

Impact of the Norwegian Language on Job Opportunities for Immigrants from South Asia in Kristiansand, Norway

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Abstract

Migration is one of the most common global phenomena. With one of the best welfare systems in Europe and a reputation for being one of the most diligent countries, Norway has seen many immigrants, both professionals and non-professionals. When immigrants move to a new nation, they face a variety of difficulties, notable among them being obstacles connected to finding work. As such, the main goal of this research was to investigate immigrant stories about how they viewed their level of Norwegian language skills and the difficulties they faced in finding work in Kristiansand, Norway.

This study was carried out as a qualitative inquiry with a focus on immigrants from South Asia and two main research questions. One; How do immigrants perceive their language proficiency in accessing the job market in Kristiansand? And two; What are the challenges faced by immigrants in the job market? A semi-structured interview guide was employed to collect data from fifteen participants in the study. The results were analyzed using a variety of theoretical frameworks, including those pertaining to skills, ethnic hierarchies, category inequality, and human capital, social capital, and self-efficacy theories.

The present study has clarified the relationship between immigrants' capacity to become fluent in Norwegian and their active participation in the labor market. One of the most important factors determining a successful transition into the workforce is language ability. The results highlight the importance of language in the workplace and highlight how different professions view it differently. The report also emphasizes the various challenges faced by immigrants in finding employment that corresponds with their educational background and area of expertise. Language challenges, effects on self-efficacy views, the devaluation of job experience and academic qualifications, strict national rules, a lack of interpersonal relationships, bias against women and ethnic minorities, and social and cultural differences are the main causes of these challenges. The findings imply that to solve these issues and improve immigrants' experiences in the job market, significant reforms in integration policies and programs at the local and national levels are required.

Key words: immigrants, language proficiency, Norwegian labour market, employment, human capital, and social capital.

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Declaration

I, Lea Parvin, hereby declare that this master's thesis, titled «Impact of the Norwegian Language on Job Opportunities for Immigrants from South Asia in Kristiansand, Norway. », is my original work. I also state that I have not submitted it to any other university or educational institution other than the University of Agder, Norway.

Place: Kristiansand, Norway

Signature: Lea Parvin

Date: December ,2023

List of Abbreviations

CV	Curriculum Vitae
EEA	European Economic Area
EEPO	European Employment Policy Observatory
EMR	European Migration report
EU	European Union
HNCs	Host Country Nationals
IMDi	Integrerings og Mangfoldsdirektoratet (The Norwegian Directorate of Integration and diversity)
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IT	Information Technology
MPI	Migration Policy Institutes
NAV	Ny arbeids- og velferdsforvaltning (Norwegian Labor and Welfare Administration)
OECD	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PD	Perceived Discrimination
SIKT	Sikt – Kunnskapssektorens tjenesteleverandør
SSB	Statistisk sentralbyrå
UDI	The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration
UiA	Universitet i Agder (University of Agder)
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
US	United States

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

According to Statistics Norway (2021a), the proportion of immigrants in the overall population in Norway is 14.8%. According to the research by Ringard et al., (2013), Norway is recognized for its extensive social welfare structure, which is distinguished by readily available healthcare for everybody. Additionally, in the Norwegian context, health fairness is prominently positioned as a major policy goal. As discussed by Gullestad (2002), Norway stands apart in terms of social dynamics for its commitment to egalitarian principles, which are embodied in the concept of "likhet," which refers to an ethos of resemblance or homogeneity.

Immigrants are commonly defined as those who were born abroad to parents who were also born abroad and who had four foreign-born grandparents (Statistics Norway, 2019b). Armed conflicts, violations of human rights, and environmental issues like climate change are just a few of the causes of the increase in migration from less developed countries to the wealthier parts of the world (Ims et al., 2021). A fuller knowledge of immigrant integration through employment and its relevance to the field of development studies is necessary considering the growing immigrant population and the ongoing discrepancies in employment rates.

Immigration to Norway has a very recent history. Male labour migrants from Pakistan and Turkey made up most immigrants to Norway in the early 1970s. Norway stopped accepting labor immigrants from less developed economies in 1975, apart from cases involving family reunions. Following the 2004 expansion of the European Union, Norway saw a rise in the number of free-moving labour migrants from Central and Eastern Europe (Brochmann & Kjeldstadli, 2008). Nearly 17% of Norway's population was made up of immigrants and their descendants as of 2017 (Statistics Norway, 2021b). Notably, there has been a marked rise in the number of immigrants entering Norway in recent decades. In addition, by 2022, there were almost 500,000 immigrants working in Norway, indicating that immigrants were participating in the labour market (SSB, 2023). As a result, immigrants have significantly impacted the Norwegian labour market. As a result, several industries in Norway, including manufacturing, administrative and support services,

food and beverage services, construction, and cleaning, heavily rely on immigrant labour (Statistics Norway, 2021).

In Norway, immigrants come from a variety of nations, including those like Poland, Lithuania, Sweden, Syria, Somalia, and Pakistan (Statistics Norway, 2021a). This variation is present in both their places of origin and the reasons for their migration. The largest cohort within this group is made up of labour migrants, followed by refugees and immigrants coming for family reunion (Statistics Norway, 2021b). Although these groups are highly heterogeneous, they have common problems in terms of social, economic, and political aspects (Arora et al., 2022). These groups may have been geographically segregated in core areas due to the lack of comprehensive integration programs and clear settlement methods, which may have slowed their progress in learning Norwegian cultural and language abilities. Notably, historical patterns show that family reunification has come in second on the list of reasons for immigration to Norway, with humanitarian factors being in front (Ugreninov & Turner, 2023).

As an example of a welfare state with strong redistribution mechanisms and a labor market under strict supervision that provides significant protections for its workers, Norway stands out (Orupabo & Nadim, 2020). In contrast to other countries, Norway's immigrant labour market outcomes are rather favorable; yet there has been a long-standing employment gap between the native and immigrant populations (OECD, 2018). The employment rates of immigrants are lower than those of native citizens in all OECD and EU member nations, according to a 2018 report by these organizations, and this discrepancy has been worse over time. According to Statistics Norway (2019c), immigrants have lower employment rates than native Norwegians, with immigrant employment rates at 67.1% and native Norwegian employment rates at 78.5%.

One distinguishing characteristic of the Norwegian setting is its strong dedication to gender equality, which is demonstrated through a range of gender-equitable laws, regulations, and cultural norms (Aboim, 2010). Despite this, Norway still has a clearly segregated labour market due to the substantial prevalence of women working in the public sector, particularly in fields like health, social work, and education, while men are more likely to work in the private sector, primarily in industries like manufacturing and finance (Reisel & Teigen, 2014).

The severe disadvantages faced by immigrants in the labour market provide a major obstacle to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal 8 of the United Nations. This objective aims to

promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and the assurance of decent employment for all. In numerous Western European countries, there are substantial differences in work prospects between populations that are native-born and immigrants, especially among women (Bratsberg et al., 2017). On the job market, immigrants consistently display much lower salaries and employment rates than their Norwegian-native counterparts (Vrålstad & Wiggen, 2017).

Additionally, prejudices about immigrants endure through generations, with immigrant children encountering attitudes and biases as they enter the workforce (Midtbøen, 2018). More often than native Norwegians, immigrants and their descendants experience comments about their gender, ethnicity, skin tone, and religious background when participating in public debate (Midtbøen et al., 2017). Employment is of utmost importance to immigrants in the context of their integration, yet they struggle to find jobs that are in line with their qualifications and abilities (Danso, 2009). Furthermore, due to the growing deregulation of labour markets in Western nations, immigrants from the global South face increased precariousness in the global North (Lewis et al., 2014). Immigrants thus experience higher levels of job insecurity because of their precarious employment situations, which has a negative influence on their general health (Liu et al., 2019).

It is commonly acknowledged that one of the key components of immigrants' engagement in their host cultures is their successful integration into the labour market, which is defined as obtaining a permanent, full-time job position that closely matches their skill set and qualifications. Research on migration in Norway has looked at how immigrants have integrated into the labour market by analyzing their job status, productivity, and incomes. Liebig (2009) found a significant correlation between immigrants' qualifications and their work status, showing that highly skilled immigrants integrate better than their less educated peers. Based on graduates from Norwegian universities between 1993 and 2002, Brekke and Mastekaasa's (2008) study found a significant difference in the job and income statuses of native Norwegians and immigrants. The analysis indicated that immigrants' economic prospects were significantly worse than those of their native-born colleagues, indicating noticeable differences in employment and income levels.

In the context of labour force integration and sociocultural assimilation, native language proficiency is highly relevant. The most effective method for assisting newcomers emerges as linguistic teaching. Since September 2005, Norway has required all recently arrived immigrants

who are from countries outside the European Economic Area and do not speak Norwegian fluently to enrol in language and civic education courses (IMDi, 2017). It is mandatory for refugees to enrol in a two-year programme that teaches the Norwegian language. Other immigrant groups have the right to attend language classes, but they are responsible for paying for them themselves. On September 1, 2003, Norway launched the "Introduction Programme" to address these issues and improve immigrants' employment prospects. This programme offers free social studies instruction or on-the-job training in addition to free Norwegian language instruction. Refugees must take part in this programme; family members who have reunited with refugees (family-reunited immigrants) might choose to do so voluntarily. However, allowances are used to extend incentives for participation (Ugreninov & Turner, 2023).

Immigrant communities in Norway's rural areas face severe hurdles when it comes to learning the local language, making new friends, and integrating into informal networks. According to empirical data from Sweden and Norway, informal networks are important in the hiring process because many job possibilities are obtained through personal connections (Behtoui, 2008). The significance of social networks as a pathway to the labour market is highlighted by these findings. Given that these features are frequently unstated and taken for granted by the native population, it can be particularly difficult for immigrants to adjust to the existing norms and values of the host community as well as understand the tacit and culturally established social customs. Furthermore, according to Valenta (2008), to be integrated into Norwegian social networks, immigrants must adhere to the norms that the dominant population has established. However, this conformity does not ensure access, adding another level of complexity.

Net immigration¹

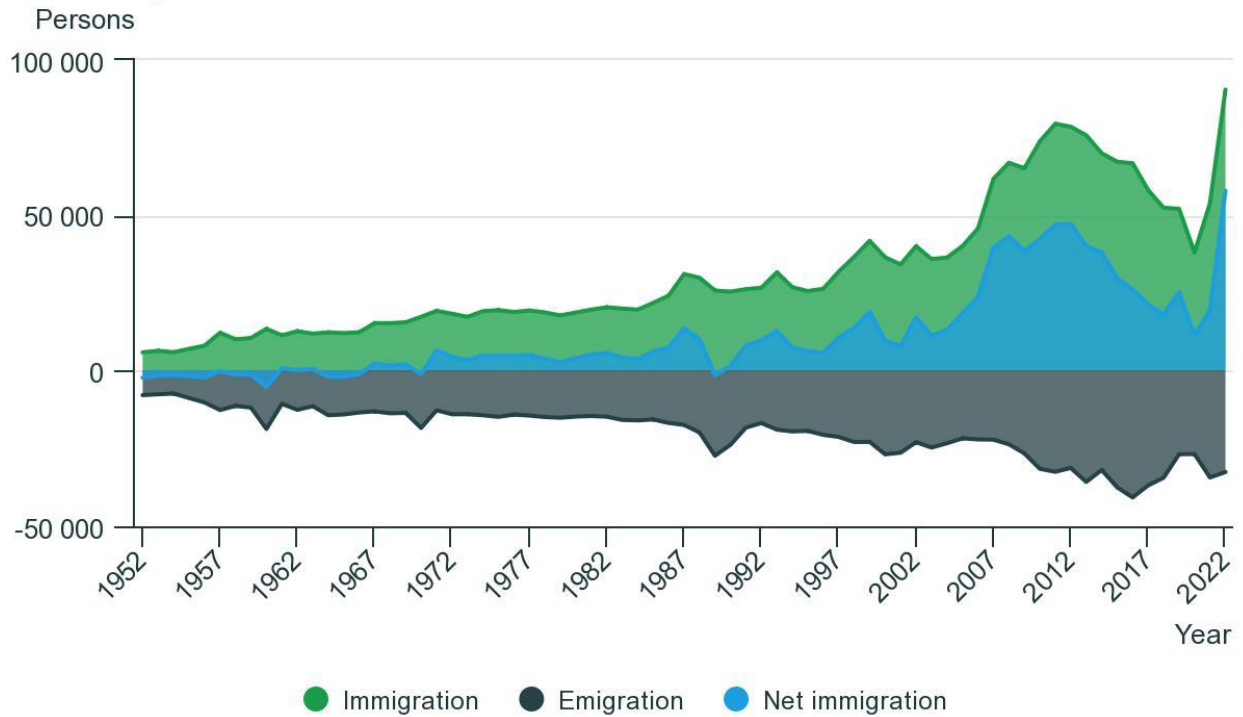


Figure 1: Net Immigration

Source: Statistics Norway, 2023

1.2 Personal Motivation for Conducting the Study

Most international students, especially those from South Asian nations, face a pervasive issue after moving to Norway to pursue higher education. To meet the financial obligations related to housing and daily expenses, this problem centers on finding part-time work. When I first arrived in Norway as an international student, which occurred to be around the time of the COVID-19 outbreak, I set out on a mission to find part-time work. My employment hunt was difficult and took around six months to complete because of the COVID-19 pandemic and language obstacles. Eventually, I was able to land a job in the hospitality industry, working as a housekeeper in a hotel. This account of my own perceptions about immigrant workers in this field and my interactions with them could have an impact on future academic research in this area.

Since I started my academic and professional, I have had the chance to contact with people from a variety of nations, including Bangladesh, Pakistan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and several other southern parts of the world. It has come to my attention that nearly all the industry's labour is made

up of immigrants. Our contacts go beyond talking about our own nations and cultures; they also involve talks of the difficulties we all encounter, particularly as we look for more promising career prospects in the Kristiansand region. Additionally, it has been observed that people often look for jobs that require little verbal communication due to their weak command of the local tongue, which hurts their chances of landing front desk jobs. In a related context, I have thought about the common challenge faced by a sizeable fraction of immigrants in getting past language difficulties when looking for career prospects.

Furthermore, people who frequent Norway's restaurants and hotels may have seen a repeated pattern. Housekeeping, cleaning, dishwashing, kitchen porters, assistant cooks, runners, and servers are some of the more physically demanding backstage positions that tend to be mostly filled by people from distinct ethnic origins from Asia and Africa. In contrast, employees from specific ethnic groups, speak Norwegian fluently, and have relevant professional experience typically fill relatively higher-paying and less physically demanding front office positions within the industry, such as restaurant managers.

Therefore, I selected this topic for this study since I wanted to study, how immigrants' perception their language proficiency and faced different challenges in the job market in Kristiansand. Thus, with the influence of my personal experiences and observations, I built up the research problems, questions and objectives of the study .

1.3 Research Problem

Human migration is a persistent phenomenon in human history that is frequently associated with a variety of situations, including persecution, war, conflict, and violations of human rights. In 2018, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that over 70 million people worldwide were categorized as refugees in search of safety and survival (UNHCR, 2019). One of the most popular destinations for many migrants fleeing war-torn places is Europe. These territories include sub-Saharan Africa, countries in Africa's Sahel, South Asia, and other areas devastated by ongoing violence.

Diverse classifications of these elements have been made by various scholars; the main classification centers on the push and pull causes of migration that are rooted in socio-political, cultural, economic, and environmental dimensions (Segal et al., 2010). Human rights violations,

wars, conflicts, persecution, natural and man-made disasters, widespread unemployment, and extreme poverty are just a few of the disruptive elements that continue to drive migration. For as long as these difficult conditions persist, there will likely be a global migration of people, either as refugees or as migrants. Most immigrants come from middle-class and lower-class countries, and they typically migrate in their middle or older years, according to Gustafsson et al. (2017). Studies indicate that the interchange of cross-cultural competencies between immigrants and native-born individuals greatly contributes to the joint efforts of people from different backgrounds, which in turn has a substantial impact on the growth of said nation. But in terms of creating jobs and developing efficient integration programs, this good feature poses difficulties for governments (Reitz et al., 2009).

Even though learning a language is vital, a lot of immigrants frequently fall short of being fluent enough in their new country. A person's ability to participate in politics, the labor market, and everyday social interactions is greatly hindered by their limited language proficiency. Reaching an impressive degree of language competency is essential for immigrants to advance in the occupational ladder, improve their chances of finding work, and become more competitive for higher-paying roles. Even with how important language learning is, a significant fraction of immigrant groups still struggles with low language proficiency.

Despite significant efforts and legislative measures undertaken by the Norwegian government, available information from previous studies indicates enduring difficulties in the Norwegian labor market. When it comes to employment, immigrants make up a relatively small share of the labor force. Internationally qualified immigrants find it challenging to find jobs in Norway that match their training and experience. Professional immigrants with advanced degrees who are mainly from non-EU nations face more difficulty getting hired in Norway than their Norwegian colleagues who were born there or other EU nationals, even though they meet all the requirements of the country they are living in. Moreover, empirical data suggests that immigrants from non-EU countries, especially those from Africa, the Middle East, and Asia, face greater challenges in finding jobs that correspond with their foreign qualifications than do immigrants from non-EU Western countries.

The literature emphasizes how difficult it is for immigrants from outside the European Union (EU) to find work, especially in low-paying jobs. These people frequently find themselves forced to accept low-status employment that is inconsistent with their academic degrees to meet their

survival demands (Rooth and Ekberg, 2006). These jobs include everything from cleaning and housekeeping to driving, waitressing, cleaning, and kitchen aid. Some of the reasons for the challenges faced are a limited social network, a deficiency of knowledge on the educational background of working immigrants, prejudice (Faris, 2016), and a lack of fluency in the Norwegian language. As a result, professional unemployment rates are still very high, especially for immigrants from the Middle East, Asia, and Africa. Furthermore, existing research suggests that when pertinent authorities ignore immigrants' concerns about employment, they put them at risk of unemployment or taking jobs that exploit them (Zimmermann and Constant, 2012).

Ignoring immigrants' past knowledge and abilities makes it more difficult for them to integrate into the new country's system. Due to this error, there are ongoing social problems like unemployment and salary differences between people who were born abroad and those who were born here. According to other studies, immigrants frequently live in subpar conditions and are more likely than native-born people to become impoverished in old life because of not saving enough for retirement (Gustafsson et al., 2017). Feelings of deprivation, devaluation, marginalization, and social exclusion are brought about by the underutilization of immigrants' abilities. Such exclusion hinders a person's ability to grow personally within society and adds to human unfreedom (Suto, 2009).

The general employment patterns of immigrants in the Norwegian labor market have been the subject of numerous studies. These investigations have covered a wide range of topics, including the differences in income between foreign nationals and native-born people, immigration and assimilation laws, and the difficulties in finding work that non-EU immigrants generally face. Nevertheless, not much research has been done on the language skills and labor-related challenges encountered by South Asian immigrants. In view of this, the current researcher seeks to identify, via immigrant narratives, the causes of ongoing job disparities in the labor market, despite national policy initiatives that attempt to alleviate such difficulties.

Most of the perspectives in this study are from non-EU immigrants who moved to Norway and brought with them a variety of skills; yet, they have not been able to find employment that matches their foreign qualifications. Furthermore, interviews have been carried out with immigrants who are currently working in their academic fields. The reasoning for this choice stems from the idea that these people are part of a group of working immigrants who have experienced similar

circumstances. Their current involvement in their respective fields indicates that they may have faced obstacles in the past and overcome them, using tactics to break into and make a name for themselves in the job market. Interviewing immigrants from South Asia is a conscious choice, as this group is thought to be underrepresented in the Norwegian labor market relative to other immigrant groups. The objective of this focus is to provide detailed insights into the distinct difficulties encountered by this specific group, thereby improving our comprehension of the more general job dynamics among immigrants in Norway.

1.4 Research Objectives

The central objective of this research is to identify the impact of the Norwegian Language on Job Opportunities for Immigrants from South Asia in Kristiansand. This research follows two interrelated objectives:

- (1) To produce knowledge about immigrants' perception of their language proficiency and job market opportunities in Kristiansand.
- (2) To provide policy recommendations for solutions to the challenges faced by immigrants in the job market in Kristiansand.

1.5 Research Questions

A set of specific research questions have been developed to act as a guide for pursuing the objectives of the study:

R.Q (1) How do immigrants perceive their language proficiency in the job market in Kristiansand?

R.Q(2) What are the challenges faced by immigrants in the job market in Kristiansand?

1.6 Geographical Study Area and Context

The current study was carried out in the municipality of Kristiansand, which is in southern Norway, one of the Nordic nations. Norway is a country in northern Europe that is bounded to the north, west, and south by the Barents Sea, the North Atlantic Ocean (also known as the Norwegian Sea or Norskevalet), and the North Sea (also known as Nordsjøen). It shares boundaries with Sweden, Finland, and Russia on the east (Sverige, Finland, and Russland). Known for its breathtaking scenery, steady economy, and strong social state, Norway is a desirable and welcoming country for immigrants. According to data from the Norwegian Statistics Bureau (SSB, 2018), immigration

is a major component in Norway's population growth. Since 1950, immigration has significantly expanded Norway's population by about 2 million, to 5.5 million people (SSB, 2023). The Municipality of Kristiansand has 115,705 residents as of the second quarter of 2023, according to Statistics Norway (SSB, 2023). Kristiansand, Norway's fifth most populated city, is located as the county's administrative hub. The municipalities of Lindesnes to the west, Lillesand to the east, and Vennesla and Birkenes to the north define its geographic borders.

Kristiansand has the greatest rate of immigrant settlement (compared to the national average), according to Kristiansen (2017). Kristiansand is known for its multicultural fabric and has a diversified population, with over 161 inhabitants hailing from different countries (Ibid.). Out of the 17,730 immigrants in Kristiansand, according to recent Norwegian statistics from 2023, about 490 are from South Asia (SSB, 2023). The Municipality is facing difficulties integrating the immigrant population into the employment, according to reports from a major Kristiansand daily. Compared to other parts of the nation, the data shows a smaller percentage of working-age persons having immigrant backgrounds. The fact that almost 4,000 more individuals in Kristiansand are unemployed than in comparable cities like Bergen and Oslo presents a considerable obstacle, according to Wenche P. Dehli, director of health and social services (Salvesen, et al., 2019).

The population of Kristiansand is diverse in terms of demographics, which makes the city a living, breathing entity that requires its residents to actively participate in fostering the city's ongoing development (Ibid.). Noted for being one of the top tourist destinations, Kristiansand has many dining venues, including bars, restaurants, hotels, and food trucks, most of which are in the city center. I became quite interested in this research project because of its features. Aside from the fact that the municipality works hard to provide opportunities for immigrants to integrate, immigrants also show that they are committed to making a positive impact on the general well-being of the Kristiansand municipality by working toward employment and personal independence. To address the different barriers preventing their integration into the workforce, it is necessary to develop new and long-lasting policies and strategies that go beyond existing ones. These must also be continuously monitored and assessed. The Municipality of Kristiansand has emphasized that the goal is still full integration and active involvement in promoting sustainable development. Because it fits with my study objectives, I chose Kristiansand as the focus of my investigation. As one of

the Norwegian towns with a higher-than-average number of immigrants, Kristiansand offers a diversified mix of immigrants from various cultural origins.

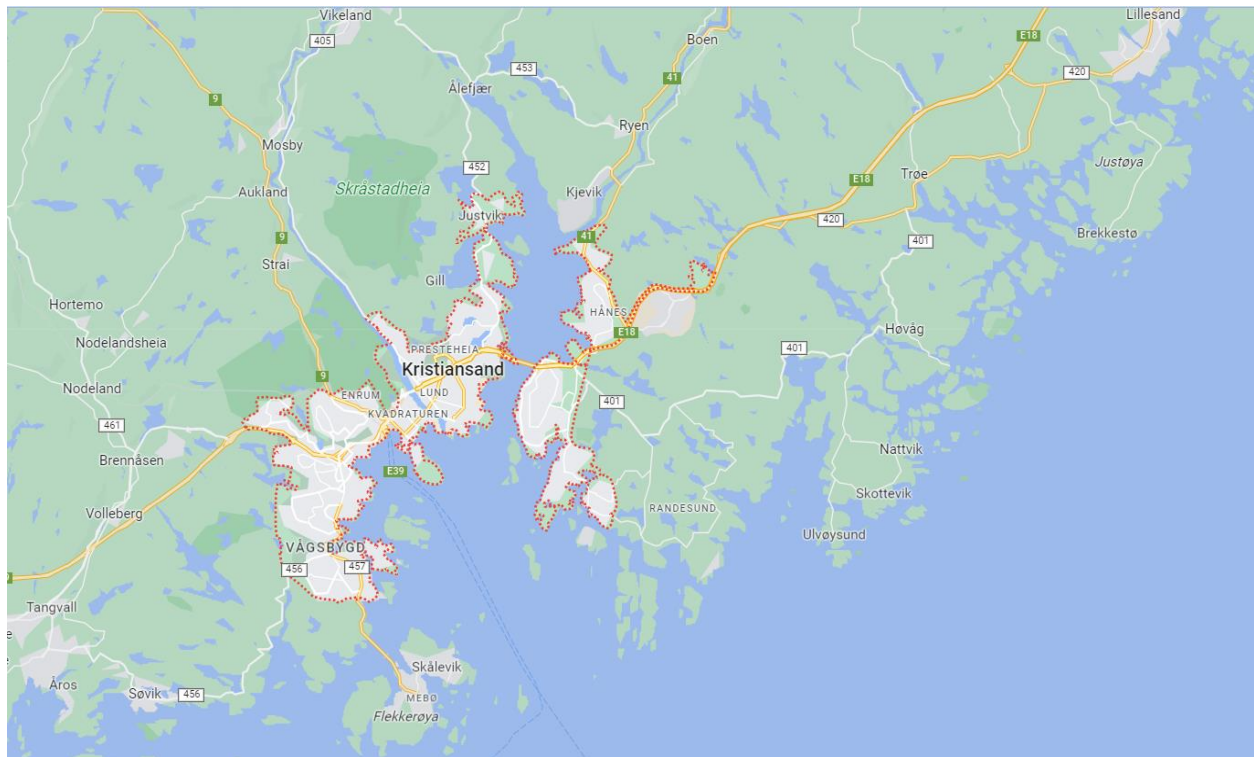


Figure 2: Screenshot of Kristiansand Municipality from Google Maps (2023)

1.7 Significance of the Study

One of the main duties of development actors is to deal with complex personal, family, and community issues (Truell and Jones, 2012). Human predicaments are caused by a variety of causes, as claimed by Truell and Jones; one important element found in this study is employment-related challenges. Moving abroad comes with a lot of difficulties, many of which emerge from the laws that the new country has put in place. These policies have a significant impact on how services are provided, and immigrants' quality of life is impacted, which raises questions regarding their compliance with human rights laws. This study is therefore important for development actors since it sheds light on the barriers or constraints that immigrants face in the Kristiansand, Norway, job market. The study's conclusions provide development actors with a solid foundation on which to confront and contest adverse rules and policies that may influence immigrant professionals' rights. In addition, it provides opportunities for development and other relevant actors to push for laws

intended to lessen oppression, especially those that deal with the current obstacles preventing talented immigrants from entering the workforce. Governmental agencies and other key stakeholders are expected to use this lobbying to help them create better policy frameworks and initiatives. This study provides policymakers with a means of scrutinizing the shortcomings present in the existing skilled immigrant employment regulations. It also opens the door for more successful policies to be developed that aim to achieve social and economic equality. These policies will be based on the idea of social justice for everyone, which is a major concern for organizations involved in development. The present study constitutes a significant contribution to the extant literature on the employment trends of foreign workers in the Norwegian setting. Newer scholars with related interests will find the information gathered here useful in understanding how professional job acquisition is changing among immigrants in Norway, particularly those from South Asia.

Several studies highlight the importance of variables including the ethnicity, educational attainment, employment position, income, and labor market disadvantages of immigrants (Brekke & Mastekaasa, 2008). Nonetheless, there is still a clear lack of research on the function of the host language and the difficulties that immigrants face in finding employment. As such, this study aims to clarify the impact of the Norwegian language on job opportunities for immigrants from South Asia. The data used in this inquiry will be obtained via semi-structured interviews. The study focuses about Kristiansand municipality, which is a major center with a significant demographic concentration and is probably home to the greatest immigrant population in Norway's Agder county. A deliberate sample of fifteen people has been chosen for primary data gathering.

The findings of this study have the potential to significantly influence policy discussions at the local and national levels. This influence is especially relevant to how integration policies and programs are implemented and restructured. Furthermore, the results of this study may have significant influence over employers in a variety of industries within the Norwegian labor market. It might encourage them to use the knowledge gained from this study to improve workforce diversity. Moreover, these disclosures may be helpful to Norwegian civil society organizations like Amnesty International Norway, which is a strong supporter of migrant workers' rights (Amnesty International, 2018).

1.8 Definition of Key Terms

Differences in viewpoints can affect how different people interpret and define the same terms. Mitigating terminological ambiguity is fundamental to the scope of this study. For that reason, to guarantee understanding and avoid any misconceptions, it is necessary that I clearly define the major terminology that is used in this study.

Immigrant: According to Bäck and Soininen (1998), 'immigrant' refers to those who are, in one way or another, of foreign descent. The authors claim that labels such as "foreign born" and "foreign citizens" are used synonymously to accurately describe the immigrant community. This theory represents a collective noun that includes a variety of individual groups (ibid). This study is limited to examining the demographics of South Asian immigrants living in Norway.

Language Proficiency: The ability of a person to use language for goals is known as language proficiency, and it is frequently evaluated through proficiency exams (Gharbavi & Mousavi, 2012). Conversely, language fluency refers to the degree to which a person can converse both orally and in writing in the language that is widely spoken in the nation they are visiting. It's critical to distinguish verbal ability from language fluency. In contrast to the effects of language fluency, a native speaker's limited verbal abilities such as a limited vocabulary or an inability to form complex sentences usually do not obstruct their ability to understand and convey basic written and verbal communications (Guerrero & Rothstein, 2012).

1.9 Organization of the Study

The entire study is organized into six (6) chapters. The chapters are: (1) introduction, (2) literature review, (3) theoretical framework, (4) methodology, (5) empirical findings and analysis. I end this work with conclusion and recommendations (6).

Chapter 1: Introduction

The first chapter explains the purpose of the study, describes its structure, and describes how it will be carried out in detail in the following chapters. In this section, the topics covered include the introduction, the researcher's personal motivation for conducting this study, the research question that was identified, the specific objectives and questions that were posed, the study area's location and historical context, the importance of the research project, clear definitions that

clarified important terms, and, lastly, the thorough organization of the study or the research framework.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

In the second chapter, a brief introduction is followed by an examination of the topic of literature reviews. This section is a thorough reading of the literature to acquire a deeper comprehension of the changing conversation about the topic and how it relates to this study. As a result of this procedure, I conducted a thorough analysis of previous research that outlined the recognized variables affecting how the Norwegian language affects employment prospects for immigrants in Norway. Moreover, I discovered enduring research gaps that require consideration. Following that, the planning of research questions, study goals, conceptual framework construction, and semi-structured interview guides were all carried out using the knowledge gained from the literature review chapter.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework and Conceptual Framework

In chapter three, I explain in detail in the theoretical framework the theories retained and how they are interconnected. I provided the major theories such as human capital theory, social capital theory, self - efficacy theory and finally I used theories of skills, ethnic hierarchies and categorical inequality. Furthermore, I have presented a conceptual framework to interrelate with my research questions and theory.

Chapter 4: Methodology

The methodology chapter describes in great depth the procedure that was used at different phases of the research. This section mostly discusses the research design, strategy, study population, sample size, and sampling process. In addition, it explains why semi-structured interviews were chosen as the main method of data collection in addition to the use of purposive and snowball sampling. It also explores the use of thematic analysis and coding in data interpretation. In a similar vein, it highlights the requirements for include respondents, moral issues, data accuracy, and difficulties that arise in virtual interviews.

Chapter 5: Major Findings, Analysis and Discussion

Comprehensive empirical insights from the study's investigation are presented in this chapter. The results are methodically divided into discrete main themes, including language obstacles, self-efficacy beliefs, devaluation of immigrant work experiences and overqualification, ethnic discrimination, social and cultural differences, experiences with racism, hopelessness, social networks, and social identity. These topics are developed further by using thematic analysis techniques, leading to the emergence of related sub-themes. This part is mostly descriptive in nature, outlining findings through interviews with respondents.

In addition, this chapter includes a detailed examination of the data that was gathered and carefully transcribed. The findings are organized into primary and sub-themes, and an analytical analysis utilizing relevant theories and a comprehensive assessment of the literature are also included. The chapter ends by discussing each research issue in the context of the well-considered study findings.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

This chapter represents the end of the thorough research. It provides a succinct summary of the results together with an analytical analysis that links the current chapter to earlier ones. It also indicates directions for future research and outlines the limitations of this specific study, in addition to providing general recommendations for resolving the identified research topic.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the field of social science research, the corpus of existing literature plays a crucial role (Bryman, 2016). A vital part of the research process is the literature review, in which the investigator methodically presents findings that are logically argued and analytically examined. To understand the body of knowledge already in existence within the selected sector, the researcher has carried out a thorough assessment of significant literature (Machi & McEvoy, 2012). This thorough analysis uses books, reputable websites, scholarly research publications, and official government reports to determine the state of knowledge today and pinpoint research gaps in the field. There is a dearth of research on the impact of the Norwegian language on career opportunities for immigrants in Norway, even despite the wealth of literature discussing social and labor market integration through orientation programs for refugees and immigrants. To supplement the existing materials, the researcher has additionally included literature from other Scandinavian and European nations.

2.2 Immigrants and the Labour Market in Norway

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) defines a migrant as a person who has moved, either permanently or temporarily, within a country or across national borders, driven by various reasons, and left their customary place of residence (IOM, 2022). The categorization of migrants is dependent upon the intention and justification for their migration, and includes labels like economic migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and irregular migrants. Significant contributions to the capitalization and commercialization of Norwegian society have been made by immigrants, who have been instrumental in the country's historical development. Studies by Brochmann and Kjeldstadli (2008) show that in early modern Norway (1500–1814), wealth, skill, and state allegiance were valued over nationality when making decisions about immigrants. Prior to instituting the welfare state, the immigrants' potential economic impact, asset ownership, and competences were among the many cost-benefit variables considered by the Norwegian authorities (Ibid). Disparities between immigrants and natives are more evident in the labor market, even though modern Norwegian culture may not explicitly engage in such assessments.

Employment prospects are generally divided into different categories according to several criteria, including working conditions, pay, social acceptance, and requirements for qualifications. The labor market is divided into two main parts: the primary and secondary segments, according to the segmented labor market theory, an explanation framework that is commonly used to explain these differences. Jobs in the first category, or the "upper levels," have higher pay, better working conditions, and more opportunities for professional progression. On the other hand, jobs that fall into the secondary sector, or bottom tier, are typically associated with lower compensation, less than ideal working conditions, and less opportunities for career advancement upward (Reich et al., 1973). Most empirical research places immigrants in the lowest ranks (secondary segment) of labor market hierarchies, albeit it uses different language to describe primary and secondary segments (Orupabo & Nadim, 2020). The term "secondary segment," also known as "lower segment," is used in this study to refer to all low-wage, basic jobs in its broadest definition. On the other hand, revenue-generating roles with good working conditions are referred to as the primary segment.

It is essential that immigrants participate actively in the labor market to promote social cohesiveness in the host country and ease their transition towards self-sufficiency, productivity, and self-realization as contributing members of society (Budría et al., 2019). The capacity of immigrants to find and keep a job is a critical factor in determining their integration potential. Gainful employment facilitates the development of social ties and allows for the building of social capital, which grants access to the same rights as citizens, such as unemployment benefits, contributory pensions, and healthcare aid. However, one major issue that Western country is currently facing is the uneven assimilation of immigrants into the labor market. "The inability of European immigration policies to guarantee that immigrants obtain and retain employment" (Hansen, 2012) is the Migration Policy Institute's (MPI) claim.

Academic research has often explored differences in labor market outcomes between native-born and immigrant groups. Individual characteristics such as age, gender, marital status, human capital, and length of stay in the host nation significantly influence the labor market outcomes of immigrants. In addition, the degree of discrimination that exists in the job market and in work settings, in conjunction with inclinations toward social distancing or, on the other hand, cultural participation, significantly influences these results. According to Blackaby et al., (1997), there are three ways that linguistic competence in the target language might be impacted. Many studies

support the idea that a person's effectiveness in the job market is largely shaped by their level of fluency in the host language.

Many immigrants in Norway face a wide range of difficulties in their attempts to integrate into the host community. These people face marginalization in the job market and are disproportionately located in underserved areas of the host city and its suburbs. Newcomers' struggles daily are frequently caused by their lack of knowledge of the rules and cultural norms that are common in the community (Gudykunst & Kim, 2003). This lack of familiarity can create feelings of uneasiness and a sense of cultural inferiority when compared to the indigenous population, especially when communication problems are present (Chriswick & Miller, 2003). Moreover, people who have moved or sought safety face difficulties with how they show themselves, and speaking in a language other than their mother tongue may cause them to feel uneasy and inadequate in their day-to-day activities (Knudsen, 2005). Furthermore, a significant percentage of non-Western immigrants and refugees who are resettled in Western countries may experience uneasiness and discomfort when interacting with the native populace; this situation is ascribed to racism, stigmatization, and ethnic discrimination, among other things (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006).

Studies have shown a relationship between language barriers and the ensuing expenses for both professional mobility and the unique incomes connected to each profession. According to Hurst and Chiswick's (2000) research, immigrants face several challenges when they first enter the workforce. These challenges are mostly related to the limited transferability of their talents and the limited availability of labor market information. Moreover, immigrants show increased susceptibility to seasonal, cyclical, and transitory fluctuations in the economy, which leads to higher unemployment and involuntary job turnover rates. Speaking English well becomes a mitigating factor in this situation because proficient immigrants work an extra 0.5 weeks per year and have a 1% lower unemployment rate.

2.3 Job Opportunities: The Role of Host Language

An essential element in obtaining a job is the candidate's social circle and how well they can utilize these relationships to achieve a particular goal (Agyare, 2021). Being able to communicate effectively in the language of the host community is essential for enabling meaningful interactions within the larger social context; community engagement may be hampered by a lack of such ability.

These language skills serve as a means through which migrants can access a variety of socioeconomic resources (Potocky-Tripodi, 2004).

On the one hand, being able to speak the host language fluently is a critical component of one's ability to progress socioeconomically. Speaking fluently in the language of the host is essential in a variety of situations, such as job interviews, applications for employment, following holiday and insurance policies, and filing tax returns (Oreopoulos, 2011). In the workforce, being able to communicate in the language of the host country is essential, giving immigrants a clear competitive disadvantage. Indeed, proficiency in the target language means active participation in society's norms as well as the assurance of self-sufficiency and the capacity to carry out basic needs.

Every social setting has a cognitive structure that is intrinsically linked to language. Beyond its use in communication, language is an expression of a specific social cognitive paradigm. It functions as a conduit for the transmission of a group way of thinking and the introspective processes of people who speak the same language (Agyare, 2021). This common language, passed down via customs and tradition, gradually forms a unique identity and forms part of a common cultural legacy. The outcome of this cyclical process is mutually enhanced by new works produced both within the community and, more importantly, through contacts with other social entities.

It is impossible to ignore the critical importance of language in this social setting. In situations where the fulfillment of one's obligations and rights are at stake, it is also crucial to engage and communicate effectively (Agyare, 2021). Language ability is therefore a concrete differentiator for success, both in terms of landing a job and promoting cooperation in the public and private domains. As such, the obstacle of a host language barrier continues to be a significant factor hindering immigrants' dynamic integration into the host society's labor market (Oreopoulos, 2011), hence reducing employment security and opening opportunities for innovation.

A wide variety of communication abilities pertinent to the job-related duties should be displayed by the potential employee. To top it off, the way that work is organized and structured as well as the use of digital technology have made language proficiency even more important (Oreopoulos, 2011). Effective communication is essential whether exchanging emails, getting directions from coworkers or supervisors, or updating coworkers on work-related activities. Furthermore, employment plays a critical role in integrating by supporting immigrants' autonomy, increasing

their chances of professional growth, and increasing their chances of social mobility (Agyare, 2021).

2.4 Language Training and the Introduction Programme

A prominent feature of immigration to Norway is the common situation in which most immigrants arrive illiterate in the language of their new nation. This phenomenon is comparable to the immigration patterns seen in the Netherlands, other Scandinavian countries, and, to a lesser degree, Germany and Austria. But it is this specific feature that separates Norway from areas where people have immigrated and from other OECD nations in Europe, such as France and the UK. Speaking the language of the host nation fluently becomes essential for a successful integration process that includes both societal and labor market assimilation (Liebig, 2009). As such, language instruction becomes an essential intervention targeted at immigrants in OECD nations Norway being a prime example of this approach's observance.

The level of Norwegian language ability required by the labor market seems to be quite high, especially for low-skilled positions. Key stakeholders are in agreement that having a strong command of the Norwegian language is essential to obtaining meaningful employment. Because of this general agreement, there is very little disagreement over whether language instruction is required for those who are traveling from non-EEA nations. According to stakeholders, immigrants with higher levels of education might not be fully aware of how important it is to learn Norwegian to integrate into society and the labor market in a sustainable way. For immigrants who are not engaged in the introduction program, the consequences of skipping the 300-hour Norwegian language course and social studies are minimal. In essence, those who disregard this criterion are forced to renew their temporary permits on a regular basis. Compliance with this program is also a requirement for all migrants seeking citizenship as of September 1, 2008. Nonetheless, immigrants are released from the requirement of mandatory participation if they can demonstrate that they are proficient enough in Norwegian(Liebig, 2009).

The results of the study showed that there was no significant relationship between the degree of program participation and either Norwegian language competency or job prospects. However, this lack of effect could be explained by a possibly inverse relationship between the participants' pre-existing literacy levels and the number of program hours. Interestingly, the author discovered an important conclusion that suggests participating in work praxis for 80 hours or more increases the

probability of landing a job. Work practices and labor market outcomes have been positively correlated(*ibid*).

2.5 Challenges Immigrants Encounter in the Norwegian Labour Market

Numerous difficulties and barriers encountered by immigrants in the labor market are revealed by reviewing assessments of earlier research and reports (Awori, 2019). These difficulties include problems like joblessness, poor language skills in the new country, a lack of strong social and professional networks, the devaluation of foreign degrees, mismatches in qualifications, discrimination, a lack of job information, and a general ignorance of the workings of the labor market. Among the significant obstacles to actively participating in the professional labor market are issues with residency permit laws and the under recognition of overseas job experience (Faris, 2016).

Benton et al., (2014) confirmed the extreme difficulties that recently arrived immigrants face while trying to make a name for themselves in the European Union (EU) job markets. Inadequate language skills, a lack of relevant information about job opportunities in the host country, discriminatory practices, restrictive policies, and barriers to the recognition of their foreign qualifications and professional experiences pose challenges for both non-EU citizens and mobile EU citizens. These barriers make it difficult for immigrants to meet the expectations of employers, which forces them to seek out low-skilled jobs and eventually leads to "brain waste" (Benton et al., 2014). These elements have the capacity to significantly impact policy goals and their ensuing consequences if they remain unattended (Törngren & Holbrow, 2017).

2.5.1 Experiences of Language Barriers

The European Migration Report (EMR) of 2013 found that language barriers are a major barrier to immigrants' successful integration into the labor market. According to a thorough review of studies conducted in the Norwegian context, immigrants' work prospects are hampered by their lack of Norwegian language ability (Delander et al., 2005). According to Lorentsson's (2015) theory, there could be a connection between the observed discrepancies in employment and the lack of proficiency in language and knowledge of international systems in the host nation. The language barrier still has a variety of negative consequences on immigrants even if English is widely used in Norway. As a result, they struggle to communicate because several of their fellow immigrants and Norwegians do not speak English well. The main working language in the country

is Norwegian, therefore new immigrants who haven't yet invested time in learning the language may find it difficult to compete in the job market. Being able to communicate well in Norwegian is frequently required to obtain job.

It is believed that fluency in the language is necessary to promote positive employer-employee and client connections. Language proficiency in the host nation is a prerequisite for effective integration. Through proficient language use in the language that locals speak, immigrants improve their ability to make social and professional relationships within the community. Consequently, these networks aid in the gathering of data regarding new job opportunities in the labor market. Faris' (2016) study concludes that these relationships ultimately play a major role in the immigrants' capacity to improve and hone their language abilities.

Not only does language barrier affect immigrants directly, but it also plays a decisive role in employers' ability to recruit foreign nationals as new immigrants. According to a study by Törngren and Holbrow (2017) comparing the experiences of highly skilled labor migrants in Sweden and Japan, companies in the host country have significant challenges in attracting and retaining qualified immigrants due to language problems. Language hurdles prevent both Swedish and Japanese businesses from successfully integrating immigrants into their workforces. The career growth of immigrants is negatively impacted by a lack of proficiency in the language of the host nation, as evidenced by the differences between the circumstances in Sweden and Japan. Törngren and Holbrow (2017) state that not knowing Swedish is a disadvantage when looking for jobs in Sweden. This is especially true for the country of Sweden. These writers also stress that immigrants still face barriers to advancement in life even in the absence of other difficult circumstances, such as discrimination.

Atassi and Alebiary (2017) emphasized that initial program-focused integration measures, including language classes, have not worked as well as expected to produce positive results for recent immigrants. A considerable segment of immigrants, despite their best attempts to learn a language, struggle to utilize the language in real-world situations. Only a small number of immigrants and local Norwegians communicate, which reduces the effectiveness of integration initiatives that only focus on language learning . According to research, it is critical to create a link between language ability and previous job experience for immigrants to succeed and perform well in the labor market (ibid).

2.5.2 Devaluation of Foreign Credentials and Prior Work Experience

The potential for the transferability of skills and certifications obtained abroad to the host country is a crucial factor that influences and fosters integration. According to Guo and Andersson (2005), this is an area that has not gotten enough attention in many countries that recruit highly qualified workers. Many studies have been done, and the results show that professionally trained immigrants who are highly educated face difficulties like deskilling or having their existing knowledge and job experience undervalued when they move to a new nation. One of the main challenges that skilled immigrants face in finding employment that is in line with their educational background is the devaluation of their job experience and educational credentials (Lorentsson, 2015).

Comparative research on professional immigrants' non-recognition of foreign credentials in Sweden and Canada reveals that people in these countries "experience nonrecognition and devaluation of their prior work experience upon arrival in the new country" (Guo & Andersson, 2005). Immigrants' lives are greatly impacted by this occurrence. In his research on the difficulties faced by highly educated immigrants in the Swedish labor market, Faris (2016) finds that skilled immigrants' professional knowledge erodes due to a lack of practical experience. As such, this group of professionals frequently gives up their previous jobs and chooses to pursue other career routes in the labor market (Lorentsson, 2015). Immigrants' experiences of demoralization and disempowerment lower their chances of successfully adjusting to life in the new social structure.

According to Bursell (2012), people who achieve high positions in the labor market are less vulnerable. Some highly qualified individuals work hard to improve or modify their foreign credentials by learning new skills when they get to their new location. The principal aim of this undertaking is to enhance their professional worth and conform to current labor market norms, which will finally result in obtaining more advantageous roles. However, for some experts, this venture ends in failure as they find it difficult to add to the new nation's skill set because of budgetary limitations and drawn-out procedures (Bursell, 2012). Immigrants are known to provide new perspectives, information, and life experiences that can advance the host nation. However, several immigrant-welcoming nations have not given this claim the proper attention or acknowledgement. According to Guo and Andersson (2005), there is a common misperception that professional immigrants from Third World nations are incompetent and inferior, which leads to the discrediting of their knowledge for real-world use.

2.5.3 Prejudice and Discrimination in the Labour Market

Discrimination is a substantial obstacle to immigrants' work opportunities that are commensurate with their educational background. A country's labor market's employment opportunities are influenced by factors like race, ethnicity, and country of origin. Research that is now available emphasizes how common discriminatory behaviors are, especially in developed nations with established industries that have been successful in luring and keeping skilled immigrants. Empirical research has demonstrated that people with foreign academic credentials are excluded from actively participating in the job market in Sweden, a country where immigrants represent a wide range of national and cultural origins (Törngren & Holbrow, 2017).

Törngren and Holbrow (2017) conducted a comparative analysis on the experiences of highly skilled migrants in Sweden and Japan. The findings of the study indicated that immigrants in both countries frequently face prejudice and discrimination, which can present significant obstacles to their professional success. Presumptions of discrimination are regularly reported in public areas, especially in places of employment, and they substantially lower the standard of living in the host communities. This confirms what Rogova (2014) said, namely that discrimination against immigrants prevents them from participating fully in daily life, especially when it comes to the labor market. Rogova points out that a barrier to good language acquisition and overall integration is the lack of positive relationships and active involvement.

The results of a study by Rydgren (2004) on exclusionary processes in the Swedish labor market categorically show that widespread ethnic discrimination exists. Immigrants from the Middle East and Africa who are not EU members are the group most severely impacted by this type of racism. Carlsson and Rooth (2007) conducted an additional study that examined ethnic discrimination in the Swedish labor market. The study clarified the unequal treatment that was noticed throughout the recruitment process, which was mainly caused by racial differences. Additionally, Carlsson and Rooth's study highlights the fact that hiring managers clearly favor resumes with Swedish names. Compared to their counterparts from immigrant backgrounds, Swedish applicants received at least 50% more callbacks for interviews. According to the authors, those with Swedish names had a three times higher chance of getting called back for each ten job applications they submitted a phenomenon that was noticeably different for applicants from the Middle East. Despite having qualifications on par with their local counterparts, the latter group had to send 10 or fifteen job

applications to receive a callback for further recruitment stages. The study's findings also shed light on the disparities in differential treatment based on gender. Male foreign nationals found it difficult to get callbacks from female employers on a regular basis; foreign female job seekers also noticed this pattern (ibid.).

2.5.4 Unfamiliarity with the Social-Cultural Norms of the New Country

A lack of knowledge about the social and cultural norms that are prevalent in the host nation is linked to several barriers to labor market integration. Awori (2019) notes that immigrants from a variety of socioeconomic, cultural, and religious backgrounds frequently struggle to fit in with the customs of their new nation. This problem occurs when immigrants lack knowledge about how the labor market operates in the society, which poses a serious barrier to their recruitment (EEPO, 2016). Furthermore, immigrants might not be familiar with the job market in Norway. According to Awori (2019), unemployment is a result of certain migrants' limited access to knowledge about job opportunities, especially those who are female and lack role models in their communities. Furthermore, psychological and physical traumas may leave immigrants vulnerable on a personal level, affecting their mental and physical capacities and making it more difficult for them to find employment. Immigrants' emotions might be greatly impacted by repeatedly rejected employment applications. Furthermore, unfulfilled requirements, including housing, have been linked to stress and trauma that have been shown to have a significant negative impact on their ability to participate in the labor market (ibid.).

2.5.5 Ethnic Discrimination and Workplace Racism

Additional research, carried out in Norway and other locations, has produced empirical evidence indicating the widespread impact that racism and ethnic discrimination in the workplace have on immigrants, impacting aspects like job assignments, career advancement, and compensation (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). According to Grønseth (2006), these encounters might make immigrants less likely to communicate meaningfully with their Norwegian coworkers in the employment arena. Additionally, a significant portion of immigrants believe that their interactions with coworkers are merely professional and devoid of genuine warmth. Some immigrants find fulfillment in their relationships with their Norwegian counterparts, while others do not. People who hope for closer relationships become discouraged when their initial contacts don't develop into complex, intimate partnerships.

2.5.6 Occupational Misplacement in Job Market

The concept of occupational misplacement which describes circumstances in which immigrants' professional backgrounds and human capital significantly deviate from their current work in the host nation was brought to attention by Chiswick and Miller (2009). This problem presents unique difficulties for immigrants' social integration in the workplace, especially when it results in displacements associated with social class. Even with their vast human capital which includes extensive education and professional experience many immigrants find it difficult to find jobs in Norway that are comparable to their status back home. As a result, this situation creates what is known as "brain waste," which is the underutilization of immigrants' intellectual capacity because of differences in occupation.

Among the immigrant community are people who were once in high positions in their home countries, such as those of engineers, doctors, judges, lawyers, business leaders, and politicians. Still, some of these groups have moved into manual labor on a part-time basis or found lower-class service jobs like waiting tables, housekeeping, babysitting, or cab driving. These people are more sensitive to the problem of being misinterpreted by their coworkers because they have experienced downward professional mobility, which has led to animosity.

2.5.7 The Relationship Between Perceived Discrimination and the Health/Mental Health of Immigrant Individuals

Individuals' subjective awareness of or encounters with discriminatory situations are referred to as perceived discrimination. PD exhibits a decrease in general well-being and is closely associated with higher feelings of anxiety and sadness (Schmitt et al., 2014). Research has indicated a correlation between low language proficiency and reduced mental and physical health (Zhang et al., 2012). According to Spencer et al. (2010), the Asian American community in the US is more likely to rely on unofficial mental health treatments when they also experience discrimination. This is because their language abilities aren't as strong. Very little research has been done in the literature to determine whether having good language abilities protects against mental health decline when faced with discrimination. Increased levels of social capital, or people's trust in others, may be linked to improved physical and mental health (Kawachi et al., 1999). This is another moderating aspect that people may experience. On the other hand, it has been found that greater social capital is associated with lower feelings of discrimination among those who are depressed (Zoppei et al., 2014).

The association between expected discrimination and mental health outcomes may be complicated by generalized trust, according to a Swedish study (Lindström, 2008). Still, it is conceivable that high levels of trust could operate as a buffer against the negative effects of perceived prejudice on mental health. Additionally, language ability is positively correlated with socioeconomic level, education, and engagement in the job market all of which are linked to a lower risk of mental health problems (Boyd & Cao, 2009). Linguistic competence could therefore serve as a more comprehensive gauge of resources that are accessible.

2.5.8 Social Networks or Relationships of Immigrants' Labour Market Integration

It is important to recognize the importance of social networks because people usually belong to different groups. Joining a social network raises a person's value and makes it easier for them to find work because of relationships in their social circles. Social networks are essential to the job search process because they act as channels for the exchange of knowledge, power, and resources (Gross & Lindquist, 1995). According to Granovetter, (1995). Professional, technical, and management workers in Massachusetts relied more on personal connections than on formal job application processes when researching their job-search techniques. In a similar vein, studies carried out in Ghana (Langevang et al., 2015) showed how important social relationships including relatives, marriage, and professional networks are to work and business ventures. According to academics, social networks provide a platform for immigrants to interact with people in their host communities, which helps them learn cultural norms and promotes language and social interactions (Lomicka & Lord, 2016).

According to Ryan (2011), interactions between immigrants and the community in which they live have a substantial impact on improving their language skills, access to relevant information, and impressions of job chances. On the other hand, Hayfron (2001) asserts that while speaking Norwegian fluently is essential for immigrants hoping to get into the Norwegian labor market, it has little bearing on their earnings. Social networks are important because they provide vital social capital. According to Fuglerud and Engebriksen (2006) analysis of Tamil and Somali immigrants in Norway, the type of network friendship or family influences the dynamics of trust in immigrant communities, which in turn affects the immigrants' participation in the labor market.

Although social networks are essential for labor market integration, the type of social ties that job searchers are a part of might cause systemic differences in the outcomes of their labor market

experiences. As such, a person's standing in a social network matter when it comes to their ability to obtain resources that can provide them with a competitive advantage. Accordingly, depending on where they are in the social network, some people or groups may have strategic advantages or drawbacks (Harvey, 2008). As such, people with wider and more open networks, that is, relationships that go beyond close family have better access to resources than people with closer or more closed networks (Granovetter, 1995). Furthermore, according to Lin (2001), social networks are crucial in influencing prospective employers. This power is frequently acquired by recommendations to companies and information about job openings sent through middlemen. Friends, relatives, neighbors, acquaintances from school, coworkers, and people from the same ethnic group are examples of these mediators. Prominent members of these networks frequently act as recruiters' agents, recommending candidates to potential employers.

According to Granovetter (1995), people who are successful in landing a job take advantage of their professional networks instead of depending on their close friends and family. Longer professional networks and participation in shorter information chains are linked to success. The author's investigation on the relevance of network access and utilization in relation to employment achievement is based on this idea. Also, authors investigate how using different networks for example, Ghanaian networks vs Norwegian networks affects immigrants' capacity to land jobs that correspond with their credentials, abilities, and professional goals.

2.5.9 Intersectionality and Labour Market Participation

Gender, race, class, and ethnicity are examples of socially constructed identity categories that are at the core of the intersectionality notion. It investigates how various facets of social injustices and inequality are revealed by the combination and interaction of these categories (Valentine, 2007). Collins (2000) refers to this "matrix of domination" as a conceptualization of overlapping social inequality. It is often understood that within this matrix, a person or group may experience both privileges and barriers at the same time because of the intersection or combination of gender, color, class, age, ethnicity, and sexual orientation . Understanding how differently constituted identities give rise to varied forms of labor market experiences among Ghanaian immigrants in Norway is made easier by applying an intersectional lens (Crenshaw, 1989). This viewpoint is crucial for understanding the potential and difficulties that various groups of Ghanaian immigrants confront

in integrating into the labor market, depending on their citizenship, age, gender, and educational background.

The concept of intersectionality, when applied as a framework for analysis, distinguishes between many 'axes of inequalities'. The argument suggests that dominant social groups control the structures of social structure as well as the flow of productive resources, increasing the likelihood of finding work. Accordingly, those who belong to the "highest" social strata are more likely to integrate into the workforce than people who belong to the "lowest" social strata (Browne & Misra, 2003). Essentially, one can interpret a person's performance in the job market by looking at where they fall on the intersectional ladder, which represents a fortunate fusion of different social groups. For example, a highly educated male immigrant from Ghana who speaks Norwegian well has a positive intersectional position. On the other hand, someone can be in an unfavorable intersectional situation with difficulties integrating into the job market, as the case of an illiterate migrant woman from Ghana who does not speak Norwegian well. These discrepancies, which are referred to as positional differences, are shaped by the interaction of individual factors, which impacts the employability of immigrants and, to a lesser degree, their ability to obtain appropriate employment opportunities.

Employers often claim that they will only choose candidates who meet the requirements for a position, but studies show that their prejudices, biases, and self-interests, shaped by gender, race, class, age, and ethnicity, greatly contribute to the rise of class disparities in the workforce (Browne & Misra, 2003). Through an examination of the benefits associated with beneficial identities, this study seeks to understand the factors that allow some immigrants from Ghana to move up the intersectional hierarchy. The author's analysis makes it possible to identify the distribution of occupations in Bergen's labor market and provides insight into the factors that either support or hinder employment. As such, our goal is to clarify why immigrants from Ghana tend to work in low-skilled fields like cleaning and healthcare.

2.5.10 Employer Preference and the Hierarchy Compatibility

According to Hussein and Christensen (2017), a supply-side approach is commonly used in academic research on men working in traditionally female-dominated fields to explain the experiences, coping strategies, and actions of men who are the gendered minority in these fields. By focusing on the demand side and closely examining employers' conceptions of the perfect and

desired employee, this inquiry departs from the norm. In addition, it examines the relationship between gender and perceived professional worth in industries that have had a significant increase in male employment following their shift from primarily female-focused fields (Orupabo & Nadim, 2020). Patterns of occupational segregation in the labor market are largely determined by the need for labor and the kinds of workers that organizations are looking for (Acker, 1990). Organizational decision-makers control hiring, firing, compensation, promotions, supervision, and general management, as noted by Stainback and Tomaskovic-Devey (2012). This affects how people are distributed among different job roles and the benefits that come with being employed. Processes of category inequality are closely related to the assignment of different demographic groups to certain positions in the labor market (Ridgeway, 2011). Moreover, preconceptions about gender, race, and immigration status are closely related to the standards that define credentials and the idea of what it means to be competent for a job. According to McDowell (2009), these preconceptions influence how employers evaluate the suitability of employees and how well they perform on the job.

The first explanation centers on the theoretical construct known as "bodies that define work," which was proposed by Ashcraft and Ashcraft (2015). This idea defines the nominal relationship that exists between physical objects and positions in the workplace. Labor market niches that are primarily occupied by people with similar characteristics like gender or immigration status become associatively associated with that specific social group. As a result, individuals within the designated category are considered more qualified for the related categories of employment (Carter, 2003). This reasoning suggests that the social identity of a profession, such as "women's work," changes in reaction to differences in the gender distribution of the profession's workforce.

The second explanation puts forth the process that Ashcraft and Ashcraft (2015) described as "work summons bodies," explaining the complex relationship that exists between labor and bodies, influenced by occupational factors including skill requirements and task complexity. The criteria that businesses use to determine which employees are qualified for a certain position are impacted by the recording of tasks and the introduction of new skill requirements. It is possible to interpret the redefining of abilities in traditionally white male working-class occupations considering the changing ethnic makeup of these fields. Research shows that there is an increasing focus on soft skills as the main criterion for hiring decisions, especially in the lower-skilled and lower-paid

sectors of the labor market (Moss & Tilly, 2003). Soft talents are "skills, abilities, and traits pertaining to personality, attitude, and behavior, rather than formal or technical knowledge," (ibid). According to Shih (2002), the assessment of these qualities is intrinsically subjective and shaped by employers' opinions and impressions of potential hires.

Employers view African Americans, and African American men in particular, as having a limited set of desirable soft skills, according to a thorough body of research undertaken in the United States. Newly arrived Latino immigrants, on the other hand, are seen as having an excellent work ethic, which makes them superior to native people and other immigrants in low-skilled employment situations (Moss & Tilly, 2003). According to empirical data, companies in Norway create unique ethnic employment hierarchies that prioritize immigrant workers over native workers in particular low-skilled occupation categories (Friberg & Midtbøen, 2018a).

The preferences of employers and the need for soft skills are not limited to prejudices about certain racial or ethnic groups; they also encompass stereotypes about the immigrant status of employees and their duties as recent arrivals. Employers typically attribute traits like flexibility, diligence, and docility to immigrants, making them appear less assertive than their native counterparts (ibid). According to Wills et al. (2009), immigrants' willingness to work in low-status jobs is frequently seen as a sign of their work ethic or skill set rather than as a reflection of their precarious situation in the labor market. As a result, although immigrants may face prejudice and unfavorable assumptions in high-level work environments (Midtbøen, 2016), employers tend to favor these people in lower-level roles in the labor market.

2.6 Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to review the literature relating to the impact of Norwegian language on job opportunities for immigrants. It discussed the immigrants and the role of host language in labor market in Norway. It also discussed challenges facing immigrants to acquire employment in Norway. This chapter includes research that emphasizes the value of language competency and points out a gap in the detailed analysis of the various linguistic requirements across various industries in the Norwegian labor market. A more comprehensive analysis is required to fully understand how economic prospects and immigrant societal assimilation are impacted by Norwegian language competency. By examining these topics, this research adds to the body of knowledge by examining the effects of language ability on immigrants' occupational assimilation

in Norway. The aim is to close these research gaps and offer politicians, corporate executives, and immigrants' practical insights that promote a more vibrant and inclusive community. As was previously said, the emphasis of policies pertaining to Norwegian language instruction and program introduction has been on using work as a means of assisting both male and female immigrants in assimilating into Norwegian society. As such, these resources will be crucial for deciphering and interpreting the empirical data presented in this thesis.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Theoretical Framework

A theory is a conceptual framework that includes definitions, concepts, and propositions that are intended to clarify or predict occurrences or situations by defining relationships between variables (Glanz & Rimer, 2005). In his explanation of the mutually beneficial link between theories and research, Bryman (2010) states that theories provide the essential justification for the research process, which allows them to act as guiding principles in research activities. Stated differently, it is difficult to do social research without theoretical frameworks. For researchers, it is still not feasible to use speculation alone as a compass to guide them toward study goals (Faris, 2016).

This chapter presents four relevant theories that the researcher believes are appropriate for explaining the obstacles affecting immigrants' professional assimilation in Norway's labor markets, based on the evaluated literature relevant to this study. Theories related to skills, ethnic hierarchies, and category inequality are among the theories discussed in this study, along with theories of human capital, self-efficacy, and social capital. These theoretical frameworks have been chosen because of their ability to make it easier to understand and analyze the causal variables that underlie observed events. They help to explain the differences that exist between working-class immigrants and native people in Norway's labor markets.

3.1.1 Human Capital Theory

Human capital refers to a person's ability to use information, abilities, and credentials obtained through formal education and hands-on training (Becker, 1993). Economists Theodore Shultz and Gary Becker developed this theory, which dates to the 1960s and is based on the ideas of "investment in human beings" and "human capital" (Blaug, 1976). According to Blaug, this theory describes people's willingness to make sacrifices for goals they believe have the potential to be beneficial in the future, even if such goals come with dangers. These activities include spending money on healthcare, going back to school, spending time looking for jobs that pay more, taking chances when gathering information about jobs, and moving to a place with better job opportunities, even if the starting salary is less with the hope of receiving raises in the future. An "investment-oriented approach as opposed to consumption" is how this phenomenon is described

(Blaug, 1976). Notably, spending money on high-quality education regularly pays off in the job market (Popovic, 2012). In addition, it makes it easier to locate, create, and strengthen unofficial and social networks that might act as doors to employment chances (Mossaad, 2014).

Mossaad (2014) emphasizes that a person's human capital is made up of their distinct qualities, which include their understanding of the economic, social, cultural, and political dynamics of the place they are living in, their degree of education, their language ability, and their working abilities. The opportunity to participate in the labor market and make more money is greatly increased for immigrants who own such capital. For people, this is seen as a great resource that promotes social and financial progress. Knowledge and abilities acquired via education are transferable throughout a person's life. According to Lorentsson (2015), immigrants in particular position themselves to meet labor market demands when they make educational investments. An increased level of education and improved skills among immigrants reduces risks by fostering motivation, self-assurance, and the capacity to successfully compete for high-paying jobs in the labor market (Felicio et al., 2009).

Popovic (2012) argues that, as long as they have similar educational backgrounds and skill sets, native-born people and immigrants should be given equal consideration for open positions. Education, experience, and knowledge, together known as human capital, are critical components that contribute to increased employability in the labor market (Felicio et al., 2009). According to Mossaad (2014), facilitating the transfer of talented immigrant professionals' learned knowledge from larger settings to the systems of a new nation protects their chances of participating actively in the labor market. This could thus help with issues pertaining to underemployment and unemployment in lower-status jobs (ibid.). However, the literature on migration studies reflects doubts on the validity of this reasoning, pointing out that immigrants continue to face obstacles that prevent them from taking full advantage of their skills in the job market (ibid.). The market value of qualifications held by immigrants is frequently lower than that of persons who were born in the country. Some scholars have referred to this discrepancy in qualifications between native-born people and immigrants as "human capital devaluation" (Salmonsson & Mella, 2013).

An additional research study emphasizes that people with lesser human capital have difficulty finding positions that are well-suited to their qualifications and experience (Rooth & Ekberg, 2006). According to Rydgren (2004), human capital components like education, experience, and

skills vary, which is why there are differences in the labor market. According to Reitz (2007), Canadian research on the job success of immigrants shows that several interrelated factors, such as education and the dynamics of the welfare state, have an impact on immigrants' economic prosperity when they move to a new nation. Though most migrants' human capital is based on the education and skills they bring with them from their home countries, these elements are frequently overlooked. There is a difficulty in transferring international credentials and abilities because of this disparity because it is believed that education received abroad is of lower quality than that received in the country of destination (ibid.).

In Norway, several factors other than an immigrant's educational background seem to have a big influence on how well they integrate into the job market. Research indicates that immigrants have strong educational backgrounds when they first arrive in Norway, but their ability to successfully integrate depends on additional investments made in the human capital of the nation. This investment becomes essential for reducing obstacles related to finding acceptable work prospects. Ignoring this process could force immigrants to choose positions that don't match their educational qualifications and pay less (Rydgren, 2004). Faris (2016) highlights the value of learning about Swedish social and cultural norms and adding Swedish education to one's international qualifications. These kinds of activities are essential for improving a person's chances in the job market. Companies in Sweden tend to favor applicants who show that they are aware of the culture of the workplace since it gives them confidence that they will integrate well (Faris, 2016).

This study explores the job opportunities of immigrants in the Norwegian labor markets within the framework of human capital theory. To be more precise, the study examines the difficulties faced by immigrants in Norway in having their foreign-acquired human capital accepted and acknowledged.

3.1.2 Social Capital Theory

Coleman (1988) asserts that social context which includes norms, interpersonal trust, social networks, and social organization has a substantial impact on how people behave, channeling and limiting their behavior. These elements are essential conduits for promoting socioeconomic growth in a working society. Social capital is a grouping of several structural elements that work together in a harmonic manner to achieve goals. Coleman (1988) highlights the two basic traits that these elements have in common: they are all parts of social structures, and they all help the people who

are a part of them carry out their daily activities. Social capital is the readily available resources that people and groups obtain when they join a social network (Carrillo & Riera, 2017).

Economist Glenn Loury first proposed the idea of social capital in 1977. Loury was a strong supporter of personal growth. According to Loury, families and communities function as both internal and external frameworks, or resources, that help people achieve social growth (Palloni et al., 2001). This idea is centered on "relations among persons," as Coleman (1988) put it. Coleman understood the theory of social capital in terms of relationship paradigms. An individual's social capital is influenced by a variety of structures, such as networks, relationships, families, communities, businesses, trade unions, voluntary organizations, legal and political systems, educational and medical institutions, and so on. Human capital can be developed and maintained more easily when people work together in a group setting than when they are alone (Porritt, 2007). Coleman highlighted the relationship between human capital and social capital, arguing that the development of human capital is facilitated by social capital (ibid). Building relationships between people makes it possible to obtain resources and spot chances for growth (Felício et al., 2009). This accomplishment depends on people functioning in a system of broad trust and reliability that is molded by expectations, duties, and good behavior, resulting in an effectively running entity (ibid).

The Social Capital Theory is essential to the emergence and accumulation of different types of capital as well as to the clarification of complex aspects in the field of migration studies. In this research study, the social capital the idea describes how social networks, personal ties, and ties to the host community impact immigrants' ability to successfully integrate into the workforce. Based on empirical research, immigrants who cultivate strong social networks and connections with their peers as well as with the native population are more likely to succeed in the job market. According to Lorentsson (2015), social networks function as channels that facilitate access to expertise, relevant information, and assistance, which in turn increases the likelihood of individuals actively participating in the job market.

People who become members of particular social networks and personal networks have access to a wide range of high-quality and varied materials (Palloni et al., 2001). These researchers stress that the ability of an individual to exert influence over resources depends on the power or influence that individuals possess within the network, the size or structure of these networks, and the

dynamics that define relationships within them. These factors taken together determine the potential access to resources within society. According to Felicio et al. (2009), immigrants have a higher chance of learning about job opportunities and potential investment opportunities when they establish connections with respectable establishments in their new community, such as corporations, associations, clubs, professional organizations, and religious institutions like churches. Thus, to ascertain the degree to which social ties facilitate labor market integration in Norway, this research applies the social capital theory.

3.1.3 Self-Efficacy Theory

The self-efficacy theory is applicable to a few areas in social work practice, including people's intentions, their capacity to act, maintain control, promote personal change (including empowerment), and participate in networks and relationships (Danneris & Dall, 2017). Notably, social learning theory and social cognitive theory both heavily draw on the ideas of agency and self-efficacy. In many cases, these theories operationalize agencies as self-efficacy related to people's confidence, empowering demonstrations, and future intentions and aspirations (Bandura, 1977; 1986; 1997). Agency is the ability of individuals to actively direct their life. This includes the ability to define personal goals, determine the steps required to achieve those goals, create strategic plans, and then carry out those plans to achieve the goals. The ability of people to react and act in various settings is essential to an agency and is emphasized by their willingness to participate. It deals with the concrete and intentional steps people take as active participants in their lives as opposed to just being byproducts of their environment. Moreover, agency involves reflecting on oneself and assessing results (Bandura, 1997).

The concept of perceived self-efficacy concerns a person's belief in their capacity to do a task successfully and how this belief affects their motivation, performance, and thought processes. As was previously mentioned, Bandura (1997) proposed that people who have high levels of self-efficacy exhibit cognitive resourcefulness and a future-focused orientation. A person's estimate of their ability to organize and carry out the necessary steps to accomplish performance goals is known as their self-efficacy belief. This idea is not about the skills a person has; rather, it is about what they believe they can achieve with the skills they have (Bandura, 1986). According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is comprised of three main dimensions: the first is the degree to which a person believes they can handle tasks of different levels of difficulty; the second is the

intensity of their personal beliefs; and the third is the degree to which these beliefs are applicable in various situational contexts. To create a logical connection between a person's ideas and how they interact with their surroundings, it is crucial to place the idea of self-efficacy inside an interactionist framework. According to Danneris and Dall (2017), this application may require a particular attention on several aspects of employment-related activities, such as job seeking, re-employment, total employment involvement, intensity of job search, and career decision-making.

Self-efficacy beliefs can be seen as a task-specific expression of self-esteem and self-concept, and they may be related to self-confidence. These ideas are connected to a person's self-belief in their ability to handle circumstances (Sharf, 2013). Notably, a person's expectations for coping are primarily and most significantly influenced by their past coping experiences (Bandura, 1986). In Norway, a key component of social integration and a social welfare indicator is one's employment status. People who are unemployed may have few social ties, which could be dangerous for their socio-cultural background and, in turn, their social identity. According to Tajfel (1981), social identity is inextricably linked to a person's perception of their own inclusion in a community that they value. Being in the workforce serves a variety of purposes, one of which is identity formation and maintenance, which affects how an individual is perceived both internally and externally. According to Sharf (2013), a person's career and vocational decisions are a way for them to define their place in society and how they embody their social self.

Work is the main medium through which category-based social identities are formed. These identities are shaped by a person's membership in different groups and by aspects of their identities, such as roles and common interests in the workplace. On the other hand, relational social identity concerns the relationships that people cultivate with those in close social circles, like family and close friends (Brewer & Yuki, 2007). Loss of social and personal identity can be triggered by obstacles faced by immigrants during the resettlement phase, especially those related to their professional endeavors like unemployment or poor job placements. These encounters frequently result in elevated stress, hopelessness, and depressed symptoms (Sharf, 2013).

Consequently, the self-efficacy theory is utilized in this study to investigate how immigrants view their self-efficacy as a driving force behind the development of optimistic views regarding their own labor market skills. The human capital traits that immigrants possess, including work experience, education, skills and abilities, all contribute to their enhanced self-efficacy. Their

elevated sense of self-worth reduces stress and is associated with overcoming environmental obstacles as well as setting and achieving lofty objectives that they actively and persistently work toward. Furthermore, they assert that people who embrace competence and confidence in their ability to accomplish their jobs typically have better levels of job satisfaction. Humans can control their behavior and the cognitive and emotional dimensions that lead to the establishment of behavioral norms. While control and influence over life circumstances alter reality perception and behavior, perceptions, beliefs, and emotions drive behavioral reactions. As a result, it is predicted that self-efficacy has a strong direct and indirect relationship, via perceived job autonomy, with job satisfaction. Moreover, a positive association has been shown between perceived job autonomy and job satisfaction, with autonomy in the workplace being associated with increased employee motivation and performance (Bandura, 1997).

3.1.4 Theories of Skills, Ethnic hierarchies and Categorical Inequality

Employers frequently assume that immigrants have (soft) skills that make them suitable for specific roles because they are concentrated in lower-wage, concentrated segments of the labor market. Still, there hasn't been much research done on the perceived and real nature of these skills, or how employers' views might change over time (Friberg & Midtbøen, 2018). Conventional economic theory holds that the labor market is structured around differences in human capital and that job assignments are determined by carefully matching the skill levels of employees with the tasks that they are assigned. Employers look for a variety of skills required to perform a range of tasks, and employees bring their own set of skills from their training, education, and experience.

To enable a suitable matching of these skill sets, wages operate as the pricing mechanism (Becker, 1964). According to Borjas (1989), differences in the levels of foundational and national human capital between native laborers and diverse immigrant cohorts account for systematic disparities. These differences can be further explained by differences in the educational systems of their native countries, differences in the selection process for immigrants, and the average amount of time that immigrants have had to acquire human capital specific to their new country, such as language skills and cultural integration.

While the economic model might seem simple, it is dependent on a concept called "skills," which is somewhat ambiguous and can refer to a wide range of abilities, qualities, and knowledge that are difficult to define or measure (Moss and Tilly, 2001). Some abilities like basic reading and

writing are taught in the regular school system, while others require specialized instruction. While certain skills are learned through hands-on experience, others are taught in formal educational settings, such as schools and universities, and can be officially validated by certification. Moreover, although some talents are universally applicable, others are unique to certain nations or even businesses.

Sociologists have proposed that labor allocation is influenced by social status in addition to skills and compensation, which further complicates the matter (Piore, 1979). According to the theory of the segmented labor market, domestic workers might be reluctant to work because of their low pay as well as the perception of their low social status that goes along with it. On the other hand, immigrants might exhibit less selectivity, a phenomenon that is frequently explained by a "dual frame of reference" and a lack of job options in the labor market of the host nation. This greater willingness on the part of immigrants is often perceived as an indication of aptitude or a strong work ethic (ibid).

The intangible character of competences is particularly evident when discussing non-standardized or popularly referred to "soft" skills (Moss and Tilly, 2001). Soft or informal skills are often the only significant skill category in the lower-paid and less regulated labor markets, where a significant proportion of immigrant workers are located. The ability to perform tasks, such as physical strength, endurance, or dexterity, may be included in these soft or informal skills. Alternatively, they could have to do with a person's readiness to follow rules and procedures and workplace security measures. As we will discuss in more detail, perceptions of soft skills often come down to the idea of "exploitability." Soft skills, however, can also include the interpersonal and communication abilities required for productive interactions with coworkers, employers, and clients. Moreover, they might also include less tangible personal traits like discretion, affability, or sociability qualities that help someone fit in and take on roles in a particular workplace (ibid).

Employers usually face difficulties related to restricted access to detailed information about individual job applicants in low-wage labor markets. This problem is more severe when it comes to immigrants because it can be difficult to verify their credentials and references. As such, in labor markets where the immigrant population is large, certain characteristics such as age, gender, nationality, ethnicity, immigration status, or race often serve as stand-ins for determining a person's skill level and employability (Moss and Tilly, 2001). This phenomenon can be explained by the

formation of distinct "hiring queues," as demonstrated using heuristics based on nationality to speed up selecting qualified applicants for job openings (Wills et al., 2009). Ridgeway (2011) discusses the complex relationship between the placement of immigrants in host countries and the dynamics of categorical inequality. Moreover, as Waldinger and Lichter (2003) have shown, labor market hierarchies typically reflect the societal structures in which they are ingrained.

The study provides a perceptive examination of immigrant employment outcomes in Norwegian labor markets by employing skills, ethnic hierarchies, and categorical inequality theory. The objective of this research is to investigate the mechanisms that lead to the development of various sets of soft skills among diverse immigrant cohorts. In addition, it investigates how these new immigrant groups affect categorical gaps and established ethnic hierarchies within the context of the labor market. The researcher's focus on the difficulties immigrants face in having their soft skills recognized and legitimized in the Norwegian setting is at the heart of this investigation.

3.2 Conceptual Framework

Initially, based on a thorough literature assessment, I developed a conceptual framework that outlined the relationships between various factors. This framework is not set in stone and may change as the study progresses, recognizing that the research technique integrates both deductive and inductive methods. According to Bryman (2012), theories and concepts also arise from data in qualitative research studies. Comparably, because this study also employed the qualitative method, I made the choice to start with a conceptual framework to examine its applicability and refine it considering empirical evidence while also looking into other aspects that influence the research questions.

This framework describes how the theoretical concepts in this thesis influence the job opportunities for immigrants from South-Asia in Kristiansand and how they may interact with each other.

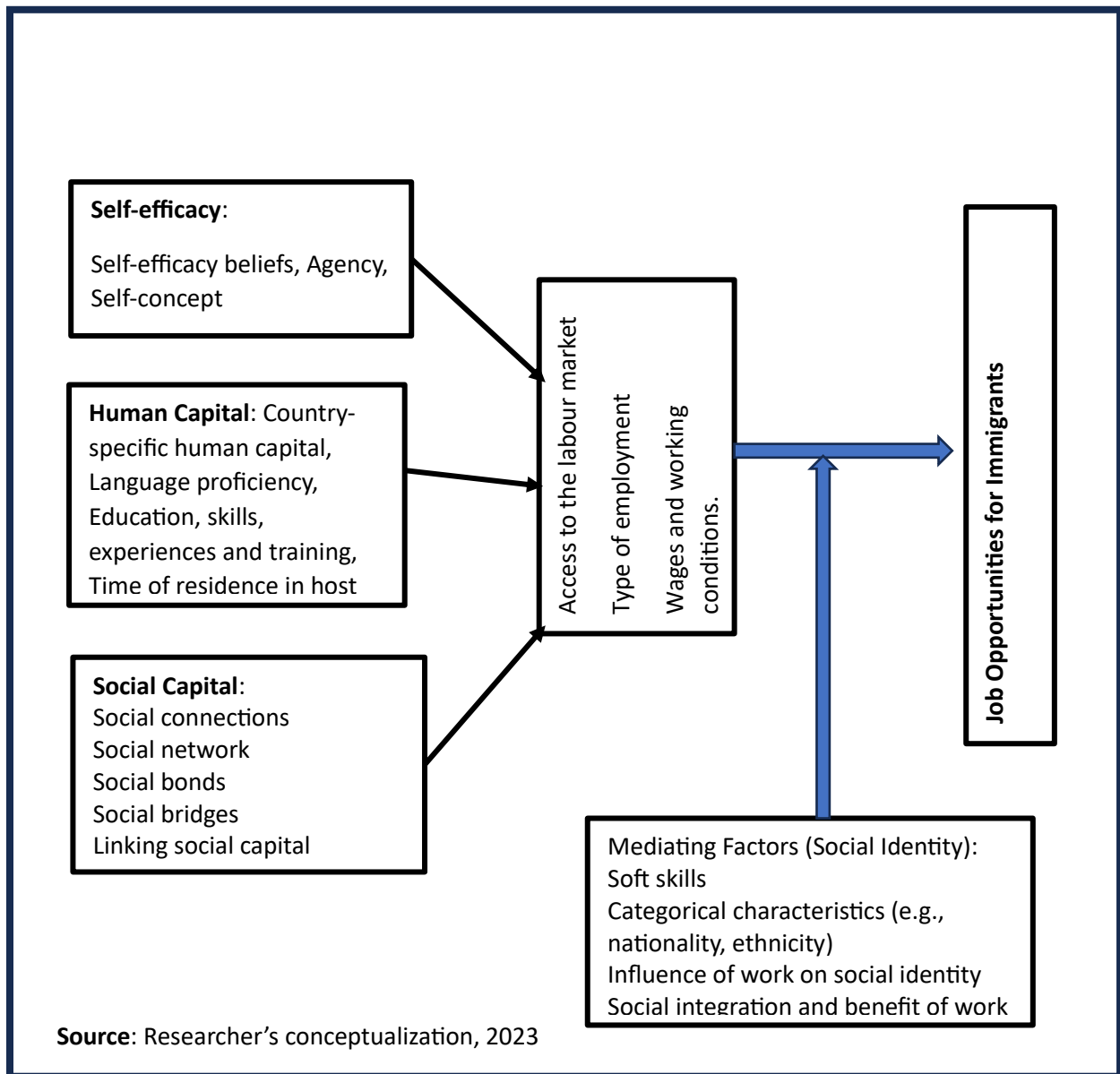


Figure 3: Conceptual Framework for the Impact of Norwegian Language on Job Opportunities for Immigrants from South-Asia in Kristiansand

Key Relationships:

- Self-efficacy beliefs may influence individuals' job-seeking behavior, persistence, and confidence.
- Human capital factors such as language proficiency knowledge, skills, experience, qualifications and education impact job opportunities.

- Social capital, including social connection, networks, personal relations, bonds, bridges, and linking social capital, can affect access to job-related information and networks.
- Soft skills and categorical characteristics play a role in job allocation and hiring decisions.

3.3 Conclusion

In summary, incorporating these theoretical perspectives into the analysis will provide a comprehensive examination of how Norwegian language functions as a gateway or barrier to job opportunities for immigrants from South Asia in Kristiansand. This approach will allow us to explore both individual level and structural factors that affect the labour market experiences of this group and contribute valuable insights to the thesis. With these theories, we can investigate whether language proficiency serves as a potential mechanism through which definite inequalities are reinforced or eased. For example, the theories will help me to explore whether South Asian immigrants with proficient Norwegian language skills face fewer barriers and discrimination in the job market compared to those with limited Norwegian language abilities. Additionally, the theories will be helpful to consider how broader societal factors, such as ethnic biases and cultural stereotypes, may intersect with language skills, education and other experiences to influence job opportunities in this group of immigrants. This chapter offers a thorough examination of the academic publications relevant to the topic. This establishes the fundamental conceptual framework for this study by clarifying the elements highlighted in the literature that may affect immigrants' inclination to focus on low-skilled jobs. The purpose of the following chapter is to explain the research methods used in this study. This chapter completes the theoretical framework portion with the formulation of the preliminary conceptual framework as it was previously described.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

Research is a thorough and systematic investigation that aims to add new knowledge or understanding into the unknown with the specific goal of expanding on what already exists (Kothari, 2004). This chapter outlines methodological frameworks and offers in-depth explanations and analysis for each. The study employs a variety of analytical strategies based in the social sciences to examine how immigrants from South Asia perceive their work opportunities in relation to the Norwegian language. This investigation is a master's thesis that uses qualitative information obtained from immigrants of South Asian descent who work in a variety of sectors in Kristiansand, Alaska. The case study research paradigm is followed in the collecting and analysis of data, and purposive and snowball sampling are used to select participants for semi-structured interviews. The subsequent analysis made use of thematic analysis methods. In addition, this chapter discusses the ethical issues and challenges that arise when conducting research.

4.2 Research Design

The research design establishes a framework that is fundamentally dependent upon the data collection and analysis procedures in a study, as per the findings of Clark et al., (2021). According to Bryman (2012), the research design selected should therefore correspond to the particular emphasis given to certain aspects of the research process. Blaikie (2009) has also addressed the subject of research design, explaining that "research design is a full statement and justification for the technical decisions involved in the planning of a research project."

Considering the nature of the questions that needed to be explored in the study, the case study design was thus adopted. The case study design was suitable because it allowed the study to engage in a thorough analysis within the confinements of the immigrant's Norwegian language proficiency in job market that was selected for the study. The definition of a case study is explained by Bryman (2012), who points out that a "case" usually refers to a particular physical context that may include communities or organizations. Within the framework of our inquiry, the assigned case concerned the larger metropolitan region of Kristiansand, Norway. Furthermore, Crowe et al., (2011) elaborate that a case study design is an appropriate methodological choice for academic research,

especially when the nature of the research questions demands a thorough and multifaceted examination of the problem under investigation. The application of the case study design enabled a targeted and comprehensive examination of the immigrant community in the Kristiansand area.

Beyond the many benefits of using a case study methodology, Crowe et al. (2011) emphasize that examining a particular case a community or organization, for example offers researchers a rare chance to gain deep understanding of the realities on the ground. Through theoretical reasoning and the development of connections between observed phenomena and the underlying causes for their existence, this methodology helps scholars gain a thorough understanding. Moreover, Crowe et al. (2011) highlight that the use of the case study design is crucial to the careful gathering and recording of the necessary specific data in research that is defined by inquiries that center on "What" and "How," as demonstrated in Chapter One of this document. Given the study's research questions, that focus on the "What" and "How" aspects, the decision to use a case study design was indeed wise and in line with the goals of the investigation.

4.3 Research Strategy

In the field of research, there are two main methodological approaches: qualitative and quantitative methodologies. This study is to investigate in-depth the experiences, difficulties, and perceived language ability of immigrants in the Municipality of Kristiansand job market. After thorough analysis, it is determined that the best methodological strategy for this thesis is qualitative research, which enables a more thorough examination of these aspects. The expression of immigrant's views and viewpoints is a critical component in understanding the intrinsic difficulties that people face when attempting to blend into everyday life, especially when it comes to work accessibility. Gaining insight into their perspectives helps to clarify the nuances around their integration issues, particularly regarding finding work.

According to Kara (2022), qualitative research designs enable a deeper comprehension of intangible components like feelings and individual experiences. The research objectives of the study are harmoniously aligned with the selected research design. Because of the choice of this design, the researcher was able to use a variety of data collection techniques to thoroughly examine a subset of immigrants who had not been given enough attention in previous studies. It is considered essential to employ a qualitative research design because it can produce non-numerical,

descriptive data, which is especially useful for characterizing and interpreting the social behaviors, ideas, and perceptions of the individuals being studied.

This study employed a qualitative research method because of its potential to offer a contextual in-depth understanding of social problems (Bryman, 2012). Bryman (2012) asserts that a research method is simply a technique for collecting data. Qualitative research uses open-ended questions about human realities and experiences that are studied through extended contact with people in their natural contexts, producing rich, descriptive data that helps in understanding their perceptions and attitudes. According to Creswell & Poth, (2016), qualitative research is an inquiry into understanding that is founded on several methodological traditions of inquiry that examine a social or human problem. He points out that the researcher builds a complex, comprehensive image, analyzes language, records the informants' in-depth opinions, and conducts the study in a natural setting. The qualitative approach is more suitable because it is more flexible and sinks well with the research objectives of the study.

4.4 Study population

The population is basically the larger circle of units out of which a sample is selected from population refers to all the units that make up a group from which the data can be acquired (Bryman, 2012). The target population for this study were immigrants who are living in Kristiansand municipality. The immigrants were from different countries like India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Nepal in South Asia.

4.5 Sample size and Sampling technique

According to Blaikie (2000), sampling is the practice of taking subsets of a population, that is, members or units so that results can be extrapolated to the entire population. Many scientific disciplines use different sampling techniques. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the researcher to carefully choose a sample strategy that is consistent with their research goals. Sampling techniques are categorized by Blaikie (2000) according to two opposing dimensions: single-stage against multiple-stage and probability versus non-probability. Single-stage approaches can be further divided into two categories: non-probability (which includes accidental or convenient sampling, quota sampling, judgmental or purposive sampling, and snowball sampling) and probability (which includes simple random, systematic, stratified, and cluster sampling). Based on the research objectives of this study, I combined purposive and snowball sampling techniques, both well known

as non-probability sampling techniques and commonly applied in qualitative research (Bryman, 2016 & Blaikie, 2000). The participants were those who freely offered to share their experiences and met predetermined criteria, which the researcher had carefully chosen. The purposive and snowball sampling methods were the two non-probability sampling strategies used in this selection process.

For this research project, a carefully chosen sample of fifteen (15) participants was used. Twenty to twenty-five respondents made up the target sample size in the original design. However, we gave the concept of data saturation top priority during the data collection phase. As such, the investigation proceeded by gradually choosing participants until no new, relevant data surfaced. Thus, the study had successfully gathered data from a total of fifteen (15) immigrant participants at the end of the data collection phase.

A purposive sampling technique was used to choose fifteen (15) participants for the research. Purposive sampling is classified as a non-probability sampling technique in which study participants are selected based on their significance (Bryman, 2012). Instead of using a random approach, this technique made it possible to strategically select participants to specifically consider their ability to provide relevant information to the research. In line with the recommendations of the first respondents, the snowball sampling technique was also applied to increase the number of interviewees who had comparable experiences.

Thus, first I purposively selected the immigrants who work in different industry in the Kristiansand area, and then, more respondents were selected for the interviews through the referrals got from initial respondents. This methodological decision is consistent with Bryman's (2012) observations regarding the widespread application of mixed research methods, which include purposive sampling and snowball sampling, to engage a larger and more diverse sample of respondents. Snowball sampling, as explained by Bryman (2012), is essentially a type of purposive sampling in which the first contact with a small group of people who are relevant to the study area acts as a trigger for connecting with other participants. Moreover, Bryman (2016) describes snowball sampling as a practical method of sampling.

4.6 Sources of data

To meet the research objectives and answer the research questions, I collected data from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data, which in other words is first-hand information, was collected from immigrants of different backgrounds working in the different industry in Kristiansand. The secondary data part of the study was sourced from the scholarly studies and research about impact of Norwegian language on job opportunities for immigrants from south Asia conducted in the past.

4.7 Data Collection Method

In the field of research, data is essential because it is the basis for determining the reliability and validity of study findings. As a result, selecting the best data collection technique carefully is a big responsibility placed on researchers, who must protect the overall caliber of their research projects. This aspect has been discussed in detail by Bryman (2012), who emphasizes the equal weight of importance given to each stage of the research process but emphasizes the critical role the data collection methodology plays in determining the caliber of the research.

This section examines in-depth interviews conducted with fifteen (15) immigrants to represent their perspectives and viewpoints regarding the impact of the Norwegian language on employment opportunities in Kristiansand. Thus, to gather information for further analysis, content producers were interviewed in a qualitative manner. Bryman (2012) highlights the importance of the interviewee's perspective and describes qualitative interviews as a fluid and dynamic process. This method gives the interviewee plenty of opportunity to shape the direction and focus of the interview while allowing the researcher's ideas to remain flexible. As a result, in-depth interviews were used to explore the topic and learn how the participants saw the problem or phenomenon that was being studied. These interviews also allowed for the observation of the participants' non-verbal cues and provided a wealth of contextual information regarding the reasoning behind the participants' particular responses.

It is crucial to stress that every interview that was done for this study was semi-structured. Semi-structured interviews play a crucial role in promoting an open-minded attitude toward the process of gathering data, which in turn facilitates the emergence of new ideas and theories from the information gathered. Since qualitative researchers rely on the inductive derivation of theories and concepts directly from empirical data, this intrinsic quality of semi-structured interviews greatly

supports the paradigm of qualitative research. Bryman (2012) supports this claim and adds that using a semi-structured approach gives participants the freedom to freely express their ideas and delve deeper into the subjects being discussed.

Carefully constructed, the semi-structured interview guide with different sets of questions was created for the multiple interview sessions. Participants were able to openly share their experiences and offer in-depth insights into their lived experiences through semi-structured interviews. The process of creating the guide started with a methodical outline of the important contemporary issues that needed to be investigated. These issues were divided into the following categories: immigrants' opinions about their language skills in the workplace, their employment history and present, their educational backgrounds, and the difficulties they had finding work in Kristiansand.

These contemporary problems emerged from the main research questions of the investigation. Then, to reduce the possibility of miscommunication or ambiguity among the participating immigrant groups, these theme elements were broken down into relevant questions and expressed in an understandable manner. With the conversations encouraging the emergence of impromptu questions, participants were encouraged to share candidly about their experiences. It is important to remember that the questions used were open-ended and discursive in nature, in accordance with Bryman's (2012) guidelines.

Thus, interview guides, which are included at the end of the study, were created to encourage a more adaptable methodology rather than the creation of extremely detailed structured interview questions. As a result, in accordance with Clark et al. (2021) methodology, interviewees were given the freedom to openly share their experiences, opinions, and stories related to the study. Because there were no current COVID-19 restrictions, all interviews were performed in person and took place in the English language over the course of 20 to 30 minutes. To record the interview process, a digital recorder was utilized. The Norwegian Centre for Research Data (SIKT) provided ethical clearance before starting the fieldwork, and each participant gave their informed and voluntary consent to be included in the study. Their identities were replaced with pseudonyms for all participant identities mentioned in this article, ensuring their strict anonymity. A broad range of verbal and nonverbal cues, including emotional indicators like teary eyes, hand gestures, and voice tones, were included in the analysis. To help with memory recall, reflective journal entries were kept in detail and included statements, phrases, noteworthy events, and emotional expressions.

4.8 Data Analysis Method

Semi-structured interviews were the main method used to collect data for this qualitative study. I focused on open-ended questions to gain a thorough understanding of the barriers that immigrants face when attempting to integrate into Norwegian culture, especially in the Kristiansand municipality's job market. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data for the study, and theme analysis was used to analyze the data. According to Bryman (2016), coding is a useful first step in the processing of qualitative research data that facilitates a comprehensive review of transcripts and the identification of significant themes for this study. According to Bryman (2016), a theme is a category that the researcher identified from the data that was gathered, that corresponded with the research questions, originated from codes found in the transcripts, and provided the framework for a theoretical understanding of the data, adding to the body of literature related to the research questions. Using an inductive approach, I chose appropriate literature relevant to this study based on the actual data.

In the social sciences, thematic analysis is one of the most widely used techniques for analyzing qualitative data. The extensive use of this approach highlights its importance and demonstrates how well it can extract significant themes, patterns, and insights from qualitative data sets. Braun and Clarke (2006) assert that although this foundational technique is highly useful, it has not always received enough recognition. The name of this analytical technique suggests that its focus is on finding, examining, and summarizing any patterns, or "themes," in the dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Transcripts and field notes are coded to create themes, according to Clark et al. (2021). Furthermore, themes can function as categories of interest for the researcher, offering a framework for understanding the information gathered. Crucially, themes need to highlight significant elements of information to answer research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The online version of Microsoft Word was used to convert audio recordings into text format. After that, themes were arranged in line with the research questions and further explained in line with the goals of the study.

Using the methodology described by the authors above, the data were subjected to a methodical, step-by-step analysis process as described by Larkin et al., (2021). By systematically examining the dataset, this method was used to reveal both explicit and implicit interpretations.

Step 1. Reviewing the transcriptions several times allowed for a deeper understanding of the dataset, especially the participant narratives about their integration experiences.

Step 2. The study started with extensive annotation, which was like a thorough textual analysis. To incorporate the immediate observations about emotions and non-verbal cues, like teary eyes, hand gestures, and tone of voice, into the analytical process, the research diary was then reviewed. This strategy gave the inquiry more depth.

Step 3. The process of nurturing emerging themes required the methodical organization of a large collection of comments into cohesive groups. This assignment required both an in-depth examination of the details, such as finding important quotes or noteworthy observations, and an overview of the dataset, which included the main themes in the story. Ensuring that relevant themes were included required a rigorous and meticulous interaction with both the research diary and the transcribed content to enable the identification of developing patterns and connections. The analyst's interpretations and the original transcript blended harmoniously in the emergence of these themes.

Step 4. Performing an investigation of emerging themes required a purposeful concentration on these themes to reveal relationships not previously identified. The overt and covert relationships, like the importance of language, as well as the possible negative effects of appreciation for integration, were carefully documented. With the help of electronic cataloging and reorganization, it was possible to take a step back and see the whole thematic landscape. A recurring focal point surfaced, exposing the connections between clusters of themes. The emergent themes were compiled and reevaluated using new lists, and this iterative process was repeated until the themes were clearly defined and effectively summarized the main conclusions of the report.

Step 5. Procedural steps had to be repeated to advance to the next case. Every interview was put through a thorough analysis process to start from scratch while also recognizing the presence of preconceptions.

Given that the primary analytical currency in qualitative content analysis is codes (Saldana, 2021), a careful review of the data was conducted to provide an accurate description of the information. The data was then subjected to a methodical categorical coding process which produced thematic groups. Following this, I went on to analyze and combine the carefully arranged data, resulting in

the creation of broad statements of understanding that were consistent with the goals and purposes of the study. This approach made it easier to spot common patterns in the research and made it possible to quickly establish important connections and correlations, which improved the way the extracted data was interpreted and analyzed.

4.9 Reliability, and Validity

Validity and reliability are two basic concepts that are frequently used in the assessment of research quality. According to Bryman's (2012) explanation, validity is essentially related to how reliable and sound a study's results are, while reliability is more about how well the results of a particular study can be repeated time and time again in other research projects to produce consistent consequences. An important consideration in the validity assessment process is the methodological soundness and the conclusions that are presented in the study's interpretation. Ensuring that researchers use the most appropriate research methodologies to establish and maintain the validity of their findings is the main goal. Reliability analysis, on the other hand, emphasizes consistency, which refers to the ability of the techniques applied in each study to produce consistent results when repeated. Data validity addresses the integrity of the conclusions drawn at the end of a research study, according to Clark et al. (2021). Several aspects of data validity, including measurement validity, internal validity, external validity, ecological validity, and inferential validity, were discussed in the study conducted by Clark et al. in (2021). Research studies that have employed various research methodologies are subject to these aspects of data validity.

Because of the small number of participants, the scope of qualitative research findings is typically restricted. Validity and reliability issues with qualitative research are often accompanied by concerns about objectivity, transparency, and reliability. When compared to quantitative research, critics argue that the inherent limitations of qualitative research limit its universal applicability. Yet according to Bryman (2012), the main goal of qualitative research is to obtain unique insights into people's experiences, thoughts, and feelings by working with a small number of participants in a particular organization, community, or environment.

More support for this claim comes from Creswell et al. (2016), who highlight that the main goal of qualitative research is to gain a deep comprehension of the rich contextual data obtained from participant interaction, extended fieldwork, and comprehensive investigation to produce accurate and comprehensive results. The goal of interviewing subjects for qualitative research is not to

represent a broader population. Qualitative research findings are not based on statistical principles, but rather on the quality of theoretical inferences made from qualitative data (Bryman, 2012). Additionally, Bryman (2012) highlights that the findings of a qualitative research study must consider the specifics of the design, sampling, and data collection instrument to be replicable.

I followed the guidelines for data collection provided in Chapter Four of this research study, as previously stated. It is crucial to emphasize that the robustness of the research findings is not compromised by the relatively small sample size of fifteen participants. I made sure that the study participants, who came from a variety of South Asian countries, were significantly diverse in terms of sex, age, gender, and occupation. I have purposefully allowed participant voices to permeate the narrative in order to provide room for multiple interpretations, which I believe will increase the research's authenticity and credibility. It is imperative to stress that I did not modify their opinions as they were expressed during the transcription, translation, and interpretation procedures that were used to compose this study.

Ethical principles were strictly adhered to during the interview process, guaranteeing that participants were not forced or offered financial incentives to participate. Interviews were scheduled to fit the participants' schedules, and all necessary procedures were followed to the letter. The required SIKT approvals were carefully sought before the interviews started, and each participant's informed consent was obtained. The respondents were then provided with interview transcripts to confirm the accuracy of the recorded data with their initial statements.

The researcher took great care to prevent her personal biases from influencing how she interpreted the data by regularly cross-checking her interpretations with the study's conclusions. She also collaborated with a colleague to carefully cross-check the data and interpretations. Throughout the entire research process, the researcher continuously maintained objectivity and neutrality. Discussions and conclusions from the research were informed by the strict research methodology that was methodically followed throughout the study's implementation.

4.10 Ethical Considerations

Ethical dilemmas are more likely to arise in the context of social science qualitative research. According to Sanjari et al. (2014), qualitative research generally explores complex and delicate topics, which puts participants and the researcher at risk for emotional and other risks. Establishing

strong ethical protocols was essential to protect the rights and dignity of the individuals who served as the study's subjects of analysis.

It's important to remember that research ethics can cause serious ethical problems, so it's important to never take them lightly (Bryman, 2012). Clark et al. (2021) state that when conducting social research, several ethical principles need to be carefully considered. As a result, these ethical guidelines were followed when conducting this investigation. Specifically, I paid close attention to the possible harm, that is, bodily as well as mental that participants could endure. The term "harm" includes more than just physical injury, as Diener and Crandall (1979), as cited in Clark et al., (2021) point out. It can also refer to stress, harm to participants' personal growth, eroding self-esteem, and encouraging respondents to engage in ethically unacceptable behaviors.

I conducted interviews for this research project with immigrants who worked in low-skilled, unseen jobs like housekeeping, reception, kitchen help, and dishwashing. I tried to act with consideration and respect during these exchanges to make sure the interviewees didn't experience humiliation or a decline in self-worth. I revealed that I worked part-time as a hotel housekeeper to build a sense of mutual respect, which helped to build rapport and allow open communication with the subjects. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the researcher to take steps to reduce any risks that might arise while conducting their research, as stressed by Clark et al. (2021). Think about the following example: a researcher from a minority group sets out to investigate a racist movement. To protect themselves, the researcher needs to be cautious when interacting with respondents who might have intolerance-based viewpoints in this kind of situation.

As part of my own research, I spoke with employers across a range of industries to understand why they choose to hire immigrant groups for back-of-house roles. In these cases, I was sensitive in my approach to the respondents, careful not to offend and to avoid any negative fallout for the immigrant workers who were already performing similar roles in these organizations. Notably, all interviews were conducted with participants' explicit informed consent, protecting their privacy. This practice is highly regarded for its ethical importance, according to Clark et al. (2021). To further emphasize our dedication to conducting ethical research, participants were given the choice to leave the interview at any time.

Specifically, given that my study was carried out in the somewhat limited geographic boundaries of the Kristiansand area, I took extra care when it came to participant anonymization. This

increased alertness was required because the slightest unintentional leak could reveal the identity of the organization that was involved. Moreover, it is imperative to mention that a rigorous adherence to ethical guidelines was upheld during the conduct of this study and the ensuing dissemination of its results. In accordance with the suggestions made by Clark et al. (2021), this required a dedication to maintaining the values of honesty and integrity and making sure that neither the participants nor the potential audience were the target of any kind of coercion or fraud.

The current study followed the guidelines provided by the SIKT and University of Agder (UIA). SIKT provided its approval for data collection because the study required handling sensitive personal data related to survey participants. The transcripts and audio recordings were safely kept on the university's OneDrive cloud storage platform. Careful and sensitive negotiations were conducted to protect participants from any possible consequences arising from their participation and to resolve any potential discrepancies related to language, gender, and setting. The participants were given thorough information about the study several times over to guarantee their informed consent and voluntariness. In addition, participants were made aware of their ability to leave the study at any time.

Every participant properly completed the informed consent form. Pseudonyms were then given to each participant individually to protect their identity. The consent forms that the respondents had executed were safely stored in a private home to prevent access by unauthorized parties. Participants occasionally struggled with strong emotions during the interview process, such as sadness, anger, or despair, while they described their experiences from the past and the present. The participant's potential for excessive emotional distress was minimized, and the interviewer remained acutely aware of the sensitive nature of the data being collected.

4.11 Research Challenges

It was quite difficult to engage informants to get their stories of migration from their home country to Norway and their assimilation into Norwegian society, particularly in the job market. Interview techniques had to be modified to accommodate the participants' varied cultural backgrounds to guarantee their comfort and get around any potential impediments. Furthermore, an efficient background analysis required an awareness of their cultural environment. Additional obstacles faced during the process included running with immigrants who declined to participate, having trouble following up with some, and having interviews interrupted by participants who left early.

Language proficiency presented another difficulty. The researcher intended to interview immigrants from five different countries: Bangladesh, India, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. However, English was not their first language, several of the participants found it difficult to express themselves clearly in the language. Due to this language barrier, several participants were unable to formulate their answers based on the interview questions, which resulted in inconsistent results.

Furthermore, the main drawback of this qualitative study was how time-consuming it was. This restriction made it very difficult for the study to proceed, for both the subjects and the researcher. Because several interviewees found it difficult to balance their professional obligations with the interviews, scheduling interview sessions became difficult. Remarkably, one respondent said that they were unable to participate in in-person interviews because they had recently taken on a new professional role. They attributed their inability to participate to work-related obligations.

4.12 Conclusion

This chapter discusses the methodology and design used in this research. It discusses the relevance of the qualitative research approach in assessing the impact of Norwegian language on job opportunities among immigrants. The study adopted a qualitative design. The study adopted a qualitative research design because it allows the use of a combination of data collection methods and techniques in conducting this study. This approach applies to several qualitative studies (Bryman, 2012). This chapter discussed the principal data collection methods employed by the researcher in the data collection process. These are face-to-face in-depth interviews. It further discussed the thematic analytic techniques for analyzing the data in detail. The chapter, therefore, explains and justifies the choice of the research design, outlines the area of study, and discusses population and sampling procedures, as well as the ethical foundation and challenges on which the research was conducted. The issues taken into consideration while collecting the data in the field are informed consent, anonymity, and confidentiality. It also discussed the issues of validity and reliability.

CHAPTER FIVE

EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the major findings of the current study with respect to the objectives and the corresponding research questions. This study exclusively focused on the impact of the Norwegian language on the job opportunities for immigrants from South Asia in Kristiansand. The findings presented answers the two research questions: one how does immigrants perceive their language proficiency in the job market? and what are the challenges faced by immigrants in the job market? It analyses and discusses the findings by linking them to theories which were earlier on discussed in chapter three. As I mentioned in the previous chapter (Chapter Four), this study is qualitative; the collection of my primary data was done through semi-structured interviews. In total, my empirical data consisted of fifteen informants, including South Asian immigrants from different countries (Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal), composed of eight females and seven males. Quotations from interviews have not been edited for the maintenance of originality. All interviewees were promised anonymity. The notes included pseudo codes assigned to the interviewees. This chapter begins with section one that presents the general overview of immigrant's perception about language proficiency and experiences of different challenges in the job market, then follows section two provides analysis and discussions on the different themes used by immigrants to the job market. This chapter is built on the themes and sub-themes selected during the thematic analysis.

5.2 Immigrants Perception about Language Proficiency in Job Market

In the wider national context and within the boundaries of the Kristiansand municipality in particular language plays a crucial role in social, economic, political, and administrative activities. The idea that language has a major impact on companies' decision to consider hiring immigrants for positions in Norway's labor market is supported by the participants' agreement. Every participant's first and consistent response when asked what the main factors were that allowed them to enter Kristiansand's professional labor market was language.

The most common obstacle faced by immigrants when they integrate into Norwegian culture is language acquisition, according to every interviewee. This is especially true when it comes to

looking for work. "Mastery of the language is very important in Norway", a Pakistani female informant remarked forcefully. "One's capacity to engage in any activity here is contingent upon language proficiency," she emphasized to further emphasize the significance. "Language proficiency stands as the primary barrier impeding immigrants from securing employment," as one immigrant from Nepal who provided his personal expertise during an interview shared this sentiment.

Learning the Norwegian language seems to be difficult for immigrants. One of my Nepalese informants she is studying at university of Agder in Coastal Ecology said,

The hardest thing I have faced since coming to Kristiansand has been learning the language, which has affected every part of my stay in Norway. She explained this by highlighting the university's restricted offerings, which are confined to Basic Norwegian (Parts 1 and 2). After completing this required curriculum, I decided to advance my language skills by enrolling in a paid online program.

The main goal of language learning is to facilitate successful communication, academic achievements, and professional endeavors. To facilitate social connections and help immigrants integrate more easily into their new communities, language is an essential medium. However, people who come to Norway in their middle years or later, and/or have not had much formal schooling, find it difficult to become fluent in the language. According to an informant source connected to NAV, "there is a portion of this population that struggles with language acquisition completely. As such, this situation impedes their integration process, especially in terms of work accessibility".

On the other hand, people who are middle-aged and less educated find it extremely difficult to learn Norwegian. On the other hand, even younger and more educated immigrants to Norway have language barriers when assimilating into society, especially in the job market. Speaking about her worries regarding her fluency in Norwegian, the female Bangladeshi informant said in an interview that "I worry about my proficiency in Norwegian; although I speak well, at times I feel hesitant and question if it is enough, leading to a loss of trust." This hesitation on the part of immigrants not only prevents them from interacting verbally but also lowers their confidence when they go on job interviews, which in turn limits their employment opportunities. In agreement, an Indian male informant said, "I always get nervous thinking about how well I know Norwegian before job interviews." Even immigrants who speak Norwegian at a level C1 proficiency frequently have

difficulties both in the job search and in the workplace. This was attested by an informant who, has worked as a pedagogist she said as follow:

Speaking Norwegian is not just a problem for newcomers; it is a major barrier to employment in the country. Looking back at my previous work experiences, I can recall times when my coworkers purposefully made communication difficult by speaking in informal sentences, making it difficult for me to follow their conversations. I was feeling so alone and confused in these situations (a female Pakistani immigrant).

Respondents emphasized how particular ethnic groups and geographical variances have an impact on the Norwegian language. Different dialects of the Norwegian language arise from regional differences, such those between Kristiansand, Bergen, Oslo, and other places. These variations pose difficulties for immigrants. As a result, people learning Norwegian may encounter challenges due to slight pronunciation differences and the use of non-official Bokmål words. According to a Sri Lankan informant, " I was faced with a circumstance in which, although fulfilling all the necessary requirements, I was unfortunately unable to obtain the employment." This instance highlights the ways in which these linguistic complexities might hinder the assimilation of immigrants into the labor force, especially in the case of those who are skilled in Norwegian.

5.3 Challenges in Accessing the Labour Market

Immigrants faced different challenges in having access to the labour market. This theme comprises key subthemes such as language barrier, influence on self-efficacy beliefs, impact of social connections or networks, devaluation of academic qualifications and work experience, gender and ethnicity discrimination, employer preferences and the hierarchical suitability, feeling of hopelessness and disillusionment, social cultural differences and so on.

5.3.1 Language Barrier

Different areas of daily living are significantly impacted by language. The primary means of our communication and cognitive processes in all fields are the words and concepts made possible by language (Hymes, 1977). The language barrier has been identified as a significant predictor impacting the clustering of immigrant employees inside low-wage, physically taxing elementary jobs in Norway, according to the research enquiry of this study. The comments that follow serve as examples of how language competency affects immigrants' access to the labor market and poses

a barrier to their entry into higher-level, more socially regarded and prestigious occupations. While explaining her experience, this informant shared:

When I came to Norway , I went to different hotel's for looking for job as a receptionist field, but I did not call from any places because my Norwegian proficiency is beginning level. I went to ask the hotel manager why the company authority did not call for me to this position. The manager told me they get many older guests, and they do not feel comfortable to speak in English, and they don't need to speak in English either. So, it doesn't make sense recruiting someone who cannot speak Norwegian fluently for a front office job. That's the reason why many immigrants are engaged in backhouse jobs such as housekeeping, cleaner, dishwashing, kitchen helping, cooking (a female Bangladeshi immigrant).

Based on interviews with participants, it was discovered that access to the labor market was especially important for a small group of immigrants, mostly those who had become fluent in Norwegian. One Pakistani resident who had lived in Norway for twenty-five years, for example, stated that she was given consideration for several jobs outside of her academic sector once she became fluent in Norwegian. On the other hand, most respondents expressed that their inability to speak Norwegian well was the main obstacle to entering the job market. The results demonstrated how widely people practiced Norwegian and how most companies considered it to be an essential skill. According to employers, being able to communicate in Norwegian with service customers was essential to landing a job in Norway. When asked for thoughts on this topic, one participant shared their viewpoint by saying,

It is necessary to have a thorough command of Norwegian to obtain employment in Norway. For most work prospects, this criterion is still essential even though it might not be applicable in every situation. Being able to communicate in Norwegian is an invaluable skill and is essential to succeeding in the job market. One could argue that language ability serves as a powerful tool for work growth, acting as a kind of marketing (a male Bangladeshi immigrant).

Language has a significant influence on communication, as evidenced by the proverb "knowledge is power." People who have access to information are better able to achieve their goals. Nevertheless, this study's empirical data clearly shows that immigrants face significant obstacles when attempting to navigate and obtain essential information and services due to language barriers. This kind of access has a big impact on how well they integrate into the labor market. The participants in the survey highlighted that having sufficient access to information resources helps them find work prospects in a modest way. Numerous immigrants said that they were unable to

understand papers in Norwegian that were connected to job networks and other information sources. As a result, this language barrier makes them invisible to prospective employers. Particularly employment agencies are reluctant to employ people who do not speak Norwegian well because they would rather hire people who can follow directions and explain workplace safety issues to clients, coworkers, and employers.

Furthermore, linguistic competence is critical to understanding instructions because a lack of it can result in unemployment. One of the interviewees emphasized their own experience when they said, "My application for a cleaning job at the university was turned down because of my poor Norwegian. According to an Indian immigrant woman, "even jobs in the cleaning industry require people who can read and comprehend cleaning product labels in Norwegian language." In agreement, respondent 5 emphasized that inadequate Norwegian language competency creates obstacles when interacting with the community, especially for first-time student immigrants to Norway. She added that:

Finding a job right away when you get to Norway is difficult, mostly because of linguistic issues. People could find it challenging to communicate clearly, particularly if they don't speak Norwegian well. The language barrier also makes it difficult to follow conversations and obtain important information about employment prospects. Notably, the inability to understand job ads is greatly impacted by the language barrier, which restricts access to work opportunities. This becomes especially difficult when one considers personal experiences, like being turned down for a cleaning job because one couldn't read Norwegian. (a female Nepalese Participant)

Language barriers may not have much of an effect on IT professionals because their work mostly entails considerable computer system interface, with programming languages being the major means of engagement. Professionals who work in roles like development sectors, which require constant customer communication, are not like this. But when it comes to the field of information technology (IT), the importance of language skills seems to vary depending on the profession. This is especially true for engineering. One male respondent who was originally from Bangladesh and worked in the field of computer systems expressed a different viewpoint regarding the significance of language. He argued that because information technology has its own command-based language, linguistic expertise is not very useful in his line of work. He said,

Though being proficient in a variety of talents is useful, it hasn't made a big difference in getting or doing my current job. Thus, to complete my work efficiently, I mainly speak in a language unique to information technology.

When examining language learning from the perspective of human capital theory, professionals who are interviewed and looking for work in Norway show a strong association between not speaking the language well enough and having to look for a job for a long time. A major obstacle to genuine social and economic engagement, especially in the job market, is a lack of proficiency in the language of the host nation. Language ability seems to be one of the most important factors affecting an immigrant's employment opportunities. Immigrants can find employment in a variety of industries because entry-level occupations like cook, dishwasher, housekeeping, kitchen assistant, or cleaner sometimes do not require a high level of language competence. But without strong language abilities, advancement to higher employment levels is still limited. To enter higher levels of the labor market, such full-time jobs, management positions, front desk administration, or head chef jobs, immigrants must demonstrate a high level of language proficiency. Professional language proficiency becomes essential for immigrants hoping to obtain higher jobs in the labor force.

5.3.2 Influence on Self-efficacy Beliefs

Particularly for immigrants looking for new chances abroad, the quest of considerable employment is frequently seen as a crucial element of personal fulfillment and societal assimilation. Within the context of the individuals investigated in this study, their effort to find work in Norway not only highlights their constant devotion but also bears witness to their unwavering professional objectives. As they devote their time and effort to navigating the Norwegian labour market, these people represent the epitome of ambition and tenacity.

The participants' intense sense of professional desire was revealed in the interviews, along with their tenacious pursuit of job prospects in Norway. They described a relentless schedule that included extended job searches, job applications, and active involvement in a variety of programs and courses aimed at improving their employability throughout the workweek. In the NAV offices, immigrants and other people can take use of projects and programs geared toward the labour market, including workshops and counselling on how to find a job. However, their real experience of accessing the Norwegian labour market proves to be significantly more difficult than their initial

assumptions, according to the respondents' 1 perspectives. An informant from Bangladesh confirmed this statement and stated the following information clearly:

My foremost aspiration resides in securing gainful employment within my field. To facilitate employment chances in Norway, the Norwegian Labor and Welfare Administration (NAV) has provided vital assistance in the form of programs, educational courses, and counselling. However, the pursuit of these endeavors has required a significant investment of time and resources while producing no positive results in terms of productive employment within the business. My potential employers have not yet made me an offer to work for them. I currently work part-time as a housekeeper at the Thon Hotel. Unfortunately, this employment situation does not perfectly match my professional goals. It's important to note that I don't get enough hours at the hotel to support myself.

The second respondent, a 32-year-old Indian woman, has a bachelor's and a master's degree in mass communication, both of which she earned in her own country. She has been in Norway for seven years, yet she is still jobless right now. Her description of the job search process goes like this:

As I signed up for a Media and Communication program run by NAV, I have a lot of work ahead of me. Every working day, I constantly search for employment opportunities during the day. Unfortunately, despite sending my curriculum vitae to between 50 and 70 potential companies, there have been no positive results. The situation is made worse by my Indian degree's seeming insignificance in the setting of Norway.

The experiences of Respondents 1 and 2 provide vivid examples of how people regard the job search process as a commitment equivalent to full-time employment, involving a significant expenditure of their time and effort. These respondents spent a significant amount of time and energy looking for work, which is not surprising; however, their unwavering persistence and clearly defined career goals initially suggest a resolute determination and the conviction that they can find suitable employment opportunities.

Respondent 3 is a 26-year-old native of Bangladesh who holds a master's degree in marine engineering from his home nation. After living in Norway for almost a year, he displays extreme frustration with the job search process and seems to be on the approach of giving up on the idea of finding a job that pays well. Even though, unhappily, he has not received any invitations for job interviews, it is noteworthy that he has diligently dedicated a significant period in becoming proficient in the Norwegian language.

I have now completely lost the motivation to learn more Norwegian and to seek more jobs. I have three years' experience; I was working in ocean Tankers Private Limited in Singapore. Right now, I am not doing anything specific just for living. I am working in Berger king restaurant as a kitchen staff that is also not as a full time. It is not expected for me. I hope I will get a job in my relevant field as I have job experience.

This demonstrates how the desire to improve one's Norwegian language skills has diminished among certain interviewees. They have been motivated to learn languages primarily by their desire to find lucrative employment, but they believe that this quest has not been successful in helping them find employment.

According to Bandura (1997), the respondents have clearly made deliberate steps to integrate themselves into the Norwegian labour market. This phenomenon can be further examined via the lens of agency theory. They elaborate on their active job search efforts and their steadfast pursuit of their goals. These proactive actions include learning Norwegian fluently, enrolling in relevant courses, utilizing NAV's counselling services, taking part in a variety of job efforts, and enlisting the help of volunteers. The respondents have faithfully carried out both the recommendations of others and the activities they believe to be appropriate. They explain how they play active roles in the job search process, which is marked by well-defined objectives and self-directed management. They also exhibit deliberate behavior and have some control over how they function and how their lives turn out in the Norwegian setting.

To fulfill their career goals and professional ambitions, the respondents diligently created detailed strategies and strategic methods. Prior to beginning their job search in Norway, this required them to obtain the necessary training and education in their home nations. Drawing from earlier coping experiences related to skill development and education, they initially seemed to demonstrate a high level of self-efficacy in this situation. According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is a prerequisite for agencies to manifest. However, it is possible to interpret the respondents' descriptions of unpleasant experiences they had after arriving in Norway as signs of declining self-efficacy. Their perceived ability to affect change appears to have lessened because of their active efforts not yielding beneficial results, almost driving them to give up on their job search efforts. One can claim that there is a discernible decline in them. Their self-efficacy convictions seem to have waned, not only in relation to the Norwegian labour market but also in relation to Norwegian society at large, a subject that will be covered in more detail below.

5.3.3 Devaluation of Over Qualifications and Work Experience

The interviewees have described a pattern of self-perceived "downgrading" about their competence and educational credentials because the actions they took to establish themselves in professional careers have not played out as anticipated within the Norwegian context. Because of this, individuals have started looking for jobs that do not require a formal degree, positioning themselves as maybe overqualified for such positions. Unfortunately, this deliberate change in employment seeking strategies has had very modest success. "Over-education" is a term used to describe the state of having educational credentials that are far higher than those needed for the open post (Hardoy & Schne, 2014).

In the discussion that follows, this study investigates how these interactions affected the interviewees' perceptions of their own self-worth and self-efficacy. Study also tries to clarify the complex interrelationships between skills, opportunities, and self-perception in the context of immigrant job searchers in Norway by digging into the narratives offered by Respondents 4 and 5, among others. These stories highlight the numerous challenges faced by those who must match their career goals with the requirements of a foreign labour market. As a result, they provide important insights into the dynamics of self-esteem and self-efficacy when facing difficulty.

Respondent 4, an Indian national of 34 years old, presents an illustrative case. With a degree in mathematics teaching and previous experience working from home as a preschool teacher, her move to Norway has brought significant obstacles. It's noteworthy that her issue goes beyond finding a job in her field of expertise to include finding any type of paid work in the area. She concluded that:

I now believe I have no future in Norway, I will not get any job. Despite my job experience in English medium school, I wish will get job in kindergarten /pre-school or school, but I am so frustrated. I have nothing to go to. I am outside everything.

Another example is respondent 5, (27), who has a bachelor's degree in biology and is from Nepal and continuing master's degree in coastal ecology at university of Agder. Her opinion is that:

Many jobs I remember going everywhere, giving my resume to them on paper, asking them if you need any new people to work here, but everything that I heard was no, it's not the high season. So, I was rejected by all the parties. But it was many. I remember that there were many jobs. I am also seeking work in cafes and canteens and at other places that do not require any formal education, but this

does not get a positive response. This situation affects me and my self-esteem, I am so sad.

Most interviewees have experienced situations where they believe that their educational achievements from their home country have been diminished, giving them the impression that their credentials are of little or no significance in the context of Norway. Their domestic situation is further impacted by their situation.

Respondent 6 has been a resident of Norway for three years. She is from Pakistan and holds nursing degrees from her home country. She has run into difficulties when trying to get a job as a nurse in Norway because her home country has not recognized her nursing skills. When she tried to get recognition for her education in Norway, she ran into a common attitude that stressed the value of obtaining additional academic credentials. This sentiment was frequently expressed as,

You need to pursue additional education, as your qualifications are mostly experiential. But since her education and experience had been properly verified, she was able to follow her dream of working in the healthcare industry without any such obstacles. bouts of intense personal thought and worry for my family were joined by phases of emotional suffering on this journey.

The sixth respondent's statement clarifies how she views the professional nursing education she had in her home country, claiming that it might not be given the same amount of respect as the Norwegian nursing education. She thus experiences a reduction in the value of her professional training and abilities, which makes it more difficult for her to get employment. The Norwegian Directorate of Health is the central agency in charge of awarding the necessary authorizations for professional categories within the legally regulated healthcare domain. It is crucial to note that the Norwegian healthcare sector is characterized by strict regulatory standards.

One Bangladeshi immigrant who has lived in Kristiansand for a year, identified as respondent 3, had the following opinion:

I hold a master's degree in marine engineering from my homeland. Due to my overqualification, I have faced fewer professional opportunities. Companies can easily find people with lower credentials who can nevertheless successfully complete job requirements. Because of my unique circumstances and substantial qualifications, I must adhere to Norwegian labour rules, which call for higher pay. As a result, employers prefer to choose applicants with lower qualifications since they avoid having to pay higher salaries.

Therefore, it is evident that there are observable obstacles for potential interviewees, independent of an individual's background or level of education. Negative experiences and a feeling of hopelessness and helplessness are frequently experienced. Even though their educational credentials and competences were obtained in their place of origin, which may indicate an initial holding of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986), the Norwegian context does not view this reservoir of knowledge and competencies as immediately useful.

Numerous individuals who participated in the interview conveyed their intention to remove their educational history from their curriculum vitae. This also includes (respondent 7), who is 50 years old and from Pakistan; she is living in Norway around 25 years. At first, she has degrees in Economics and Administration from Norway. Secondly, she completed a second bachelor's degree in pedagogy from the University of Agder. Her situation is slightly different from that of the other interviewees because she once has a work placement in Oslo, Norway with a job contract as a barnhage (kindergarten) teacher.

She stated that I seek employment everywhere in my previous degree. I am open to doing everything possible.... But it's not easy. It is very challenging for me and my family. I have lost all energy and hope. Then I decided to do my second bachelor's in pedagogy. I just need a job, I applied 15 to 20 applications but they look at my resume and... I'm overqualified. I asked if I could take away something from the CV and just search, but they said that I can't do that. Finally, I found a job, because now I had the relevant education, so I felt that I was very attractive.

This comment relates to Respondent 7, who seems to have qualifications that go beyond those needed for the jobs she is seeking for. It's important to remember that NAV (the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration) advises against downplaying one's educational credentials on a resume. This circumstance leads to a question about a potential paradox that may affect job applicants. On the one hand, applicants can find themselves turned away from job interviews if they are thought to be unqualified for the positions in question. They are urged not to conceal their broad educational background from their CV, which puts them in a difficult position. Due to their perceived overqualification in this case, there may be fewer opportunities for interviews.

5.3.4 Experiences of Powerlessness and Marginalization

Even though it is accompanied with hope and aspirations, the effort to look for employment prospects abroad frequently reveals a complex web of interrelated circumstances that can either

empower or disempower people in their quest for employment and financial security. The participants who kindly shared their stories in this study set out on this exact trip because they aspired and a strong desire to offer their knowledge and abilities to the Norwegian labour market. A stark and depressing reality, however one characterized by helplessness and marginalization becomes apparent as their individual experiences play out. When navigating the Norwegian employment market, many of the respondents stress the need of building a professional network. They emphasize how important recommendations and relationships may be for landing interviews and job searches. They claim that this network can be an asset in the job market because it is common to be placed in less beneficial positions when one does not have the necessary contacts. This was confirmed by this Pakistani immigrant:

In Norway, you must know someone; then, you can get a job. If you do not know someone, you end up in the back of the queue. References are very important in Norwegian and social network and references they it helps a lot and degrees also besides education is that's why we are applying. But differences and your contacts and your network are very important besides your education. Background your language skills, your driver's license, so I think references have a great influence (a female Pakistani immigrant).

In her presentation, she clarifies the value of having a professional network in the context of people who are gifted with lots of money and/or advanced educational credentials. The other interviewees also describe their difficulties navigating the employment landscape, which are mostly caused by their lack of access to a network of people who are familiar with their line of work. This observation is consistent with research on labour recruiting done in Norway, which showed that a lot of employment vacancies are still not advertised publicly (Fosslund, 2013). As was already said, education and job experience both play crucial roles in determining employment outcomes by promoting the growth of a more diverse network, which is an essential part of human capital . The respondents' decision to continue their study outside of Norway is noteworthy because it makes this element less favorable in the current situation.

5.3.5 Social Networks and Relationship

All study participants who were involved in paid work reported that social networks, which include people like friends, coworkers, family, former bosses, and members of one's religious community, were very helpful in facilitating the employment-seeking process. As stated by some responders, finding even a basic job can be difficult if you don't have the right professional connections. This

statement is from a Bangladeshi immigrant employee (respondent 9) who works at a kitchen assistant a restaurant in Kristiansand.

Consistent with the theme she added that physically I go through like 30 to 40 places a with my CV, resume and via online I apply more than 200 applications online or emails to the owners or the managers to search for a job. But I did not receive any response. The most important thing to find a job in Kristiansand is contacts. Contacts are more important as similar with language. Even to get a cleaning job there should be contacts. First, I was a cleaning lady, I got that job through one of my Bangladeshi friends(a female Bangladeshi immigrant).

It is widely acknowledged and discussed how important making social connections is for gaining access to the labour market. An Indian immigrant's claim (referred to as respondent 13) highlights how social capital can be used to take advantage of career chances. The respondent stated as follows:

One's network of contacts in the business world is quite important. I can recall a time when I worked at an Asian restaurant, where staff reductions were put in place and ultimately resulted in my untimely termination. I then found myself in a position where I needed help from the NAV (Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration). The NAV officer in charge of my case made a perceptive inquiry about the size of my professional network and stressed the importance of it in finding future employment prospects. The result of that conversation brought home the important point that having a strong social network is frequently necessary for having promising professional possibilities. It's important to note that my subsequent employment was made possible by the professional connections I had already made, highlighting the significance of networking in the modern labour market (a male Indian Immigrant).

Respondent 10 is a former student who completed a master's degree as part of a master's degree program that was financially sponsored by the Norwegian State Educational Loan Fund. He is 54 years old and was a student at the time. The availability of financial support for his academic endeavors and a desire to get away from the unstable political environment that prevailed in Pakistan at the time influenced his decision to travel overseas. He did not use his language skills to his advantage when looking for work, despite being required to study Norwegian for two years. In its place, he trusted information that friends who lived in Norway had passed along.

According to Respondent 10, he stated that he believed that the work prospects available to the average international student were primarily low-skilled, implying that Norwegian language fluency was not a must. He also added that he

didn't actively look for jobs that matched their educational background, prior work experience, or linguistic abilities as a result. Their main driving force was to take on any work that was open and would be able to pay some extra money while they were in school.

He initially found work thanks to the assistance of a fellow student. He later secured a summer job as a laboratory custodian at the same academic institution where he was enrolled after his contractual obligation expired. After this temporary job came to an end, he started looking for another low-skilled job.

The sources of information participants had access to regarding the labour market had an impact on their choices for job seeking. It may be assumed that Respondent 10's continued pursuit of a "normal menial job," without actively seeking positions that matched his qualifications, is a result of his immersion inside social networks, which are defined by a narrow scope of knowledge about the employment landscape in Kristiansand.

The above statements, emphasize the general pattern among immigrants, which is that they tend to gravitate toward simple employment mostly because of their reliance on social networks within their own ethnic communities. A careful assessment of these claims reveals that immigrants have found the traditional job application procedure to be less successful than other job seekers, which begins with the submission of CVs and job applications. As a result, their current social networks act as their primary means of finding out about available jobs on the market and getting in touch with possible employers. The fact that most of these immigrant interactions are concentrated in the lower levels of the labour market is notable, nevertheless. Because of this, immigrants often find employment in the same sector of the labour market as those with whom they have relationships. On the other hand, these remarks suggest the value of establishing connections with native Norwegians, who are more prominently involved in the top echelons of the labour market.

5.3.6 Social and Situational Identities

Diverse intersecting dimensions, such as race, class, and gender, are included in composite identities. According to Werbner and Modood (1997), people use these crossing positions to negotiate their complex responsibilities. In the workplace, immigrants who achieve high status have favorable conditions. These statuses and the roles that go along with them help immigrants shape their self-images and achieve social recognition in the job. Their socioeconomic position also has a role in their ability to gain attention outside of their own professional network.

Due to its impact on a person's societal standing and day-to-day roles, an individual's occupation has a substantial impact on several aspects of their identity (Valenta, 2008). An immigrant's position in the occupational hierarchy of Norwegian society affects not just their situational identity but also places them in a larger and longer-lasting social context than any one scenario. In essence, an immigrant's occupational status can also have an impact on their social identity. The possibility of successfully negotiating one's identity in contacts with native residents increases with the prestige attached to the status symbols an immigrant holds. This was certified by Pakistani informant who pointed out the following:

Conversing with Norwegians became noticeably easier as I attained specific positions, which is consistent with the main theme. As a result, my conversations have become more confident and self-assured because I notice a change in how others view me: they now seem to be more interested in me and approachable. Evidently, my professional position has played a huge role in boosting my comfort level when speaking with Norwegians. In the past, people would mention my place of employment while making introductions, and questions would frequently focus on my hometown and line of work. The practice of clearly stating one's professional occupation acts as a technique of eliminating such biases in situations where one feels condescending based on their ethnic heritage(a female Pakistani immigrant).

A prominent aspect of an immigrant's social identity, notably their ethnic identification, can be contrasted and compared with their occupational standing. One could use their vocational identification more pro-actively, as suggested by the mentioned immigrant, to prevent a possibly stigmatized response to their ethnic identity (Valenta, 2008). Immigrants are always negotiating their identities due to the complexity of identity and how it is divided among many facets of social life.

5.3.7 Ethnic Hierarchies and Categorical Inequality

Ethnicity has come to be seen as a criterion for job fitness and, in some situations, as a quality that applicants are expected to express to potential employers throughout the competitive recruiting process. The companies under investigation in the framework of this study have determined that large percentages of the workforce in a variety of industries are made up of people with native Norwegian, Swedish, and Eastern European ancestry. Nonetheless, there is a sizable and diverse community of immigrants in the labour market, particularly in fields like hospitality, food, and beverage services.

Employers and managers appeared to view South-Asian immigrants less favorably, with opinions fluctuating depending on the nature of the employment, in contrast to the largely positive comments they made about Swedish and Eastern European immigrants. The South Asian immigrant community included some demographic groupings that employers even had negative opinions of.

Respondent 15 described his experiences working as a restaurant waiter in this study, illuminating the clear division of the job hierarchy and putting a special emphasis on individuals at the bottom of the employment hierarchy:

He expressed a degree of doubt in articulating his manager's views, stating that their firm has shown hesitation in considering South-Asian immigrants due to worries about their fundamental skill levels. It was intimated that these abilities were viewed as being insufficient and that it would be difficult to integrate those with low language skills into the organization. Additionally, some Asian people were perceived as being less hardworking and frequently possessing the same desire or work ethic as their European counterparts. Employees from Europe were praised for their diligence and politeness, and the business had a successful working relationship with them in the past. It should be highlighted that the different origins of these personnel were cited as the cause of these behavioral and work ethic disparities.

The term "immigrant" refers to a heterogeneous group that includes a variety of groups, each of which is distinguished by immigrant histories as well as distinctive cultural and social characteristics. The numerous responsibilities that various immigrant groups play within different corporate entities also demonstrate this diversity.

5.3.8 Employer Preferences and the Hierarchy of Suitability

The physical demands of the job of cleaning have a significant impact on how companies evaluate qualified applicants and how cleaning is categorized as a primarily male occupation. One of the interviewees (designated respondent 1) was asked to elaborate on the claim that cleaning is distinguished by its physical intensity during a private sector interview. She gave the following response:

Have you ever performed this kind of manual labour? For a total of seven hours, you are continuously engaged in tasks like walking, standing up, scrubbing floors, emptying garbage cans, and other such activities. As a result of the required physical stamina, these activities are sometimes thought to be better suited for people of the male gender. Physical exertion is an essential component of many

occupations. However, regardless of gender, it might be more acceptable if one worked in an office setting where they performed simpler chores. On the other hand, jobs in the cleaning industry are physically demanding and demanding by nature. These professions usually have a high incidence (a female Bangladeshi immigrant).

In similar vein, a male participant who works in the public sector and was one of the responses expressed the opinion that cleaning is not a job for guys. He argued that, in his view:

cleaning is a more suitable profession for women because, in his perspective, women thrive in this activity because of their meticulousness. He stressed further that women typically maintain a better standard of cleanliness, particularly in communal places like break rooms. He gave an example to show this, saying that if a bottle was left on a table in the break room, women were more likely to see it and quickly take care of it, whereas males normally did not show the same amount of attention to such details. He essentially asserted that women are generally more vigilant and adept at keeping common places clean and orderly (a male Sri Lankan immigrant).

In this analysis, the argument swiftly evolves from characterizing cleaning as a physically demanding occupation to a subsequent assertion that it is consequently more apt for male individuals than their female counterparts. The gender assignment of aptitudes appears to exhibit variability across different organizational domains, notably distinguishing between private enterprises and public institutions. In private-sector establishments, employers overtly emphasized the superiority of men in cleaning roles compared to women, whereas public sector employers did not manifest analogous gender-biased perceptions of suitability.

5.3.9 Attachment with Norwegian

Making contacts with Norwegians is essential to entering the top strata of the labour market because their presence there is noticeably more evident than that of immigrants. The development of relationships with native Norwegians is hampered by several obstacles, according to research. One Sri Lankan immigrant, identified as respondent 12, explained that the difficulty originates in the difficult process of developing these bonds because immigrants are seen as strangers in Norwegian society.

We face the difficulties of building substantial social networks as foreign residents, especially considering the difficulty in connecting with people from Norway. The development of such networks can be a very complex process. The notion of developing ties with Norwegian peers seems frightening to someone

who has not completed secondary education in Norway. However, establishing close links with Norwegians might greatly improve one's chances of finding job.

Consistent with this statement, one of Nepalese respondent, worked as a restaurant waiter mentioned about the importance of having contacts with Norwegians to approach the upper segment of the labor market. Employers in Norway generally tend to favor suggestions that come from people in their own network. For instance, adding references from Norway to one's curriculum vitae greatly improves job seekers' chances. But those who are new to the Norwegian professional scene could run into difficulties at first, mainly because they lack established local relationships. He shared his experience :

My early experiences in Norway, where my main social group was made up of other immigrants, are reflected in my own personal anecdotes. As a result, with the help of another immigrant, I was able to find employment at a restaurant. It is crucial to stress, however, that building a larger and more powerful professional network is frequently necessary to secure more esteemed positions.

According to the statement above, having social capital gives one a unique advantage while trying to get into better jobs. However, it doesn't appear that immigrants have the same access to this benefit. As a result, the limited social capital that immigrants have access to could be another factor that explains why they tend to work in lower-skilled jobs.

5.3.10 Feelings of Hopelessness and Disillusionment

When individuals have low proficiency in the Norwegian language, applying to on average 30 to 50 workplaces often leads to a disheartening outcome - no calls for interviews. Everything else seems to align perfectly, but the language barrier becomes an insurmountable hurdle for job seekers. Consequently, these applicants find themselves grappling with frustration and deep mental stress. In the Kristiansand job market, their initial impression is far from friendly, leaving them with a sinking feeling that Norway may not be the right place for their future. In a related way respondent 8 stated that:

when I came in Norway at first, I was shocked in Norway weather, foods pattern, language. I felt very loneliness without my family members. Especially in the month of January in dark period in outside it was so cold. I had just stood in my window and cried. These feelings of hopelessness and distress rise in my life when I have rejected my applications from different job places because of language proficiency. In the beginning, in a host country for a newcomer it is very tough to cope with the new surroundings.

For newcomers, there are an array of challenges to overcome - adapting to the weather, adjusting to new food and dress patterns, experiencing cultural shocks, and trying to connect with people from different backgrounds. Loneliness becomes a constant companion. However, amidst all these challenges, the language barrier remains one of the most burdensome. Some of the respondents even contemplate returning to their homeland when they are unable to secure employment. This is often because many immigrants arrive in Norway with loans from relatives, family members, and friends back in their home country, adding immense pressure to repay these debts. In summary, immigrants in Kristiansand find themselves trapped in a cycle of frustration, mental stress, and disappointment as they struggle to break through the language barrier and establish a stable life in a foreign land.

5.3.11 Experience of Gender and Ethnicity Discrimination

When immigrants move to a new nation, they face many welfare challenges, the most significant of which is being denied employment opportunities. Discrimination was another important subject that the research brought to light. The participants expressed a range of viewpoints about how their different ethnic backgrounds affect their status in the job market. There is a widespread belief that certain people are treated differently in the areas of employment acquisition, job transfers, and pay increases because of differences in race, ethnicity, gender, and color. The insights obtained from interviews with immigrants highlighted the continued existence of disparities in their employment and income, which were mainly ascribed to the discriminatory practices that recruiting firms continue to support. Due to their subtle and ingrained character, discriminatory practices are difficult to identify and acknowledge. On this note, participant 9 mentioned:

I face a gender issue like as a female, I feel that. But not all the positions match me to me like they say they require. They're expecting male candidates rather than female. And I also face some family issues like they are, they question about the children's that I have a child or not. I can work at that time or that time or not like that. I also face some physical appearance problems as well as wearing a hijab. Because I'm a Muslim lady, so I must maintain this. So, in several places I found that they don't accept wearing the hijab. Some places are, as I mentioned, for physical appearance. For example, required the height. So, I feel these things as a challenging or can influence my job search (a female Bangladeshi immigrant).

This study confirms that because of linguistic and cultural differences, immigrants frequently feel rejected from the labor market. Some respondents emphasized how, even with the necessary

credentials, their limited language skills combined with cultural norms that prohibited some behaviors resulted in their being shut out of competitive work prospects. Furthermore, a correlation between prejudice and gender was found in the research data.

5.3.12 Experience of Racism in Workplace

Ethnic prejudice, which is frequently referred to as "racism" by certain scholars, is a factor that is studied in the academic literature in relation to the concentration of immigrant workers in elementary jobs. In an interview, it was mentioned that Norwegians experience some form of discrimination on the job market. Finding career prospects is challenging for immigrants with distinctive names that sound foreign. Racist attitudes are thought to be responsible for this phenomenon. A female respondent with Pakistani participant described their viewpoint in the following way:

people don't like Pakistani immigrants as far as I've seen it. I even try to find an apartment and people would reject me for being an immigrant. So, I think there are a lot of challenges and it's very hard to get a job. Especially for migrants in Kristiansand.

5.3.13 Challenges in Recognizing Immigrant Education Qualifications

Due to a variety of issues, including linguistic differences, complex administrative processes, and documentation complexities, accrediting the educational credentials of immigrants in Norway is a complex problem. Immigrant workers face obstacles when attempting to get their local educational credentials recognized because of these complications. During conversations with several immigrant respondents, this problem surfaced as a recurrent theme. For instance, Respondent 12, a waiter working in Kristiansand who is originally from Sri Lanka, offered his perspective on these difficulties.

I have a master's degree in sociology, and I've heard from a variety of people about the potential difficulties in getting an education recognized in Norway. It has been stated that for me to achieve such distinction, I might need to devote more time to further academic endeavors. I regret that I am unable to devote myself to further studies currently due to limitations on my time and resources. As a result, to find employment soon, I must look for work in my subject of study (a male Sri Lankan immigrant).

In a similar vein, respondent 7 from Pakistan shared her husband's experience about getting the accreditation for his zoology degree obtained from Pakistan:

Norway's academic institutions have set strict standards for evaluating academic credentials. My husband is an accomplished zoologist with an impressive five years of industry expertise. His trip has unfortunately been difficult, which has compelled him to look for new sources of income. Opportunities to demonstrate his skill and knowledge were notably hard to come by. It is difficult for people who acquired their education somewhere else to break into the Norwegian work market.

However, it indicates that immigrants are easily able to get employment in domains linked to this profession when considering their qualifications within the culinary business. Employers readily accept the credentials these immigrants have gained in their home countries, and formal certification is typically not required for such employment. For instance, some immigrants who work in kitchens as cooks have successfully finished their commercial cooking education in their home nations, enabling them to enter the employment market without having to go through the arduous process of gaining certification.

5.3.14 Social Cultural Differences and Mindset

Faris (2016) clarifies the challenges experienced by foreigners trying to integrate into the Swedish labor market, highlighting the fact that having a degree may not be enough on its own without a comprehensive grasp of the country's social and cultural landscape. The study emphasizes the difficulties faced by participants who admitted that their lack of awareness of Norwegian cultural norms, societal nuances, and operational procedures made it difficult for them to land jobs that matched their academic backgrounds. The participants brought attention to cultural differences; two of them especially mentioned how the expectations of recruitment firms during interviews had a big impact on their chances of finding work. Sometimes it's difficult for people to understand the exact standards that an interview panel has set. An Indian participant brought up a point regarding this, emphasizing the generality or uncertainty of the expectations or criteria in these kinds of interviews. She stated that:

A variety of elements, including cultural norms, social conduct, and expected behavioral goals, greatly influence the results of job interviews. Important factors affecting how one is perceived during an interview include posture, communication style, and responsiveness. In addition to language hurdles, ignorance of organizational nuances can have unanticipated repercussions. For example, landing a job could be followed by getting fired for breaking workplace policies. Characteristics that run counter to workplace norms, including excessive

shyness or an improper tone of voice, highlight the complex impact of cultural conformity on career success. (a female Indian immigrant).

Immigrants who identify as Muslim have described feeling left out of work chances because they cover their heads when interviewing for jobs. They think that their dress preferences have played a decisive role in keeping them out of certain job opportunities. In agreement with this current study, a Bangladeshi female participant stated.

To successfully integrate, one must adjust to the expectations and conventions of a new social setting. Being a person who is of Muslim descent, I value my clothes as a representation of my religion. All the same, I admit that my religious choices in clothing may have unintentionally hurt my chances during a job interview. It is easy to feel at ease and transparent in Norway, a nation with unique cultural standards, particularly when interacting with people of the other gender in work-related contexts. Should I be unable to reconcile my religious beliefs with the expectations of society, it may hinder my chances of being hired by any company that operates in this environment (a female Bangladeshi immigrant).

Immigrants who participated emphasized that newcomers frequently do not have the 'social intelligence' needed to integrate into Norwegian society. Respecting local customs and values is crucial because it helps people build up their human capital when they move to a new nation. Within the framework of social intelligence, a few participants highlighted that immigrants' incapacity to adjust, adjust, and recognize cultural norms is a major factor hindering their potential to become productive members of the workforce.

5.4 Analysis and Discussion of Findings

The main goal of this study is to determine how the Norwegian language affects South Asian immigrants' chances of finding work. To ensure its relevance in the modern era of diversity and inclusivity, this inquiry lays particular emphasis on the opinions and subjective experiences of the immigrants. This chapter therefore confronts my empirical results with my theories to shed light on my research questions. Moreover, this study contributes significantly to the growing body of literature that recognizes the distinctive experiences of immigrants and the challenges they face in their search for gainful employment.

5.5 Immigrants Perception about Language Proficiency in Job Market

As can be shown, all the participants in my research agreed that language competency was a critical component that was essential to successful labor assimilation. At the same time, academic research emphasizes how important it is to become fluent in the language of the host nation to integrate into the workforce successfully (Joyce, 2019). There are differences in perceptions, even though my results support previous research in recognizing the beneficial impact of language proficiency while impeding career opportunities for immigrants who lack it. Interestingly, Zwysen (2019) claims that while increased language competency among immigrants may increase their engagement in the labor market and help them land a job, it might not increase their pay in proportion, meaning that they end up underpaid despite their fluency in the language. But my research suggests that language ability seems to be a subjective measure, which is partially consistent with Zwysen's argument, since this criterion seems to change based on the employer in different professions. This suggests that whereas many vocations, like those in the cleaning industry, require only basic Norwegian communication skills, other professional contexts require a more advanced grasp of the language. Language competency among immigrants has a dual role in terms of job chances, according to Hayfron (2001). Language proficiency, first and foremost, makes it easier for them to interact with possible employers and increases their access to employment prospects. Even so, immigrants are still unable to fully exploit their strengths since, even with their mastery of the language, their ability to acquire positions that correspond with their skills is limited. The importance of language in the process of assimilation is emphasized by Hayfron (2001), although it is also noted that language proficiency is not always a determining factor in salaries in the job market. Furthermore, the popularity of regional accents in the workplace is a neglected barrier that has a big impact on immigrant assimilation. These accents,

which differ significantly from normal Norwegian writing, are most common in workplace settings in the area. This suggests that the use of regional accents in conjunction with insufficient possibilities for learning advanced languages seems to worsen the disadvantage in human capital that immigrants face in my field of study.

5.6 Challenges in Accessing the Labour Market

After reading through existing research and publications, one finds that there are many difficulties and barriers that immigrants face in the workforce. These cover a wide range of problems, including unemployment, poor language skills in the new country, a lack of established social and professional networks, low value placed on degrees earned abroad, qualification discrepancies, discrimination, limited access to job-related data, and a limited comprehension of the workings of the labor market. In addition, barriers associated with residency permit laws and the rejection of foreign work experience are among the primary deterrents that substantially hinder immigrants' ability to actively engage in professional labor markets.

5.6.1 Language Barrier

According to Selmer (2006), language is essential in assisting expats in assimilating into a new culture. Extensive research continually supports the value of host country nationals (HCNs) as crucial information sources that might aid expatriates' transition within the host country, both in professional and personal realms . According to Statistics Norway (2022d), most immigrants who come to Norway are from continents such as Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Oceania. As a result, these people are under a greater need to work harder to become proficient in the Norwegian language. The results of the empirical investigation showed that a significant percentage of immigrant workers employed in low-skilled jobs only have a basic command of the Norwegian language, which is insufficient for opportunities to work in higher-level positions. As a result, the study's results highlight the apparent relationship between Norwegian proficiency levels and the labour market strata that immigrants are more likely to belong to.

According to the research that is currently available, language fluency is a crucial skill that immigrants need to develop to enter the higher echelons of the labour market and overcome the limitations of the lower tiers. But Botoon (2020)'s study has investigated this issue. He correctly points out that a basic command of the Norwegian language is sufficient for entry-level jobs, such as those in cleaning and custodial labour. A comparable level of verbal fluency is necessary to

pursue higher-level work prospects, though. This observation is consistent with those made in Zwysen's (2019) analysis, which investigated the possibility of enhancing immigrant employment prospects through higher investments in human capital.

The viewpoints of fifteen respondents highlight the significance of the language barrier as a key factor in the concentration of immigrants in lower-skilled occupations within the Kristiansand labour market. According to a careful analysis of the respondents' comments, language proficiency has a big impact on job advancement. In this study, in all, 15 out of the 15 respondents answered questions about language barrier when they were looking for jobs in Kristiansand. They applied to more than 20 or 30 places, but many workplaces rejected them due to their limited language skills. Moreover, from the interviews, it emerged that host language skills remain a marked weakness for most of the respondents. A third of the respondents stated that they were unsuccessful on the labor market due in part to adequate competence in the host language. Particularly, female respondents applying for service positions in restaurants, hotel receptionists, and other front desk jobs faced challenges. In addition, Respondents in my sample come from South-Asian countries, and international students have limited opportunities to learn Norwegian due to the cost. The University offers basic Norwegian courses (Part 1 and 2), and organizations like KIA provide free language classes twice a week, which are insufficient for proper language proficiency. Moreover, Immigrants need time to complete these courses and achieve fluency, but they require immediate employment to cover their living expenses in an already expensive environment.

5.6.2 High Self-efficacy Beliefs

The results of this study provide light on a specific cohort of immigrants' long and difficult journey to employment, despite their proactive job-seeking actions and their initial possession of strong self-efficacy beliefs in this domain, as proposed by Bandura (1997). The respondents initially had a great deal of faith in finding work in Norway. Regardless of the reasons for their difficulties in finding employment in Norway, these experiences steadily reduced their sense of autonomy over their life. They received few or no responses to their job applications, which they saw as a diminution of their skills and credentials. This had an impact on their self-efficacy perceptions about the job search process. The findings show how this phenomenon may compromise the interviewees' capacity to function as active participants in their own lives, ultimately leading to the creation of an impression of personal helplessness brought on by poor coping strategies.

Findings from the research have revealed how these processes have a substantial impact on immigrants' perceived self-efficacy, which is a crucial aspect of their identity and social positioning in the context of the Norwegian workforce. The immigrants who took part in the interviews have shown that self-efficacy perceptions are flexible and change because of interactions. Despite their aggressive job-seeking actions, they eventually discover that they are under external control, particularly from potential employers who operate as representatives of the predominately Norwegian populace. The prospect that interviewees may be subjected to both conscious and unconscious racial discrimination by these companies must be considered, as stressed by Midtbøen (2015), a topic that has already been addressed in the literature.

5.6.3 Devaluation of Over Qualifications and Work Experience

According to Larsen et al., (2018), the term "overqualification" refers to the discrepancy between the educational degrees of potential job candidates and the work criteria. "Overeducation" in this sense refers to the situation in which immigrants have higher or excessively advanced educational credentials. According to the research's findings, immigrants' entry to Norway's higher levels of the labour market is further hampered by the phenomena of overeducation due to certain labour laws and policies. It is essential to stress that the required educational requirements for applicants to high-level positions determine the wage structures. According to legislative requirements, if an employer wants to hire a person with a master's degree in a particular profession, they are required to pay that person more than a candidate with a bachelor's degree in that subject (UDI, 2022b). As a result, in the private sector, employers frequently choose applicants who have less formal education but who are competent in meeting the job criteria. As a result, job searchers with advanced school backgrounds may occasionally end up in positions for which they are overqualified, all the way down to elementary ones.

Academic studies have delved into the plight of overeducated immigrants in Norway, notably studying their employment in occupations below their educational credentials, as demonstrated by the works of Larsen et al. (2018) and Hardoy and Schøne (2014). However, little effort has been made to clarify how wage and labour laws contribute to these results. One may argue that the phenomena of job seekers having excessive educational credentials, a type of overeducation, is a widespread problem within labour markets and is not just a problem for immigrants. However, as shown by the study, immigrants with excessive levels of education have a far higher risk than

natives of working in low-skilled jobs. Brekke and Mastekaasa (2008) also point out the important fact that, sometimes, despite immigrants' significant investments in obtaining advanced educational credentials, such as postgraduate degrees and diplomas, these endeavors may not yield the anticipated returns, particularly if the chosen fields of study are less in demand within the host country's labour market.

The results derived from this analysis corroborate the notion that individuals who have undergone migration to Norway, when faced with challenges hindering the effective utilization of their pre-existing resources, such as their social networks and educational qualifications from their home country, experience a limitation in their ability to harness their competencies and assets to attain upward mobility within the Norwegian societal context. Notably, the transformation in their status and identity pertaining to gainful employment is pronounced in cases where the expected career positions and opportunities in Norway do not align with their initial expectations. Consequently, it can be posited that they traverse a descending trajectory within the social hierarchy, in accordance with Bourdieu's social class theory (1986). This observation aligns with existing research that underscores the phenomenon wherein highly skilled migrants in Europe encounter a reduction in their socio-economic status post-migration, often resulting in an underutilization of their talents, leading to a phenomenon of career downgrading, as demonstrated in the work of Ramboarison-Lalao et al., (2012). The regression in social class and the underutilization of their talents can be attributed to the stark contrast between the expected positions they envisioned in their country of origin and the positions they eventually occupy within the Norwegian labor market.

5.6.4 The Experiences of Powerlessness and Marginalization

This finding supports Røysum (2020) claim that the lack of meaningful employment among respondents strongly leads to emotions of marginalization and helplessness. The labour market's position as a significant social arena in Norwegian society worsens these feelings. A sense of loss of control over their own lives appears to be a result of the respondents' experiences with skill erosion. As a result, students are forced to reassess their knowledge of career options in Norway while also evaluating their skills and work restrictions, including the different roadblocks and dead ends they meet. Surprisingly, despite the lack of verbal expression of discrimination, the interviewees clearly identify themselves as being influenced by outside forces. They stand out for

having a strong individualistic perspective on their situation, which is followed with a discernible loss of confidence throughout the job search process.

5.6.5 Social Networks and Relationships

The job-seeking process has been made significantly easier by social networks, which include friends, coworkers, family, former bosses, and religious groups (Badwi et al., 2018). This study demonstrates how such social connections affected participants' productivity as well as how employers made critical recruiting decisions. For the most part, participants used people from their own ethnic origins, close relatives, coworkers, churchgoers, and other contacts to get around language problems and counteract any potential skepticism about the qualifications of immigrant job applicants. Furthermore, the results showed that respondents' social connections improved their professional prospects. Without a doubt, informal relationships play a crucial part in how jobs are distributed on the labour market. People are deeply intertwined in a complex web of interpersonal relationships that greatly affects their ability to access a wide range of socioeconomic resources. As a result, recommendations and endorsements spread through these social networks are what cause employment chances to spread. Additionally, as a large percentage of survey respondents confirmed its supportive role, our study's findings highlight the ongoing significance of relational resources in aiding work achievement. Notably, a sizeable number of respondents stated that comments or recommendations have contributed to their professional success. Across respondents with various educational backgrounds, this propensity to rely on familial and peer networks for career advancement was seen.

For the participants, social contacts were crucial in gathering knowledge to land particular work chances. However, distinctions become apparent when comparing the nature of these interpersonal interactions with employment outcomes. Comparatively to their counterparts with doctorate degrees, those with lower skill levels faced dwindling employment opportunities. This situation has ramifications for the limited innovation potential dependent on the academic abilities of the participants. Many participants, especially those working in low-skilled jobs, had found their current jobs through the development of social networks within their local communities. It became clear from participant observations and interviews that these religious communities provided important social platforms for the communication of information about resources, employment prospects, and relationships within the labour market. As a result, in addition to being places of

worship, the church and mosque also served as gathering places where people could spend a lot of time getting to know one another and cultivating connections that facilitated the sharing of important information. While religious community networks were crucial for the participants' job acquisition, our research showed that these networks' nature also placed restrictions on their ability to connect with a wider range of social contacts outside the South Asian community, limiting their access to a larger source of employment-related data.

Similar points have been made by several other studies about the importance of social capital for immigrants and how it affects their ability to integrate into society and the labour market. For instance, Strömgre et al., (2014) have shown how networks within Norwegian immigrant groups can guide immigrants towards career possibilities that are primarily filled by people with comparable backgrounds. Like this discovery, Kracke and Klug (2021) have investigated how immigrant relationships with co-ethnic groups can restrict their access to knowledge about the hiring and application processes unique to the host country. Notably, the application procedure for jobs in the highest echelons of the labour market requires a comprehensive awareness of the application process due to Norway's high level of digitization. Therefore, only identifying with co-ethnic groups may not be beneficial in learning such knowledge, possibly preventing access to chances in the highest echelons of the labour market and pushing people towards the lower ones.

5.6.6 Social and Situational Identities

This finding supports the theory advanced by Brewer and Yuki in (2007), according to which interviewees also elaborate on how the situation affects their social and situational identities regarding employment and how their withdrawal and sense of alienation from Norwegian society are rising. We carefully consider how the interviewees' social and situational identities are impacted by their lack of labour market engagement. One way to describe the workplace is as a community divided into categories. Within individualistic Western societies, the development of social identities based on categories is of paramount importance. As a result, obtaining employment or developing a social identity associated with a professional community may be seen as extremely difficult tasks. People's perceptions of how they compare to others in an in-group, such as the Norwegian labour market, are consistent with Tajfel's (1981) theory that the labour market functions as a platform for social integration and aids in the growth of an individual's self-perception. The relationship between social identity and self-esteem explains why interviewees'

self-perceptions changed as the number of job applications rejected rose. These people emphasize how important it is to participate in the labour market and how much they identify with such category-based communities.

It is likely to propose that people might look for a way into the workforce to gain acceptance and approval from the dominant societal majority. However, experiencing exclusion from this social group can negatively affect a person's self-confidence, which can then affect their ability to find employment, their sense of self-efficacy in this area, and perhaps even other areas of their lives. Passivity and outside control are in sharp contrast to the idea of agency as it is presented by Bandura (1997). It indicates people's ability to decide what matters in their life and to conduct purposeful actions targeted at achieving their goals. Gainful employment is of utmost importance to the individuals who were questioned, but a recurring element in their narratives relates to the perception of a lack of agency in the context of their labour market engagement because of their experiences of exclusion from the Norwegian economy. Despite their strenuous efforts, they have not been able to significantly change their work status throughout their difficult voyage to Norway in search of employment prospects. These interviewees had a strong desire to take charge of their own lives by actively seeking out and getting jobs inside the Norwegian labour market. Well-defined goals and a strong sense of self-efficacy about their abilities to find meaningful employment in this environment serve as the foundation for their aspirations.

5.6.7 Ethnic Hierarchies and Categorical Inequality

The study found that immigrants tend to enter the lowest echelons of the labour market since they have little opportunities to do so in the upper tier. The study's results also suggest that the use of names from immigrants, which can serve as indicators of their ethnicity, frequently acts as a deterrent, preventing potential employers in the upper strata of the labour market from inviting applicants for job interviews. These empirical findings confirm that racial discrimination exists in the Norwegian labour market. According to Bursell (2007), the differences in the labour markets experienced by native-born and immigrant populations are typically explained by factors relevant to productivity, such as language proficiency or other abilities.

The degree of cultural affinities between immigrant groups and native Norwegians varies. For instance, South Asian immigrants may experience difficulties with their language ability, but they still share a lot of shared social, cultural, and religious elements. On the other hand, immigrants

from less developed nations with distinctly different theological and cultural roots may face greater challenges when attempting to build relationships with Norwegian employers, colleagues, and clients.

These conclusions are in line with the study of Friberg and Midtbøen (2018), focused on the Norwegian hotel and fish processing industries. They discussed the ways in which employers view ethnicity as a valuable quality in their investigation. Their study sheds light on how many different employee characteristics, such as physical prowess, looks, demeanor, and accents, have an impact on recruiting decisions. Furthermore, employers frequently use categorical traits like colour, ethnicity, and country as substitute indications when there is a lack of valuable information regarding the credentials and references of job applicants (ibid). As a result, it is interesting to note from their empirical findings that in the hospitality sector, people from European backgrounds, particularly those from Central and Eastern Europe, are primarily employed in kitchen or housekeeping roles, as opposed to Scandinavians, Western Europeans, and natives, who are more often appointed to front-stage positions.

5.6.8 Employer Preferences and the Hierarchy of Suitability

This study has shown that employer preferences and the need for soft skills go beyond simple racial or ethnic affiliations. They are also related to prejudices about immigrants' status and the special conditions of recent immigrants in the workforce. Employers usually describe immigrants as adaptive, diligent, and obedient, even though they are frequently seen as being less assertive than local workers (Friberg & Midtbøen, 2018b). As opposed to being a sign of their vulnerable situation in the labour market, immigrants' willingness to accept lower-status jobs is frequently seen as a sign of their competence or work ethic (Wills et al., 2009). As a result, although immigrant workers may encounter prejudice and unfavorable preconceptions in high-skilled positions (Midtbøen, 2016), employers tend to favour them in lower levels of the labour market.

Cleaning has always been seen as a chore mostly performed by women because it has historically been a profession dominated by women. Like other types of care work, cleaning includes duties that are frequently carried out by women and fall under the category of low-wage or unpaid employment (Hagemann & Roll-Hansen, 2005). Cleaning also includes tasks that are typically done by family members. We concentrate on the cleaning sector in our study because it has historically had a sizable female workforce, making it one of the most female-dominated

professions on the Norwegian labour market. Orupabo & Nadim(2020) note that it has developed into one of the largest employers of immigrants. In contrast to the rise in immigrant employees, both male and female, the proportion of native-born women in this field has dropped over the previous two decades (ibid). The capital city of Oslo, where the cleaning sector has reached gender parity with women making up 54% of the workforce in 2014, is where this desegregation trend is most obvious. Additionally, the cleaning industry in Oslo has undergone a shift, with over 40% of workers now being male immigrants. As a result, our study, which is based in Oslo, reveals a substantial shift in the gender dynamics of the cleaning industry, with immigrant men taking on a key role in a field that has historically been dominated by women (Orupabo & Nadim, 2020).

5.6.9 Attachment with Norwegian

Because different immigrant groups arrived at various times, immigrants have varying levels of commitment to Norway. Their average duration of stay in the nation reflects these temporal disparities, which has an impact on how well-versed they are in the language and how to interact with the local culture. It is noteworthy that a lack of integration can, in some circumstances, give a definite advantage, as shown by our earlier studies. A "dual frame of reference," as described by Gelatt (2013), frequently rules for recently arrived immigrants who have strong transnational links or see their time in Norway as transient with plans to return to their home country. This dual viewpoint may boost their readiness to tolerate working circumstances that native workers would reject, making them more appealing to employers who are hesitant to raise wages or improve working conditions for less desired occupations.

The study's participants observed that native people had a significant impact on the higher levels of the Norwegian labour market. An examination of labour market participation data for native and immigrant groups provides more support for this phenomenon. As a result, relationships with native Norwegians are crucial to helping newcomers gain better jobs in the upper echelon of the labour market. For instance, providing references and recommendations from natives can improve immigrants' career prospects. Additionally, the indigenous community in the upper labour market category is the main source of information about employment opportunities. Because of this, immigrants may find it difficult to attain the higher levels of the labour market due to their limited engagement with natives. This finding is consistent with the study of Badwi et al. (2018), which highlights the difficulties experienced by some ethnic groups, such as Asians, who frequently find

themselves working in positions for which they are overqualified because they lack native contacts. Additionally, Botoon (2020) argues that when immigrants build ties with native businesses, it lessens some unfavorable attitudes of immigrant job seekers, particularly refugees, and facilitates their entry into roles that highlight their competencies and talents.

5.6.10 Feelings of Hopelessness and Disillusionment

The present research explores the harmful effects of negative job search experiences on people, illuminating the formation of depressive symptoms and effects on coping mechanisms. It also explores the complex relationship between job choices and personal choices, emphasizing how unfavorable career experiences can negatively affect general life satisfaction and family conditions. The concept of self-efficacy as advanced by Bandura (1997) is used to analyze this occurrence. This study support Chen's (2008) findings that, in immigrant populations in particular, unemployment and underemployment can lead to a decline in overall well-being by inducing feelings of hopelessness, disillusionment, and a decline in self-concept and coping skills. The interviews demonstrate the pervasive uncertainty that these people feel about their chances of entering the Norwegian labour market as well as the extent to which their education and skills can be converted into a capital of qualifications, in line with Bourdieu's conceptual framework (1986). This uncertainty is a result of the collision of individual goals, aspirations, and career expectations, as well as the crucial question of whether individuals will have the chance to use their skill set in the profession.

5.6.11 Experience of Gender and Ethnicity Discrimination

Despite having a strong feeling of self-efficacy and confidence in their capacity to find work when they arrive in Norway, female immigrants nonetheless confront difficulties when trying to access the Norwegian labour market (Røysum, 2020). This is a fascinating finding from this research. The fact that these ladies were chosen for recruitment from a women's centre is noteworthy because there, people frequently struggle to find work.

The results highlight the complex power relationships between majority and minority populations regarding the acceptance of 'Norwegian' knowledge and workers, which is by no means uniform. As a result of this complex dynamic, immigrants' ability to act independently is limited by existing social norms and legal restrictions rather than being purely determined by their inborn traits or aptitudes. As a result, immigrants find themselves assimilated into a system that is nonetheless

foreign to them and different from their own, one that seems to both exclude and undervalue their store of knowledge and resources. This paradox is made worse by the prevalent focus on workfare in modern-day Norway, which aggressively pushes immigrants to work.

5.6.12 Experience of Racism in Workplace

The findings of this inquiry are consistent with earlier work by Larsen and Stasio (2019), which examined racial differences in the Norwegian labour market with a focus on Pakistani immigrants. It is interesting that the research by Larsen and Stasio (2019) shows that immigrants from Pakistan have experienced more severe discrimination in the Norwegian labour market than immigrants with comparable qualifications from Sweden, Poland, and Lithuania. The study also emphasizes the significant role played by racial and religious factors, notably the influence of names, in fostering prejudice on the Norwegian labour market. Larsen and Stasio (2021) make it clear that people with Muslim names are noticeably more likely to face prejudice in the job market.

Participants in the study emphasized the pervasiveness of discrimination, particularly when it comes to accessing job possibilities. Their viewpoint emphasizes how discriminatory practices are often subtle and evasive, which makes them difficult to spot right away. This finding is consistent with earlier studies clarifying racial differences on the Norwegian labour market, such as Midtbøen (2014) study, which serves as an illustration. Notably, second-generation immigrants face more difficulties finding work than their native counterparts do even when they have respectable language skills and educational backgrounds. As a result, Midtbøen (2016) developed the concept of "ethnic penalties" to describe the persistent instances of racial discrimination faced by immigrants entering the labour markets of Europe, including Norway.

Immigrants from Asian regions also encounter racial discrimination on the job market, which is like the experiences of Muslims. Kunst and Phillibert (2018) claim that the discrimination experienced by Asian immigrants in Norway is related to their membership in a racial group. To be more specific, people of Asian and African heritage frequently face discrimination because of their darker skin tones, which place them in an ethnic group with poorer social standing than the majority population and their non-white position within the majority. Therefore, these beliefs about immigrants with darker skin tones may help explain why they tend to work in low-skilled jobs. Notably, immigrants from Africa and Asia frequently work in the hotel sector in lowly jobs like

dishwashing, kitchen aid, and cleaning. However, Norway does not, according to Kunst and Phillibert (2018), because it has never exercised colonial rule over any foreign country.

5.6.13 Challenges in Recognizing Immigrant Education Qualifications

Norway attracts immigrants for a variety of reasons, many of which have specific roots. These people often bring with them educational credentials they obtained in their countries of origin, regardless of the exact reasons for their migration. The average educational attainment and foundational schooling of immigrant cohorts clearly show considerable differences. These discrepancies are caused by variances in the standard and prevalence of educational systems among various countries of origin, as well as in the make-up of immigrants within migratory streams.

The findings of this inquiry show that the procedure of accrediting immigrants' local educational credentials in Norway is a significant barrier. Participants in the study emphasized that strict certification requirements set by the Norwegian educational authority hinder immigrants from seeking accreditation for their educational backgrounds. For instance, some immigrants are required to continue their study in Norway to receive accreditation, while others find themselves in the unfortunate situation of having their credentials judged to be below Norwegian standards, which prevents them from receiving accreditation. To survive economically, immigrants must find employment; as a result, they are driven to engage in simple jobs that do not require knowledge. These results are consistent with the research by Damelang et al., (2020), whose investigation focused on the acceptance of immigrants' credentials and the likelihood that they would be able to access skilled occupations in Germany.

Recent academic studies have emphasized the necessity of establishing a simplified accreditation procedure in the Norwegian setting. For instance, as Botoon (2020) noted, the accreditation process in Norway requires a greater submission of documentation, which frequently presents tremendous problems for many immigrants. Due to their limited alignment with the Norwegian framework, persons who came to Norway as refugees face these difficulties to a greater extent and may have difficulty becoming accredited for their chosen subjects of study. It follows from these empirical findings that immigrants' concentration in lower-skilled occupations within the Norwegian labour market is a result of the complexities and challenges associated with the certification of their credentials in Norway.

5.6.14 Social Cultural Differences and Mindset

It is abundantly evident from the research findings that cultural differences and mindsets have a major impact on limiting access to Norway's labor market. Those looking to enter this field of work may therefore need to think about adjusting to and integrating into the new social structure. Knowledge of the socio-cultural, political, and economic environment of a host nation improves opportunities for active participation in that society, according to the human capital theory. This is consistent with the EEPO's (2016) claim that ignorance of the social-cultural norms normal in the new setting frequently causes obstacles to labor market integration. Coming from different socio-cultural and religious backgrounds, immigrants often find it difficult to fit in with the customs of their new nation. Obstacles to recruitment may arise from their incapacity to successfully negotiate the job market. It may be more difficult for many immigrants to succeed and be accepted in the workforce because they are firmly rooted in the cultural standards of their new country.

5.7 Conclusions

By foregrounding the voices and lived experiences of these individuals, this study carries significant contemporary relevance, particularly in the context of promoting diversity and inclusiveness within Norwegian society. This study makes a substantial contribution to the growing body of literature that acknowledges the unique experiences of immigrants and the diverse challenges they encounter while navigating their path to gainful employment (Täubig, 2019). The exploration of the influence of language proficiency on self-efficacy among South Asian immigrants reveals a critical aspect of their job market experiences. Rooted in Bandura's self-efficacy theory, the findings in this thesis emphasize the pivotal role played by language proficiency in shaping individuals' beliefs in their own capacity to attain their employment goals. The narratives shared by the (respondents one and two) illustrate the formidable journey they undertake as they strive to realize their career aspirations. Initially, their self-efficacy beliefs serve as driving forces propelling them forward, but these convictions gradually undergo rigorous tests as they confront the stark realities of limited job opportunities. This highlights the profound impact of language proficiency not only on employability but also on individuals' self-esteem and overall outlook (Bandura, 1977).

The paradoxical experiences of being downgraded while simultaneously being overqualified emerge as a central theme within the narratives of South Asian immigrants seeking employment

in Norway. These individuals often hold qualifications and experiences acquired outside Norway, leading to the challenging task of reconciling their educational backgrounds with the stark realities of the Norwegian labor market. Anchored in the human capital theory, the analysis underscores how these immigrants' endeavor to leverage their qualifications as forms of human capital. However, our findings suggest that, in many instances, their efforts are met with the disheartening reality of positions being considered overqualified or, paradoxically, inaccessible due to the lack of Norwegian language proficiency. The emotional accounts of (respondent four and five) vividly illustrate this intricate relationship, underscoring the nuanced and often disheartening journey these individuals undertake in their pursuit of employment (Becker, 1964).

The narratives shared by South Asian immigrants also shed light on the disconcerting reality of powerlessness and marginalization that characterizes their job-seeking endeavors. The influence of social networks and social identity looms large, with connections frequently serving as gateways to employment opportunities. While reliance on social networks offers certain advantages, it simultaneously constrains individuals to specific job categories that may not align with their qualifications or aspirations. Furthermore, our study underscores the glaring disparities in employer preferences and the hierarchy of suitability. Cleaning jobs serve as a stark example, where the physical demands associated with the role are filtered through the lens of gender bias. The private sector frequently perceives cleaning as a physically demanding occupation better suited for men, while the public sector challenges these stereotypes .

Furthermore, the findings bring to the forefront the disheartening reality of ethnic hierarchies and inequality within the Norwegian labor market. Ethnicity becomes a determinative factor in job suitability, with South Asian immigrants frequently encountering skepticism and prejudice. Employers' perceptions of suitability are frequently tainted by stereotypes and biases, influencing the opportunities extended to these individuals. While certain employers' express reservations about the skills and work ethic of South Asian immigrants, others acknowledge the value they bring to the workforce. This underscores the intricate and multifaceted nature of ethnic hierarchies within different industries and firms.

5.8 Implications for Development Studies and Development Practitioners

The implications of our study extend beyond academic discourse to the field of development studies and the practices of development practitioners. Development studies are characterized by

a commitment to understanding and addressing disparities, and our findings underscore the critical role that language proficiency plays in determining access to employment opportunities. Development practitioners, by championing the cause of marginalized and vulnerable populations, possess a pivotal role in addressing the challenges encountered by South Asian immigrants in the Norwegian labor market. The findings highlight the necessity for culturally sensitive and inclusive practices that empower immigrants, particularly in their pursuit of language proficiency and job opportunities. Moreover, development practitioners can contribute significantly by advocating for fair and equitable employment opportunities, challenging stereotypes and biases, and fostering diversity and inclusiveness within the labor market. The study unveils the multifaceted nature of the challenges faced by South Asian immigrants within the Norwegian job market. Language proficiency, self-efficacy beliefs, the paradox of being downgraded but also overqualified, experiences of powerlessness and marginalization, and the prevalence of ethnic hierarchies all play integral roles in shaping their job market experiences. By acknowledging these challenges and their implications, we are better equipped to advocate for policies and practices that foster diversity, inclusiveness, and equitable opportunities within the Norwegian labor market.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Concluding Remarks

This chapter seeks to conclude and provide a summary of the research study conducted. In addition, the conclusions drawn from the study and recommendations, limitations, future research made are also highlighted in this chapter. Chapter one of this study begins by highlighting the background information and problem areas of the study. Then the purpose of study, research questions and relevancy of the study was presented. Consequently, a thorough literature review was presented in Chapter 2. Some pertinent key areas were examined in these chapters – such as a review of immigrant perception of language proficiency and the role of host language in labor market in Norway, different challenges faced by immigrants in finding a job in their profession in Kristiansand. Theoretical framework under chapter 3 is highlighted, whereby human capital theory, self-efficacy theory, and theory of social capital are discussed and believed to be suitable for analyzing this research. The methodology adopted for the research was detailed in Chapter 4. Consequently, the fifth chapter offered a detailed analysis of the findings considering pertinent literature. This chapter sums up the results of the research questions from chapter 1. The conclusions made in the study as well as related recommendations for immigrants' employment, policy, as well as further research are highlighted in this chapter.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of Norwegian language on job opportunities for immigrants from South Asia. The research was interested in finding answers to two main questions. Firstly, how do immigrants perceive their language proficiency in the job market? And, Secondly, what are the challenges faced by immigrants in the job market? Semi-structured interviews with fifteen respondents were conducted; the respondents were chosen using purposive and snowball selection methods. After that, the collected data was transcribed and subjected to thematic analysis. The results were methodically arranged into broad themes and specific sub-themes, allowing for a thorough examination of how well they aligned with previous research. The goal of this in-depth conversation was to clarify and assess how well the research findings align with earlier academic publications.

From the viewpoint of the immigrants themselves, this study has confirmed that the degree of desire for a Norwegian language competency affects the immigrants' participation in the labor market. One important factor that has been found to be crucial for successful professional integration is language competency. The results show that while language competency is important, its importance varies depending on the job. For example, in the Information Technology (IT) industry, language skills are less important than in the social work field, where they are highly valued. This disparity results from the fact that social workers interact directly with service users, or clients, whereas IT specialists mostly carry out their work via computer systems. The results of the study show that communication is greatly influenced by language proficiency. The study highlights the difficulty immigrants have accessing and understanding job-related information, especially for those who are just learning Norwegian. The study also emphasizes the challenges these people face while trying to take part in programs that are held in Norwegian, which makes it more difficult for them to enroll in additional courses at Norwegian universities. As such, they expect to wait a long time before they are actively seeking employment. The participants report difficulty communicating their concerns in Norwegian, especially in interviews, which prevents many businesses from considering them for jobs. The findings suggest that companies in Norway favor candidates who speak Norwegian fluently over those who speak other languages, like English. The significance of learning Norwegian is acknowledged by the respondents; on the other hand, many of the comments indicate that there are few networks with speakers of the language. Their inability to practice hinders their language development, as demonstrated by Awori's research (2019).

Respondents expressed in this study how they believe that being able to communicate in Norwegian is a good indicator of integration, particularly when it comes to evaluating cultural assimilation. Being able to communicate in Norwegian affects not only one's ability to find work but also how one interacts with people in Norway and abroad. People who did not speak Norwegian well said they felt less confident and hesitant to approach Norwegian people. Furthermore, poor language proficiency was out to be a major factor pushing immigrants into entry-level jobs. Inadequate Norwegian language skills together with cultural differences in socialization methods proved to be significant barriers for South Asian immigrants in Norway who wanted to make friends outside of their ethnic community. To sum up, proficiency in Norwegian

language is essential and crucial for gaining a foothold in Norwegian society, which directly affects the structural, cultural, and social integration of newcomers.

Study showed that in Norway, immigrants whether from EU or non-EU nations face considerable obstacles when trying to enter the labor market for their professions. According to Sobolewska et al., (2017), the investigation's findings and a review of recent literature provide the conclusion that immigrants face similar challenges in their early years regardless of their ethnic affiliation. According to the research findings, finding work that fits their professional background is more difficult for non-EU professional immigrants from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East than it is for their counterparts from other non-EU nations. These difficulties are mostly caused by social-cultural differences, inadequate Norwegian language skills, small social networks, low regard for credentials and work experience, strict national regulations, discriminatory actions, employer preferences, and hierarchical concerns, among other things (Awori, 2019). The personal accounts shared by the fifteen participants reinforce the idea that immigrants may face protracted challenges in establishing themselves in their careers in Norway if they lack skills particular to the country of destination. The experiences that migrants have at work are greatly influenced by institutional variables, such as national government regulations and other social traits. Immigrants are frequently prevented from actively participating in the professional labor market by the lack of these characteristics.

The results of this research emphasize the difficulties immigrants encounter in having their substantial overseas job experience acknowledged. Employers and the rules in place in the host country frequently disregard the credentials and abilities of immigrants. Because of this, immigrants believe they are working in a closed atmosphere where their foreign professional experience is not valued. Before joining the workforce, immigrants often go through a preparatory procedure known as "familiarization" and "institutionalization." This requires gaining a solid understanding of the educational requirements of the host nation, being fluent in Norwegian, gaining work experience through internships and job training, assimilating new cultural customs, and developing strong professional networks. The successful transfer of immigrants' professional talents, which opens possible job prospects in the Norwegian labor market, is determined to depend on several elements. Immigrants' unwillingness to utilize their prior qualifications obtained in their home countries is partly attributed to the related expenditures, which encompass both time and

financial investment. As such, immigrants frequently don't actively look for professional job openings (Lorentsson, 2015). The study's findings unambiguously show that immigrants might not meet certain qualifications, chief among them being fluency in Norwegian, which would condemn them to low-status employment instead of roles that correspond to their level of professional competence.

According to the research findings, immigrants face difficulties in the labor market because of the undervaluation of their work experience and qualifications, which are recognized as significant barriers. Individuals devote time to their education to secure a more promising future in the labor market, according to the human capital theory. The achievement of Norway's aspirations for highly skilled immigrants is hampered by the undervaluation of foreign training. Of note is the fact that a lot of immigrants believe their qualifications from their home country are inadequate. Furthermore, eligibility for professional positions in Norway is not guaranteed even if one has a significant amount of work experience from one's native country. The reason why many employers disregard their international experiences is that they were not obtained in the Norwegian setting, thus they are often written off.

One may claim that this element might significantly affect how well their chances go. However, a significant obstacle to successful professional integration is a lack of Norwegian language skills. According to the report, one major barrier is the strict national rules of Norway and the requirements that must be fulfilled for skill transfer to occur. The assessment processes that newcomers go through for their qualifications to be acknowledged and for work permits to be obtained are very time-consuming, especially for those who work in highly regulated fields. For a considerable amount of time, these people view these procedures as onerous administrative obligations that prevent them from finding suitable jobs for their qualifications. Therefore, it can be concluded from the research findings that having an education alone does not guarantee economic empowerment in the labor market. To overcome these obstacles, people must make even more investments in broadening their skill set domestically.

Furthermore, in terms of social networks or connections, the results highlight the fact that professionals' ability to successfully integrate into society depends on the caliber and quantity of their social ties. Consistent with earlier studies, this inquiry shows that limited social networks pose obstacles for professional immigrants seeking to make a name for themselves in the job

market. The discussion indicates that most of the participants' networks were primarily made up of people with similar racial origins, which hindered their ability to get work. Crucially, newcomers have few contacts with local Norwegians and no job-related networks. This restriction is a significant obstacle, especially in situations where people are unable to obtain recommendations or referrals to employment agencies.

When it comes to the topic of discrimination, the study's conclusions show that participants had trouble pinpointing specific instances of prejudice. The majority viewed it as a hidden practice where they just felt it existed but were not sure on how to justify the practice. People felt there was a general perception that people were treated unfairly in Norway's employment market due to differences in skin tone, names, gender, ethnicity, and physical appearance. According to the study, having a name that sounds Norwegian seems to improve one's chances of finding employment. Interviews for jobs were often skipped over by immigrants with names like that. Further evidence of the continued existence of discrimination in Norway's labor markets comes from employers' preferences for credentials and domestically earned work experience. Thus, many immigrants are forced to take jobs in low-skilled industries, frequently taking on roles for which they are overqualified (Lorentsson, 2015).

When the Norwegian labor market is examined nowadays, there is a significant difference between the percentage of native-born people and those who are immigrants. While immigrants tend to play supporting roles in the labor market, natives are more prevalent in formal or skilled industries. As such, immigrants have little opportunities to move up the social ladder, even though they were able to enter the lower ranks quite easily thanks to their networks. The findings of this study, which are consistent with the body of academic literature already in existence, show that immigrants have less access to information about career opportunities and the associated application processes in the upper segment when most career-related information is shared through personal contacts. Their reduced engagement with indigenous people is the reason for this. Furthermore, many immigrants do not have recommendations from their local colleagues, which is a critical component in advancing to the top levels of the Norwegian job market.

Overall, this study has made a substantial contribution to our understanding of the challenges immigrants in Norway encounter in finding qualified jobs. It also illuminates the impact that immigrants themselves have on language competency in the workplace. The results highlight how

important skills relevant to the host nation are in improving the employment prospects of immigrants. The study's findings suggest that participants' failure to exhibit all the characteristics linked to the capital of the host nation may account for their difficulties finding professional work in Norway. Thus, immigrants who wish to work in Norway as professionals need to have the necessary "human and social capital." It is reasonable to say that immigrants may have to temporarily accept lower-status career chances while they seek to improve their language skills, broaden their professional networks, enhance their qualifications, get work experience, and adjust to Norwegian cultural norms.

6.2 Limitations of the Study

The purpose of this research was to complete the prerequisites for a degree in Development Management and Planning as part of a Master's thesis. My lack of background in fieldwork and scientific research could have been a major limitation affecting the study's quality. Furthermore, although Kristiansand is home to a wide range of businesses, the data collection was limited to fifteen respondents, thus my thesis could not fully examine the employment market dynamics of these industries. The limited time frame and the need for convenience in finishing the investigation were cited as the causes of this constraint. For a more thorough examination, it is therefore recommended that future research on the same topic take a wider range of sectors into account.

The study was limited to fifteen interviews, during which participants provided insights on their current work situations in the Kristiansand, Norway, job markets. It is possible that this small sample size does not include a wide variety of data. The results obtained from immigrants of South Asian descent living in the Kristiansand commune may not fully represent the experiences of immigrants in various contexts throughout Norway. As a result, this study suggests that future researchers consider involving a bigger sample of participants from different communes and places outside of Kristiansand in order to perform a comparative qualitative analysis on the labor market circumstances of immigrants.

6.3 Suggestion for Future Research

The topic of immigrant employment is broad, and some of the study's limitations suggest that there may be further research opportunities in this area. These topics might need more investigation or analysis of aspects that weren't fully covered in the current study. Notably, research on employment of immigrants in Norway has advanced significantly in recent years. However, there is still a dearth

of study, namely concerning the examination of immigrants' Norwegian language skills and the obstacles they face, especially when trying to enter the job market. Although the municipality of Kristiansand is the case study for this study, it would be worthwhile to carry out a comparable inquiry in a particular rural municipality or a large Norwegian city.

This study used a qualitative approach to investigate people's real experiences and identify the aspects that affect issues that are relevant to people's lives. It is recommended that a mixed methods research design be used to evaluate how the employment sector of the immigrant population is affected by host language competency. It is recommended to include both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to increase the scope and profundity of the investigation, therefore providing a more comprehensive exploration of the factors impacting employment consequences.

Purposive and snowball sampling strategies were used in this study to choose participants. Given that participants in the study were frequently connected in the region where it was conducted, the use of these techniques raises questions about potential bias. Participants were not randomly selected; therefore, this study suggests future research consider change of methods that is the selection of participants can be purposive but based on random selection criteria. Furthermore, since this study focused solely on the experiences of immigrants in the labor market, more research is required to examine the difficulties employers and hiring organizations encounter while integrating foreign workers from non-EU locations.

6.4 Policy Recommendations

The Norwegian government has implemented programs aimed at improving the effectiveness of immigrants' integration into the job market and promoting a more welcoming society. However, ongoing labor market issues such as the disproportionate number of immigrants working in low-skilled occupations highlight the insufficiency or restricted efficacy of the policies in place to address the fundamental barriers to the labor market integration process. Although certain obstacles can be addressed by improving policies, the widespread of preconceptions that sustain differences in chances for immigrants in the highest echelons of the job market indicates that more extensive actions are necessary to change the way people think. As such, based on the knowledge gained from this research, the following suggestions can be made.

A) Enhance the effectiveness of language training

1. Provide better mechanisms for evaluating participants' Norwegian language proficiency, which will impact how much money municipalities receive, to incentivize municipalities to provide high-quality, outcome-oriented language training suited to the needs and capabilities of migrants (Liebig, 2009).
2. Motivate local governments to maximize the opportunity for quick routes for immigrants nearing the labor market, while also reducing the obstacles to early job participation for immigrants who have obtained the fundamental credentials necessary for a long-term adjustment into the workforce.
3. The municipality, through NAV, is responsible for helping immigrants find professional jobs when they have acquired Norwegian human capital. In addition, it is necessary for the municipality to actively pursue these leads and work with employers to make recruiting easier. This study highlights the fact that a sizable immigrant population faces challenges in finding work, regardless of how long they have been involved in these careers.
4. Building a strong social network is essential to immigrants' full integration not just into society at large but also and this is crucial into the job market. The municipality ought to come up with plans to encourage ethnic Norwegians to actively participate in volunteer work, which will pique newcomers' interests.
5. To bring local incentives into line with the main objective of facilitating a swift and long-lasting integration into the job market, a reconsideration of the current lump-sum funding plan for the introduction program is necessary. A recalibration of this kind ought to take into consideration the various integration requirements that migrants may have, depending on their level of expertise.
6. It is crucial to enhance the sharing of firsthand knowledge across municipalities. To do this, it is suggested that municipalities implement a benchmarking process that will allow for the methodical evaluation of how well immigrants are integrating newcomers in terms of both language skills and labor market integration.

B) Make better use of immigrants' skills

1. Include the official assessment and subsequent recognition of foreign qualifications, as well as pertinent bridging possibilities, as a mandatory part of the orientation program for recently arrived persons.
2. Extend the scope and depth of "bridging" programs created to help immigrants get credentials accepted by companies and improve the clarity of options accessible to immigrants.
3. Establish evaluation and acknowledgement procedures for people with foreign language training credentials, integrating them into an all-encompassing structure to promote the certification of previous education, with an emphasis on immigration and cooperation with community partners.
4. Provide explicit standards that institutions must follow to recognize academic professions and offer incentives to guarantee that these guidelines are followed to the letter.
5. Methodically document the foreign credentials of immigrants to have a thorough grasp of how immigrants' skills are employed in the labor market and then take the necessary action. Concurrently, carry out a pilot study to evaluate the effect of acknowledging foreign qualifications on the job market.

C) Improve the framework for anti-discrimination

1. Promote the anti-discrimination framework for immigrants and spread knowledge about their rights. This can be accomplished by adding a specific anti-discrimination section to beginning courses.
2. Conduct an empirical study to assess the frequency of discriminatory hiring practices.
3. Examine discriminating recruiting procedures in small and medium-sized businesses.
4. Examine why employers should maintain a close eye on anti-discrimination compliance.
5. Provide governmental assistance for consultant services to enable the implementation of anti-discrimination and diversity initiatives.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Consent form

Are you interested in taking part in the research project?

Impact of the Norwegian Language on Job Opportunities for Immigrants from South Asia in Kristiansand

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to understand how Norwegian Language proficiency impact on Job Opportunities for Immigrants from Southeast Asia in Kristiansand. In this letter, we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

The main purpose is to understand how Norwegian Language proficiency impact on job opportunities for Immigrants from Southeast Asia in Kristiansand.

Specifically, the project seeks to find answers to the following research questions:

1. How do immigrants perceive their language proficiency in the job market in Kristiansand?
2. What are the challenges faced by immigrants in the job market in Kristiansand?

Who is responsible for the research project?

University of Agder, Department of Global Development and Planning is the institution responsible for the project.

Why are you being asked to participate?

You are asked to participate because you are an immigrant who has recently come to Norway and are either searching for a job or has had a job recently. Immigrants who reside in Kristiansand will be questioned for the study's purposes. Both men and women will respond. To contextualize respondents' responses, a gender and continent balance was achieved.

What does participation involve for you?

If you choose to take part in the project, this will involve you that answer interview questions regarding your view on Norwegian language proficiency and finding a job in Kristiansand. You will also be asked about your job situation and your job search strategies. Only information provided in this interview will be used for analysis in the project.

Participation is voluntary.

Participation in the project is voluntary. If you chose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you chose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy - how we will store and use your personal data?

We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act). Only I, Lea Parvin, and my supervisor Vito Laterza will have access to the information you provide. The information will be used in an anonymized for the thesis report.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?

The project is scheduled to end in June 2023. In the end, the data will be anonymized and all identifying information removed.

Your rights

So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data be deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you be corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?

We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with the University of Agder, Sikt - the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?

If you have questions about the project or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- University of Agder via Lea Parvin, leap@uia.no or Vito Laterza, vito.laterza@uia.no
- Our Data Protection Officer: Trond Hauso, trond.hauso@uia.no
- NSD - The Norwegian Centre for Research Data AS, by email: personventjenester@nsd.no or by telephone: +47 55 58 21 17.

Yours sincerely,

Lea Parvin

Consent form

I have received and understood information about the project, “**Impact of the Norwegian Language on Job Opportunities for Immigrants from South Asia in Kristiansand**” and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

to participate in an interview

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. 30 June 2023

(Signed by participant, date)

Appendix 2: Interview guide

Impact of the Norwegian Language on Job Opportunities for Immigrants from South -Asia in Kristiansand

Semi-structured interview guide for immigrants

1. How long have you been living in Norway?

.....

2. How do you evaluate your Norwegian language level?

.....

3. Current occupation and previous occupation role in home country?

.....

4. How do you perceive the impact of Norwegian language proficiency in job market in Kristiansand?

.....

5. How old are you?

.....

6. Can you tell me a bit about your educational background?

.....

7. What do you think are the challenges to finding a job in Kristiansand?

.....

8. Do you think that you have adequate job opportunities in Norway that match your educational qualifications and experiences?

.....

9. What do you think can influence job search apart from Norwegian language proficiency?

.....

10. How long have you been searching to get your current job?

.....

11. To how many jobs did you apply for before starting your current job?

.....

12. How many job interviews where you called among them?

.....