They compared personal and community SOC as well as stress reactions across the cultures. The three cultures examined were Jews, Muslims and Druze during a bush fire in December 2010, which destroyed many

homes and displaced families. Results showed that personal SOC was the strongest predictor of stress reactions across all three of the cultures. Community SOC only played a significant role for the Druze, which the authors hypothesized was due to the context of their small, closed ethnic community (Braun-Lewensohn & Sagy, 2011). The authors concluded that a stable, multicultural community protected young people from stressors and lead to comprehensibility (Braun-Lewensohn & Sagy, 2011). This study also highlights the importance of context regarding Community SOC.

He, Lopez and Leigh (2012) conducted a qualitative study to look at acculturative stress and Sense of Coherence (SOC) in Chinese nursing students in Australia. They found that Chinese immigrant nursing students in Australis had a moderate amount of accelerative stress and sense of coherence. Sense of coherence was found to correlate negatively with level of acculturative stress (He et al., 2012), which agreed with other literature in the field (Lindstrom & Eriksson, 2005). The authors concluded that if SOC is a coping mechanism and a person with a high SOC sees life as predictable and manageable, they are less likely to see stressful situations as threatening. While there were limitations regarding self-reporting surveys and cross-cultural applicability of instruments, the study provides some understanding regarding the association between acculturative stress and sense of coherence (He et al., 2012).

Bonmati-Tomas, Malagon-Aguilera, Bosch-Farre, Gelabert-Vilella, Juvinya-Canal, & Gil (2016), applied a salutogenic approach to exploring immigrant women's experience of health inequities. They pointed out in their study that acculturation research has tended to focus on the needs of immigrant women and not their assets, this study employed an assets analysis for a health promotion focus on interventions to reduce health inequalities. The study utilized focus groups and in-depth interviews (Bonmati-Tomas et al., 2016). The aim of the study was to describe the women's assets using the salutogenic approach and assets model. They interpreted the results with a phenomenological focus, identifying assets on the internal, community and institutional levels. The study found, that despite the challenges immigrant women face, they were aware of the assets they possessed such as high optimism, strong capacity for struggle, self-initiative, religious beliefs, social support and concern for their children's future (Bonmati-Tomas et al., 2016). The authors suggest that using a salutogenic approach can help immigrant women recognize their own assets enabling them to make better use of their resources, increasing their self-esteem and SOC. Helping the immigrant women identify their resources empowers them to take control of their own health and life. A main limitation in this study was the participants' very basic level of Spanish, which may have

affected the participants' understanding and expression of their thoughts (Bonmati-Tomas et al., 2016). While this study has a different aim than my study, I decided to include it as an example of how salutogenic theory with an asset focus can be applied to immigrant women's experiences of coping with life abroad.

Riedel, et al., (2011) performed a review of literature and found that research published regarding immigrant mental health and resources for coping has produced variable results. They suggest that there is a need for further empirical knowledge regarding the role of SOC for understanding the acculturative process. The authors further highlight that acculturation and SOC research can be used by community practitioners and policy makers for increasing immigrant SOC. Community-level interventions can help immigrants to identify and strengthen their resources for coping thereby helping them to comprehend, manage and find meaning in their new society (Riedel, et al., 2011).

According to Aper, Sevenants, Budts, Luyckx, and Moons (2016), there is also little in-depth information available regarding the factors that form SOC. In addition, studies examining the role of life events and resources is mainly quantitative (Aper et al., 2016). According to Aper et al. (2016), SOC is a subjective, complex and context-bound concept that qualitative research can help to explore, deepening the current understanding of the role of life events and resources. Findings from qualitative studies can help health professionals strengthen existing resources or make resources available to young people (Aper et al., 2016).

3.2.4   Literature review summary

The studies I reviewed show that contextual factors such as the perceived distance between cultural values and the receptiveness of host cultures are important to consider when exploring how immigrants negotiate between cultures (Goitom, 2018; Ozyurt, 2013; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Rezazadeh & Hoover, 2018; Sinacore et al., 2013; Straiton et al., 2017). Competing roles and values between the host and ethnic culture affect cultural transitioning and negotiation (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997). There is also evidence that individuals use various acculturating styles such as hybrid/blended, alternating and separated (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Ward et al., 2018). Both acculturation and salutogenic studies indicate the importance of the presence of resources for negotiating cultures (Benz et al., 2014; Bonmati-Tomas, et al., 2016; Riedell, et al., 2011; Sinacore et al., 2013; Straiton et al., 2017)

In addition, previous research has focused more attention on acculturation outcomes rather than qualitative experiences regarding the process of acculturation (Bhatia & Ram, 2001; Hong et al., 2000). Traditional acculturation frameworks and literature are also criticized for their linear view of the acculturation process as there is growing evidence that negotiating cultures is an ongoing process (Bhatia & Ram, 2009; Pajouhandeh, 2004) with many different trajectories (Bhatia & Ram, 2009). Acculturation research has also tended to focus on the problems or risk factors (Riedel et al., 2011) in a group and not on the strengths and resources that a group possesses (Sam, 2006). Despite, the important role that Antonovksy felt that culture played in developing resources and SOC, little research has been done regarding this theme (Mittelmark & Bauer, 2017). While salutogenic research indicates that culture is important for health and that a stable culture and social support help to strengthen an individual's SOC, more qualitative research is needed to understand the role of life events and resources (Aper et al., 2016).

Further, some of the qualitative research I uncovered from my literature review, revealed more of a focus on adaptation and transitioning cultures versus negotiating cultures, but there was some overlap in terminology. In my search, I found that some authors used "navigating" cultures while other authors used the term "negotiating" cultures to refer to the same process of negotiating cultural identities. My search also uncovered that much of the existing literature on immigrant women focuses on issues regarding access to health care, health status, and reproductive issues with little focus on their experiences regarding the ongoing process of negotiating cultures.

In summary, young, refugee women from Asia and Africa represent an important group for integration and inclusion in Norwegian society (Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, 2013). The period between adolescence and adulthood represents a critical period of transition in which cultural conflicts and ethnic identity issues can arise (Antonovksy, 1979). Research shows that complex, multicultural identities may play an important part in forming young peoples' identities (Gyberg, Frisen, Syed, Wangquist, & Svensson, 2018). However, there is little qualitative research regarding young women's experiences regarding the process of negotiating cultures in Norway. Experiences regarding this process are important for understanding how community interventions can better empower young immigrant women during a pivotal time in their lives.

3.3 Purpose of study

My study aims to explore the experiences of young immigrant women in Norway regarding negotiating between their ethnic cultures and the Norwegian culture. Using acculturation and salutogenesis as my theoretical frameworks, I will explore young immigrant women in Norway's experiences regarding acculturation and bicultural strategies as well as the resources they have available for negotiating the ongoing process of acculturation.

3.4 Research question

What are young, immigrant women's perspectives and experiences regarding negotiating between their ethnic culture and the Norwegian culture?

4.0 Methods

In this chapter, I will present the philosophical assumptions behind my study as well as the methodologies and methods applied. In addition, I will discuss my data analysis methods as well as quality considerations and ethical issues.

4.1 Scientific theory

"Effective scientific theories magnify understanding, help supply legitimate explanations, and assist in formulating predictions" (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2015, p. 1). Scientific theory is a goal or product of science and produces new knowledge and predictions (Standford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2015). As a field, scientific theory is concerned with the scientific processes and methods utilized for gathering and developing new knowledge (Aadland, 2011). Scientific methods are the means by which scientific theory is tested (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2015).

4.1.1 Epistemology

Epistemology provides information about the researcher's own philosophical assumptions, which inform the methodologies utilized and the production of knowledge (Carter & Little, 2007). The philosophical assumptions underlying the study are the basis for the research questions and methods employed. Researchers' own backgrounds, preferences and experiences influence which philosophical assumptions are chosen (Creswell, 2014). It is important to thoroughly explain the philosophical assumptions behind the study, so readers are aware of underlying assumption and can evaluate the quality and correctness of the methods (Creswell, 2014).

4.1.1.1 Phenomenology

This study employed a phenomenological philosophical approach. Phenomenology is both a philosophical assumption and a methodology (Creswell, 2014). The goal of phenomenology is to "describe the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by the participants" (Creswell, 2014, p. 14). Phenomenology helps to make sense of the social world and assumes that individuals' experiences and knowledge are influenced by social, contextual and biographical factors (Eberle, 2015). Considering the context of an individual's experiences, allows phenomenology to explore the complexity of situations (Sloan & Bowe, 2013). While it is not possible to truly access others' experiences, the goal of phenomenology

is to reconstruct individuals'' subjective meanings of social phenomena as closely as possible (Eberle, 2015).

Phenomenology was an appropriate choice for my study as I was interested in young immigrant women experiences regarding the phenomenon of negotiating between two or more cultures in Norway. It is important to note that I used a phenomenological approach to designing my study and gathering the data, however my study was not a true or pure phenomenological study.

4.2 Methodology

Methodology refers to the underlying process, theoretical assumptions and procedures a researcher uses to approach problems and search for answers (Sloan & Bowe, 2013). It provides guidance and justification for the actual methods employed in a research project (Carter & Little, 2007).

4.2.1 Qualitative design

The purpose of qualitative research is to explore and understand individuals or groups' perceptions regarding social and human phenomena through text derived from speech and observations (Creswell, 2014; Malterud, 2001). Qualitative research poses broad, open questions about phenomena in the context in which they occur (Carter & Little, 2007). Data is typically collected in the participants' "natural" setting and the researcher is a key instrument in the qualitative research process. Multiple data sources are often used such as observations and interviews. Data and analysis build from specifics to general themes and the researcher makes interpretations of the meaning of the data. Qualitative research is also known for its flexibility and subjectivity with a focus on individual meaning and the complexity of situations (Creswell, 2014).

In addition to exploring experiences, qualitative research is interested in understanding phenomena (Malterud, 2011) and participant meanings (Creswell, 2014). As I was interested in exploring and understanding young immigrant women's experiences regarding negotiating two cultures, qualitative research with a phenomenological approach was well suited for exploring this topic.

4.3 Methods

While methodology is the general way that a topic is approached, the methods are the specific tools and techniques used to collect and analyze data to explore the phenomena of interest

(Sloan & Bowe, 2013). This includes the activities involved in carrying out research such as sampling, data collection, data management, data analysis, interpretation and reporting (Carter & Little, 2007; Creswell, 2014). Qualitative methods are influenced by the philosophical underpinnings of the study, goals and purpose of the study, commonly accepted approaches in the field, the data available and the competence level of the researcher and project supervisor (Creswell, 2014).

Qualitative methods seek to portray reality as socially constructed, complex and ever-changing (Sloan & Bowe, 2013). Qualitative methods acknowledge the subjective, experiential life-world of human beings and description of their experiences in depth (Patton, 2002 in Sloan & Bowe, 2013). They are known for their focus on text generated from spoken language and observations, which focus on meaning and interpretations (Silverman, 1998 in Sloan & Bowe, 2013). Qualitative methods and procedures include interviews, observations, focus groups, case studies, or text analysis (Carter & Little, 2007). In this study, observations and interviews were utilized to collect data.

4.4 Site and sampling strategy

4.4.1 Site

The young women's peer group, which I studied, was part of a larger non-profit organization that houses a multicultural resource center for individuals with immigrant background. The non-profit organization is located in a city in Norway. The organization's goals are to contribute to increased dialogue, participation, inclusion and diversity in society with a focus on building up individuals' own resources.

The women's peer group is a meeting place for girls and women between ages 15-30. The group serves as a social meeting place for discussing identity, belonging, values, freedom, equality, participation and empowerment. The group also discusses the concept of finding a third way between the women's ethnic culture and the Norwegian culture. The group's meeting place is in a building utilized by the non-profit, which oversees the peer support group. The meeting location consists of two main rooms. A kitchen for making food, eating and socializing as well as a larger room for activities.

I gained access to the non-profit organization through my supervisor who was acquainted with the leader of the organization. As a means of getting to know the background of organization

and the women's peer discussion group, I held two meetings with the leader of the
organization before starting data collection.

4.4.2   Sampling strategy

In qualitative research, the sample is determined by the design of the study. (Kvale & Brinkman,
2015). My project sample included young immigrant women from a young women's peer
discussion group in Norway. The sample in this study was a purposive, time and place-based
sample as a specific group was selected in regards to their experience with the phenomenon of
interest (Silverman, 2013).

From a review of studies, Creswell (2014) determined that phenomenological studies tend to
include 3-10 participants. My goal was to collect 6-7 interviews, but as participation was
voluntary, my sample was limited to the number of participants who were willing to
participate. I ended up with five interviews not including the pilot interview with the
coordinator.

4.4.3   Inclusion and exclusion criteria

My study included first-generation immigrant young women between the ages of 18-30 with
Norwegian residency who were attending the young women's peer group. The age range of
the women was predefined by the group and was anywhere from 18 to late twenties without a
specific cut-off as all were welcome to attend the group. One group member was seeking
asylum in Norway at the time of this study. She was not included in the interviews, as she had
limited time and experience with the Norwegian culture. Out the outset of the study, I was
open to interviewing both first and second-generation immigrant women. However, all of the
women attending the meetings while I participated were first-generation immigrant women,
establishing that I would only interview first-generation women.

4.4.4   Recruitment strategy

The organization that hosted the women's peer group served as a gatekeeper for recruitment
of participants. Gatekeepers are often high up in an organizational hierarchy (Kristiansen &
Krogstrup, 2015) and can either withhold or grant access to participants (Creswell, 2014). The
leader of the non-profit organization provided access to the group in this study. As part of my
research study, I agreed to do a program evaluation for the women's peer group. An initial
meeting was held with the leader of the organization to discuss the study, background of the
women's peer group and other important issues and considerations, such as the group's

dynamic and protecting the participants' anonymity. Permission was obtained from the leader of the organization prior to approaching the group members about participation in the study. A purposive sample with the use of a gatekeeper was logical in this study as it provided access to the population I wished to study (Silverman, 2013). I attended several group meetings as a participant observer to get to know the group members as a way of establishing rapport with the young women before conducting interviews. After a series of observations, I approached individual group members to ascertain their willingness to participate in individual interviews. Three of the interviews were agreed upon before the first interview day, while the other two were recruited on the first day of interviews.

4.5 Data Collection

Qualitative data was collected through a combination of participatory observations and semi-structured interviews with the program coordinator and women's peer group members.

4.5.1 Observations

Participant observation involves unstructured observations of individuals in their usual setting or environment. Even though the researcher enters the environment, which inevitably influences it, everything remains as natural as possible (Kristiansen & Krogstrup, 2015). As qualitative research with a phenomenological approach is concerned with exploring and understanding social and human phenomena as they happen in real life, participatory observations are an appropriate tool for achieving this (Kristiansen & Krogstrup, 2015). The goals of participant observations are to interact with the group members in their own setting, to be open to what the individuals have to say and to understand how they interpret their unique social situation (Kristiansen & Krogstrup, 2015).

In this study, participant observation involved participating in the group discussions to gain a better understanding of the phenomena under study rather than observing from a distance (Silverman, 2013). The observations in this study served several purposes. One purpose was to become acquainted with the group members in their usual setting. The second purpose was to provide a second data source for crosschecking my results and the third was to aid in development of interview questions. I participated in the group discussions and interactions in an attempt to observe from the inside (Kristiansen & Krogstrup, 2015).

The number of meetings necessary for obtaining observational data and rapport with the group was determined between myself, the leader of the non-profit organization and my

supervisor. While traditional observations involve the use of field notes to record the behavior and activities of individuals, I did not do this in an attempt to keep the interactions as natural as possible (Creswell, 2014; Silverman, 2013). However, immediately following the observations, I took detailed notes regarding, the setting, impressions, interactions, observations, behaviors and other important details.

My role was made known to the participants before beginning the observations in an effort to maintain transparency and obtain informed consent (Creswell, 2014). I attended three official group meetings, two in June of 2017 before the group had summer break and one in August, 2017. A partial fourth observation was attended on the first day of interviewing in September, 2017. I interacted with the women as part of the group over the course of the observations, so that they could get to know me and feel comfortable around me. All of the meetings I attended were in their usual meeting place. During the meetings, we sat around a table in the kitchen and discussed our weeks. One day we ordered food from an Eritrean restaurant. The other days some of the women made food from their cultures. The days I attended, there were not specific topics to discuss or activities. An outdoor picnic was planned at the second observation in June 2017, but was moved inside due to weather. The meeting in August of 2017, involved introductions of the group coordinator and the new group coordinator as well as information about the purpose of the group and topics they were going to discuss throughout the year. For the most part, it was the same women attending the meetings I observed, which allowed me to establish some rapport with them. On average, the meetings I attended had 6-7 women in attendance.

On 01.09.17, the first day of interviews, I attended the group's meeting between interviews as a partial fourth observation. There were more women at this meeting (approx. 20) and some new faces. We celebrated the Muslim holiday Eid with a meal. We ate in the larger room as there was so many women attending that day. They were dancing and socializing before and after the meal. I ate the meal together with the women and then conducted the interviews after the meal.

Overall, the women were very positive to me and my project. They welcomed me into the group and were friendly, treating me as an equal. At group meetings, they seemed to be in a good mood, laughing, socializing, and seemingly enjoying their time together. I got a very positive feeling from the group and wished I could have attended more meetings. This feeling was later confirmed in the interviews with the women.

It is important to note that my observations occurred during a time of transition regarding the group's leadership. The current coordinator was moving on to a new career and a new coordinator was filling her role. As one observation was at the year-end meeting in June 2017 and the following was at the beginning of their next session in August 2017, they were not typical group meetings. Attending the group meetings during this time of transition, may have prevented me from getting a full picture as to how the group typically functions. However, I was able to observe their dynamic and learn a little bit about their experiences of being immigrant women in Norway.

4.5.2   Qualitative interviews

Phenomenology uses interviews as a tool for organizing subjective life experiences and as a starting point for collaborative dialogue for exploring a phenomenon in depth (Eberle, 2015). It acknowledges that knowledge is co-constructed between the researcher and the participant (Sloan & Bowe, 2013).

This study utilized semi-structured interviews. "The semi-structured life-world interview seeks to obtain descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomenon; it will have a sequence of themes to be covered, as well as some suggested questions" (Kvale, 2007, p., 51). Semi-structured interviews focus the conversation around themes relating to the main research questions and underlying theory (Kvale, 2007). There is some flexibility in this style of interviewing allowing for changing the order and form of the questions, for follow-up questions and additional insights. Semi-structured questions also allow the researcher to focus on the topic of research, while allowing individuals to provide their own meanings, perspectives (Kvale, 2007) and experiences (Sloan & Bowe, 2013).

While qualitative interviews are beneficial for exploring experiences, there are some downsides. Interviews can be seen as "artificial" situations and the researcher can color the interpretations (Creswell, 2014). The researcher's experience level and participants' ability to formulate themselves can also influence the quality of the data (Creswell, 2014). The participant can also experience a hierarchy with the researcher in a position of power. If the participant experiences the researcher as an expert, it may influence the information they share (Braun & Clark, 2013). Despite the potential downsides of qualitative interviews, they were an appropriate method for exploring the young women's experiences of negotiating

cultures. In an attempt to protect the quality of my study, I was aware of and attempted to avoid the limitations mentioned above.

4.5.2.1 Development of the interview guide

The purpose of the interview guide was to provide structure to the interview and address the research question and theoretical frameworks influencing my study (Silverman, 2013; Creswell, 2014). I considered the clarity of my questions, use of non-leading questions and use of language that was easy for the respondents to understand. Questions posed to the participants in this study were broad and general so that the participants could provide their own meanings regarding the phenomena of living in two cultures. (Creswell, 2014). I started my interview guide with general questions regarding the women's backgrounds. This provided an opportunity for them to share about themselves and warm-up for the interview. Before creating my core questions, I read theoretical and research literature regarding the topics of acculturation, biculturalism, negotiating cultures and salutogenesis. I looked at my research question and posed broad, general questions, which addressed the larger research question using key concepts from acculturation and salutogenesis to frame my questions (Ryan et al., 2007).

I also conducted a pilot interview with the group coordinator. This interview allowed me to test questions and interviewing techniques as well as gather more background information about the group. The interview guides were also sent to the group coordinator and my project supervisor to allow for feedback as they had more interview experience and experience with the group.

(See Appendix 3, for a copy of the interview guide)

4.5.2.2 Interview process

Interviews occurred over the course of two days and were in a private room located in the group's usual meeting place. Information regarding the study and consent forms **(See Appendix 5)** were given to participants before the interviews. I also provided an opportunity for the women to ask questions before beginning the interviews. All of the women except for one were familiar with me and my background as I had attended three of the previous group meetings with them. I presented myself and my background to the woman I recruited on the first day of interviews since we had not met prior. All of the women seemed very comfortable talking to me. The interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes each. I used a voice recorder in

addition to field notes for recording interview data. All of the women consented to use of the voice recorder.

The first day of interviewing, started out a bit late and was a little stressful. I traveled from the Eastern side of Norway where I was living and encountered some delays. I conducted the interviews in conjunction with the regularly scheduled group meeting, as to make participation as easy as possible for the women. I interviewed three women on the first day. Three of the interviews were agreed upon beforehand and the other two women were recruited on the first day of interviews. Two of the women were willing to come back and meet me at the usual meeting location the following day for interviews. The two women who met me the following day were living without their family in Norway, so I did not need to worry about potential conflicts regarding their whereabouts and participation in the study.

The first three interviews were the most difficult for several reasons. First, there was the fact that I was running late and tired from traveling. These interviews were also done in Norwegian and I had to rephrase the questions sometimes so the women could understand. This could have been due to the language barrier, the way the questions were worded or my interview techniques. The two interviews on the second day went much better. These two interviews were in English and the women were also very open. This was partly due to both parties being very comfortable with the English language, but also personality and background differences in the women. After the interviews, I had a new understanding of the importance of the context surrounding interviews and factors affecting them both inside and outside of the researcher's control.

Directly following the interviews, I sat down and added to my notes that were taken during the interview. I wrote observations about the context, setting, interview process and my role and observations such as the respondent's reactions and mannerisms (Kvale, 2007). Transcription was done directly following each interview. By transcribing after each interview and recording my observations, I was able to recall and reflect over key observations and details (Kvale, 2007).

4.6 Data analysis

Data analysis in qualitative research is used to make sense out of textual data (Creswell, 2014) by abstracting and generalizing the data into themes (Malterud, 2001). It also helps the researcher organize, compare and validate alternative interpretations (Malterud, 2001). Qualitative research uses both inductive and deductive approaches to analyzing the data. An

inductive approach starts at the bottom and works up. The data goes from specifics to ideas that are more abstract. The process involves the researcher moving back and forth between themes and the data until the researcher has developed a comprehensive set of themes (Creswell, 2014). An inductive approach starts with the data itself and uses themes and patterns that occur from the data to make broader generalizations on a theoretical level (Malterud, 2011; Creswell, 2014). A deductive approach is the opposite of inductive and involves a top down approach, where the researcher begins with theory and concepts that the data is seen in light of (Malterud, 2011). My study utilized both approaches. I started with a inductive approach to analyzing the data and then after I had developed a comprehensive set of themes, I switched to a deductive approach and looked at my themes in light of previous theory and research. This is line with a phenomenological approach, reducing data to descriptions of what the participants experienced and how they experienced it before it is seen in the larger context (Creswell, 2013; Moustakas, 1994).

Phenomenology does not require a formal analytical method, rather it allows for the context of the phenomenon to decide how the data is analyzed (Sloan & Bowe, 2013). In phenomenology, the researcher seeks to "understand the meaning of the experiences by searching for themes and engaging with the data interpretively" (Sloan & Bowe, 2013, p. 1296). The analysis process involves understanding the text in relation to its individual parts, the researcher's own understanding and in relation to the text as a whole (Sloan & Bowe, 2013).

4.6.1   Thematic network analysis

I used thematic network analysis in my study. "Thematic analyses seek to unearth the themes salient in a text at different levels, and thematic networks aim to facilitate the structuring and depiction of these themes" (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 387). Thematic networks create a web-like network, organizing themes with an aim to explore and understand significant issues and ideas (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

One of the benefits of thematic analysis is that it is a flexible method for data analysis and is not bound to a specific theory or epistemology. Thematic analysis' flexibility and theoretical freedom allows for generating rich, detailed and complex data (Braun & Clark, 2006). In addition, it does not require the detailed theoretical and technical knowledge that some other approaches require. Therefore, this method is suitable for novice researchers like myself as it makes it possible to conduct a good thematic analysis on qualitative data without a lot of

experience (Braun & Clark 2006). Another benefit of thematic analysis is that it does not require that inconsistencies within and across the data be ignored. It allows for consideration of accounts that differ from the dominant story, which may bring to light interesting details and ideas for further exploration (Braun & Clark, 2006).

Thematic network analysis is well suited for the level of phenomenological application in my study. While interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) is a specific type of analysis within phenomenology, it is theoretically bound and requires a high level of detail regarding experiences and understanding people's everyday reality. In practice, IPA is often applied "lightly" without thorough application of the theoretical background. To avoid this pitfall, I chose thematic network analysis due to its theoretical freedom and compatibility with phenomenology (Braun & Clark, 2006).

While thematic analysis is widely used, it is criticized for a lack of clear guidelines and an "anything goes" approach (Braun & Clark, 2006). In an attempt to ensure the quality of my study, I applied specific guidelines for thematic network analysis outlined by Attride-Stirling (2001). Using clear guidelines allows researchers to report the methods used, provide information about underlying assumptions and allows for comparison with other research (Braun & Clark, 2006).

4.6.2 Organization and data analysis

At the beginning of my analysis, I employed an inductive approach, avoiding predefined conclusions, generating themes from the data (Creswell, 2014). Using an inductive approach, ensured that I captured as many aspects of the data as possible, including unexpected themes. Looking for meaning from the data and the participants' experiences regarding the phenomenon of negotiating cultures is consistent with the phenomenological focus of this study. I started by coding diversely, reading, and re-reading the data for potential themes. In the early stages of coding, I did not pay attention to what previous research said about my topic and tried to put aside theoretical assumptions and pre-knowledge that I had about the phenomenon (Braun & Clark, 2006). In later phases, as the themes moved to a more abstract level, I looked to my research questions and theory to see how the data applied to them.

4.6.3 The data analysis process

The data analysis process was broken up into six steps: coding material, identifying themes, constructing the thematic network, describing and exploring the thematic network, summarizing the thematic network and interpreting the patterns (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

4.6.3.1 Transcription

Transcription of the verbal data marked the beginning of my analysis as I started to familiarize myself with the data during transcription (Braun & Clark, 2006). Transcribing myself helped me to gain a more thorough understanding of the data as I started to develop ideas regarding potential themes or meanings in the data while listening to the audio files.

I transcribed the interview recordings as soon as possible onto a password protected computer. Following the Norwegian Centre for Research Data's (NSD) guidelines, the audio files were deleted after transcription. To protect the anonymity of the women participating, I removed identifying information such as their names, names of places, organization names, and names of theirs ethnic cultures and country of origin. Within the transcription, removal of names and places were marked within parentheses. Participants' laughter and other expressions were also marked with parentheses. I transcribed the audio files from the voice recorder used during the interviews verbatim, including all words and utterances to ensure that the data was presented as accurately as possible. This allowed for as much of the true nature of the interviews to come through as possible. Transcripts were double-checked against audio files to assure accuracy as a quality measure (Braun & Clark, 2006). I transcribed directly into the Nivo 12 data analysis program.

As I collected the data myself during interactive/participant observations and interviews, I inevitably came to the analysis with a prior knowledge of the data. I read the interview transcripts repeatedly as a way immersing and familiarizing myself with the data. I read actively, searching for meanings and patterns throughout. I took notes and marked ideas for coding, which I used in later phases (Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 87).

4.6.3.2 Coding material

In the first step of coding, I generated my initial codes by devising a coding framework. I coded based on recurrent issues and other interesting items that arose from the data (Attride-Stirling, 2001). This step began after I had already familiarized myself with the data and made a list of initial ideas about the data. "Codes identify a feature of interest from the data and

represent the most basic form of that data that can be seen in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon under study" (Boyatzis, 1998, p. 63 in Braun & Clark, 2006, p. 88).

Coding involves putting the data into "meaningful and manageable chunks of text such as passages, quotations, single words, or other criteria judged necessary for a particular analysis" (Attride-Stirline, 2001, p. 391). My codes were data driven as I employed an inductive approach in the beginning to ensure that all interesting and important aspects of the data were included (Braun & Clark, 2006). I attempted to set aside theoretical assumptions at this point, just looking at what the data had to say.

I worked systematically through the entire data set as I coded. I gave full and equal attention to all data items that seemed to form repeated patterns or potential themes. I used Nivo 12 software for coding my data from the interview transcripts. I coded the text by tagging and naming selections of text within data items (i.e. interviews). The software helped me to organize the data and allowed for coding individual extracts of data into more than one theme.

4.6.3.3 Identifying themes

In this step, I abstracted themes from coded text segments by searching for common themes from the long list of codes I created from across my entire data set. This phase took the codes and refocused the analysis into a broader level or basic themes. "Basic themes are simple premises characteristic of the data and on their own say very little about the text or group of texts as a whole" (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 389). At the end of this phase, I started to get an idea of the significance of my basic themes. In the next step, I looked at the themes in more detail to see how they could be combined, refined, separated or discarded (Braun & Clark, 2006). **(Figure 5)** below is an example of how I grouped codes under a basic theme with examples of text extracts.

Example of codes forming a basic level theme (Figure 5)

Basic Theme	Codes	Text examples
A third way	You have to find a way in between the two cultures	"But that's kind of the situation. With the Norwegian society, it's like you have it fit in either way in both cultures. You have to like find a way in between."
	Gone into a third culture	"It is two cultures and I have…gone into a third culture. With everything together in my head. It is pretty challenging..."
	Finding the third way is hard, challenging	"….but um I guess it's really hard in the beginning. I'm started I guess, if you would, my third way. Making my way. Ugh yeah there is still the people behind it. It's always about the judgement at the end."

4.6.3.4 Reviewing and refining themes

In this step, I continued to review and refine the basic themes and started to see how they could be combined or separated into organizing themes. The organizing themes "are more abstract and are more revealing as to what is going on in the texts" (Attride-Stirling, 2001, p. 389). I examined the themes to see if there was enough data to support them and that the data was not too diverse. Some themes collapsed into each other to form one theme. New themes were created for extracts that did not work under an existing theme or were discarded if they did not fit in the analysis. I examined the data within themes to ensure that it cohered together meaningfully and that there were identifiable distinctions between themes (Braun & Clark, 2006). When I was satisfied that my remaining themes thoroughly captured the ideas present in my data, I created a preliminary thematic network **(Figure 6)** (Braun & Clark, 2006).

4.6.3.5 Creating the thematic network

The thematic network, places basic themes under organizing themes based on the story they tell about the data (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Organizing themes are clusters of basic themes centered around larger issues more abstract issues (Attride-Stirling, 2001).

After creating my preliminary thematic network **(Figure 6)**, I considered the validity of individual themes in relation to the entire data set. I did this by looking at my preliminary thematic network to see if it accurately reflected the meanings presented in the entire data set (Attride-Stirling, 2001). I read through the entire data set a second time to ensure that any data I missed the first time was coded, and to check that the existing themes worked in relation to the entire data set (Braun & Clark, 2006).

After I generated the organizing themes, I looked at the data in relation to my research questions and the theory around them, and created an overall global theme. The global theme, "Negotiating cultures", represented the central theme presented by the data in relation to my research questions (Attride-Stirling, 2001). **(See Appendix 4, for a full size thematic network)**
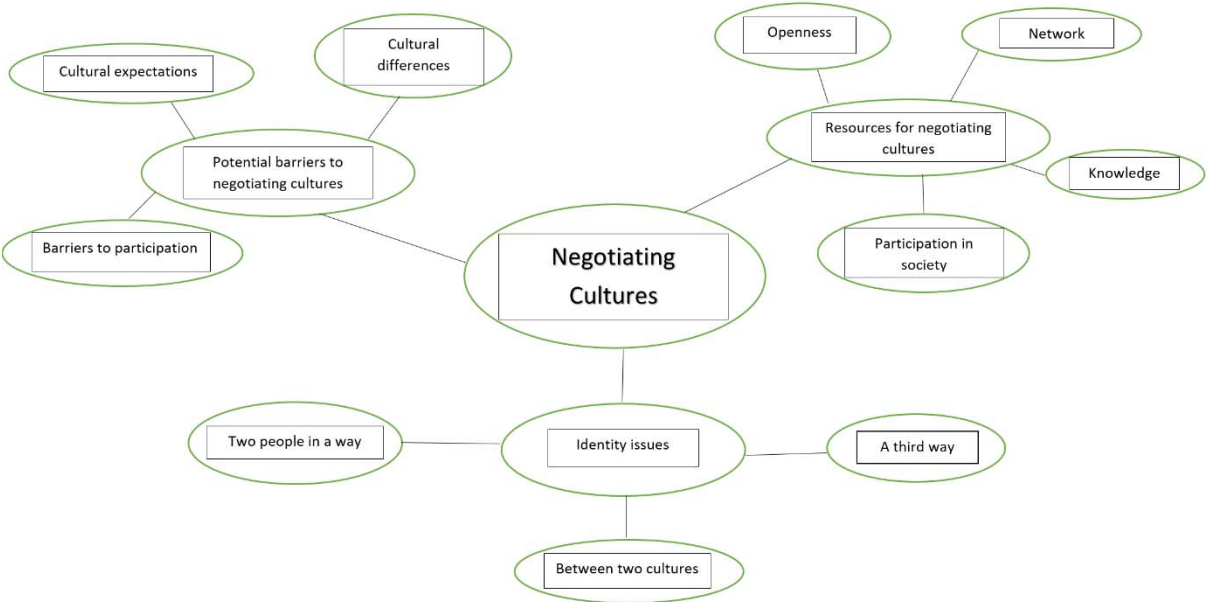
Figure 6 Thematic Network: Negotiating Cultures

4.6.3.6 Final steps of thematic network analysis

The final stages of thematic network analysis involved exploring, describing and summarizing my thematic network (Attride-Stirling, 2001). I created a summary of the network and its main themes and patterns (Attride-Stirling, 2001). Descriptions and a summary of my network and themes are in the write-up and analysis of my findings, which are reported in the findings chapter **(See Findings 5.0)**.

4.7 Quality measures

In this section, I start by discussing my role in the study before moving into other important quality considerations. Qualitative research has different methods and objectives from quantitative data and therefore uses different concepts for explaining criteria in qualitative research (Creswell, 2014). Key quality criteria in qualitative research include reflexivity (Sloan & Bowe, 2013), credibility, dependability and transferability (Ryan, Coughlan, & Cronin, 2007).

4.7.1   Role of the researcher, reflexivity, positionality

In reality, researchers are not blank slates and come to the study with knowledge about their topic and ideas regarding the topic of interest (Malterud, 2011). Acknowledging bias requires that the researcher reflect about how their background, pre-knowledge, gender, culture, history and socioeconomic status influences their interpretation of the findings and direction of the study (Creswell, 2014). When a researcher is reflexive they are conscious of and reflective about how their questions, methods and own position may affect the data and knowledge produced by the study (Sloan & Bowe, 2013). The researcher's own morals and value systems as well as knowledge of ethical guidelines affect the study (Kvale, 2007). A key assumption in phenomenology is that the researcher studies phenomena from their own subjective self-conscious (Eberle, 2015) and that the researcher is a part of the process (Kvale, 2007). The researcher's influence over the study is not necessarily a violation of the quality, but rather a role that adds to the interpretations provided (Kvale, 2007). Disclosing the researcher's potential bias and pre-knowledge regarding the topic is essential for creating transparency and honesty with the reader, helping to establish credibility (Creswell, 2014; Shenton, 2004).

I chose this topic based on my own experiences as a young immigrant woman in Norway as well as my educational background in health promotion. Based on my own experiences, I was interested in how other women experienced negotiating cultures, specifically those who come from cultures that are very different from the Norwegian culture. From my own experiences as an immigrant woman, discussions with other immigrants and research on the topic, I had an idea about what challenges they experienced in regards to negotiating cultures.

As the researcher, I served as the main instrument in the data collection, interacting with the participants in the study. My own personal beliefs, values, bias and immigrant background inevitably shaped the direction of the study and my interpretations (Creswell, 2014). Along with the participants, I served as an active collaborator in the process with my background

and beliefs intertwined into the study. I participated in the group meetings during the observations and co-created the knowledge in the interviews. Inevitably, I interpreted my observations with my own meanings attached (Kristiansen & Korgstrup, 2015). My experiences as an immigrant were inevitably different from the women's in this study as I came to Norway voluntarily, and I am a white woman from a Western culture (i.e. United States), married to a Norwegian man. Being married to a Norwegian provides me with an insider perspective into the Norwegian culture. I utilized debriefing with my supervisor as a method for ensuring credibility by providing other perspectives and considerations (Shenton, 2004).

As I too was a young immigrant woman, this may have made it easier for the women to relate to me and share their experiences. On the other hand, I was a Western woman from a very different culture in the position of researcher, which may have created some distance between myself and the participants. My presence at the meetings also calls into question how natural my observations really were. My presence may have influenced the young women's behavior and the outcome of the data collected (Kristiansen & Krogstrup, 2015).

During interpretation and analysis, I attempted to prevent my own knowledge on the topic from overshadowing the participants' voices. This happens when the researcher looks for confirmation of their previous knowledge, overlooking other important elements that might challenge their previous views on the subject (Dalen, 2011; Malterud, 2011). I focused on maintaining openness, looking for data that both supported my preknowledge and contradicted it (Creswell, 2014). Limitations regarding my role are covered in the discussion chapter.

4.7.2   Credibility

Credibility is a concept in qualitative research used to evaluate how closely findings presented by the researcher represent reality (Ryan et al., 2007; Shenton, 2004). Credibility is concerned with researchers' interpretations and whether or not their conclusions are supported by the data (Shenton, 2004). Below are the methods I used to ensure credibility in my study.

4.7.2.1 Triangulation

One method of ensuring credibility is with triangulation (Shenton, 2004; Silverman, 2013). This study utilized triangulation by crosschecking the results between two data sources (i.e. observations and interviews). Using a combination of data sources helped me to build a better

understanding of the phenomena, checking for major discrepancies between data sources (Creswell, 2014). Overall, the data from observations supported the data from the interviews.

4.7.2.2 Verification

The interviewer should attempt to verify their interpretations of the individual's meanings during the course of the interview and during debriefing (Kvale, 2007). Clarifying the meanings and responses during the interviews aides in coding and analysis of themes and shows the respondent you are listening to what they are saying (Kvale, 2007). I attempted to clarify participant meanings by asking follow-up questions during the course of the interviews.

4.7.2.3 Spending time in the field

Cross-cultural interviews present several quality considerations regarding the relationship between the interviewer and the respondents. The interviewer needs time to learn about the foreign culture (Kvale, 2007). Differences in religion, generation, social class and culture can lead to misunderstandings, so the researcher should become as familiar as possible with the culture they are studying before interviewing (Kvale, 2007). In my study, I collected background information regarding the group prior to data collection through several meetings with the group coordinator and leader of the non-profit organization. The observations also helped me to gain further knowledge about the group and its members before the interviews.

4.7.2.4 Debriefing

Throughout the entire research process, I debriefed with my supervisor. This provided an outside perspective, serving as a means of checking and questioning, adding credibility to my study (Creswell, 2014).

4.7.3 Dependability

Dependability is concerned with how much information the researcher gives to the reader. The reader should have enough information to determine the how dependable the study and researcher are. Studies should be audible meaning another researcher should be able to follow the reported processes and end up with a similar result. By reporting my methods and procedures, I allowed for replication and evaluation of my study (Ryan et al., 2007). I also attempted to provide evidence regarding decisions made at each step of the research process regarding methodical and theoretical issues as well as documentation of the entire research process (Ryan et al., 2007).

4.7.4 Transferability

Transferability refers to how widely the findings can be applied to other settings and contexts. The transferability of the findings is dependent on how different and similar the contexts are. By describing in detail the context of this study and processes used, I allowed for readers to determine its applicability to other settings (Kvale, 2007).

4.8 Ethical considerations

4.8.1 Research ethics

Research ethics refers to the values, norms and institutional practices that researchers should consider before engaging in a research study (Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees in Norway, 2016). Researchers should consider the benefits and consequences for society and individuals in performing the study, obtaining informed consent, confidentially issues, anonymity issues, and access to interview transcripts and data (Kvale, 2007, Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees in Norway, 2016). Other important ethical considerations involve good scientific practice, originality, referencing, openness, accuracy, respect for human beings, and reporting conflicts of interest (Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees in Norway, 2016). Ethical research guidelines for the social sciences, humanities, law and theology published by the Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees in Norway were used as guidelines for this project (2016) as well as guidelines published by the University of Bergen, Norway.

4.8.2 Project approval and anonymity

This study fell under the Personal Data law and the Health Register law and therefore had to be approved by the Norwegian Data Protection Authority through the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) (2018) (The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees, 2016). I obtained approval before starting data collection. Information regarding personally identifiable information was protected, so that responses could not be tracked back to individuals in an effort to maintain confidentially and anonymity (The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees, 2016). The name and location of the discussion group was kept anonymous to protect the group members from identification. All personal information that could be tracked back to individuals such as transcripts and voice recordings were stored in encrypted files on a password protected computer to protect the participants' identities (Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees in Norway, 2016). After transcription, I

immediately anonymized the transcripts to protect the group members' identities. The audio files were also deleted after transcription to protect the identity of the group members. The audio recorder and signed informed consent forms were stored in my home in a concealed and secure location. The informed consent forms will be shredded at the conclusion of my study in May, 2019. As my project took over a year due to maternity leave, I sent a change form to NSD regarding the new project end date of 31.05.2018. I received confirmation of the new project end date via email from NSD on 15.11.2017. All data was anonymized and audio files delated in Fall of 2017 after transcription.

4.8.3 Informed consent

Informed consent should include information to the participants regarding the purpose of the study and how it will be conducted. Potential risks and benefits in regards to participation should also be provided to the participants in the informed consent (Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees in Norway, 2016). An information letter regarding the purpose of my study written in language that the group's members could understand was provided along with a consent form at the beginning of my study. All of the women said they were comfortable reading the document in Norwegian **(See Appendix 6)**. Included in this letter was information regarding participant rights and the voluntary nature of the study. In addition, they received information regarding how data was to be stored and the results distributed. Regarding informed consent for the observations, I introduced myself at the first observation as well as the purpose of my study. I explained that I was participating and observing at the group. My project was also discussed at the subsequent meetings so any new attendees were aware of my presence. Written consent was obtained from each participant before starting the interviews.

In the event that participants felt pressured to participate in my study due to their relationship with the gatekeepers or the participation of other group members, I reassured them throughout the research process that participation was voluntary and that they could remove themselves from the study at any point (Powell, Fitzgerald, Taylor & Graham, 2012). I also reassured them again that their responses were confidential and anonymous. I utilized briefing and debriefing before and after the interviews about the purpose of the study, how information would be stored and accessed as well as publication intentions (Kvale, 2007).

4.8.4 Working with vulnerable groups

Interviewing individuals from vulnerable groups raises ethical questions regarding the benefit for society versus burden to individuals in the study. Integration and acculturation issues as well as the experiences and health of immigrants in Norway are important for society and the cultures in it (Kvale, 2007). The young women's peer discussion group is vulnerable as they are women of minority cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This study avoided unnecessary injuries and burdens on the participants. I attempted to be as sensitive as possible regarding participant feelings during the research process (Kvale, 2007). I was careful regarding topics such as religion, potential trauma experienced in their home country and other personal information. I avoided pressuring participants for information, allowing them to reveal information they were comfortable revealing (The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees, 2016). As the researcher, I took special care to protect their interests throughout the study. One way I did this was to avoid generalizing about the individuals in the study and the groups they belong to protect from possible discrimination and stigmatization in society. In addition, I showed respect to the cultures represented in the study even if their traditions and values were different from my own or the mainstream society's (Kvale, 2007).

In addition, before beginning the study, I discussed with the group coordinator how to handle issues of abuse or trauma as well as any other ethical dilemmas that may arise during discussions with group members. On the first day of interviews, the group coordinator was in the building as the group meeting was happening simultaneously. This served as a buffer in the event that one of the participants became upset due to information they revealed. The group coordinator was experienced in discussing issues of trauma and referring the women to necessary services. On the second day of interviews, the meeting location was empty, but I had the contact information for the organization leader and group coordinator in the event that any topics arose, which regarded emotional support or additional expertise. Distribution of the results were discussed with the group coordinator and the group's interests regarding the publication of research results were respected (The Norwegian National Research Ethics Committees, 2016).

4.8.5   Observations

There are several ethical considerations regarding observations. One issue is that the observer gets a very intimate view into the lives and experiences of the group being observed (Kristiansen & Korgstrup, 2015). This is especially important for vulnerable groups such as minorities, women and individuals who have experienced extreme situations. At the meetings I attended, there were not any overly personal or sensitive issues shared, so no ethical

dilemma presented itself regarding overly personal information. Another challenge of observations is if the researcher becomes well acquainted with the individuals there may be a feeling of conflict between friendship and trust and how much information to publish (Kristiansen & Korgstrup, 2015). While I did become better acquainted with one woman in particular, nothing was shared that was overly confidential or personal and did not raise an ethical dilemma.

5.0 Findings

In this chapter, I will present the findings of my study. First, I will present the participants. Afterwards, I present my findings organized by the themes produced through thematic network analysis. I briefly describe the contents of the themes before I move into specific descriptions of my findings and quotations from the interviews.

5.1 Participants

I interviewed young women with immigrant background living in Norway. All women had legal residence in Norway and had been living in Norway for at least two years. The women I interviewed were first generation immigrants who had come to Norway as asylum seekers or refugees. Three of the women were from countries in Asia and two were from countries in Africa. Some of the women came due to lack of opportunities and the political environment in their home country while others came for safety due to conflict in their home country. I gained access to the women through a young women's peer support group that they attended at a non-profit in Norway.

Given the women's unique experiences and the vulnerable nature of their participation, I was concerned they could be identified if I presented their biographical information in a chart with their ages and countries of origin. I chose therefore to provide a general description of the participants as a group. The women ranged from age 19 to late twenties. None of the women were currently married, but one had previously been married with children. None of the other participants had children. All the women were first generation immigrants, however some came as children with their parents, while others came alone to Norway as young adults. It is important to note that the women had very different backgrounds and experiences regarding religion (i.e. Christian, Muslim, Jehovah's Witness), schooling (i.e. incomplete high school education to further education), family, living situation (i.e., alone, with peers, with family), and country of origin.

5.2 Presentation of findings

Since there were only five interviews, when I refer to "most" this means three or more participants and a "few" means two or three. When text was left out of a quotation, I marked this with (…) three periods. When something was left out between two sentences I used, (….) four periods. For quotations with a dialogue, "P" indicates participants and "I" interviewer.

5.2.1   Identity issues

Identity issues as an organizing theme, represented experiences regarding feelings of not belonging, aspects regarding the women's personalities and having to be two different people at times and finding a third way with a mix of values and beliefs between their ethnic culture and the Norwegian culture.

5.2.1.1 Between two cultures

This concept referred more to the phenomenon of feeling stuck between two cultures rather than "finding a way" between the two cultures as expressed in some of the quotes regarding the "A third way". Most of the women mentioned not feeling like they belonged to either Norwegian culture or their ethnic culture.

P: With the Norwegian society, it's like you have it fit in either way in both cultures. You have to like find a way in between.

I: Ok. So it can be a source of conflict if you are being too Norwegian?

P: Yes, yep definitely. Sometimes I feel like I am in neither cultures...Like I'm not all Norwegian and I'm going out and I don't know, I get stuck. (Interview 4)

5.2.1.2 Two people in a way

This concept refers more to the aspect of the women's personalities and being two different people one at home and one out in society. Some of the women mentioned the concept of being two people or multiple personalities or having to act different in Norwegian society versus around their ethnic culture. One of the girls emphasized how hard this is and that she wishes people understood how hard it is to be two people in a way.

It's like you have multiple personalities. With the Norwegians, you have to be Norwegian and with the (ethnic culture) you have to be more (ethnic culture)...Like you're more conservative with the Norwegians and with the (ethnic culture) (H: she laughs a little)....So you have certain expectations that you are supposed to follow because of where you come from and your religious background and then you go out in Norwegian society and other things are okay and accepted, so but then is that hard having these two, like you said it's like you are two people." (Interview 4)

5.2.1.3 Third way

The concept of a "third way" was described to the women during the interviews. This concept came from reading previous research and discussions with the group leader. The concept was

defined to the participants as "about taking bits of your ethnic culture and bits of the Norwegian culture and making your own way or finding your own way. The third way is about mixing bits and pieces of both or several cultures.

Most of the participants related to the idea of a "third way" and felt that they either had or were currently experiencing this concept of a "third way". Several mentioned that it was difficult finding their third way. While the concept came in part from the group leader, it did not seem like a concept the group had discussed, but most of the girls expressed interest in exploring this topic further. A "third way" meant different things for different people. Several of the women referred to the idea of a "third way" as finding their "own way". Most of the women discussed developing their own ways or beliefs somewhere between the two cultures.

It's very hard. Yeah because one, I know I don't belong with some in (ethnic) culture, not all of them because there are so many things in (ethnic) culture and I still do it and but the thing is, I don't get it, the Norwegian culture, so I don't have to follow a certain culture...I think, so the best thing is to do the thing between the two cultures and just ignore the other thing ….You have to find a way in between. (Interview 5)

5.2.2   Potential barriers to negotiating cultures

Under this organizing theme, were the basic themes; cultural differences, cultural expectations and potential barriers to participation. The experiences under this theme represented potential obstacles to successfully negotiating between the women's ethnic cultures and the Norwegian culture.

5.2.2.1 Cultural differences

Everyone reported major cultural differences between their ethnic cultures and the Norwegian culture, which is a potential barrier to negotiating cultures. Most of the women reported that these cultural differences made things difficult at times for them at home or with their ethnic culture.

P: They are two different. Norway is a little different than where I come from.

I: Was it difficult for you when you lived together with your parents to answer to different expectations at home and out in society?

P: Yes, it can be a little difficult. In Norway, it is a little different. So, it is a big difference. (Interview 3)

Some of the women reported that their cultures were much more social than Norwegian culture. There were also religious differences between their ethnic cultures and the Norwegian culture.

I: How do you experience the Norwegian society versus your culture? How are they different?

P: They are very, very different. I will say they are up and down you know? They are so different. I don't think we have something in common….One of the most different things we have is like for example I believe that we are very, very social. Norwegians are very closed. (P: she laughs a little). Like they need time to get to know you. We are very social.

I: Are there other differences too?

P: It might be a little different, but talking on the bus for example. Norwegians they don't….One day I was traveling from Oslo to Stavanger and I took the bus and usually when you travel for long hours on the bus in (home land) there is music on the bus. Everybody listens to the same music. In Norway, everybody has their own earphones. (Interview 4)

Some of the women noted that the different language was a challenge for immigrants.

P: It can be challenging for immigrants to manage. That you are…properly explained…

I: In regards to the language or?

P: Language and communication. (Interview 1)

The language and food are also different.

It's like all the things different for me when I came here. The language, the culture, food, the way, everything's different. As a culture, we are, as a (ethnic) people we are Muslim, conservative people and here they are not like that. Practically we don't have similarities (she laughs)….So we are human, that is the similar thing….Yeah like I don't think the same thinking, maybe sometimes but not all the time. (Interview 5)

Small social codes are different between the two cultures.

Like the other day it was like we were eating the food somewhere and everybody was eating and they finish and me and my friends the one who have to clean the plates. Normally someone take your plate when you finish. You ask are you finished, yes. Then they take it for you. It's normal in our culture. But, someone get angry like I can take my own plate. (Interview 5)

One woman experienced cultural differences in Norwegian culture depending on which area of Norway you are in. She experienced that bigger cities have more cultures whereas smaller towns had only Norwegian culture. Some women reported that different things are acceptable in Norwegian society than in their ethnic cultures. Examples included, discussing prevention and birth control. Some girls did not even know about these things before coming to Norway as it was not appropriate to discuss such topics in their ethnic culture.

The one who had a baby is young and everything was unexpected for her and she actually had the baby because she didn't have a lot of knowledge about birth control and stuff like that and that really hurt me because that was not her plan. It just happened because she didn't have a lot of knowledge about it. And coming here we get the knowledge...but for some of the (ethnic culture) girls that are here that is not the same. They don't have that kind of knowledge, so coming here was...talking about this stuff that we were ashamed to talk about so it's really, (name of women's peer group) is a big step. (Interview 4)

5.2.2.2 Cultural expectations

The theme cultural expectations refers to the expectations the women experienced in regards to their ethnic cultures and the Norwegian culture.

Most of the women reported dealing with expectations from their ethnic culture. Those who came as adults and not together with their parents experienced expectations from ethnic culture friends to behave a certain way. The women who came to Norway with their parents had varied backgrounds so their answers were a bit diverse in regards to this question. One reported that her parents had expectations that she use her mother tongue and have ethnic culture friends. Another said that her parents probably would have had expectations about maintaining her ethnic culture if she had continued living with them.

But, my mother and father wish that I would speak my own language and be with friends from my language. It is unbelievably difficult for me to be with them because I am not used to them (Interview 1)

There was also a woman from one of my observations who discussed how strict her brother was in regards to her behavior. He monitored her social media accounts and her cell phone. She said that if her brother found out she had a Norwegian boyfriend at work, she would have to quit her job. Overall, the consensus was that at least some parents have expectations for their children regarding their ethnic culture.

All of the women mentioned that different things are expected of them in Norwegian society and in their ethnic cultures. Everyone felt that there was some degree of difficulty between ethnic cultural expectations and Norwegian cultural expectations at some point in their life. This was largely due to the major cultural differences and subsequent cultural conflict. Some of the girls reported experiencing some form of judgment from both their ethnic and the Norwegian culture as well as some generalizing and stereotyping from Norwegian culture.

….So, when I got here, in (name of city), my roommates used to go to the Orthodox church and they used to tell me ok, "come with us", I went once, I went twice, but it wasn't a thing for me. I stopped going there. They were like, "did you change your religion". Why are you not coming? Have you become suddenly Norwegian? Don't you believe anymore? No, it's not the case, but I don't feel comfortable there so I…I'll do it my way. But there is still judgement there. (Interview 4)

One woman said that integrating too fast can cause conflict with your ethnic culture.

For example, when you go to school when you start to learn the language, for example if you were a little bit faster learner and you are in a way smarter and you get to learn the language fast, the Norwegians, you might integrate with the Norwegian culture, but you are going out from the (ethnic culture) and people will be like, "Now she knows the language" and you are a big joke in ways. (Interview 4)

Most of them women mentioned experiencing that you are expected to become Norwegian or go into the Norwegian system and way of doing things in Norway.

P: In Norway, it is natural to wake up at 7.00 in the morning and go to school or work or do things daily. If you do not have anything to do like daily tasks then you are forced to do something else. Or read a book every day for 20 minutes, go for a walk 20 minutes. You are quite controlled in comparison to being free.

I: Of the Norwegian society?

P: If you go really into the system. But, it is good to go into the system in Norwegian society, but then it is most likely that you become who become. You are a person of the system not yourself. It's the system that takes over you….they prefer you to become Norwegian, true? (Interview 1)

Some of the girls mentioned increasing cultural awareness on both sides so that immigrants and Norwegians alike know what to expect of each other's cultures.

P: I think it's very good to have awareness...like I think everybody is not so optimistic about the new culture, the people coming to the land or these people that come to the land, they are not so, happy with it, the new culture they came in, so I think the awareness is very good for all people to understand each other's people and each other's culture and their perspective and how they respect everybody's, it's not like something scary that much.

I: So about other cultures and what to expect?

P: Yeah, maybe, yes. Expectations because they think that you came from that place so whatever they have in their head they think you are that. (Interview 5)

5.2.2.3 Potential barriers to participation

Potential barriers to participation consisted of language barriers, knowledge about Norwegian culture or ethnic culture, not understanding Norwegian culture, discrimination and experiencing Norwegian society as being hard to get into.

Some of the women mentioned their Norwegian language ability or perceived ability as a barrier for getting jobs. This was more of a problem for those that came as adults, but even some of those who came as children mentioned that it was hard with the language in the beginning.

The language, the very important thing to have to get the job market very quickly. But at the same thing we are not illiterate people. We have been working before....Of course we know Norwegian now. We can understand all of it now. At least, but maybe when we talk, we don't talk that good, but at least we can talk it you know? To the people. We can get by with it..There's some jobs that doesn't need the language. For example, if you are going to clean somewhere. You don't need the language but and the thing you need is to tell you where you are going to go and when you are going to go and how you clean and that we can do in Norwegian. We can speak about it. So and I've been working in my home country.. I've been a teacher and I worked in the store. So like we are not like some people that have not seen the world before. We can do some stuff. (Interview 5)

Some said the language was the hardest part of the culture. Everyone agreed that the Norwegian culture was hard to understand in the beginning.

It was difficult to understand things maybe and understand what people said and what they meant. We didn't quite understand the society in Norway...what one can do or not do yes, it is

a bit like that in the beginning in a way. Yes. It was more Norwegian that was difficult in the beginning. (Interview 2)

Several of the women reported not having enough information about Norwegian culture even though they have had social studies classes. They experienced a gap between what is learned in social studies classes and what Norwegian culture actually is. One girl said that there is everything you read in the books (i.e. history) and then there is everything that happens outside of the books (i.e. social culture) that you have to find out about. The classes did not help with learning certain social codes or actually making friends or meeting Norwegians. Therefore, even though they knew the history, it didn't help them break into Norwegian society.

You get a theory in school. You learn about society, then you come out in society and learn something else, but here in (current city) it has been very challenging for me. There is all the society beyond what is not in the books, true?(Interview 1)

Those women who came to Norway as adults experienced Norwegian society as closed and hard to get into. Everyone said it was hard to meet new people. These are both barriers to participating in society.

It's hard to have a contact that easy. Contact with as much people is not that easy. I don't know if when I go to the school if it's going to much easier, but now I don't meet that many Norwegians. (Interview 5)

One said that it might help if the Norwegian culture was more flexible to get into.

The thing is I met some person that had been here 12 years and a girl she had been here six years. And she told me she don't get it the Norwegian society. And they don't even have so much friends, norsk friends. And it was so, I don't know, because you live here 12 years and you don't have a norsk friend…I think so and how could you avoid them that much…But the culture you want to get in also sometimes is not easy. They don't know how to go to the culture but if that culture was a little bit easier, more flexible maybe they could get in, you know? So if your culture is a little bit closed and the other people's is closed. For us, (ethnic background) people when you see them maybe outside you don't know how, you think they are closed people or you cannot get in there, but we are not like that. (Interview 5)

One woman said she thinks immigrants get afraid because they do not understand the Norwegian culture, so they do not open up.

We are a very, very open society. Everybody can get in. But the people don't know cause we come here and we get afraid. They don't know the norsk culture. They get afraid so they don't go in that much. (Interview 5)

Some of the women who came to Norway as children lacked knowledge or experience from their ethnic background, which could be a barrier to participating in their ethnic culture. One woman did not have much contact with her parents during her childhood as she grew up in a Norwegian institution. She said the only thing she shared with her parents was the language.

I have not grown up in (homeland) and not so much in my environment. So I hopped right into the Norwegian environment with friends with other backgrounds from Somalia and Iraq and Kurdistan and yes, it has not been such much that I was together with my own culture. Other than I have mother and father who promote that culture. I am more integrated in the society and want to learn and move forward but it is quite challenging. Yes, you have to try to figure out what is important for yourself. (Interview 1)

Some of the women reported experiencing some form of stereotyping or generalizations towards them. Some girls also mentioned they had experienced racism. One woman mentioned how the media portrays immigrants as coming to Norway for money, which is not the case for many immigrants who are trying their best to find work. Some of the women reported experiencing some form of racism. These are also barriers to participating in society.

Then there is the generalizations, stereotypes. Like I told you, I'm looking for a job and I applied at like five places right now, almost a month ago and still haven't gotten any answer. So there is always the, I don't know if it's the name or the fact that I am (ethnic culture), I don't know, but I believe I am qualified. (Interview 4)

5.2.3   Resources for negotiating cultures

This organizing theme consists of basic themes that represent resources or tools for helping the women with the phenomenon of negotiating between their ethnic cultures and the Norwegian culture.

5.2.3.1 Openness/attitude

This basic theme concerns the women's attitudes or willingness towards other cultures and participating in Norwegian society. The women were generally positive towards Norwegians when they had the opportunity to meet and interact with them.

Yeah, very, very good people. They help you wherever you are going to, you can ask, you know, even these young girls they help me a lot. Even they tell you, "just ask us". The thing is you have to get in. When you get in okay, that's the most coolest thing, but how to get in is hardest. (Interview 5)

Overall, everyone had a desire to participate in Norwegian society whether socially, through education or work. Most of girls mentioned that they were interested in learning about other cultures. Those women who came recently were trying to find work and were learning the Norwegian language. One woman specifically said that integration was important to her.

For me it is important to integrate myself into the society so I am here (name of peer group). (Interview 1)

5.2.3.2 Knowledge

This theme included knowledge of Norwegian culture, the women's own ethnic cultures, Norwegian language competency, education level, and work experience. The education levels varied greatly among the women interviewed. One was currently attending high school and one had dropped out and was trying to get back into high school. Another woman had completed high school and two other women had further education beyond high school from their home countries.

The women who came to Norway as children spoke Norwegian very well and those who came as adults were still learning the language, but they could speak and understand quite a bit. The women who came to Norway as adults reported having difficulty understanding the nuances of the Norwegian culture even though they had taken social studies classes as part of their introduction program.

One woman talked about building cultural awareness and knowledge for immigrant and in Norwegian society to help combat generalizations.

Yeah generalizing. Like maybe it's happening, but maybe all the people doesn't believe that. That they don't agree, you don't know. So it's like to have more information about it and to learn each other's people's culture. Because normally, not here…they are just focusing on the positive thing, they just forget about the negative thing. Or they just focus about the negative thing and they just forget about the positive. And for me I don't think this is good because you have to focus on both of them. You have to learn both of them. And make awareness about both of them. Not only Norwegian culture. I think all the cultures. (Interview 5)

5.2.3.3 Network

This theme consists of data regarding the women's current social groups and network in Norway. The women's peer group where I gained access to the women, serves as an arena for the women to meet others, discuss various topics and to expand their network for friends and searching for jobs. The women's group was an integral part of the women's network in Norway. Most of the women mentioned feeling or being alone at some point, so the group was a place to be with others.

Talk to those here....teach each other the language... I like it because there are many new ones who come here both new and old and so I like to make contact them. It is a type of network for me with friends. Because it is not so easy for me to find new friends (Interview 3)

One girl mentioned that they only meet at the group meetings not outside of them, which is a question of the depth of the group's reach as a network for the women.

We do not meet in our spare time. We just meet here. So, how much it means to integrate here it is just talking Norwegian and explaining yourself. It is how I have got to know some people... (Interview 1)

All of the women were very positive to the support and help they received from the group. Some of the women mentioned that the group felt like a safe place where they could talk about anything. Overall, everyone felt that the group had helped them to meet more people and was a place to be social and share their experiences as well as learn about themselves and different cultures.

I feel safe here and it is very nice to be social with everyone. And to get to know everyone and another culture. Now I meet everyone in one place. From America or Africa and we tell each other what we have experienced in the course of a day. What we have done...that we actually care about others. It is important...to get to know about us everybody together. That was what made me strong and that I also can tell who I am and where I come from. There are very many people exposed to serious things that can destroy your life, true? Social anxiety and yes...so this was spot on for me, to meet others. (Interview 1)

All of the women were positive to the women who were leading the group. One girl said the women have time for them. Another said that even though the group and leaders do not fully understand your culture, they accept you where you are. One girl mentioned that the group

leaders were role models for her and she wanted to do what they are doing. She was already helping her roommates get information on prevention.

It's people you can talk to and you don't afraid especially when I talk to (name of leader) so, you just talk whatever in your mind and you don't have to be afraid like you know and she gives you a…she help you, she helps you in her best to cope. (Interview 5)

Some of the women mentioned another immigrant support group that helps them with the Norwegian language and job searching.

Yeah, learning language because we go every Monday there (other immigrant support group). To practice Norwegian….There is someone to talk about Norwegian and conversations and lectures like that. And if you need help with the CV or stuff. She help with it, yeah. She look for a job for us or something. To practice place or something like that. (Interview 5)

Several girls mentioned having ethnic group friends outside of the peer support group and several had Norwegian friends as well. The one girl said her Norwegian friends are a resource for learning the language.

I just go with those friends sometimes they invite me for cafe and the good thing about those people and my friends is that they never talk to me in English, they only talk to me in Norwegian….They are very strict and I love about that….It helps. Even if I don't understand a word I say it in English, they say it to me in Norwegian. Yeah, they are very cool. (Interview 5)

5.2.3.4 Participation in Society

This basic theme contains data regarding how the women were currently participating in Norwegian society or how they would like to in the future.

One woman was working at a canteen, and two others had practice jobs in the past at stores and preschools. Two women were studying Norwegian, one was in high school, and several were looking to further their education in the future. One woman mentioned that she would like to do what the leaders at the peer group are doing and help others. She would like to volunteer at various organizations.

Um I actually the group helped me with the I came across a lot of things I didn't know for example there was a midwife here, (name of midwife) and um we talked about with her, but

not only with her, with (name of coordinator) we talked about a lot of things, you know? And we get a lot of advice from them and any problems you have or any questions you have. And you know what, I became, they are my role models. I really want to do what they are doing here. (Interview 4)

All the women showed interest in coming into contact with others socially.
The group means very much because it is maybe people that I can be with the future and we can meet outside the group...It is just to create a friendship that we can take care of. It is very nice to make new friends here at (name of women's group). (Interview 1)

Some of the women had Norwegian friends.

I just go with those friends (Norwegian friends) sometimes they invite me for café.

Two of the women were disappointed that they have not been able to secure jobs. They have had several practice jobs that did not turn into work opportunities. They had work experience from their home country and believed they were qualified.

That's the hardest thing, the jobs. Til now we are working voluntary. We work to just have a job. The job market for us is very difficult. Even for the new ones, It's become more harder and harder over the years. So, I don't know, we do our best, we go every morning and just put the CVs in and we don't have an answer. The thing is the media is making you crazy also because the old immigrants, they came here for the money and when you do stuff, when you do your best and you cannot find a job that is irritating. Even searched the smallest jobs like ugh like cleaning or serving or like something everybody can do it with the language or without the language, didn't have a response so that's very sad. (Interview 5)

5.3 Summary of findings

Identity issues regarding culture, barriers to negotiating cultures and resources for negotiating cultures were the three organizing themes formed from the interview data. They represent the key themes discussed regarding the women's experiences in my study under the global theme of negotiating cultures. These findings are discussed in more detail in the next chapter regarding their implications for negotiating cultures and health promotion in relation to acculturation theory and salutogenesis.

6.0 Discussion

6.1 Introduction

The goal of this study was to increase knowledge regarding the phenomenon about young refugee women negotiating between their ethnic cultures and the Norwegian culture. In this section, I discuss the key themes and findings from the study in relation to relevant research and theory. I used acculturation and bicultural theory as well as key elements of salutogenesis and the SOC such as comprehensibility, meaningfulness and manageability as a framework to understand my findings. I also discuss the implications of my findings regarding health promotion as well as the limitations of this study and recommendations for future research.

6.2 Main findings

All of the women in this study reported major cultural differences between their ethnic culture and Norwegian culture. The cultural differences discussed in this study related to language, religion, food, gender expectations and social codes. Most of the women reported some form of difficulty related to the cultural differences listed above and expectations from their ethnic culture and Norwegian society. The women who came to Norway as young adults experienced Norwegian society as closed and hard to get into and encountered discrimination and difficulty regarding securing a job in Norway. There was a degree of uncertainty for most of the women regarding understanding Norwegian culture and its underlying social codes. The women who came to Norway as children had varied backgrounds, so their experiences varied also. Overall, the women who came to Norway as children did not discuss experiencing Norwegian society as closed. While these women did mention that the Norwegian culture was hard to understand when they first moved to Norway, most of the women who came to Norway as children did not report currently struggling to understand the culture. All of the women in this study were positive to getting to know Norwegians on a social level and had a desire to participate in Norwegian society through education, work or social activities. The women in this study had at their disposal some key resources for participation and negotiating cultures such as openness, education, Norwegian language skills and network. However, they also faced barriers to negotiating cultures such as lack of cultural competence, cultural expectations/conflict, a closed host society, discrimination/stereotyping and inadequate employment opportunities.

6.3 Acculturation and bicultural experiences

Bicultural experiences explain the cultural identity experiences discussed by my participants in the findings. Overall, the experiences reported by the women in my study correspond with cultural identity experiences discussed in the bicultural literature.

Most of the women in my study reported feeling at some point as if they did not belong to either the Norwegian culture or their ethnic culture. In Pajouhandeh (2004), Iranian women in Canada reported feeling like the "other" in relationships with Iranians and Canadians. They also reported feeling alienated or disconnected from both cultures (Pajouhandeh, 2004). According to Straiton et al. (2017), feelings of not belonging to either group can lead to feelings of stress or distress and marginalization, which occur when an individual is separated from both their ethnic and the host cultures (Berry, 2006b). Perceived social isolation is negatively associated with health (Abebe et al., 2014). Further, connection to cultural roots and cultural stability are important resources that strengthen SOC (Idan et al., 2017) that may be jeopardized by feelings of not belonging and marginalization.

Women in my study also reported the bicultural experience of being two people in a way, which is related to the idea of alternating biculturalism in the research literature (Hong et al., 2000; Nguyen & Benet-Martinez, 2013; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Stuart & Ward, 2011; Ward et al., 2018). Individuals, who identify as alternating biculturals, do not have a fixed cultural identity, but rather switch their identity and behaviors based on the context or situation (Hong et al., 2000; Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997; Van der Zee et al., 2016). Pajouhandeh (2004) identified a similar concept of the self in flux regarding changing identity based on the cultural context. This process of navigating cultural identities is also referred to as cultural frame switching (Hong, et al., 2000). Several women in my study reported feeling they were two people or that they had multiple personalities. One woman specifically mentioned that she was one person at home and another out in society.

According to research, alternating biculturals find it difficult to have two cultures at the same time as they see their two cultures in conflict with different values, ideas and norms (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997). For this reason, they switch between the two cultures rather than blending their identity (Van der Zee et al., 2016). This agrees with Pajouhandeh (2004) where Iranian women in Canada reported difficulty regarding remaking their identity due to competing expectations between the two cultures. As a coping mechanism, they developed a fragmented self to deal with different expectations (Pajouhandeh, 2004).

Yeh et al. (2003) found that maintaining two identities or being two people in a way, may represent a coping mechanisms for negotiating cultures. Cultural frame switching allows for participation in both cultures and is seen as positive as long as it facilitates interactions, close social relations and achievement of important goals (Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016). Successful cultural frame switching essentially allows for participation in both cultures.

However, on the negative side, switching cultural frames or identities can be experienced as stressful (Van Oudenhoven & Eisses, 1998) or difficult (Benet-Martinez, Leu, Lee & Morris, 2002). Overall, an alternating strategy is more associated with identity conflict and lower levels of life satisfaction compared to a blended or hybrid identity. (Ward, et al., 2014). While only one participant in my study mentioned the experience of being two different people as difficult, it would be interesting to explore this topic further to see if the other women experienced the same feelings.

Rather than switching cultural frames as discussed above, the "third way" as I referred to it in my study, resembled more of a blended or hybrid identity with bits and pieces of both cultures (Stuart & Ward, 2011; Van der Zee, et al., 2016). Blended or integrated bicultural individuals identify equally with both their ethnic and the host society cultures. A bicultural identity is facilitated by individuals not experiencing conflict between their two cultures (Van der Zee et al., 2016). The blended/integrated identity is most associated with positive psychological and sociocultural outcomes compared to other acculturation strategies (Nguyen & Benet-Martinez, 2013). Most of the women in this study discussed that they were trying to develop their own ways or beliefs somewhere between their ethnic cultures and the Norwegian culture. Several mentioned that it was difficult finding their "third way" or "own way" between the cultures. This was different from the experience of being two people discussed above. For the women in this study "a third way" represented more of a goal that they were working towards, but had not yet reached.

Developing one's "own way" occurs when individuals view themselves as an individual and minimize the importance of cultural identity. This was a strategy used by some Muslim youth in New Zealand (Stuart & Ward, 2011) One woman in my study mentioned finding her "own way". She mentioned not needing to follow either her ethnic culture or the Norwegian culture, but talked about making her own culture. This may be related to the minimizing differences method utilized in (Stuart & Ward, 2011). None of the women in my study mentioned experiences related to being a separated bicultural or someone who only identifies with their ethnic culture (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997).

According to Ward et al. (2018), a blended or hybrid identity was more common with second-generation immigrants and an alternating strategy with first-generation immigration (Ward et al., 2018). This suggests that achieving a blended identity takes time to achieve and may not occur for first-generation immigrants who immigrate as adults. My findings support this as the women who came to Norway recently reported more of an alternating strategy compared to those women who came as children. Nguyen & Benet-Martinez (2013) suggest that that the acculturation strategy one utilizes is not necessarily their ideal strategy in real life. This also agrees with my findings in that it seemed everyone had integration or a blended identity as a goal, but they were using other strategies such as alternating in real life, which may be related to contextual factors such as cultural distance and time in Norway.

Overall, my findings agree with previous research that biculturalism is a complex, multi-dimensional phenomenon with different ways of "being" bicultural and individuals may experience more than one bicultural strategy (Phinney & Devich-Navarro, 1997). The complexity of the acculturation experience supports the importance of context when considering the utilization of acculturation and bicultural strategies (Pajouhandeh, 2004). Bicultural strategies such as alternating and blending are a potential coping mechanism for balancing competing cultural expectations (Stuart & Ward, 2011) and having two cultures is associated with better adjustment than one culture (Nguyen-Benet-Martinez (2013).

6.4 Potential barriers to negotiating cultures

Looking at the experiences in my study, the women lacked some key resources for negotiating cultures and maintaining a healthy SOC. Discussed below are barriers to negotiation and missing resources that represent barriers to participation in one or both cultures.

Perceived incompatibility between cultures is more likely to occur in the presence of major cultural differences between beliefs, values and traditions of the host society and ethnic culture (Ozyurt, 2013), leading to potential familial and/or ethnic culture conflict (Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016). Societal, educational, cultural community and familial contexts can either facilitate or serve as a barrier in cultural transitioning for immigrant women depending on the values of the culture of origin, the host culture, gender roles, and the women's own expectations (Sinacore, et al., 2013). Perceptions of incompatibility between cultures can threaten bicultural identity formation and lead to feelings of marginzalization or in-between-ness (Ozurt, 2013). Overall, my participants experienced major cultural differences or cultural distance between their ethnic cultures and the Norwegian culture. Differences regarding the

social cultures and expectations as well as subsequent cultural conflict caused some level of problems for most of the women coinciding with findings reported in Dona & Young (2016) and Riedel et al. (2011). Iranian women in Canada also reported difficulties regarding conflicting expectations between their two cultures, which led to them developing a fragmented self and feeling disconnected from both cultures (Pajouhandeh, 2004). Stuart and Ward (2011) found that Muslim youth in New Zealand balanced potentially competing expectations between family, friends and society using bicultural strategies of alternating, blending or minimizes differences. My findings support the importance of considering cultural differences between the ethnic and host cultures in regards to compatibility and strategies utilized for negotiating cultures (Sinacore et al., 2013).

Research indicates that it is not uncommon for young women from traditional cultures to experience parental pressure to adhere to their ethnic culture values (Goitom, 2018). While there was some mention of parental or familial pressure to maintain traditional values in my study, it was not a major topic as in previous research. This is likely due to the various backgrounds of the women in my study. Some of the women who came to Norway as children, did not have much exposure to their ethnic culture or live with their parents, which may explain the relative lack of parental pressure they experienced (Goitom, 2018). For those women who came to Norway as young adults, acculturating too fast caused conflict with ethnic culture friends, which coincides with research done by Goitom (2018), but in the context of peer pressure rather than family pressure. Implications regarding pressures experienced due to ethnic culture expectations are important for understanding the experience of negotiating cultures and potential conflicts and stressors.

Ethnic cultural competence and traditional family values are important for contributing to feelings of belonging to one's ethnic group, psychosocial security and self-esteem (Jasinskaja-Lahti & Liebkind, 2001). The development of cultural competence is affected by the quality of interpersonal relationships and family support (Oppedal, Røysam, & Sam, 2004; Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016). Research has also found that ethnic cultural competence helps adolescents explore their identity and surroundings (Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016). Family cohesion, ethnic identity centrality and ethnic group belonging are protective factors (Stuart & Ward, 2011). Some of the women in this study were lacking identification with their culture and ethnic cultural competence as well as familial and ethnic cultural social support (Oppedal et al., 2004; Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016). Most of the participants in this study who came to Norway as children, lacked exposure to their ethnic culture. This led to them identifying more

with the Norwegian culture and served as a barrier to participating in their ethnic culture as adults. Overall, most of the women in this study reported having some different beliefs from their ethnic culture and experienced not fitting in with their ethnic culture in Norway. This is problematic for healthy integration as ethnic culture is important to one's identity, self-esteem, and sense of belonging (Jasinskaja-Lahti & Liebkind, 2001; Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016; Stuart & Ward, 2011).

For successful integration, it is important with both ethnic and host cultural competence (Benz et al., 2014). Individuals, who are not integrated into the host culture, are constantly confronted with new and incomprehensible information. This leaves them feeling powerless in society and threatens their SOC (Benz et al., 2014). All of the women in this study felt that the Norwegian culture was hard to understand when they first arrived to Norway. Most of the women experienced a gap between what they learned in social studies classes and what Norwegian culture really is. Some of the women in this study reported that there are social codes and other things to be learned outside of the classroom, which they found challenging. Not comprehending or understanding Norwegian society is a threat to integration, SOC and overall health.

It appeared that contact with Norwegian culture, could at times be stressful or challenging for the women in my study due to competing expectations and uncertainty about Norwegian culture. These findings correspond to Hong et al., (2000), who found that experiences related to intercultural contact and change can be experienced as either challenging or stressful (Hong et al., 2000). If immigrants do not comprehend or understand their situation (i.e. host culture), it may affect their ability to assess and use available resources for negotiating cultures leading to a struggle to find meaning in the host country (Benz et al., 2014).

Another important aspect of successfully negotiating cultures and integrating is host cultural openness or receptiveness (Berry, 1990; Berry & Sam, 1997; Berry, et al., 2006; Nguyen, Benet-Martinez, 2013; Sam & Berry, 2010). In one study, Arab youth who perceived that their environment supported cultural diversity were more likely to utilize a blended identity and experience less identity conflict (Qumseya & Ward, 2015). While, integration/biculturalism is the acculturation strategy most associated with immigrant health and well-being, it is dependent on the host culture being receptive and inclusive towards immigrants' (Berry, 1990; Berry & Sam, 1997; Berry, et al., 2006; Sam & Berry, 2010). According to the Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care Services (2015), it is not unusual for individuals with immigrant background to report feeling excluded from Norwegian society.

Perceived social isolation and discrimination have shown a negative effect on health and well-being (Abebe et al., 2014; Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care Services, 2015; Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016). The experience of being an insider versus an outsider is a key transitioning factor for acculturating individuals (Sincaore et al., 2013). In addition, limited or no access to cultural institutions and a limited voice in mainstream society can lead to feelings of marginalization, which is an integration strategy associated with poorer health (Benz et al., 2014). Being part of a minority group that is not accepted by the majority group can also inhibit immigrants from developing a strong SOC, threatening their health (Maoz, Antonovsky, Apter, Wijsenbeek, & Datan, 1977). Most of the women in my study reported experiencing a degree of marginalization and the women who came to Norway as adults experienced the Norwegian society as closed. All of the women interviewed in my study experienced difficulty meeting new friends in general. Feelings of marginalization and less than desired participation in society represent a threat to health related to integration and SOC (Riedel et al., 2011).

Also related to cultural receptiveness, discrimination and stereotyping are also barriers to negotiating cultures. Young Filipino women in Norway reported experiencing a degree of stereotyping related to their ethnicity and gender (Straiton et al., 2017). Other studies done in Norway indicate a degree of discrimination in the Norwegian labor market based on applicant names (Midtbøen, 2013). My participants reported experiencing marginalization and discrimination in various contexts. One woman mentioned the media stereotyping immigrants at the group level. She said the media portrays immigrants as coming to Norway for money, which is not the case for many immigrants who are trying their best to find work. In this case, the media is contributing towards misinformation of the public regarding refugees who come to Norway for reasons of persecution and conflict in their home countries and who are trying to find work in Norway. The participants, who came to Norway as adults, reported experiencing possible discrimination at the individual level regarding applying for jobs. This discrimination led them to feeling disappointed and frustrated. Perceived discrimination can also push immigrants to identify more strongly with their ethnic communities, favoring a separation strategy for acculturation (Rezazadeh & Hoover, 2018). While the women in this study did not mention identifying more closely with their ethnic culture when they felt discriminated against, that does not mean that it was not the case. Overall, generalizing, stereotyping and racism represent barriers to participation that can lead to utilization of a

marginalization or a separation strategy, which are acculturation outcomes associated with maladaptation and mental health problems (Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016).

A review of literature regarding acculturation attitudes and expectations of host or majority cultures towards immigrants in Europe found that the majority cultures preferred assimilation while the immigrants or minority groups preferred integration (Sabatier, Phalet, & TItzmann, 2016). There is a polarized reality in Norway regarding integration and diversity, with the political left supporting integration and the extreme right favoring assimilation (Andersson, 2012). Most of the women in this study mentioned that they felt Norwegian society expects them to become Norwegian or go into the Norwegian system and way of doing things. This perceived expectation of Norwegian society for assimilation is not ideal. The women seemed to prefer an integration or bicultural approach themselves. This mismatch in acculturation attitudes can lead to enhanced feelings of prejudice, poorer intergroup relations and lower levels of well-being for the immigrant women (Sabatier et al., 2016).

Participating in the job market is a vital part of participation in society. Integrating into a new job market can be stressful for refugees due to the loss of financial security, jobs and their home as well as any other trauma they may have experienced (Fix & Passel, 1999). Refugees who come from situations of poverty or deprivation sometimes have high expectations for their economic lives in the host country. Those with education may not realize how difficult it is to transfer foreign credentials and work experience in the host country and retraining is often a long process (Dona & Young, 2016). Underemployment, downward mobility and unemployment is not uncommon among refugees (Aycan & Berry, 1996) and refugee women specifically (Tronstad & Liebig, 2018). A study in Norway revealed that finding work was a stressor for Filipino women. They were "deskilled", meaning they were in jobs lower than their education or experience level from their home country. As a result of this, the women reported feeling devalued and disillusioned and faced an uphill struggle related to further study and pursuing a career in Norway (Straiton, et al., 2017). The women in my study, who came to Norway as adult refugees experienced many of the same frustrations regarding employment opportunities despite having experience and education from their home countries. They also faced reeducation after completing their Norwegian language studies. Adequate employment opportunities are important for helping refugees re-establish their occupational and economic lives, which are key to their overall health, well-being and life satisfaction (Dona & Young, 2016). Research also indicates a strong link between refugee employment and social networks especially with native-born peers (i.e. Norwegians)

(Tronstad &Liebig, 2018) showing that unemployment has implications for other areas of the women's lives.

Social works are important resources for negotiating cultures and participating in society. Reconstructing social bonds and networks is a central part of the acculturation experience (Ward, Fox, Wilson, Stuart & Kus, 2010). All of the women in my study reported struggling on some level to develop a social network and meet new friends. Research shows that reestablishing social lives can be especially challenging for refugees who have experienced war-trauma as they may struggle with reminders of traumatic experiences (Goodkind et al., 2014; Dona & Young, 2016). At least two of the women in my study fled their countries due to political problems or war. While they did not specifically mention experiencing trauma related to these events, it is an important consideration regarding barriers to successfully negotiating cultures and reestablishing social networks.

6.5 Resources for negotiating cultures

While the section above highlighted key resources the women lacked for negotiating cultures and participating in society, they also had at their disposal some important resources for negotiating cultures. These resources included Norwegian language skills, education, work experience, social network and individual personality traits. The availability of resources helps to provide consistency and understanding (i.e. comprehensibility), opportunity for participation and shaping outcomes (i.e. meaningfulness), and underload/overload balance regarding the resources available to tackle the demands (i.e. manageability) (Idan et al., 2017).

Openness to experiences is an important personality resource (Van der Zee et al., 2016) for negotiating cultures. Openness to experience is a positive predictor of health and well-being among immigrants (Van der Zee, 2004; Van der Zee, et al., 2016). Attitude is also a key factor in negotiating cultures and for integration (Berry, 1990; Berry & Sam, 1997; Berry, et al., 2006; Sam & Berry, 2010). A review of studies regarding foreign-born women in Canada showed a strong desire to participate in Canadian society through work and volunteering as well as a desire to learn the language (Rezazadeh & Hoover, 2018). The women in my study also showed a desire to participate in Norwegian society through work, volunteering, language acquirement and education. All of the women in this study were open to and interested in learning about other cultures. Overall, everyone had a desire to participate in Norwegian society whether socially, through education or work. While I did not measure

personality in this study, the fact that the women came to the peer group may say something about their personality and personal resources. Some of them faced potential backlash at home for attending the group, but attended anyhow.

Host culture competence another important resource for negotiating cultures. Speaking the host language and competence in host culture codes is key to promoting interaction and friendship (Birman & Taylor-Ritzler, 2007). Participants in this study, who came to Norway as children, described fewer experiences of discrimination and did not describe Norway as a closed society. This is likely due to that they lived in Norway longer and had more exposure to the Norwegian culture and time to develop cultural competence. Majority culture competence is a key resource for social integration into dominant society networks. It is also an indicator of future academic and economic success as well as feelings of acceptance in the mainstream society. Early exposure through Norwegian preschools and schooling helps to build cultural competence (Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016).

Language skills are an important resource within cultural competence for integration into host societies (Straiton et al., 2017). Filipino women in Norway, expressed learning Norwegian as the most important aspect of functioning in Norwegian society (Straiton et al., 2017). Overall, the women in this study either had or were well on their way towards achieving Norwegian language competence as a resource for integration.

Competence in multiple cultures improves immigrant chances for success and access to additional protective, sociocultural resources (Berry, 2006a; Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016). Additionally, competence in multiple cultures may contribute to flexibility, adaptability and positive mental health outcomes (Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016). Research has also shown that high levels of competence in both cultures is associated with lower levels of perceived discrimination and depressive symptoms (Oppedal & Idsoe, 2015). Increasing competence in ethnic and host cultures is a goal for improving well-being and successful negotiation of cultures. Health promoting interventions should focus on participation in culturally diverse ways and peer networks. Community-level interventions should include organized activities that build cultural competence and promote coping (Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016).

Social network is an important resource for negotiating cultures (Sincore et al., 2017). Social support acts as a buffer to immigration related stress by increasing feelings of control and self-worth (Sørensen, Klungsøyr, Kleiner, & Klepp, 2011). Emotional closeness, a fourth component of the SOC, is seen as important for developing a sense of belonging regarding

social groups and contributes to the meaningfulness component of SOC (Idan et al., 2017; Sagy & Antonovksy, 2000). In previous research, family members were identified by immigrant women as key to developing their social networks and negotiating cultural differences (Sinacore et al., 2013). However depending on the supportiveness of family members regarding integration, they could either facilitate or hinder the women's cultural transition. (Sinacore et al. 2013). These findings correspond to my study as those women who did not have family in Norway discussed relationships with ethnic group peers regarding integration in Norway. For women who came alone to Norway, it seemed that ethnic culture peers played a similar role to family regarding cultural expectations and facilitation or hindrance of integration.

Previous research indicates the importance of support from peers who also come from traditional cultures for cultural transitioning (Sinacore et al., 2013) and friends with similar cross-cultural adjustment problems to talk with (Yeh, et al., 2003). Ethnic friends share a similar social status, immigration experiences and language. Ease of communication and mutual understanding are benefits to having ethnic culture friends (Sabatier et al., 2016). A study from Norway found that religion, and support from family and friends helped Filipino women cope with challenges related to being an immigrant woman (Straiton et al., 2017). The women in this study did not mention religion as an important resource or support for them. They also did not emphasize the need for having friends with similar cultural backgrounds, but did mention having some friends from their own culture and the women's group provided an arena for fellowship among women who were encountering similar cross-cultural adjustment problems. The women's peer group in my study, served as an integral part of the women's network and social support in Norway. It provided a source of meaning for the women while they were negotiating cultures and building up resources in their life (Sørensen et al., 2011). It served as a network for making friends, meeting others, job searching and for coping with the challenges of being an immigrant woman. The group was a resource that led to the development of additional resources for increasing SOC.

Sinacore, et al., (2013) found that if the women in their study did not receive support from their own cultural community or family, host culture peer relationships were important for exploring opportunities in the host country. According to other research, host culture competence is associated with the support of classmates or host culture peers (Oppedal et al., 2004; Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016). Two women in my study mentioned having Norwegian friends. Norwegian friends served as a resource for learning the language. Overall, ethnic and

Norwegian friends play different roles, but both are important resources for negotiating cultures and integration.

Overall, stable, multicultural communities are important for protecting young people from stressors and improving comprehensibility and SOC (Braun-Lewensohn & Sagy, 2011). The peer group in my study represented an important multicultural community for protecting the women from acculturation related stressors and promoting comprehensibility. Most of the women in my study mentioned the multi-cultural aspect of their peer support group, which was a positive experience for them. They enjoyed learning about and interacting with other cultures at the group. Bicultural research has also shown that multicultural experiences can be a positive source of creativity and personal growth (Benet-Martinex, 2012; Hong et al., 2000; Tadmor, Galinsky & Maddus, 2012, Van der Zee et al., 2016).

6.5.1 Participation in society

Overall, the women in this study participated in the larger Norwegian society through education or work. All of the women indicated a desire to participate in society in ways that they currently were not such as education, work, or volunteering. They also showed interest in coming into contact with others socially including Norwegians. Participation in wider society is key for integration (Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, 2013) and leads to opportunities to build up additional resources, increasing SOC and movement towards health**.**

6.6 Health promotion

Health promotion focuses on social and personal resources for empowering people to take control over their own lives and to achieve health (WHO, 1986). As a field, it is concerned with creating opportunities to foster heath (e.g. community interventions) and reducing inequality in health (WHO,1986). The Ottawa charter acknowledges the impact of sociological factors and social determinants on health and individual behaviors (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2018), which are central to acculturation issues. Based on my findings, there is work to be down regarding empowering young immigrant women to take control over their lives and health. While must of the women appeared to have integration as a goal, most were still working on developing their bicultural selves. Most of the women also experienced feelings of marginalization, which is associated with poorer health outcomes (Oppedal & Toppelberg, 2016). The women in my study who came to Norway as adults, struggled with finding work and the practice jobs they had were below their qualifications,

which agrees with previous statistics regarding refugee women and employment (Tronstad & Liebig, 2018). These women also experienced Norwegian society as closed and all the women reported having trouble meeting new people. A receptive and open host society is critical to integration (Berry, 2005).

Healthy public policy, supportive environments, community interventions, and a focus on developing personal skills and resources (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2018) are important to the process of acculturation. While Norway endorses inclusive integration policies that focus on immigrant resources (Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, 2013), the results of my study show there is still work to be done regarding achieving an open and welcoming host society. Public policies should continue to focus on participation and including immigrant women in the job market. Public health programming in Norway should also seek to build mutual cultural competence and awareness in the host culture and incoming immigrant cultures to help manage expectations, prevent misunderstanding, decrease fear and promote openness (Goitom, 2018).

Community-centered approaches for mobilizing resources and assets of refugee and immigrant communities (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2018) are important for empowering women at the local level. Developing personal skills such as language competence and cultural competence in local communities is important for promoting immigrant health (WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2018). The multi-cultural resource center and women's discussion group I observed and interviewed, are examples of health promoting community-level interventions. The women's group empowered young immigrant women through the development of their personal resources such as cultural competence, network and practicing their language skills. By building up immigrant women's resources, community-level interventions like the women's group I studied can help immigrant women experience balance between the resources they have available and the stressors they encounter (Riedel et al., 2011). However, it is important to note that the group was missing an important link to Norwegian society for integrating socially and in the job market. Since conducting the evaluation, the group has implemented a forum for the young immigrant women to meet Norwegian women, promoting participation in Norwegian society.

6.7 Limitations

6.7.1 Duration of the study

I took two years of maternity leave during the course of the research process. Looking back, I see that the gaps in time between reading literature and engaging with my data influenced the quality of my interview guide development and the continuity of the research process overall.

6.7.2 Research questions

I originally started the research process with two questions. In reality, I felt that I did not adequately cover the second question regarding how the women's peer group helped with the experience of negotiating cultures. As I was also doing a form of program evaluation for the group, most of my interview questions regarding the group focused on how it functioned. However, aspects of the second question did come to light and are discussed in the paper.

6.7.3 Sample and recruitment

The time scope and travel logistics in this study, limited the number of observations I attended. I attended three observations with a partial fourth observation on the first day of interviewing. As I was recruiting from one specific group, I was limited to the number of women willing to participate. An important consideration regarding the sample is the relative resourcefulness of the women at the peer discussion group. The fact that they sought out the group in the first place says something about their resourcefulness. In addition, the women who agreed to participate in the interviews may have been a self-selecting resourceful group.

6.7.4 Methodological shortcomings

I used individual interviews to explore women's perspectives and experiences regarding negotiating cultures. A focus group interview of the group may have allowed for additional perspectives and richer data as participants reflect together and discuss from each other's thoughts and experiences (Halkier & Gjerpe, 2010). However, some women may also have been reluctant to share in a group setting if they were afraid of judgement from their peers.

Another limitation is that I conducted three of the five interviews in Norwegian, which is a second language for me. Although I have passed the highest-level exams in Norwegian, my interviewing skills in Norwegian are limited. In regards to rewording questions, I struggled at times to find words and ended up asking leading questions. I also lacked experience conducting interviews and with qualitative data analysis. I failed to follow up at times where I should have asked further questions or clarified responses.

6.7.5 Verification

Due to time constraints and the logistics of living on the other side of Norway, it was not feasible for me to travel back to go through the interview transcripts in person with participants to verify and to clear up additional questions. Due to confidentiality issues I did not communicate with the participants via email, but in hindsight may have been able to follow-up with some of the women via telephone.

6.7.6   Researcher's role

When I gathered the data, I was also a young immigrant woman. Although at 33, I was a little older than the participants. My background was also very different from theirs as I am not a minority, come from a Western culture, and have insider access to the Norwegian culture as I have a Norwegian husband. These factors all limit my understanding of their situations and experiences. Our different backgrounds may also have created a degree of distance between us that would not have been there had we come from the same immigrant backgrounds.

6.7.7   Cultural differences

In addition, cultural differences can sometimes create misunderstanding regarding the wording of the questions. Yeh et al. (2003), also highlighted the importance of considering culture when interpreting the results, as it is not always deemed appropriate in some cultures to discuss family and issues with others, which could affect the interview responses (Yeh, et al., 2003). Interviews done in Norwegian were transcribed and analyzed in Norwegian to avoid losing meaning during translation. However, I translated quotes for the purposes of the report and some meaning may have been lost in this process.

6.8 Recommendations for further research

Future studies should look separately at refugee women who come to Norway as children versus adults as they may have different experiences of negotiating cultures. Findings from my study, showed that those whom came as children have had more exposure to the host culture as children through schooling and time to learn the language and gain Norwegian cultural competence. Women who came to Norway as children versus adults also had different living situations and pressures from family. Those who come as adults have had their adult lives interrupted and are faced with starting over educationally, occupationally and socially.

Previous research found that young, unmarried immigrant women from traditional cultures experienced feeling more independent and a sense of empowerment after moving to Norway

(Straition, Ledesma & Donnelly, 2017). Future research should explore questions around empowerment and independence experienced in young refugee women who immigrate alone. It would also be ideal to include immigrant women who were not part of a support group, for other perspectives regarding negotiating cultures.

According to Antonovsky (1979) SOC tends to stabilize during adulthood, but arly adulthood represents a time when identity and SOC are still developing (Antonovsky, 1979). It would be interesting to look at young immigrant women's SOC before immigration versus after immigration during this vulnerable period in their life.

Peer support groups for immigrant women are essentially a resource that builds up other resources, increasing comprehensibility, meaningfulness and manageability (SOC). Such groups play an integral role in integration and further research should focus on community-level immigrant support groups to encourage government financing.

7.0 Conclusion

This studied explored the experiences of young immigrant, women regarding negotiating cultures and their resources for negotiating cultures. My study, along with previous research found that participation in society; barriers to participation in society, network, and attitude are key factors for negotiating cultures and integration (Berry, 1990; Berry & Sam, 1997; Berry, et al., 2006; Sam & Berry, 2010). The personal resources possessed by immigrants as well as the opportunities present in the settlement society are other key factors during the acculturation process (Ho, 1995). This study attempted to move acculturation towards health promotion by focusing on the positive factors that promote health, successful integration and negotiation between cultures. The findings provide insight into how young immigrant women in Norway experience negotiating different cultural identities and sheds light on the resources that refugee women have available as well as the barriers they face to negotiating cultures.

Overall, the women in this study were open to becoming a part of Norwegian society and seemed to have integration as a goal, which is the optimal acculturation outcome for health and well-being (Berry, 1990; Berry & Sam, 1997; Berry, et al., 2006; Sam & Berry, 2010). Some of the women discussed switching cultural frames based on the context of their situation. They also discussed trying to blend or mix their two cultures to create a third way. Creating a third way seemed to be a goal that the women were yet to achieve and corresponds to a bicultural identity and integration. However, most of the women in this study reported experiencing some degree of marginalization, which is associated with less favorable outcomes regarding well-being (Berry, 2005). Those who came alone as young adults, experienced Norwegian society as closed and difficult to get into. Overall, the women experienced some barriers to participation in society and lacked some critical resources for maintaining a strong SOC and for negotiating cultures. Resources the women lacked and barriers they faced were cultural competence, cultural distance (barrier), cultural stability, employment opportunities and strong social ties in the Norwegian culture. However, they possessed resources such as language competence, openness, participation in the women's peer support group, and education. These resources are important for integration, strengthening SOC and the ongoing process of negotiating cultures. For immigrants, integration and cultural stability help to provide meaning, a balance between resources and stressors and predictability leading to increased SOC and health (Benz et al., 2014).

If successfully managed, the acculturation process presents the opportunity to strengthen SOC through mastery, empowerment and the development of additional resources (Bauer, 2017). Community-level interventions should focus on building up GRRs for increasing SOC and facilitating negotiating cultures. Building up immigrant women's SOC, empowers them to take control over their own lives and is associated with well-being (Benz et al., 2014). Support groups like the one where I conducted my study, play a critical role as a network, social support and source of knowledge.

In conclusion, negotiating cultures is an ongoing process within the field of acculturation and biculturalism. Community-level interventions should focus on equipping women with the necessary resources to successfully manage their acculturation experience (Van der Zee et al., 2016) and to prevent stressors related to negotiating cultures from becoming tension. Increasing cultural competence to promote diversity, and focusing on immigrants resources for negotiating cultures facilitates this process. As integration requires the host society to be open and positive towards cultural diversity, policies should work to create an open, including, multi-cultural society (Berry, 2005). Building mutual cultural awareness about both the host and immigrant cultures helps to create understanding (Goitom, 2018).

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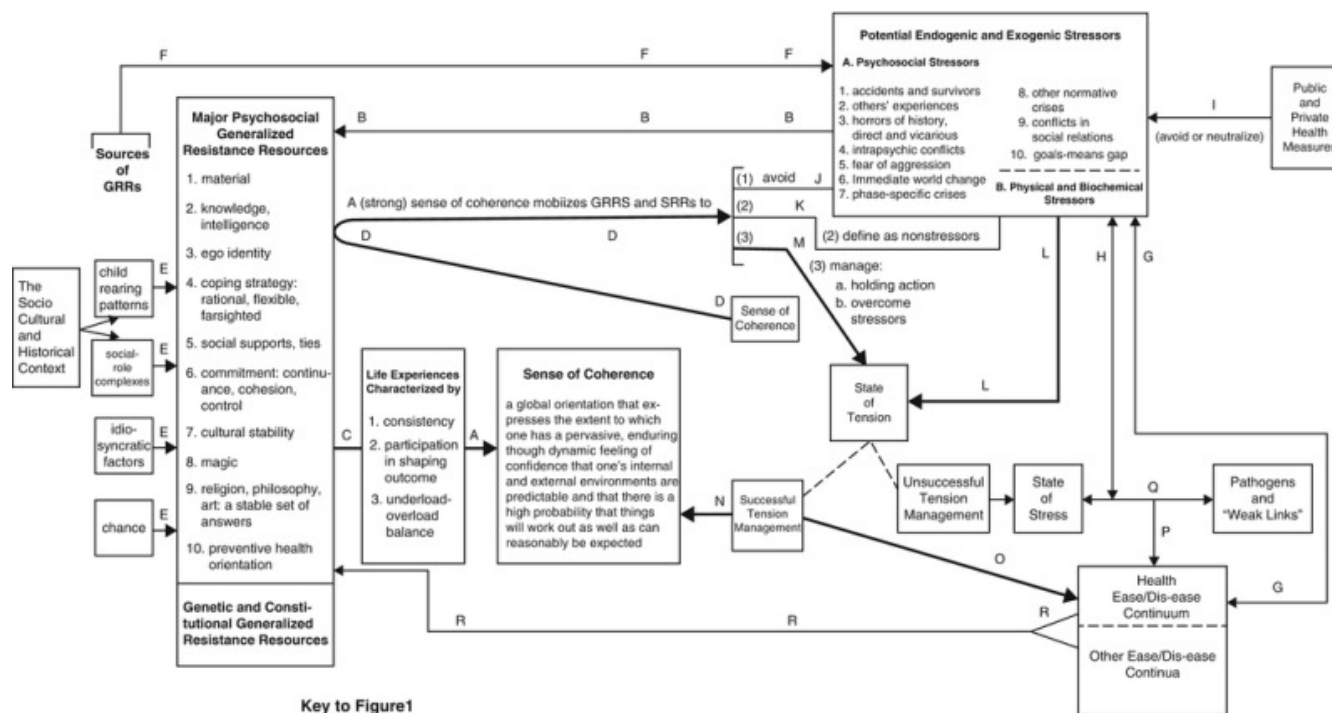Silverman, D. (2013). *Doing qualitative research* (4th ed.). London Sage.

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Appendix

Appendix 1

Potential Endogenic and Exogenic Stressors

A. Psychosocial Stressors

1. accidents and survivors
2. others' experiences
3. horrors of history, direct and vicarious
4. intrapsychic conflicts
5. fear of aggression
6. Immediate world change
7. phase-specific crises
8. other normative crises
9. conflicts in social relations
10. goals-means gap

B. Physical and Biochemical Stressors

Public and Private Health Measures

I (avoid or neutralize)

Sources of GRRs

Major Psychosocial Generalized Resistance Resources

1. material
2. knowledge, intelligence
3. ego identity
4. coping strategy: rational, flexible, farsighted
5. social supports, ties
6. commitment: continuance, cohesion, control
7. cultural stability
8. magic
9. religion, philosophy, art: a stable set of answers
10. preventive health orientation

Genetic and Constitutional Generalized Resistance Resources

The Socio Cultural and Historical Context

child rearing patterns

social-role complexes

idio-syncratic factors

chance

A (strong) sense of coherence mobilizes GRRS and SRRs to

(1) avoid J
(2) K
(3) M

(2) define as nonstressors

(3) manage:
a. holding action
b. overcome stressors

Sense of Coherence

Life Experiences Characterized by

1. consistency
2. participation in shaping outcome
3. underload-overload balance

Sense of Coherence

a global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a pervasive, enduring though dynamic feeling of confidence that one's internal and external environments are predictable and that there is a high probability that things will work out as well as can reasonably be expected

State of Tension

Unsuccessful Tension Management

State of Stress

Successful Tension Management

Pathogens and "Weak Links"

Health Ease/Dis-ease Continuum

Other Ease/Dis-ease Continua

Key to Figure 1

Arrow A: **Life experiences shape the sense of coherence.**
Arrow B: Stressors affect the generalized resistance resources at one's disposal.
Line C: **By definition, a GRR provides one with sets of meaningful, coherent life experiences.**
Arrow D: **A strong sense of coherence mobilizes the GRRs and SRRs at one's disposal.**
Arrows E: **Childrearing patterns, social role complexes,** idiosyncratic factors, and chance **build up GRRs.**
Arrow F: The sources of GRRs also create stressors.
Arrow G: Traumatic physical and biochemical stressors affect health status directly; health status affects extent of exposure to psychosocial stressors.
Arrow H: Physical and biochemical stressors interact with endogenic pathogens and "weak links" and with stress to affect health status.
Arrow I: Public and private health measures avoid or neutralize stressors.
Line J: A strong sense of coherence, mobilizing GRRS and SRRs, avoids stressors.

Line K: A strong sense of coherence, mobilizing GRRS and SRRs, defines stimuli as nonstressors.
Arrow L: **Ubiquitous stressors create a state of tension.**
Arrow M: **The mobilized GRRs (and SRRs) interact with the state of tension and manage a holding action and the overcoming of stressors.**
Arrow N: **Successful tension management strengthens the sense of coherence.**
Arrow O: **Successful tension management maintains one's place on the health ease/dis-ease continuum.**
Arrow P: Interaction between the state of stress and pathogens and "weak links" negatively affects health status.
Arrow Q: Stress is a general precursor that interacts with the existing potential endogenic and exogenic pathogens and "weak links."
Arrow R: Good health status facilitates the acquisition of other GRRs.

Note: The statements in bold type represent the core of the salutogenic model.

The Salutogenic Model of Health (Antonovsky, 1979, pp. 184–185)

Appendix 2
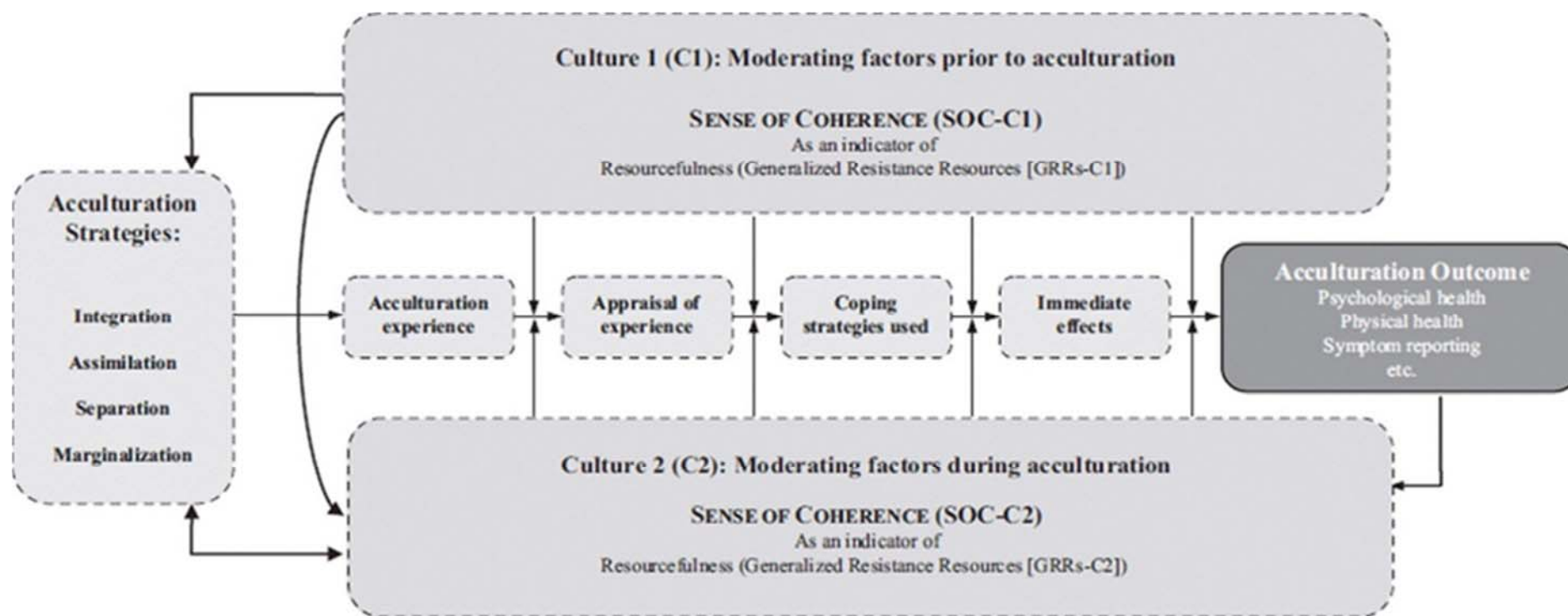
Integrative framework of acculturation and salutogenesis (Reidel et al., 2011, p. 562)

Appendix 3

Interview guide

Read goals for study from consent form

Ask for permission to record, ensure confidentiality and that files will be stored in encrypted files in a secure location

Thesis research questions:

What are young, immigrant women's perspectives and experiences of negotiating between two or more cultures?

How has participating in the young women's peer group influenced the young, immigrant women from their perspectives? (Reference material for interviewer)

Background questions:

1) Can you tell me a little bit about yourself?
(Probes: age, education, work experience, reason they immigrated to Norway, how long have they lived in Norway, ethnic background, country of origin, religious background, how long have they been part of the women's peer group, reason they came to the group, language, can they speak Norwegian? **(context, life experiences)**

Main questions:

2) How do you experience the Norwegian society versus your ethnic culture?
(Probes: How are they different or alike? Hvordan er det å svare på forskeliige forventinger mellom de to? How is it to answer to different expectations between the two cultures?)
(cultural distance)

3) Do you feel like you have to negotiate between or adapt yourself to two different cultures as an immigrant? If so, can you describe how it is to adapt yourself or negotiate between the two cultures?
(Probes: How is it for you on a daily basis regarding moving/negotiating between the two cultures? (ethnic/heritage culture vs. Norwegian culture), past experiences and current).

4) Experiences with the young women's group?
(Probes: What was the reason you decided to come to the group? How did you hear about the group? Has the group helped you in anyway? If so, how? Do you feel like you have the opportunity to contribute to the themes discussed? Do you think the group meets often enough? What are your experiences with the women who work with the group? (Experiences regarding equality at the group between leaders and women attending. Is everyone treated as if they are on the same level (i.e. fellow humans/individuals)? Is it easy to find information about group activities and when the group meets? **(empowerment, social support, network)**

(Probe: Which topics that are discussed at the group are most helpful to you? How is it to have other people to share your experiences with? **(social network)** Has the group helped you find your own way between the two cultures? **(resource)**

5) Is there anything else the women's group could do for you regarding your experience of negotiating between and/or adapting yourself to the Norwegian culture and your ethnic culture? Or this there anything the group could do to help you regarding finding your own way that is a mix/blend of the two cultures? Overall, is there anything else that you feel like you need to manage the experience of negotiating between or adapting yourself to the two different cultures? **(resources)**

6) In what ways do you participate in the Norwegian society (i.e. participation in society outside of your ethnic culture)? **(participation)**

(Probes: job, education, social groups/friends)? Other areas that you would like to participate in the Norwegian society that you currently are not? Do you experience any barriers to participation in the Norwegian society? If so, has the group helped you with these barriers and how? What else could the group do for you regarding these barriers? Is there additional information that you feel like you need to participate in Norwegian society? Examples…) **(resources, knowledge, barriers)**

7) Is there anything else you would like to contribute or say regarding the experience of negotiating between the Norwegian culture and your ethnic culture?
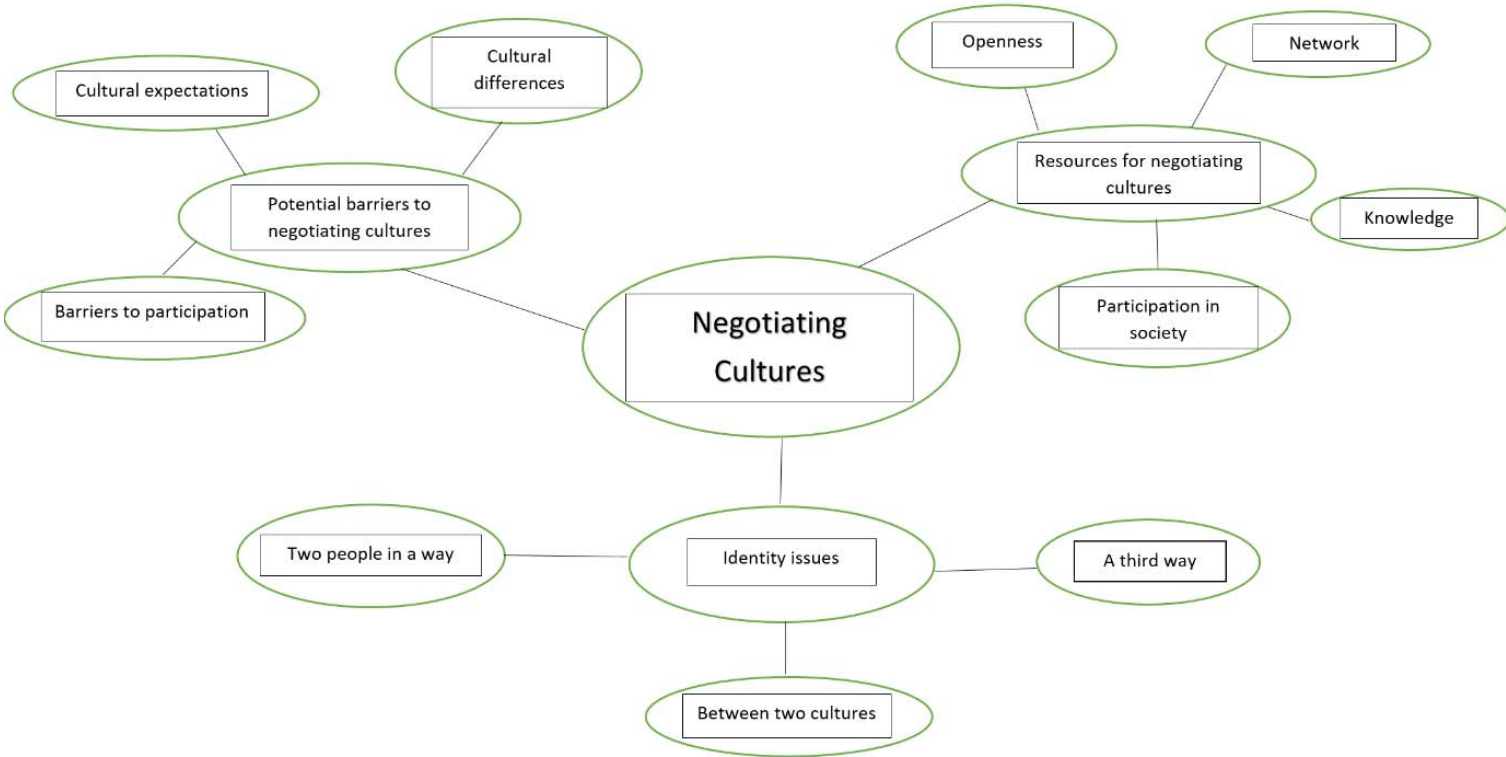
Appendix 5

Informed consent form

Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet

"Exploring young immigrant women's experiences of negotiating between two cultures"

Bakgrunn og formål
Formålet med denne studien er å utforske erfaringer og oppfatninger av unge kvinner med innvandrerbakgrunn i (name of city), Norge i forhold til hvordan det er å forhandle mellom flere kulturer. I tillegg skal det utforskes hvordan unge kvinner opplever det å delta i en samtalegruppe sammen med andre innvandrere kvinner. Dette prosjektet er den del av en masterstudie ved Universitetet i Bergen og gjennomføres i samarbeid med (name of non-profit organization where study was conducted).

Et frivillig målrettet utvalg vil bli tatt fra de unge innvandrerkvinners samtalegruppe på (non-profit organization). Tilgang til deltakerne er sikret fra koordinatoren ved (non-profit organization).

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?
For å undersøke dette ønsker jeg å observere og intervjue deg som deltaker av den unge innvandrerkvinnes samtalegruppen. Det vil bli satt av ca. en time til hvert intervju og intervjuene vil finne sted i (non-profit organization) sitt lokal eller et annet avtalt sted. Tidspunkt og rom vil bli bestemt ved senere anledning. Med ditt samtykke ønsker jeg å benytte båndopptaker og ta notater under intervjuet. Lydfiler vil bli lagret i en kryptert fil og slettes etter at prosjektet er ferdig.

Under intervjuet vil du som deltakere bli stilt spørsmål om deg som person (alder, utdanning, jobb, bakgrunn). I tillegg vil du bli spurt om dine meninger og erfaringer som innvandrer og hvordan det er å forhandle mellom flere kulturer. Du vil også bli spurt om dine opplevelser om deltakelse i samtalegruppen.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?
De innsamlede opplysningene vil anonymiseres og alle personopplysninger vil bli behandlet konfidensielt. Dette innebærer også (non-profit organization) sitt navn. Det er kun studenten og veileder som vil ha tilgang til opplysningene. Ved prosjektets slutt i Mai 2018, vil alle innsamlede opplysninger og lydopptak slettes. Anonymiserte tilbakemeldinger fra intervjuene vil bli oppsummert i en rapport som (non-profit organization) får tilgang til. I tillegg skal anonymiserte data bli brukt til mulige publisering av masteroppgaven.

Frivillig deltakelse
Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som helst trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker deg, vil informasjonen du har gitt slettes og ikke benyttes i prosjektet.

Ved å signere dette samtykkeskjema anerkjenner du at du er minst 18 år og kan derfor gi samtykke på din egen vegne.

Dersom du ønsker å delta eller har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med studentforsker Kendy Marie Shupp på telefon 40 09 75 18 eller e-post kendyshupp@gmail.com

Du kan også ta kontakt med prosjektveilederen Fungi P Gwanzura-Ottermöller ved HEMIL-senteret på telefon 55 58 31 34 eller e-post fungi.ottemoller@hemil.uib.no

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, NSD - Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS. Personvernet vil bli ivaretatt.

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og er villig til å delta

----
(Signert av prosjektdeltaker, dato)

Appendix 6

NSD

Fungisai Gwanzura Ottemöller
HEMIL-senteret Universitetet i Bergen
Christiesgt. 13
5015 BERGEN

Vår dato: 17.08.2016   Vår ref: 49231 / 3 / HIT   Deres dato: Deres ref:

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 11.07.2016. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

49231	*Exploring young immigrant women's experiences of negotiating between two cultures*
Behandlingsansvarlig	*Universitetet i Bergen, ved institusjonens øverste leder*
Daglig ansvarlig	*Fungisai Gwanzura Ottemöller*
Student	*Kendy Shupp*

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet, og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. Personvernombudet tilrår at prosjektet gjennomføres.

Personvernombudets tilråding forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.

Det gjøres oppmerksom på at det skal gis ny melding dersom behandlingen endres i forhold til de opplysninger som ligger til grunn for personvernombudets vurdering. Endringsmeldinger gis via et eget skjema, http://www.nsd.uib.no/personvern/meldeplikt/skjema.html. Det skal også gis melding etter tre år dersom prosjektet fortsatt pågår. Meldinger skal skje skriftlig til ombudet.

Personvernombudet har lagt ut opplysninger om prosjektet i en offentlig database, http://pvo.nsd.no/prosjekt.

Personvernombudet vil ved prosjektets avslutning, 31.10.2017, rette en henvendelse angående status for behandlingen av personopplysninger.

Vennlig hilsen

Kjersti Haugstvedt

Hildur Thorarensen

Kontaktperson: Hildur Thorarensen tlf: 55 58 26 54

Dokumentet er elektronisk produsert og godkjent ved NSDs rutiner for elektronisk godkjenning.

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering
Kopi: Kendy Shupp kendyshupp@gmail.com

Personvernombudet for forskning

Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar

Formålet med denne studien er å utforske erfaringer og oppfatninger av unge kvinner med innvandrerbakgrunn i Bergen, Norge i forhold til hvordan de takler det å leve i flere kulturer. I tillegg skal det utforskes hvordan unge kvinner opplever det å delta i en samtalegruppe sammen med andre innvandrerkvinner.

Rekruttering skjer via koordinator for samtalegruppe. Personvernombudet legger til grunn at koordinator tar kontakt med det aktuelle utvalget på forskers vegne, slik at taushetsplikten ikke er til hinder for kontakten, og for å sikre frivillig deltakelse.

Utvalget informeres skriftlig og muntlig om prosjektet og samtykker til deltakelse. Informasjonsskrivet er godt utformet.

Det behandles sensitive personopplysninger om etnisk bakgrunn eller politisk/filosofisk/religiøs oppfatning.

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at forsker etterfølger Universitetet i Bergen sine interne rutiner for datasikkerhet. Dersom personopplysninger skal lagres på privat pc, bør opplysningene krypteres tilstrekkelig.

Forventet prosjektslutt er 31.10.2017. Ifølge prosjektmeldingen skal innsamlede opplysninger da anonymiseres. Anonymisering innebærer å bearbeide datamaterialet slik at ingen enkeltpersoner kan gjenkjennes. Det gjøres ved å:
- slette direkte personopplysninger (som navn/koblingsnøkkel)
- slette/omskrive indirekte personopplysninger (identifiserende sammenstilling av bakgrunnsopplysninger som f.eks. bosted/arbeidssted, alder og kjønn)
- slette digitale lydopptak