



**Erasmus
Mundus**

**The Lived Experience of Ethiopian Immigrant Parents in Norway: Balance between
the past and present**

**Erasmus Mundus MFAMILY- European Master in Social Work with Families and
Children**

Master's Thesis submitted in fulfillment of

The requirements for the degree of

Social Work

By

Yosan Sahlu

Supervisor: Mikhail Gradovski

**The Lived Experience of Ethiopian Immigrant Parents in Norway: Balance between
the past and present**

A dissertation submitted

by

YOSAN SAHLU

Department of Social Studies

University of Stavanger

2023

Approved as to style and content by:

Mikhail Gradovski, Supervisor

European Master in Social Work with Families and Children (MFamily)

University of Stavanger, Norway

2023

Abstract

Background: Families endure changes to responsibilities upon migration regardless of the type of society they are integrating into. In an effort to fit into the new society and social order, immigrant families encounter challenges however; the comprehensive welfare system in most western societies will serve as a resource and opportunity for both native citizens and immigrants.

Objective: The objective of this study is to gain new knowledge about the lived experience of Ethiopian immigrant parents in Norway and influence of the past context on their present parental behavioral practices.

Method: The research questions of the study are designed in a way they can be best answered and explained by qualitative research method; therefore the study is qualitative. The study is based on the analysis of semi-structured interviews with four Ethiopian immigrant parents who live in the western part of Norway. With the aim of selecting participants that are pertinent to the study topics, non-probability purposive sampling was used. Phenomenological research design was employed, and results of the study were analyzed using an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA).

Research Questions: The following research questions were designed to address the objective of the study. What are the experiences and challenges of Ethiopian immigrant parents in relation to parenting? How do Ethiopian immigrant parents living in Norway reflect on the differences in parental practices in the two countries? How do Ethiopian immigrant parents' parental behavioral practices are being influenced by their past and present cultural contexts?

Findings: In terms of challenges, language, over burden on parents, fear of being not good enough and limited power of parents over their children was discussed by the Ethiopian immigrant parents. In terms of opportunity, exposure to a new culture, better standard of living and support from the welfare state were reflected upon by the participants.

Conclusions: The study concluded that with a regulation of the past and present life, it is possible to make the influence of the past context on the present parental behavioral practices positive and rewarding.

Recommendations: Based on the result and findings of the study, it is recommended that local citizens and the state have to play an imperative role in easing the challenges of immigrants parents, as the challenges of immigrants are always related to the community or the state.

Table of Contents

Abstract	4
Acknowledgment.....	4
Chapter One: Background.....	5
1.1. Overview of Migration.....	5
1.2. Overview of immigrants in Norway.....	6
1.3. Overview of the participants’ country of origin.....	7
1.4 Objective of the Study.....	8
1.5 Research Questions	9
1.6 Significance of the Study	9
1.7 Clarification of Concepts	10
Chapter Two: Literature Review	11
2.1. Profile of Ethiopians in Norway.....	11
2.2. Parenting during migration.....	12
2.2.1. Parenting in individualistic societies	13
2.2.2. Parenting in collectivist societies	14
2.3. Immigrant parents in Norway	15
2.4. Integration Policy of Norway.....	16
Chapter Three: Theoretical Background.....	18
3.1 Family Practices	18
3.2. Acculturation Theory	19
3.3. Family Resilience Theory	23
Chapter Four: Methods	25
4.1 Epistemological and Ontological Considerations	25
4.2 Research Design.....	26
4.3 Samples of the study	27
4.4 Data gathering methods and procedures	29
4.5 Data storing methods.....	30
4.6 Analysis.....	30
4.7 Trustworthiness and Authenticity	31

4.8 Reflexivity of the Researcher	33
4.9 Ethical Issues	33
Chapter Five: Results	35
5.1 The Lived Experience of Ethiopian immigrant parents in Norway	36
5.1.1 Challenges of Ethiopian immigrant parents	36
5.1.2. Opportunities of Ethiopian immigrant parents	45
5.1.3. Support system	47
5.2. Balancing the past and present	50
5.2.1. Parenting in individualistic countries: The case of Norway	51
5.2.2. Parenting in collectivist countries: The case of Ethiopia	54
5.2.3. Influence of the past on the present parental behavioral practices	56
Chapter Six: Discussion	58
6.1. Experiences and challenges of Ethiopian immigrant parents.....	59
6.1.1. Limited parental rights.....	59
6.2.2 Cultural Insensetivty	63
6.2. Opportunities of Ethiopian immigrant parents.....	65
6.2.1. Better Standard of Living	66
6.3. The differences in parental behavioral practices in Ethiopia and Norway	67
6.3.1. Parenting in individualistic countries	67
6.3.2 “Parenting in collectivist countries.....	68
6.4. Influence of the past cultural context on present parental behavioral practices.....	69
Chapter Seven: Conclusion and Recommendation	70
7.1. Conclusion and Recommendation.....	70
7.2. Recommendation.....	70
APPENDICES	72
Appendix 1: Information and Consent Form.....	72
Appendix 2: Interview Questions.....	78
Appendix 3: Non-plagiarism declration.....	80
References	81

Acknowledgement

I would like to take a moment to thank the people who have made this master's thesis possible with their everyday love and support. First and foremost, I am grateful for my supervisor, Mikhail Gradovski for his guidance and expertise but most of all encouragement throughout the project. His insightful and constructive feedbacks have been instrumental in challenging me to think critically and also in shaping my research. Most of all, I am thankful for his mentorship that extended beyond the formal meetings, which helped me to be emotionally strong and complete the thesis on time. Next, I would like to thank the Erasmus Mundus Mfamily program for the master's opportunity, as the program enhanced not only my professional but also personal growth. I am really grateful for all the professors in the University of Stavanger, University of Gothenburg, University Institute of Portugal and Makerere University for the academic and professional guidance as well as coordination of the overall program.

I also extend my heartfelt appreciation to every Ethiopian immigrant parents who participated in the research. My research has been enriched by their inputs, which helped me comprehend the topic better. I have learned a lot from your stories, and I appreciate each and everyone for your courage and strength to cope with all the challenges an immigrant can possibly experience; all your stories are inspirational. The data collection was not an easy journey as expected given the sensitivity of the topic in Norway, and I am indebted to my friends, Bethalem and Eden, who helped me in finding participants. I must also acknowledge my fellow colleagues for making my stay in Europe unforgettable.

Last but not least, I would like to acknowledge the love and emotional support I received from my parents starting from the beginning to the end of this masters program; this work would not have been possible without you. I am always grateful for their sacrifices, as they have always prioritized my education and provided me with unwavering source of support throughout my academic journey. I therefore dedicate my work to my mother and father; Mena and Sahlu.

Thank you all.

Chapter One: Background

1.1.Overview of Migration

According to the United Nations (2020), the act of moving from one place in the world to another with the goal of staying there permanently or semi-permanently, typically across a political boundary, is known as migration. According to Rashidnejad (2020), humans have been migrating throughout history; therefore migration is not a new occurrence. People might move from their home country because of various push factors including internal conflict, crime, unemployment or a desire to discover new society. Majority of immigrants move from less developed to more developed countries in search of better opportunities (Onwujuba, 2015). Despite the reason behind human migration, classification of migrants' perception and experience is challenging due to the different characteristics, backgrounds, resources and circumstances of individuals. Regardless, it is crucial to acknowledge that the world we live in is one with borders, where people enter and leave for various reasons (Tataru, 2020).

According to Tataru (2020), migration can be internal or international; this research only discusses about the later one which basis on a movement across international borders. Migration can also be forced or voluntary; and this research only focuses on the later one which is based on the initiative and free will of people. Whether migration is forced or voluntary, its impact on human lives cannot be denied, as the way of living and overall structure of the family change the moment the decision is made; the change can be positive, negative or both. Hence, migration is not always successful as it depends on multiple internal and external factors; marginalization, discrimination and financial insecurity are some of the challenges of immigrants.

According to Oppedal & Roysamb (2007), interpersonal skills of an immigrant has a huge value in making a migration process successful as knowledge, communication and behavior of a person is related to creating sense of belongingness towards a new society. The integration policy of host countries can on the other hand be considered as an external factor affecting migration. It can therefore be concluded that the personal identities of immigrants and socio-cultural and political constructs of host countries play a major role in the process of integration.

1.2 Overview of immigrants in Norway

Following the end of Second World War (Sam & Virta, 2003), a huge number of immigrants entered Norway which leads to an increasing number of immigrants from 59,000 in 1970 to 365,000 in 2005, making the country more diversified in multiple ways (Oppedal & Roysamb, 2007). According to Statistics Norway (2005), 70% of immigrants to Norway came from the non-western countries, and the generous welfare system of the country with a universalized access to health, education and employment makes it a destination for immigrants. According to Statistics Norway (2021a), immigrants constitute 14.8% of the total population, and the following are the most common countries of origin for migrants in Norway in 2016.

Country	Number of Refugees
Somalia	27, 624
Iraq	20, 818
Syria	19,943
Eritrea	19,250
Ethiopia	7,888

SSB (2017)

Regardless of the number of immigrants in Norway, all have been given the same right as the national citizens; equal opportunity such as health and social benefits (Oppedal & Roysamb, 2007). The positive integration of the country therefore lifts up some weight for immigrants and reduces the challenges they might encounter due to disparities in socio-cultural values, language, and communication. Besides the effort made by the state of Norway, the native citizens also show positive attitude to immigrants especially to the young and educated ones (The Statistics Norway, 2005).

Other researches, on the other hand, have shown the other side of immigrants' story in Norway. The study conducted by Midtbøen (2014) shows the stereotypes about immigrants in Norway and the prejudice they face in the labor market. The study conducted by Brekke & Mastekaasa (2008) complements the above study, as their findings show low

employment and earning rates of immigrants compared to the natives. According to Arora, et al., (2022), healthcare services in Norway are not as well easily accessible to migrants due to language and other barriers. Basing the above literatures, this study tried to show both the positive and negative experience of immigrants in Norway which is shown in the results of this study and explained in detail in the discussion section.

1.3. Overview of the participants' country of origin

Ethiopia is a sub-Saharan nation in the eastern region of Africa. It is the second most populated nation in Africa with a population of about 110 million people (UN, 2019). According to CIA (2009), Ethiopia's population is made up of Orthodox Christians (50.6%), Muslims (32.8%), Protestants (10.2%), Traditionalists (4.6%), and others (1.8%) in terms of religion. Ethiopia is a country with dynamic culture and customs which can be proven by the large ethnic and linguistic diversity (Adugna, 2021). Amharic is the working and official language; in Ethiopia, all languages are equally recognized (Ado, et al., 2021).

The history of migration in Ethiopia is related to the country's political and socioeconomic crises. According to ILO (2020), the socioeconomic challenges of the country are mainly due to unemployment, and following this, one of the goals of Ethiopia's Growth and Transformation Plan is to increase the workforce, and reduce migration by creating job opportunities for young people. According to Adugna (2021), the Middle East, North America and Europe have been a destination country for Ethiopian migrants, and although Ethiopians have been using the Eastern, Southern and Northern routes, the later one has received a significant attention. Besides being a country of origin, Ethiopia is also a destination for migrants; hosting approximately 789,000 refugees.

In terms of family structure, the Ethiopian Central Statistics Authority (2002) shows the nuclear households in Ethiopia as getting enlarged from time to time since distant and extended family members are being included and defined as family. Abebe (2008) explained about the enlargement of nuclear households in Ethiopia in terms of migrants' temporary settlement with relatives. This family collective however comes with care, support and social security, which mostly depends on love and trust rather forced

obligation. Hence, due to the financial, social and emotional support that follows the enlargement of nuclear family, it is mostly accepted in the country.

1.4 Objective of the Study

The objective of this study is to understand and gather new knowledge about the lived experience of Ethiopian immigrant parents in Norway. The study tried to understand the social, economic and cultural aspects of being an immigrant in Norway but in relation to parenting only. Based on the study conducted by Evenson & Simon (2005:341), “parenting can be very challenging and stressful.” The tension parents and their children experience due to dual cultures which cause identity crisis and assumption of multiple roles is also explained by the study conducted by Skar et al., (2014).

The study by Tembo et al., (2021) showed the challenges of immigrant parents by explaining how they are instruments of governments, and has to fit into the social order criteria. Parents’ involvement is essential for the success of children, and the study conducted by Schmid & Garrels (2021) explained about the limited parental rights in western countries, viewed as a challenge by most immigrants. Basing the above literatures, this research assumes that all families experience changes and challenges after moving to a new country, and the research questions are based on this assumption.

The challenges of migration affect not only the first generation but also the second ones; this study is limited to the first generation immigrants. Regardless of the challenges immigrants face in a new environment, I believe that they have strengths as well that assist them to cope with the change, past trauma and shifting family dynamics; therefore resilience theory and strength-based perspective guides this research and thus provide a stronger evidence base for social work practice.

1.5 Research Questions

The followings are the research questions the study tried to address:

- What are the experiences and challenges of Ethiopian immigrant parents in relation to parenting?
- How do Ethiopian immigrant parents living in Norway reflect on the differences in parental behavioral practices in the two countries?
- How do Ethiopian immigrant parents' parental behavioral practices are being influenced by their past and present cultural contexts?

1.6 Significance of the Study

In a world full of crises, I believe it is important to give priority to familial and social issues especially when the crisis affects children. It is therefore crucial to study the lived experience of immigrants and immigrant families in order to add knowledge on the existing phenomenon, and receive the attention of policy makers and practitioners. In the field of social science, diversity is much appreciated, and immigrant families are one ways of diversifying the background, tradition, and value of a country. Hence, by understanding about these groups and acknowledging their daily challenges, researchers can develop support systems that promote successful integration.

Overall, the study is significant in terms of providing additional insight about the lived experience of Ethiopian immigrant parents, and can be used as an input by other researchers interested in conducting further study on the same area. The findings of the study can also give a new perspective for social workers and child welfare agencies in terms of planning a new kind of intervention programs regarding the study subjects.

1.7 Clarification of Concepts

Lived Experience- Lived experience is a firsthand experience showing how a person feel, understand, and make sense out of his/her life stories (Begna, 2023). According to James (2012), a person's choices and experiences, as well as the information they learn from them, are considered as lived experience.

Parental Style-Parenting style is characterized as attitudes or behaviors that impart parental authority to a kid, providing the emotional setting for the expression of parental action (Leung & Kit Man, 2014).

Parental behavioral practice- Parental behavioral practice refers to parenting behaviors or methods that can influence how a child develops (National Academies Press, 2016). Parenting practices are focused on certain contexts and fields, whereas parenting styles emphasize parent-child connection in a variety of settings (Baumrind, 1971; Darling & Steinberg, 1993). Therefore, to indicate parental practices of the participants, only the term parental behavioral practice is used in this research.

Intergenerational relations- Migration-related intergenerational ties are those between first and second generations, and according to Aroian (2014), intergenerational relations can be challenged upon migration which might lead to what is known as intergenerational conflict.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

In this section, I discuss the characteristics of parenting in individualistic and collectivist societies in order to understand how Ethiopian immigrant parents' parental behavioral practices can be influenced by the past and present contexts. The challenges of immigrant parents in Norway and the integration policy of the country are also discussed in the later part of the literature review.

2.1. Profile of Ethiopians in Norway

Because of the significance role of the country to Norway, Ethiopia is considered as an important partner (Lunde, 2019). Norway provides significant funding to many international organizations in Ethiopia; even though the support is related to the interpretation of 'root causes' which have been used as a strategy for resolving the issue of migration in Norway. The concept of 'root causes' has been considered as a strategy by sponsoring countries to prevent/lower immigration to Europe by creating promising economic possibilities in the country of origin (Lunde, 2019). The effectiveness of this strategy is however questionable considering the increasing number of immigrants in western countries from time to time.

According to Statistics Norway (2017), a total of 7,888 Ethiopians lived in Norway in 2016 where 2,499 were born in Norway. By 2020, there were 11,505 Ethiopians, making Ethiopia the third-largest African migratory country. Most of Ethiopian immigrants came to Norway as refugees or asylum seekers, and others migrated for work and educational purposes. According to Statistics Norway (2014), Ethiopian immigrants have an employment rate of 52%, and 40% live in low-income societies.

2.2. Parenting during migration

According to Bradley & Caldwell (1995), parenting is the control of a child's behavior and development with the goal of enabling them to lead a socially acceptable and desirable life. Basically, parents have a diverse way of practicing parental behaviors even though they come from the same background and culture (Ochocka & Janzen, 2008). Regardless of parental practices, the family according to Schmid & Garrels (2021) is considered as the

main factor behind the success of children. The above study explained the importance of family involvement to the success of children in the academics by emphasizing on the relevance of parenting in shaping children's world.

Parenting and parenting ideals are social constructs, not natural or random, and as such, they are impacted by factors like culture, class, and identity (Hays, 1998 & Holloway et al., 2010). Hence, regardless of being an immigrant or host national and individualistic or collectivist community, parenting can be influenced by society culture and individual beliefs. In the process of socialization therefore there is a significant chance of parents' transferring their individual as well as cultural values to their children (Elias, 2014).

Families endure changes to family responsibilities, and migration could be the major factor triggering this change. Immigrant parents' experience several changes upon migration, and parental authority over their children can be mentioned as one since parental authority might come under scrutiny at any point after migration due to the changing roles of mothers and fathers in and outside of the home. For instance, it is typical for male immigrants to lose their employment status, which also results in them losing their status as the head of the home (Ali & Kilbride, 2004 & Anisef et al., 2001).

Upon migration, parenting could also be challenged with the quick adaptation of children to the new environment by learning new behavior from peers and teachers (Albert, 2019). According to Birman & Addae (2016), the fast adaptation of children to the host society's culture and context will lead to acculturation gap and results in intergenerational conflict, as parents do not tend to learn new cultures as fast as their children. According to the study conducted Tseng & Fullgni (2000), immigrant parents from Asia and Latin America kept their mother tongue for long; their children on the other hand adopted English language very quickly which resulted in language disparities and intergenerational communication conflicts. The fact that children master the language of the host country much faster than their parents is also likely to reverse the power relations as they serve as cultural and language brokers (Albert, 2019).

The study by Tseng & Fullgani (2000) shows that some immigrant families communicate with the native language of the host country, others with their local language and the remaining mix both. The acculturation gap between generations however can be filled at any moment, as parents also learn the language and cultural practices of host countries through time (Albert, 2019). Additionally, family policies and practices adopted by the host society affects the experience of immigrant parents as well, and in countries like Norway, immigrants might experience a major shift in their parental behavioral practices due to the extreme cultural differences.

For example, according to Matthiesen (2019), teachers in Norway are essentially seen as experts in the lives of children and claim responsibility for their overall performance. Parents in this case are excluded and neglected as their competence and knowledge of parenting is questionable, which causes cultural shock among immigrant families. To understand the experience of immigrants' parental behavioral practices in detail, the following section discusses about parenting in individualistic and collectivist society.

2.2.1. Parenting in individualistic societies

Parents from individualistic societies are assumed to be authoritative; characterized by independence and self-reliance (Tamis-LeMonda et al., 2007). Parents want their kids to act responsibly and obey them, thus authoritative parents work to attain this goal by being open and honest with their kids (Baumrind, 1966). In the context of Norway, it is believed that the democratic and negotiating family is the optimum form for achieving parenting objectives which is not common for collectivist societies (Hennum, 2002; Hollekim, et al., 2016). The Norwegian parenting ideal is therefore child-centered and built on communication between parents and their children, supporting the notion of children as rational actors (Hollekim, et al., 2016 & Johannesen & Appoh, 2016).

Even though the comprehensive welfare makes parenting in Norway attractive, the high value of the country to children's right and tight control of the state over parents makes parenting challenging especially for immigrants (Tembo et al., 2021). Parenting in individualistic countries can be explained with Foucault's understanding of power. According to Foucault (1991), the state uses its power to control the life of its citizens to maintain social order, and the power the state has over families decides the level of parental

authority. The study of Tembo et al., (2021) shows how parents in Norway experience direct and indirect control by the state and society about their parental behavioral practices, resulting in over regulation of oneself to fit into a society.

2.2.2. Parenting in collectivist societies

Collective identity, emotional dependency, sharing of chores and obligations, and group solidarity are stressed in collectivistic civilizations (Bø, 2015; Javo et al., 2004). Parents in collectivist societies are assumed to be authoritarians; characterized by restrictions and expectations of obedience (Ispa et al., 2004). Parenting techniques in collectivistic-oriented countries typically focus on kin, and are dictated by collectivism, in contrast to parenting in individualistic society.

According to Schmid & Garrels (2021), parental involvement in the decisions of young people in the context of school, home and socialization is high among collectivist societies. In their study, school achievements of children are positively related to parental behavior and parental involvement which includes parent-child discussions and continuous parental encouragement and support. The involvement of parents among collectivist societies is more pronounced in home-based activities, as they support and monitor every activity of their young ones which according to Boonk et al., (2018) contributes for the positive achievement of children in schools. Parenting in collectivist societies is also characterized by school-based involvement, which includes parents' active participation in school activities and their strong and continuous communication with the staff. Immigrant parents coming from collectivist societies might sometimes get disadvantaged in this regard given their lack of knowledge about the host country's educational system as well as language barriers (Newman, 2019).

Parental involvement in academic socialization also characterizes parenting in collectivist societies, as it is very common for parents to express their expectations regarding their children's education including the plans for the future (Schmid & Garrels, 2021). In developing countries where the socioeconomic background of most households is very low, the only resource parents can give for their children is access to education. Hence, families clearly put their expectations regarding the educational future of their children. According

to Hill & Tyson (2009) and Wilder (2013), students' accomplishment in school is positively and strongly correlated to parents' expectations of children's educational achievement. Therefore, children's motivation is likely to be enhanced with high parental expectations as it increases children's self-efficacy (Schmid & Garrels, 2021).

2.3. Immigrant parents in Norway

According to Hantrais (2004), the Norwegian state strives to make welfare comprehensive to its citizens by supporting all families. The primary goal of the state support is therefore to make sure children are passing through a healthy childhood; under the state definition of proper parenthood. According to Tembo, et al., (2021), immigrant families are more likely to deviate from the welfare societies' system as they came from a background where the state has a minimum intervention in family cases. Given their background therefore, the perception of immigrant parents towards the intense involvement of the state in parental authority could not be positive, which leads to unwillingness to cooperate with public institutions (Tembo, et al., 2021), forcing the state to put much attention and control on immigrants than natives. However, it is important to acknowledge that the support of welfare states goes beyond citizens' support, as it is mainly designed with the aim of following up family life.

In the context of Norway, even though parents are given the right to exercise their parental rights, raising children goes beyond primary caregivers as child rearing is a public affair (Tembo, et al., 2021). According to Smette & Rosten (2019), state's involvement in parental behavior in Norway begins at the very initial stage where parents receive orientation on how to raise their own children including breastfeeding and children's diet. The finding of Tembo, et al., study (2021) shows a negative experience of immigrant parents in Norway towards the child welfare system of the country; mistrust towards the support system is the main element discussed in the study. However, it is not uncommon to see immigrants expressing their appreciation towards the welfare system of Norway due to the support they receive from the state (Fylkesnes et al., 2015; Korzeniewska et al., 2019).

Mistrust towards the Norwegian child welfare system is not limited to immigrants as the study by Samsonsen & Willumsen (2015) shows the same result among the national

citizens of Norway. However, according to Tembo, et al., (2021), the mistrust of native Norwegians is related to a specific positive or negative experience/case-based rather than a general mistrust of the service. The welfare system of Norway which was designed and is now being implemented with the intention of providing what is best for children makes parents question about their ability and power of raising their own children, because it challenges their decision making over their child's life. Parents will therefore be forced to live as per the rules and regulations of the system in order to avoid any further consequences.

Most immigrants show their parental support by exercising their power and authority over their children which apparently does not get along with the child welfare system of Norway (Tembo, et al., 2021) as it falls under an authoritarian parenting. The above study shows how immigrant parents in Norway feel overwhelmed, and are overly conscious in raising their children since they are expected to justify their parental actions so that the welfare system could make sense out of it and refrain from making decisions like child removal. According to Tembo, et al., (2021), immigrants are the common victims of child removal in Norway, putting the overall intention of the state intervention on family cases in question mark. According to Elias (2014), immigrant families in western societies are perceived as problematic and inadequate, which stems from practicing their own cultural norms which do not fit with the host society's way of parenting which is believed to be best for the child.

2.4. Integration Policy of Norway

According to Kim & Byun (2019), some countries practice multiculturalism and others practice assimilation, and the experience of immigrants in a new society differ depending on the policies of the host country. In most cases, immigrants favor multiculturalism while national citizens prefer to practice assimilation, and according to Kim & Byun (2019), this is because, there is a high possibility for the culture of the dominant group to be endangered because of the influx of immigrants. The above study therefore concludes that the success of integration highly depends on the attitude of native citizens towards immigrants, which is why it is important to consider natives interest prior to practicing any policies as they are the main actors of social cohesion.

According to Comprehensive Integration Policy Diversity and Community (2012–2013), people from more than 200 countries live together in Norway making Norway a diversified country. The objective behind the design and implementation of the integration policy in Norway is to make sure everyone have access to the resources of the country and the platform to participate in the community. The integration policy therefore makes sure that the socio-economic, political and cultural status of people with immigrant backgrounds is not different with the rest of the population. Accordingly, most immigrants in Norway speak Norwegian language, are socially active and are employed in different job sectors (Comprehensive Integration Policy Diversity and Community, 2012–2013).

Before the huge influx of migrants to Norway, Norwegian societies used to be considered as homogenous. Following the growing number of immigrants in the country, the concept of integration was introduced in the country (Tamrat, 2010). Currently, the integration policy of Norway favors assimilation; the state strengthens basic qualification of immigrants including language so they can fit easily into the society. The state of Norway for example did an amendment to improve the tuition of Norwegian language to increase the employment rate of immigrants (Comprehensive Integration Policy Diversity and Community, 2012–2013). Immigrants' individual rights including practicing their own language and culture are however respected by the society and state (Tamrat, 2010).

The state of Norway also organizes community involvement initiatives to help immigrants settle fast. The Comprehensive Integration Policy appreciates the varied knowledge, language, and culture of immigrant children, realizing that these assets have the potential to enhance the nation's resources. It is however questionable whether these children have the real chance to practice their diversified knowledge and culture for the betterment of the country if they are in one way or another forced to drop their culture of origin and pick the new one. According to Rønning (2001:15), "Equality of distribution does not equate to equality of opportunity. Education of any member of society for a setting that discourages the full application of one's skills is "uneconomic" and "brain waste."

Chapter Three: Theoretical Background

3.1 Family Practices

Personal beliefs and experiences impacts how people define ‘family’. Demography and position of oneself in an individual’s kinship is mentioned by Finch & Morgan (2022) as one element that determines family experience. Children raised in a family and community that values and appreciates kinship support for example might define the concept of ‘family’ and ‘family practices’ differently than those who haven’t experienced much of kinship support growing up. Similarly, the strength of family and family ties is affected by geographical mobility, and families upon migration will be challenged as keeping communication from further is difficult. According to Finch & Morgan (2022), an effective kinship is one way of helping ‘family practices’ to survive, and regardless of problems that emerges in association with family, family practices should be considered as an important element. The family practice approach by Morgan emphasizes on actions practiced by members of a family and activities they do in and outside of the house to maintain the family equilibrium; family practices can be re-defined depending on the everyday character.

Following globalization, families are migrating more than ever, making the building of bond between families challenging (Sieburth et al., 2021). In such cases, the parent-child relationships can be endangered and families can be challenged in the effort of maintaining family care arrangements and practices. Following this, families will be forced to adjust family practices in order to support the feeling of co-presence; Bryceson and Vuorela (2002) explained the different ways maintaining family ties. The study conducted by Sieburth et al., (2021) mentioned the transformation of caring roles during migration as an example to show the adjustments parents make to keep family practice. For example, depending on who migrates, provider of the house might change (Dreby, 2010 & Boehm, 2012).

According to Morgan (2020), it is impossible to create a sense of ‘home’ without the involvement of family practices. Finding a home could be experienced differently by

different groups; immigrant parents are the common groups that face challenges in creating the feeling of 'home' for themselves and their children. It is easy to find a house but not a home, and according to Morgan (2020), active roles by each members of a family can help in constructing the home in a new environment, and family practices are essential in creating a space where members can experience both positive and negative meanings (Luzia, 2010).

According to Morgan (2019), there is a high tendency for things to go wrong in a family, and all members will be affected directly or indirectly. Some troubles go beyond the family and become a public matter; during migration for example, the cases of the individual and the family will become the case of an agency. Troubling families according to Morgan (2019) belong to lower social groups including migrants as there is a high possibility of their problems to be generalized as 'problems of families' instead of being treated as an 'individual problem' which is usually the case for high status families.

Families move to a new place with the hope of a better future especially for their children; however exposure to adversities makes the process unpleasant. According to Andreasson & Herz (2022), family practices among migrants could be threatened by several factors, roles and practices therefore might shift accordingly. However, by utilizing the internal and external assets of individual members, families will adopt new way of family life and practices (Wood et al., 2022). The study by Kaplan et al., (2022) discusses in detail the adaptation strategies of families to changes in order to sustain the family life.

3.2. Acculturation Theory

Acculturation describes the reciprocal cultural and psychological transformation that takes place when two or more groups of people from different cultures interact for an extended length of time (Sam & Berry, 2010). Acculturation is described as "the process of cultural change that occurs when individuals from different cultural backgrounds come into prolonged, continuous, first-hand contact with one another" (Redfield et al., 1936, p.146). According to Blunden & Juang (2008), the major criterion for acculturation is bicultural influences. The long process of dragging previous cultural values and beliefs and integrating it into the new ones is part of migration which results in change of values and identities of

individuals. According to Sam & Virta (2003), immigrants are in a way forced to leave some of their cultural beliefs when they move to a new place and accommodate the values of the host country.

Acculturation dimensions may vary among contexts because of the varying skills and knowledge that different cultural environments require (Blunden & Juang, 2008). Acculturation theory therefore describes the complications immigrants pass through in different stages of migration, as change can be overwhelming. For example, immigrants from collectivist communities might face an extremely intense complication when they move to individualistic societies given the huge difference in culture. According to Rashidnejad (2020), the process of acculturation is usually tougher for parents compared to their children as they have the responsibility of adjusting parental attributes while at the same time keeping the parent-child relationships. However, it is important to note that experience of immigrants in relation to acculturation depends on the way they prefer to be related to the host society as well as their country of origin.

Acculturation theory could also be understood in relation to the developmental process of adolescents. Adolescents' need for autonomy increase with their age which should be matched with parents' willingness to respect their rights and boundaries. However, according to Sam & Virta (2003), most immigrant families find this challenging given their strong traditional collectivist culture. Following this, after migration, parents are likely to develop a sense of losing power and authority over their children where the adolescents are simply asking for an increased respect of their rights. Developmental changes exist whether people migrate or not; however, developmental process might change its form during migration as it is followed by acculturation.

For example, parents' experience in the educational development of children is different when they raise their children in their hometown and in a new country (Hegna & Smette, 2017). During migration, parents have to adjust their way of parenting in accordance with the host country, and the high level of individual autonomy in Nordic countries including Norway could be one adjustment parents need to make when they decide to involve in the educational development of their children. According to Hegna & Smette (2017), young

people’s autonomy in western societies is highly valued in the educational system which challenges the educational decisions made by parents including keeping them in school. This is challenging especially for immigrant families since they are not emotionally ready to consider their children as fully autonomous adults that can decide on their own life without parents’ involvement.

Acculturation is a long and tiresome process (Hegna & Smette, 2017), and it can be equally challenging for children as it is for parents, as young people face difficulties in balancing their interest, insecurity and parents’ expectations all at the same time. Sometimes parents’ involvement in the life of their children is not clearly stated, as they do not clearly voice out their specific aspirations for their children. Following this, immigrants’ children highly suffer as they experience a new way of socialization in the host country while at the same time expected to entertain parents’ involvement (Hegna & Smette, 2017).

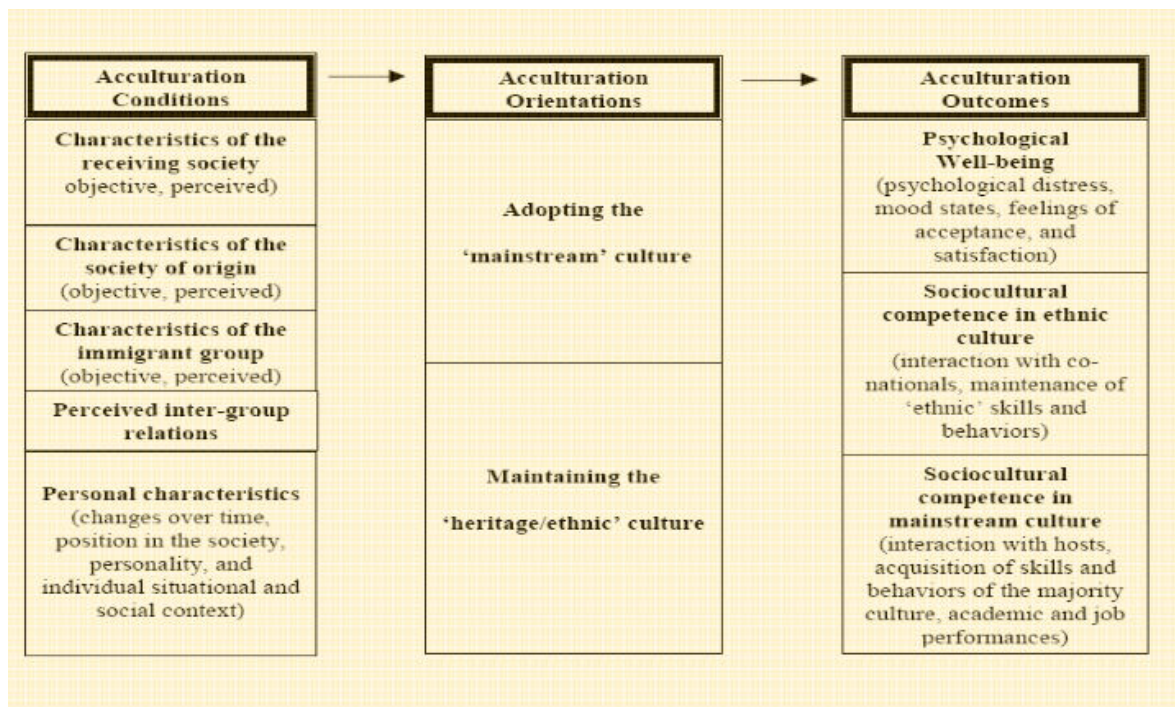


Figure 1: (Arends-Toth & Van de Vijver, 2006b)

As described in the above figure, the characteristic of the receiving and origin country defines acculturation. Acculturation orientation is also affected by internal factors like characteristic of the immigrant him/herself including their personality. Depending on the

above determining factors therefore, either a positive or negative outcome of acculturation will be experienced by immigrant families (Ward et al., 2004).

According to Ward et al., (2004), immigrants can experience an internal adjustment where they finally accept the new cultural context and get satisfied with the life, and also the external adjustment where they deal with all possible stressors by interacting with the culture as well as culturally appropriate knowledge. However, this might not always be the case since maladjustments could be observed as well. Adaptation is not a smooth process; an expose to different cultures can sometimes lead to stress (Berry & Kim, 1988), and mental health disturbances like depression can be witnessed among acculturating families (Bery & Sam, 1997).

3.3. Family Resilience Theory

Resilience, in the words of Ledesma (2014, p. 1), is "the capacity to recover from adversity, frustration, and misfortune." Resilience is also described by Luthans (2002a, p. 702) as "the developable capacity to bounce back from adversity, conflict, failure, or even positive events, progress, and increased responsibility." Resilience however is not a onetime achievement since it might be challenged by several factors at different points in life, making people resilient in some cases but not in others (Southwick, et al., 2014). Families like other individuals respond to changes, and this proves their capacity to withstand stresses. Family resilience is described as "characteristics and dimensions of families which help them to be resistant to disruption in the face of change and adaptive in the face of crisis situations" by McCubbin & McCubbin (1988, p. 247).

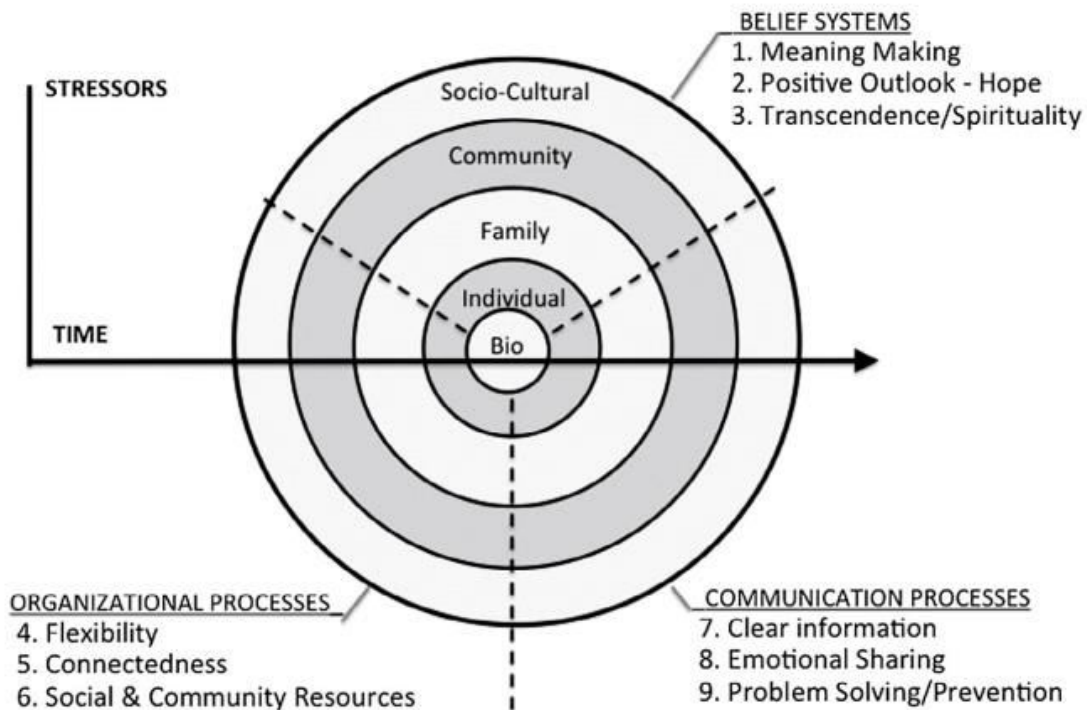


Figure 2: Source: Walsh, 2016, p. 10

The above figure explains factors responsible for the development and maintenance of resilience. According to Falicov (2005), it is not common to recognize the resilience of immigrants as researchers, media, and politics are too busy associating migration with challenges and immigrants with stress and disorientation. I believe the resilience of immigrants could be more explained by the social-ecological approach, which emphasizes on individual strength and potential to adopt changes regardless of the social and cultural structures and institutional inequalities (Adger, 2000 & Joseph, 2013). According to Lester & Nguyen (2015) and Lee (2005), migrants' resilience could be explained in relation to adaptation to challenges related to discrimination and limited opportunities by utilizing personal or communal resources which operate as protective factors, enhancing migrants' ability to overcome obstacles (Akbar & Preston, 2019). According to Cardoso & Thompson

(2010), cultural tradition could be considered as one factor that promotes the psychological resilience of immigrants since it fosters a sense of cultural identity, helping immigrants pass stressful events.

According to Sam, et al., (2008), the social and economic status of immigrants tend to be lower in comparison to native/local citizens, however with the practice of adaptation strategies, they still manage to be resilient. Despite their economic, social, and psychological status, children from immigrant parents were found to be emotionally and behaviorally stronger compared to their native peers (Sam, et al., 2008). The study by Coll (2005) shows a better performance on academics of children from migrant families in comparison to the native citizens. Because of stereotypes, children of migrant families are often associated with threat leading to bullying and social isolation (Akbar & Preston, 2019); regardless, these children have shown success in their academic life by utilizing their family support (Alcantara, 2013; Mythen, 2012).

Adaptation to social expectations of host societies according to Masten & Obradovic (2006) is a determinant factor for immigrants to be considered as resilient, and the study by Sam et al., (2008) shows a better socio-cultural adaptation of immigrants compared to local citizens. However, it is important to consider time factor, as native citizens are less likely to invest on learning social skills since they have already passed the integration stage. With the intention of keeping the families' culture of origin, parents intentionally or unintentionally pass their personal and social values and beliefs to their children. According to Sam & Virta (2003), depending on the host countries' way of socialization, children will have the chance to practice the values transferred from their parents. The resilience of immigrant parents could therefore be observed in the process of balancing the past and present by considering the vulnerable status of their children, as they are in the verge of being lost between dual cultures.

Chapter Four: Methods

4.1 Epistemological and Ontological Considerations

According to Bryman (2016), people are experts of their own life and have the freedom to voice their opinions in a way they make sense out of it. Immigrant parents have different experiences even if they come from the same background, because the world around humans is the same but the perception of individuals towards it is not which leads to the existence of multiple stories and realities. This research therefore tried to understand the different stories of Ethiopian immigrant parents and accordingly, the result only represents the subjects of the study participants. The experiences and challenges of Ethiopian immigrant parents at every stage of the immigration process was recognized in the research since social phenomena have the tendency to be revised in addition to being created. I considered both the past and present social contexts of the participants to better understand the factors shaping their world view since people's categories for understanding the world around them are social artifacts (Bryman, 2016).

In this research, I viewed the experiences of the Ethiopian immigrant parents as unique and subjective; my epistemological position is therefore interpretivism. According to Bryman (2012), the focus of interpretivism is on examining how its participants see the social environment in order to comprehend it, and interpretivism is thought to be an appropriate epistemological framework for phenomenological approach. Positionality according to Foote & Bartell (2011) refers to a person's worldview and the stance they take about a piece of research. According to Karacaer et al., (2009), personal values and beliefs are associated with decision making behavior; the data collection, discussion and analysis of this research are therefore not completely impartial, as they are influenced by my personal and professional background. However, to keep the originality of the data, my personal stances are clearly stated in the paper.

4.2 Research Design

According to Bryman (2016), the design of qualitative research stresses on an inductive methodology and places more emphasis on words than quantification. The main reason

behind my interest in conducting this research in the first place, is to have a face-to-face interaction with immigrant parents, and discuss on the 'how' and 'what' questions regarding their experiences so I can be able to have an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon. I was interested in investigating the context of immigrant families' everyday lives so I can be able to see their reality and their perception about it. Due to this, this research is a qualitative study which focuses on the experience, feeling, and meaning of participants, and the research questions are designed in a way that they can be best answered by qualitative design. Three theories are discussed in the research which I believe will support the results of the study; according to Bryman (2016), qualitative researches just like quantitative ones have the power to proof theories that are specified before the data collection.

As the research aims to explore immigrant parents' everyday experiences, a descriptive phenomenological research design was implemented. Accordingly, I described all the events as they are explained by the participants without providing any kind of frameworks or hypothesis whatsoever. According to Groenewald (2004), it is necessary to disregard anything outside of present perception and accept realities as pure phenomena. The lived experiences of the participants were therefore described by themselves, and I only assumed the role of a translator in order to make meanings out of their words and experiences. Hence, all the four participants have contributed to this research by providing a rich and descriptive data.

According to Welman & Kruger (1999, p.189), "Phenomenologists are interested in comprehending social and psychological events from the viewpoints of those who are experiencing them." Therefore, all the results of this study are generated from the participants' perspective, and the discussion is based on the meanings they made out of their life experience. However, I still hold my own personal values and beliefs throughout the process, as according to Hammersley (2000), researchers shouldn't be objective about their own personal convictions.

4.3 Samples of the study

Given the fact that the study is phenomenological research, only individuals who have experienced the reality can legitimately participate. The types of respondents were therefore determined by the phenomenon under study. Hence, Ethiopian immigrant parents who have been living in Norway for more than ten years constitute the study population. The form of sampling is therefore non-probability purposive sampling as it tries to carefully choose participants, ensuring that those picked are relevant to the study themes (Bryman, 2016).

I used my personal judgment to choose among the available samples; focused only on those who are well experienced about the research topic (Kruger, 1988). I decided to interview immigrant parents who have lived for ten years or more, because the longer they stayed in the country, the richer their experience will be regarding the issue. According to Englander (2012), in choosing participants in phenomenological study, their experience regarding the research topic should be the main focus. I employed a snowball sampling to reach out my study participants which Bryman (2016) defines it as a technique of reaching out small group of respondents where they recommend more respondents relevant for the research. Two of my closest friends helped me in getting the first two participants, and I used snowball sampling to trace the others.

Finding participants was however a very challenging journey in this research given the sensitivity of the topic in Norway. Even though there are a number of Ethiopian immigrant parents living in the country, most of them were preserved from giving information. I have also witnessed that there aren't much organized social groups among Ethiopian communities in Norway which makes it challenging to find them in one place. According to one of the participants, most Ethiopians came to Norway as asylum seekers and changed their identity including names and other personal information, and due to this, they don't freely engage in social gatherings.

According to Langdrige (2007), in a descriptive phenomenology, the participants should be as diversified as possible in terms of demography but should necessarily have the same experience about the topic under study. Accordingly, four participants from different

demographic backgrounds were included in the research. All the participants were born and raised in Ethiopia and have an experience of parenting before the period of migration. All of them have attended higher education. In terms of marital status; all four participants are married but one of the participant’s spouses is currently living in Ethiopia, making her a solo parent. As the number of Ethiopian immigrant families in the western part of Norway is not much, I refrained from giving much detail about the participants. In order to keep the identification of participants to the minimum, I did not add the information of third persons on the report including age of children and educational and work status of spouses. All the original names are also replaced with Pseudonyms.

Table 1: Biographical details of the immigrant parents

	Pseudonyms	Marital status	No of children	Years of stay in Norway
1	Abebe	Married	4	15
2	Selam	Married	2	10
3	Kalkidan	Married	1	10
4	Gelila	Married	2	14

4.4. Data gathering methods and procedures

With the intension of obtaining detailed information and avoiding misinterpretation, I conducted personal interviews. Hence, basing on relevant literatures, a semi-structured interview was designed in a way it answers the research questions and addresses the research objective. The greater interest of a researcher in phenomenological interviews is the participants’ point of view; therefore, new questions that were not part of the initial research questions were raised as a follow-up depending on the response of participants. For the convenience of the interview, the original interview guide was written in English and afterwards translated into Amharic. Before I translated the interview questions into Amharic, I have received approval of the English version from my supervisor.

According to Giorgi (2009), both a face-to-face interview and recorded account of participants’ experience are possible ways of collecting data in phenomenological research; I adopted a face-to-face interview because I believed it can give me the complete image of

the lived experience of the participants. The interview questions were developed in light of an earlier research on a related subject. There were two parts of the interview guide; one set was intended to collect data on demographic background, while the other set sought to understand the lived experiences of Ethiopian immigrant parents in Norway.

According to Liamputtong (2007), choosing a suitable place to conduct a research is very important as participants might find themselves in a vulnerable situation due to the place of the interview. To keep their comfort and safety, the interview place was chosen by the participants. Accordingly, some of the interviews were conducted in public places like a mall while some of the others took place at the participants' houses. Before the interview, I presented myself as a master's student writing a thesis on Ethiopian immigrant parents because of my personal and professional interest in learning the life experience of immigrants.

In the process of building rapport, I tried to make it clear for the participants that their answers won't be judged and all the stories will in some way be useful to the study so they don't hold back from telling their experiences. Once the interview has started, the participants were really comfortable to discuss all their experiences, however, in some participants; I have observed fear to give all the information especially matters related to the state. Some of the participants started telling me the experiences of their fellow immigrants after the interview was completed, however, to maintain the confidentiality of the third persons, this information is not included in this study. To complement the primary data, articles, journals, and books were reviewed as a secondary data.

According to Polkinghorne (2005), language affects the construction of meaning; the words we use to describe events or concepts can shape our understanding of them. I believe that the language of a culture can reflect its unique worldview which affects how individuals within that culture understand, explain and interpret the experience. All the participants were native speakers of the language which makes the interview, discussion and meaning making easier. However, the credibility of a study might be questioned when an interview is conducted in one language and translated to another since it might result in losing of meanings (Nes et al., 2010). In order not to miss meanings and to make the words of

participants and their interpretation as close as possible, I listened to the recordings of the interview multiple times.

4.5 Data storing methods

With the permission I got from SIKT as well as interviewees, I recorded all the interviews. I used different codes to each interview and labeled the audio with the code to avoid confusion later on. The transcriptions were securely stored on a password-protected computer that only I could access. The transcription was done in the same day as the interview; according to Bryman (2016), transcribing is very time-consuming as it increases the volume of text to be examined. The fact that I had to do a transcription in Amharic and later translation to English made the process very long and exhausting. The analysis was left until the interviews were conducted and transcribed.

4.6 Analysis

I did transcription, coding, and topic identification before conducting the data analysis. The data were reread and evaluated in order to get some interpretive hints from participant responses. Then, the data were tagged by underlining text and adding marginal annotations that included paraphrased data, relationships between the data that were identified, and my own initial interpretations. Patterns and meanings that emerge from the data were therefore identified and produced a final set of five themes. To understand the words of the participants and get the structure and meanings of their lived experiences, the interview and transcription were read several times.

The results of the research are analyzed using an Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) which provides a thorough analysis of individual experiences to get insight into their experience. According to Hycner (1999), in the last step of analyzing a phenomenological research, the researcher should have a creative and artistic insight to identify participant's psychological meanings. As IPA is more than description, I presented an interpretative account to what it means for Ethiopian immigrant parents to have such experiences. In the process of finding meanings, phenomenological researchers should be conscious and careful not to get biased by their own judgments. According to Giorgi (2009), the

researcher shouldn't be in favor or against the topic under discussion since the words and meanings need to be stated exactly as the participants want. In order to show the experiences of Ethiopian immigrant parents as clearly as possible, their words, feelings and expressions were changed into phenomenologically sensitive expressions.

4.7 Trustworthiness and Authenticity

In order to keep the usefulness of the findings, I took the issue of trustworthiness, which is confidence level in data interpretation, into account. According to Mouton & Marais (1990), in phenomenological studies, one should not interfere on the participants' perspectives as the focus should be on understanding only the phenomenon from the participants' point of view. Hence, it is recommended to bracket oneself to not bias the truth of participants. To explain about the trustworthiness of this study, I used Morrow (2005)'s classification of the concept.

Credibility is one area of trustworthiness, and by matching the research in accordance with the principles of 'good research' and sharing the findings with others; credibility can be achieved (Bryman, 2016). In order to make sure the results and findings matched with participants' response, I conducted a respondent validation which according to Bryman helps a researcher to ensure good correspondence between the experience of participants and findings of the study. The overall goal of the respondent validation was to seek confirmation on my impression about the topic and results in relation to the view of the main actors of the research. The respondent validation was conducted through phone and lasted for 7-10 minutes. I also tried to demonstrate credibility by utilizing the standardized qualitative research methods. With the intention of understanding the research actors better, I chose a context that I am familiar with, which ease the entire research process. I also worked closely with my colleagues; share my results of the data and analysis of the study.

Transferability is the second area of trustworthiness, and according to Bryman (2016), because qualitative research focuses on detailed stories of a small group, the findings might not be applicable to other contexts. The finding of this research provides a significant aspect of immigrant parents in Norway but it can only represent the four research subjects given the unique characteristics of their background and experience. However, Ethiopian

immigrant families who have the same demographic background and share the same lived experience could be represented by the results of the study.

The third element of trustworthiness which is dependability describes the need of keeping records throughout the research; it can be achieved by making the findings accessible to colleagues and peers (Byrman, 2016). In this study, I tried to be as transparent as possible in each step of the research including the data collection and procedures to allow readers build on my work. I provided a methodology on data collection and results of the study. The comments from my supervisor and colleagues throughout the process also played an important role in establishing dependability.

In order to achieve the last element of trustworthiness which is confirmability, as hard as it was, I limited my personal beliefs and perspectives as well as theoretical frameworks so it doesn't affect the findings of the research. I also reported my position- ontological and epistemological, to show all the results of the study represents the four Ethiopian immigrant families not the researcher. The only way confirmability in a research could be achieved is when the participants approve the presented data of the findings; hence, respondent validation was conducted.

4.8 Reflexivity of the Researcher

According to Wilkinson (1988), the examination of one's personal beliefs and ideals and its influence on their research is known as reflexivity, which affects the result and at the end analysis and interpretation of the study. I was born and raised in Ethiopia, which means I have passed through the same parenting style as my participants' children. Hence, I can easily understand the social and cultural contexts of parenting in Ethiopia. In addition, as a social work student and someone who has worked as a social worker with children and families for two years, I can relate to both the positive and negative stories of child rearing in Ethiopia. Therefore, my personal and professional backgrounds helped me to understand the participants experience easily.

On the other hand, the preconception I had about immigrants in general and immigrant families in particular affected the research process negatively. In selecting the research

problem, I had the generalized assumption about the experience of these groups as negative, so I had to be extra conscious about my personal thoughts so it doesn't lead me to misinterpretation of data. I was therefore open to the experiences and stories of all the participants, and avoided any judgment or preconceptions.

4.9 Ethical Issues

The research proposal was reviewed and approved by SIKT. The plan on how to collect the data, store and at the end destroyed was shared with SIKT as well as the interviewees. All the participants were informed prior to the interview about the people and organizations that will have access to their information. To avoid confusions, the participants were informed about their rights in Amharic, the official language of Ethiopia. They were introduced about the objective of the study, and asked for consent. The interview was therefore held after the participants gave their full consent to participate in the interview and provide information about their experience.

According to the Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities (NESH) (2019), information needs to be restricted for the purpose of maintaining the confidentiality of participants. Therefore, researchers should take precautions to guarantee that personal information is shielded from unwanted access. Accordingly, all demographic information's that are not useful for the study were exempted from the final report. To maintain confidentiality; I did data anonymization and safe data storage. The names of the participants were replaced with pseudonyms, and even though names of third persons like spouse and children were mentioned during the interview, these are not included in the report.

It is impossible to fully avoid power difference between researchers and participants; however I tried to keep it to the minimum by making the participants as comfortable as possible with the entire data collection procedure with briefing them about the study and terms of confidentiality. Hence, not only confidentiality was maintained in this study but also all participants were assured that all the information they provided will be presented in an anonymous way, and the audio records will only be used for the purpose of transcription and nothing more.

Chapter Five: Results

This chapter presents the participants' narratives only without the bias of the researcher; Vagle (2014) suggests bracketing strategies to limit personal values and past experiences of a researcher. With the implementation of bracketing, this chapter only presents the lived experience of Ethiopian immigrant parents along with their meaning making. Participants therefore explained what being an immigrant parent is including the challenges and opportunities in relation to host and origin countries with their own words. They have also explained about the influence of the past cultural context on the present parental behavioral practices by discussing about parenting in individualistic and collectivist societies. This chapter is therefore a result of repeated listening of audio recordings and transcription of four participants' interview.

5.1 The Lived Experience of Ethiopian immigrant parents in Norway

This review captures the voice of Ethiopian immigrant parents lived experience in Norway starting from the first period of their arrival. Hence, the review found three dimensions of Ethiopian immigrant parents lived experience, presented as follows.

5.1.1 Challenges of Ethiopian immigrant parents

All participants in this study described their overall experience as immigrant families in Norway as a long and stressful journey; the first few years of the migration were considered as the hardest. All of the participants have faced confusions and concerns regarding themselves and their children in the first few years of their arrival, before they eventually settle down. It is however important to note that challenges of immigrants are viewed differently by different immigrants depending on their personal characteristics and resources available to them (P1, Abebe). Therefore, a challenge experienced by one immigrant family might not be considered as a challenge for the others. The perception of some families was influenced by supports they received from family members, community members and the state as well.

5.1.1.1 Language

Norwegian is the most spoken language in Norway, and hence needed for daily communication, work and learning in school as the medium of instruction is Norwegian. One out of four participants has discussed language as a major challenge of immigrants. He explained his point as follows:

“You have to know the language of a country to be able to understand its culture. Besides, language is a key to open door for opportunities and to solve challenges you might experience in your life. It is impossible to communicate with a certain society and integrate without speaking their language. More importantly, language is a must for day to day life activities. Therefore, language was the main challenge for my wife and me when we first came to Norway.

My wife and I found the Norwegian language difficult because unlike Amharic, they have multiple dialects. For example, if you learned with Bokmal and you meet someone from Trondheim, he/she will probably use the Trondersk dialect which is quite different and difficult to understand. This applies to Bergen, Oslo, Bodo and the different parts of Norway, and just because you attended few Norwegian courses doesn't necessarily mean you can communicate with the community. And because of this, it took us several years to fully integrate with the society.”

Even though language was not viewed as a challenge by Kalkidan and Gelila, the importance of language for immigrants was given emphasis during their discussion.

“While doing my PhD, I wasn't required to learn Norwegian but I took few online courses because I was interested in knowing the language. Language is very necessary to widen your opportunities, and even though I am not fluent with Norwegian language, the fact that I try helped me a lot to open up more work opportunities. I have friends who are struggling to get jobs in Norway

because they don't speak the language. I also had few job rejections because my language wasn't strong enough for the job required" (Kalkidan, 2023).

The importance of language was discussed by Gelila in terms of enhancing immigrants' social life and fostering easier integration. She further explained her point as follows:

"I have studied Norwegian language until C1 level but I still don't have the confidence to communicate with Norwegians, and that limits my social life. I have lived in Norway for 14 years and my circle of friendship is very small, limited to mostly Ethiopians and Eritreans. I can say that I am not fully integrated to the society of Norway due to my language."

Since linguistic adaptation varies from people to people, not every immigrant finds language challenging. Selam for example explained her journey of learning Norwegian language as easy and smooth. During communication with their children, immigrant families mostly face challenges in terms of balancing language of origin and language of host countries. It is important for most immigrant families for their children to speak the language of the family, but at the same time, the children are expected to learn the language of the new country. Hence, besides language as a challenge for integration, it also impacts intergenerational communication. One out of the four participants has discussed about the challenge of language in terms of affecting the behavior of immigrant children as follows:

"Since my husband and I came from different part of Ethiopia, we speak two different languages even though we can easily communicate with the official language, Amharic. After giving birth to my second child, we both were excited to teach our daughter our languages but we ended up complicating her cognitive development. When she goes to school, she speaks Norwegian and when she comes home, I talk to her with 'Tigrigna' and my husband talks to her with 'Oromiffa. She is now 4 years old and can't speak any of the 3 languages properly. For now, we have decided to speak only Norwegian in our house and teach her the other languages in the future" (Gelila, 2023).

5.1.1.2 over burden on parents

Parents regardless of being an immigrant or not have to assume certain responsibilities over their children, however, immigrant families have to try harder to make sure that their children don't miss out their original culture, and at the same time fully integrate to the new society to avoid isolation. The data indicated that responsibilities in a family are shared among spouses to reduce the burden on one parent. Out of the four participants, one participant has explained about the burden on immigrant families in terms of teaching children their language and culture of origin. He explained this concept as follows:

“When you become an immigrant parent, you have the responsibility of teaching your children their origin including language, culture, and ways of socialization. If you raise your children in your own country, the burden of parents becomes less, as the environment itself guides the children in so many ways. For example, in Ethiopia, when it is the time of New Year, the nature and environment changes; new plants start to grow and the vibe of the city becomes different.

And since children grow up watching this, parents are not expected to invest extra energy explaining what New Year looks like in Ethiopia. While raising my kids in Norway, I have invested a lot of resources- time and money to make them understand where they came from and what it means to be an Ethiopian. The saddest part is regardless of your effort, most of the time, it is hard for children to make sense out of these stories because they don't feel connected to it since they left their country at a very early age or born here” (Abebe, 2023).

Selam on the other hand did not consider parents' investment on their children as a challenge or burden; because she believes it is the responsibility of immigrant families to teach their children about their origin by investing all the resources needed. According to her, immigrant parents sometimes get overwhelmed with their personal and professional life because of societal expectations, and their busy schedule will affect the quality time they need to give to their children. She further explained the point as follows:

“The fact that I was at home for few years after giving birth gave me the chance to spend quality time with my kids. However, most parents do not have this free time so they either pay a lot of money for online classes so their children learn their language and culture or choose not to teach them at all. Children however need to know where they came from and which culture they belong to, and parents shouldn’t at anytime fail to provide this for their children. In some cases, I have noticed when immigrant parents overdo it because they feel guilty as they assume their children are missing out by not living in their country of origin. This however doesn’t help the kids because it makes them overstressed and leads to burn out in few years.”

In the above interview, I contemplated the decisions and actions of parents in keeping their original identity in terms of culture and language as well as passing it to the younger generation depends on how they want to be identified in the past as well as present context.

5.1.1.3 Victims of the system: cultural difference and lack of information

Because of lack of information and existing cultural differences, immigrants have been victims of the Norwegian child welfare system, and all the participants of this study have criticized the Norwegian child welfare service by pointing out its cultural insensitivity. Kalkidan builds on this topic by stating the following:

“Norway is not the only country where children are born and raised in, which means every country, has its own way of rearing children. I believe there is no one perfect way of raising children, and disregarding others way of parenting and assuming Norway’s welfare service as the best doesn’t make any sense for me.”

Abebe discussed about his experience of the child welfare service of Norway in relation to the limited knowledge and information of immigrants about the issue. He further explains his idea as follows:

“When I was living in Trondheim, I came across an Ethiopian father who has 8 children. The guy is not familiar with the Norwegian child rearing law, and doesn’t know that it is not allowed to physically punish children in Norway. Minor physical punishment of children is common in Ethiopia and practiced by almost all Ethiopian parents. So, this father pinched his daughter and the school nurse saw the bruise, and immediately reported to Barnevernet. The Barnevernet took not only that particular child but also the other 7 children, and places them into other family’s house. After getting arrested for 8 years, the father got released last year. This is why we should always update ourselves with the laws of the country we live in so we understand our rights and responsibilities.”

In Ethiopian culture, fear is considered as respect so parents’ raise their children in a way that they develop fear over them as they believe it is a way of earning respect. According to Selam, parents are pushing their children away from them when they try to make them fearful, and the children will eventually find someone outside of the family to share their feelings with. In such cases, children will start to tell family problems to friends and teachers, and in contexts like Norway, this will result in unexpected consequences like child removal. Hence, due to the limited information about the host country’s laws and regulations, parents’ will fail to adjust their parental behavioral practices after migration. Selam further explained this point as follows:

“Immigrant parents can prevent consequences like child removal by the state by trying to understand the child welfare system of the country, and at the same time by creating awareness on their children as well. Children sometimes do take action without realizing its consequence, hence, they need to be constantly told and educated, but in order to do that, parents need to educate themselves first to better understand the context. In Norway for example, children are constantly told at school if they are not happy with the life they have at home, other families and the state can take care of them. These kinds of information can therefore be taken out of context by children and might result in false acquisitions of parents.”

By agreeing on the above discussions, Gelila discussed about the importance of proper assessment, evaluation and follow-up before measures like child removal are taken by the state. She added on this point by stating her experience as follows:

“I heard of this case from a close friend; a child tells his teacher that he was beaten by his mother and the teacher reported the case. After they started an investigation on this family, they interviewed the child and the mother multiple times. In one of the interviews with the child, they asked him to describe the house he lives in, and he told them that they have two televisions and a big fridge at their house. During their visitation however, the social workers proved that what he said wasn’t true, and they decided to drop the case assuming that the child told a lie about his mother beating him. However, not all cases end up like this as child removal mostly happens so quickly without the needed assessment.”

Both immigrants and native Norwegians have been victims of the Norwegian child welfare service; however this agency has been criticized for its attention over the immigrant groups. Abebe discussed about the child welfare service in Norway as being too harsh on immigrants compared to the local citizens. He said,

“Sometimes I wonder if there is a hidden agenda behind child removals in Norway because mostly the victims are immigrants. I personally feel like there is unnecessary focus on immigrant families and it looks like the state is always looking for faults on immigrants. Personally, I don’t believe there is any one like a parent that can give love and affection for a child. By using the term ‘child right’ as a cover, I feel like the state is taking advantage of the system, and the minority groups like migrants are becoming victims of it.”

5.1.1.4. Fear of not being good enough

Three of the participants have demonstrated a range of emotions regarding feeling of incompetence as an immigrant family. Selam explained this challenge in relation to children of immigrants.

“When you live as an immigrant, the people around you always make you feel different. Even children born in here are defined as second generation migrants instead of Norwegians, and this makes it hard for them to develop a sense of belongingness to the society. Hence, children of immigrants are usually victims of insecurity and low-self esteem.”

Abebe explained about the fear of not being good enough in relation to the treatment immigrants receive in the work place. He shared his experience as follows:

“When you are an immigrant, you always live with a fear of losing your job because priorities are always given for citizens of the country. During Covid for example, a lot of people lost their jobs and most of them were immigrants. In Norway, there are associations for immigrants that provide legal protection during such cases. I am a member of one of the associations, and I pay a membership fee every month. If it wasn’t for this association, I would have lost my job during Covid because I have seen a lot of my immigrant friends getting laid off. Migrants are always on the verge of losing their job in cases of crises, and these kinds of experiences sometimes make you question about your potential.”

Gelila discussed about the feeling of being not good enough as a challenge for immigrants in relation to parenting. She said,

“Children in Norway are properties of the state, and this limits my parental rights. Sometimes I feel like I need permission from the state to raise my own kid in a certain way, and this makes me question if I am capable enough to be a parent. Especially in cases of child removals, parents feel insecure about their parental ability.”

5.1.1.5. Limited power of parents

The Norwegian child welfare system supports the freedom of children, which gives full autonomy to children to decide on their own life, and limits authority of parents over their

children. Three out of four participants mentioned this as a challenge for immigrant parents. Abebe explained this point as follows:

“There are several things which are accepted by the law and culture of Norway that are considered as taboos in Ethiopia. For example, homosexuality is forbidden by Ethiopia’s culture, religion and the law as well but is accepted and practiced in Norway. Regarding this, most Ethiopian immigrant parents face difficulty in limiting their say in the sexual orientation of their children. I personally try to teach my children about what is allowed in our culture and religion and what is not. However, I also teach them that they have to respect the personal choice of others and that they don’t have to be judgmental. Freedom for children is something we need to appreciate not fear but needs to be properly managed as well.”

Kalkidan discussed about her fear of not being able to influence her child to follow her religion because of the limited authority of parents in the country. She said,

“I am Christian and I want my child to practice my religion because it’s important for me to keep the religion of my families. In Norway however, children have the full right to choose their own path including religion, and I am afraid I don’t have much say in her choice.”

Immigrants have developed unnecessary fear over the Norwegian child welfare system, and as a result, limit their parental authority over their children to the extreme. Due to the lack of parental control, children of immigrant parents are becoming addicts, school drop outs and criminals. Gelila explained this point as follows:

“I have seen many Ethiopian children who are lost between the culture of Norway and Ethiopia, as they didn’t grow up with the proper supervision from parents. They can’t speak their language or practice their culture of origin. They are disrespectful of their parents, elders and peers. I personally know a lot of Ethiopian parents who do not have enough knowledge about their parental rights, and to avoid of being victims of child removal, they allow their

children to do whatever they want. They even let them watch movies and play games that are not age appropriate. Parents need to know the extent to which their authority and power over their children is considered as abuse or crime.”

The discussion with Gelila reflected that some immigrant families have misconceptions about the Norwegian child welfare service as well as their right and responsibilities as parents. I reflect this assumption is due to the lack of knowledge and awareness of parents about the environment they live in. I also had the impression that the phrase “...it is because I don’t have the full say in the life of my child...” is used as a justification for parental failure.

5.1.2. Opportunities of Ethiopian immigrant parents

In the process of movement and search for a better life, immigrant families will come across opportunities as well as the possible challenges. After explaining about the challenges they faced as an immigrant parent in Norway, all participants simultaneously talked about their opportunities as well.

5.1.2.1. Exposure to new culture

Migration is one way of diversifying culture and ethnicity in a given country, and if both immigrants and natives use the resource properly, it is a great chance to learn about variety of cultures. One out of the four participants in this study has discussed about exposure to a new culture as an opportunity for immigrant parents and further explained as follows:

“My families had the chance to learn a beautiful new language and culture after moving here. My wife and I took different classes to familiarize ourselves with the culture of Norway. We both are really happy that we get to live in a new environment where we can challenge ourselves by trying to understand a whole new culture. Fortunately, adapting to the new language and culture of Norway was easy for my children but not so much for me and my wife. However, we enjoyed the experience” (Abebe, 2023).

5.1.2.2. *Better standard of living*

Immigrants leave their country of origin and beloved ones in search of a better life, accordingly, better standard of living as an opportunity for immigrant parents was discussed by three of the participants. Abebe explained better standard of living in Norway in relation to financial stability, safety, and freedom of time. He said,

“When I decided to move to Norway, it is to change my life for the better and open opportunities for myself and families. By paying 46% taxes to the state, I am now categorized under the highest income earning communities. I wouldn’t probably be in the same status if I was in Ethiopia. I have now a better standard of living both in terms of material and non-material means. Besides earning a better income, I consider the safety of my children as an opportunity of living in Norway. Knowing that I am raising my children in one of the safest countries in the world always gives me a mental satisfaction. I have time freedom in my job as well, which gave me the chance to spend more quality time with my kids. I highly appreciate the system of Norway in this regard, because it prioritizes family life, and for me, standard of living should be measured from all these aspects as well.”

Gelila also discussed about safety as a measurement of standard of living and an opportunity of immigrant parents by stating the following:

“The kindergartens and schools in Norway are bigger in size compared to those in Ethiopia. The state closely monitors and supervises them so they are very clean and safe for children. It is not easy to give your children to strangers especially in a new country, so the school tries to build trust with parents so we feel comfortable with the new environment. In Ethiopia, as you know, even the playgrounds are not safe for children to play, because they are not built by professionals. I remember the time where my first child had an incident while playing at school because the playing ground wasn’t properly fixed.”

Selam discussed a better standard of living in relation to a better health system. She further explained her point as follows:

“After giving birth, I had medical complications so I had to stay at the hospital for few weeks. My child didn’t have a heartbeat so I had to do a surgery right away, and I have lost a lot of blood during the surgery. With the health system in Ethiopia, both my child and I would have died; hearing deaths of mothers during birth is not uncommon in our country. Hence, I am thankful for the Norwegian health system as it saved both mine and my child’s life next to God. In addition, they are also very strict with the follow-up of children health.”

5.1.3. Support system

A support system is essential for immigrants so they can easily cope with the challenges they encounter during acculturation, and also to open up more life opportunities. Basing the response of the participants of the study, the support system for immigrant families was reviewed in terms of state and community support.

5.1.3.1. State Support

According to Abebe, immigrants can be two types- those that migrate for professional reasons- education or employment, and those who migrate for political reasons- asylum seekers. The type of support the states provides therefore depends on the type of migration. In cases of asylum seekers, the system itself provides all the support ranging from free language courses to assigning Norwegian families to immigrants so they can easily learn to integrate with the community. Overall, when an asylum seeker enters a country, the system accommodates his/her need which doesn’t apply for other type of migrants (P.1, Abebe).

One out of four participants has mentioned state’s support in terms of its encouragement for immigrant parents to teach their children about ethno cultural identification.

“When I first arrive in Norway, the commune assigned a teacher for my children who can speak both Amharic and Norwegian since the mother tongue of my two children is Amharic. This is a free service provided by the state of

Norway that helps children of immigrant families keep their original language while also learning a new one. Even though the official language of Ethiopia is Amharic, not all Ethiopian immigrants speak the language, and by recognizing the diversity of immigrants, the state of Norway has arranged speakers of different languages” (Abebe, 2023).

Supporting women is supporting families, and two of the participants have discussed about state support in relation to support to immigrant mothers.

“When you are a mother in Norway, you are entitled for more days of work leave, and this helps mothers to keep their job and at the same time raise their children without a problem. In Ethiopia, as you know, women struggle to keep their job after giving birth because of the limited maternity leave. Most women are being forced to choose between their career and children. In case of Norway, maternity leave is even more for single mothers as they don’t have support from their partners” (Kalkidan, 2023).

Abebe added on the above point by discussing about the support of medical professionals for immigrant mothers.

“When you give birth in Norway, nurses do not only does check-up on the development of the child but also make sure that the mother is not alone and have people around her. They educate her about breastfeeding and child rearing in Norway. They are especially conscious about the cases of immigrant mothers given their status of vulnerability.”

5.1.3.2. Community Support

In addition to state support, Ethiopian immigrant families experienced ongoing community support that created a feeling of home and belongingness. Mostly, immigrants have the feeling of depression and anxiety; because of their vulnerable status in the society, and the support they receive from the community reliefs their stress to some extent. Community support for immigrants can be discussed in relation to support provided by natives and

other fellow immigrants. One out of the four participants mentioned religious institutions as sources of community support.

“The Ethiopian Orthodox Church in Norway serves as bridge between new immigrants who needs support and the old ones that have stayed longer in Norway and have the resources to support others. The support can be any kind like helping them find a job or a place to stay. I am sure this support also exists among the Muslim and Protestant communities as well. As I am one of the coordinators in the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, I have firsthand experience in this area. We have helped a lot of Ethiopian and Eritrean immigrants to find a temporary house and also a job at different times” (Abebe, 2023).

For a betterment of immigrants’ integration, information is mandatory, and one participant has discussed about the exchange of valuable information among Ethiopian communities in Norway as a community support.

“We have an association among Ethiopian immigrants in Norway so we try to help each other and exchange information. For example, I am an oil engineer so regarding my area, when people call me for information; I provide them with what they need. This works for the other professions too; for example, Ethiopian lawyers have been really helpful with regards to supporting the community especially when it comes to cases of children. We also have University professors that are experts in the area of politics that can give us political and legal advices” (Abebe, 2023).

Financial support during crises was mentioned by one out of the four participants as a community support for immigrant families.

“We had few cases in the past few years where Barnevernet took the children of our Ethiopian friends, and the Ethiopian community supported the families financially as they didn’t have enough money to hire a private lawyer. Sometimes people get deported to their country because of different reasons

and in such cases; we also collect money to cover their flight tickets” (Gelila, 2023).

The concept of neighborhood and friendship is highly valued in Ethiopian culture, and two of the participants have explained about the day to day support Ethiopians provide for each other as a community support for immigrant families.

“I have Ethiopian neighbors and they really support me in my day to day life like watching over my kid when I have somewhere to be. I also do the same whenever they need my help, and in addition, we also give emotional support for each other” (Kalkidan, 2023).

The support for immigrant families by native Norwegians was explained by one out of the four participants by explaining Norwegians effort to teach immigrants about the language and culture of Norway. The participant further explained this point as follows:

“Norwegians volunteer in different areas during their free time and most commonly when they are retired. Hence, most retired Norwegians spend their time teaching immigrants about Norwegian language and culture. This gives immigrants a chance to build friendship with locals and expand their networks. It is also useful in terms of minimizing stereotypes about immigrants as it brings local citizens and immigrants together” (Selam, 2023).

From the above discussions with the participants, I had the impression that the emotional and psychological stability of immigrant families was regulated by community support. Most of the participants have expressed their appreciation to their fellow Ethiopians for the unreserved and consistent support throughout their stay in Norway. I considered the emotional stability of immigrant parents, which arise from support systems, contributed to the better adjustment of children.

5.2. Balancing the past and present

This review describes the experience of Ethiopian immigrant parents in terms of balancing their past and present for the best practice of parental behaviors. The review therefore found three dimensions which are discussed below.

5.2.1. Parenting in individualistic countries: The case of Norway

Before making big decisions like migration, parents try to compare the pros and cons of raising children in the chosen destination country. Often times, they run into arguments since they have different interests in selecting a destination country. The participants of this study have discussed about both the positive and negative aspects of being an immigrant in individualistic country as a parent and single individual. Kalkidan shared her experience of living in an individualistic country before becoming a parent as follows:

“I have lived in Norway as a master’s student before I brought my daughter here. So, I started experiencing life in Norway as a single person who does not have any family responsibilities. By then, there were a lot of Ethiopian and African students in my class so I was closer to them compared to the Norwegians. Norwegians mostly are quiet and not really good with communication. After I started my PhD, I became more involved with the native Norwegians because I didn’t have Ethiopians around. Even though most of my current colleagues are Norwegians, I still don’t develop a close relationship like the ones I had with my Ethiopian and African friends. I believe this might be because Norwegians are shy and reserved.”

Three out of four participants have discussed about their experience as an immigrant parent in individualistic country in relation to social life. Accordingly, Kalkidan shared her experience as follows:

“I have experienced several challenges when I raised my kid in Norway. The first few months after she came to Norway, she used to get sick a lot and I had to take work leave every time it happens because I had no one to leave her with. In such cases, you wish you are in your home country with your people

for support. Some days we both get sick and I have to take care of both of us. After I permanently moved to Norway, I changed my house once and moving alone was a very challenging experience. I didn't have anyone to help me with the packing and moving, and when you have a kid, it becomes even harder. In Ethiopia, your neighbors' doors are always open, which is a sign that anyone who needs help can come inside and ask for it. There is no private life in Ethiopia; we share the good and the bad with our neighbors. In Norway on the other hand, they have a closed culture where asking for random help from neighbors is seen as strange."

Selam also added her experience on the above point by discussing about the low social interaction among Norwegian societies. She said,

"In Ethiopia, your neighbors are considered as your closest friends and families. They are the ones who will be there for you before any one in cases of emergencies. Children in Ethiopia are raised by the community not only the parent. In Norway, if you see your neighbor in the street, you might say hi but the relationship usually doesn't go beyond that. Their way of socialization is completely different than ours."

According to her, immigrants will experience the difference in parenting between individualistic and collectivist countries starting from the moment they give birth. She shared her experience regarding this as follows:

"When I gave birth to my second child, my husband was the only one who was next to me. My Ethiopian friend who lives in Oslo came after a week to visit me. I used to feel very lonely because I didn't have people around. As you know, in Ethiopia, the room will get full of people starting from the moment you give birth and there won't be any day where you will be alone. Relatives and friends will come from other cities just to visit you, and most of the times, mothers feel overwhelmed. Since my husband had to go back to work after I gave birth, I was alone most of the times. I had an infection when I gave birth

to my second child and I had some medical complications following that, but I had no option than taking care of the household chores and my new born baby by myself.”

By emphasizing on the value of socialization, Gelila shared her experience of being an immigrant parent in Norway as follows:

“My closest neighbors are from Turkish, Kosovo, Eritrea and Norway, and it is surprising how the concept of neighborhood and socialization is practiced differently among these people. The families from Turkish and Eritrea are more open to social gatherings and interactions compared to the Norwegian’s. Sometimes, when I urgently need somewhere to be, I leave my children at my Eritrean or Turkish neighbor’s place but I don’t do this with the Norwegians.”

The low social life in individualistic countries was discussed by one participant in terms of its impact on children. The fact that individualistic societies don’t have strong social life makes children born in such societies less socially active, and she further explained the point as follows:

“Children born in Norway have the mentality of “I” because they are thought to be self-reliant and independent. On the other hand, in collectivist communities like Ethiopia, children are raised in a way they know how to share with others and understand the importance of social life. Hence, when children of immigrant families integrate to such societies, they are likely to lose their value of socialization, creating a difference between the two generations” (Selam, 2023).

One out of the four participants on the other hand has discussed about parenting in individualistic country from a positive aspect by emphasizing on the support of state.

“I am among one of those people who says parenting in individualistic countries is way more easier than parenting in collectivist ones, because the state will provide you with all you need and compensates the community

support you have missed from not raising your kids in collectivist countries. In Norway for example, the state assumes most of the responsibilities of the family in an organized and a better way if you compare it to the support of communities. For example, the state of Norway provides free health service for your children until they reach the age 15. After they reach 15, they will start to partially pay for medical services and will start paying the full amount when they reach 18. Besides, every family has their own family doctors in cases of any emergency or health disturbance. This is a relief for parents as children get sick more often especially during their early age which is stressful for families” (Abebe, 2023).

He added on his point by explaining on how Norway’s educational system makes parenting easier for immigrant families by comparing it to Ethiopia.

“The educational system of Norway has made my life easier. To mention one example, they have kindergartens almost in all neighborhoods. In Ethiopia, there is a high probability you will spend 1-2 hours to take your child to school due to the limited number of schools in the country. The time you spend on transportation takes a lot of time from your personal and work life. It is also not so common to rent school buses in Ethiopia since most parents can’t afford it. In here, I don’t even have to use a bus to take my kids to school as the kindergarten is 5 minutes away from my home.”

5.2.2. Parenting in collectivist countries: The case of Ethiopia

Most of immigrant parents’ experiences in raising their children in individualistic countries are related to the challenges they have faced due to low social life, which leads to less community support. On the contrary, the strong community support in collectivist countries was discussed by participants as a positive experience. One out of the four participants has discussed about the positive aspect of community support in collectivist societies in terms of easing daily life.

“Let’s say you get sick and need someone to watch over your kids or someone to take your child to school, this is not a problem when you raise your child in collectivist societies. You can leave them at your parent’s, relatives’ or neighbors house without any worries. This doesn’t exist in Norway because as you can see everyone lives in a closed door. The concept of privacy is highly valued among Norwegians and you have to respect it as long as you live here” (Selam, 2023).

According to Selam, the emotional availability of friends, relatives and community members could not be compared to the support you get from welfare countries. Raising children in collectivist countries like Ethiopia is a responsibility of the entire community as the concept of ‘Ubuntu’, which emphasis on the interconnectedness of humanity, is highly valued by African countries. Selam has discussed the importance of human relations and its importance for the growth and development of oneself. She further explains her point as follows:

“When you raise your child in Ethiopia, everyone assumes the responsibility of taking care of your child. For example, if someone in the neighborhood sees my child doing something wrong, they punish him/her as if it is their own child. The children grow up fearing and respecting not only their biological parents but also their relatives, neighbors, and the community in general. Isn’t there that one neighbor you are always afraid of?”

On the other hand, one out of the four participants has emphasized on the negative aspect of being a parent in Ethiopia in relation to the economy of parents. The economic hardship of raising children in developing countries like Ethiopia is challenging for the majority, and based on the data, the economic problem that exist in most collectivist countries is considered as a cause for the negative experience of parents.

“The number of school dropouts in Ethiopia is very high and in most cases this is related to the economy of parents. Since Ethiopia is a developing country and most Ethiopian families have low income, they can’t afford to feed their

children three times a day. Due to this, most children come to school without a lunch, and since the children don't have the resistance to sit in class the entire day, they will drop out of school. Following this, the Ethiopian government designed and implemented a project to feed children in selected schools. In Norway on the other hand, almost all kindergartens provide lunch for students and this is more than supporting families financially because it saves time and stress for parents”(kalkidan, 2023).

5.2.3. Influence of the past on the present parental behavioral practices

The influence of the past context on the present cultural and parental practices is discussed from both positive and negative aspects. The positive influence of the past cultural context on the present parental behavioral practices is discussed by only one participant and he explained the point as follows:

“I am an Amharic speaker who follows an Orthodox religion. I am very strict when it comes to my religion, and I want all my children to look like me in terms religion. I also want them to speak the same language and practice the same culture not only as me but also as my parents (their grandparents), so they can easily communicate with their families of origin. At the same time, the Norwegian society expects them to understand the culture and language of Norway. As a parent, I am therefore responsible in balancing the two. The influence of the past culture and heritage can turn out to be positive or negative depending on how the parents manages it.

From my experience, the past cultural context has a positive implication for my current parental behavior because it guides me during my parenting journey. Because of the past, I get to know the beautiful culture of Ethiopia which I am proud of and I am passing it to my children. For example, I teach them “Geez”, an ancient Semitic language of Ethiopia and also the traditional musical instruments of Ethiopia including “Kerar”, “Begen”, “Mesenko”. In addition, they are also registered on an online class given directly from Ethiopia. It is very expensive but I believe that my children shouldn't miss

anything about their culture just because they are not physically there. All the money and time that is being invested on my children is because of the value I have for my past” (Abebe, 2023).

Two out of four participants have discussed the impact of the past cultural context on the present parental behavioral practice from the negative point of view. According to Kalkidan, most immigrant parents fail in balancing the past and present, because of their unregulated motivation to make their children look exactly like them, which affects the children’s current social life. She further explained this as follows:

“I want my children to choose to be Christians but we always try not to force them or in any way pressure their mind. We want them to understand what the religion is about and love it before they accept or practice it, and for that to happen, we always try to teach them. However, I witnessed some parents who are conservatives and give no chance and space for their children to choose the life they want because they are blinded by their past life. For the sake of your children, it is important to compromise some cultural differences when you move to a new place, because they have to look like the environment they are currently living in. Children need to be guided so they choose the right path in life but pressuring them to live in the past won’t help anyone.

Selam also discussed about the negative aspect of the past on the present parental behavioral practices in relation to its impact on children. According to her, in the process of dragging the past culture into the present context, children might get lost in between. She explained this as follows:

“If you ask me to put it in percentage, children spend 95% of their time with the community and 5% with their families, and in order to get acceptance from both their families and peers, it is common to see them behave differently around friends and relatives. For example, when I take my children to school, I have observed a lot of children being really ashamed of speaking their native language with their parents because their friends expect them to speak

Norwegian. So, they insist in talking Norwegian with their parents when they are around their peers.

My second child was born in Norway and when he was in kindergarten, he wasn't comfortable in talking Amharic in front of his friends. He always asks me to speak in Norwegian by emphasizing that his friends are Norwegians and only speak that language. I tried my best to make him understand why my husband and I talk to him with his native language and how it's important for him to know his origin, but he was too young to understand. So, my husband and I decided to take the whole family to Ethiopia in 2019. We spend almost a month in the different parts of Ethiopia. It is after that trip he started to eat Ethiopian food and speaking Amharic. Now both my children are confident about their identity; they practice their language and culture with no shame."

Chapter 6: Discussion

This chapter discusses the main themes captured from the results of the study, by utilizing literatures and theoretical frameworks. The main objective of this study is to gain knowledge and understanding on the lived experience of Ethiopian immigrant parents in Norway, and to study this area, I focused on the perception and challenges of immigrant families.

6.1. Experiences and challenges of Ethiopian immigrant parents

The first research question was specifically designed to understand the perception of Ethiopian immigrant parents in terms of challenges they face and opportunities they receive in the host country. The result indicated that regardless of the availability of support systems in the host country, all participants have encountered several challenges as an immigrant parent in Norway, which affected their perception negatively. Immigrant families, including those with access to sufficient resources, are often exposed to adversities, because the process of migration by itself brings stress (Keating et al., 2016). Immigrants leave their country, often driven by the hope of better opportunity, and their perception and experience as an immigrant family will be determined by the reception of the host country. According to Keating et al., (2016), a new environment brings new challenges, and immigrant families will be victims of range of difficulties such as difference in culture and language and discrimination following their settlement in the host country.

From my perspective, the experiences and perceptions of Ethiopian immigrant families towards the parental behavioral practices in Norway can be explained by the difference in culture and strong influence of the past. As many African countries are collectivist societies with high value for social support, Ethiopian families are more likely to be held unto these traditions. In most developed and welfare countries on the other hand, the society practices an individualistic way of life, which explains the cultural shock by immigrants in the beginning of their settlement. The challenges of immigrant parents in Norway are answered by discussions related to the thematic areas of; language, burden on parents, limited parental rights and being victims of the child welfare system. The participants in this study reported multiple challenges as an immigrant parent; however, limited parental rights and

being victims of the child welfare system were the most pressing issues, which are highlighted in the following section.

6.1.1. “Children in Norway are properties of the state, and this limits my parental rights”

One of the challenges reported by the participants was the limited parental right and authority in Norway. Immigrants are heterogenous groups, meaning their perception and experience towards certain issues is not identical. The results of the literature reviews and empirical study among Ethiopian immigrants also reflect the above fact. However, with regards to state’s involvement in the life of individuals and families in Norway, majority of the immigrant groups have more or less same reflections. At the time of integration, the participants have passed through challenging moments, and they reported this in relation to fear over the Norwegian child welfare service, which force them to limit their say in their children life. The comprehensive welfare system in Norway has been viewed and judged differently by insiders and outsiders; as some groups appreciate the system, others feel overwhelmed by it.

According to Hantrais (2004), defamilialised welfare that supports families and protects the best interest of the child characterizes the state of Norway. Hence, to make sure children have the best life and their interests and needs are met, the state deeply intervenes in family life (Ericsson, 2000 & Picot, 2014). The question is which standard is the state using to measure what is best for children? Children are vulnerable groups, mainly the reason why they are provided with special care and attention. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) approves states’ full intervention in family life in cases of any maltreatment.

Protection of citizens against potential harms and risks is the main idea behind the Norwegian welfare system, giving full responsibility to the state in families’ life (Angell, 2004). The state’s intervention in Norway begins at the kindergarten stage of children’s life with the intension of controlling potential attempts on children by peers, teachers, families or community members. The family service by the child welfare system includes investigation of any kind of maltreatments in or outside of the home (Gilbert et al., 2011), which is appreciated by all the participants of the study since they believe it is important to protect children from harm. The modern childhood sociology supports states’ intervention

in child cases as it considers children as “beings” that requires assistance (Pösö et al. 2014, p. 485). The Ethiopian parents however indicates that, the intervention of the state of Norway in family life is extreme and exceeds the normal amount since sometimes it’s not related to any kind of maltreatments. Most of the participants were clueless about their rights as a parent and their position in the household, as the state assumes the position of a caregiver.

The Norwegian child welfare service is well known for its provision of the best service for children (Handulle, 2021). Due to this reason, the welfare system of Norway is not entirely viewed as negative by immigrant parents, as it protects children from harm and gives the best opportunity. When people leave their country of origin, regardless of the reason, look for a better system that offers better opportunities. Due to this, most families’ first choices are usually welfare countries as they are best for the safety and development of children. It is therefore not surprising to see immigrants’ high level of trust for the Norwegian political system particularly in relation to education and health (Friberg & Bjørnset, 2019).

The Ethiopian immigrant parents acknowledge the services and supports provided by the state of Norway by mentioning that it is the main reason behind choosing Norway as a destination country. They appreciated the education and health system of Norway, which supports immigrant families both in financial and non-financial means. The study by Friberg & Bjørnset (2019) shows the same result by reflecting on the vulnerability of immigrants and their need for the support of the state for their families’ survival. According to Statistics Norway (2017), the state of Norway fully funds kindergartens, contributing to the huge percentage of children at school. These kinds of welfare packages however come with responsibilities as well, expecting citizens of the country to be open to state’s intervention.

Children in Norway are the responsibility of teachers, doctors, nurses, social workers; all have the mandate to report any suspicion in the life of a child. This was reported by the participants in terms of putting pressure on parents, as the close attention and follow-up on their children has the possibility of child removal. Consistently, Bufdir (2020) study shows similar results stating that approximately 53,000 children received support from the Norwegian child welfare service, mostly because of in-home reasons, and according to

Handulle (2021), children of immigrant families are majority of the victims. According to Korzeniewska et al., (2019), the negative experience of immigrants towards the Norwegian child welfare system is not limited to non-western migrants but Europeans as well.

The involvement of Norwegian child welfare system over family life was discussed by the participants in terms of undermining parents' ability. The Ethiopian immigrant parents have highly struggled with their unrecognized parental power; the struggles were mainly caused by the community and state stereotype against their cultural heritage in particular to child rearing. The study by Okpokiri's (2021) shows the same result among Nigerian immigrant parents in Britain by reflecting on the low self-esteem of immigrant parents, because their parental behavioral practices are not neither accepted nor respected by the state of Britain. In Norway, the state starts to take over the child starting from birth, expecting mothers to breastfeed and care for their children as per the guidelines (Smette & Rosten, 2019), making parents question about their parental skills. According to the participants, unhealthy and disturbed families need to be regulated since it affects the emotional and psychological health of children. However, the intense involvement of the state in the life of families and the terrifying stories related to it has caused fear which overshadows families trust over the system.

According to Tembo et al., (2020), the concept of family is worshiped and authority of families is highly respected by non-western societies which leave state with minimum intervention on family life. Similarly, in Ethiopian culture, parents are given the full autonomy over their children's life including caring and disciplining them. Children are labeled as properties of parents because the society believes that children could only get the best love, care, and support from primary caregivers. Immigrants from such backgrounds are therefore most likely to negatively perceive the high involvement of welfare states on the life of children. The same result was shown by Sawrikar & Katz (2014) study, reflecting immigrants fear towards the child welfare service of Australia. The negative experience of immigrants towards the CWS in Canada is also discussed in the study by Kikulwe (2021).

Parenthood comprises a set of rules and regulations in Norway, imposed upon and internalized by parents. The state defines what is right and what is wrong, implying "good

parent” and “bad parent”. This act is considered as inconsiderate of families’ identity especially minorities since it only serves the white and middle class societies (Hays, 1996). This ideological construct of parenthood and low cultural competence of workers in the CWS will therefore lead to categorization of groups as deviant. According to Fauske et al., (2009), the response of child welfare services to family cases depends on the class and status of families. For example, with resourceful families, child cases are considered as individual cases not as family dysfunctions, giving more right and space for parents to negotiate. In cases of child removal from such families, the consent of parents is always protected. The recognition of social and financial resources therefore puts disadvantages and minority groups at risk (Kojan, 2011).

Overall, the controlling nature of the welfare system in Norway over family functioning led to emotional stress of Ethiopian immigrant families, which force them to limit their say in the life of their children. The limited involvement of parents’ in the life of their children is therefore becoming a cause for the increase number of deviant children in Norway who are traits to families, community and state.

6.2.2 “Disregarding others way of parenting and assuming their own as the best doesn’t make sense”

The participants of this study reported their experience of being victims of the Norwegian child welfare service in terms of lack of knowledge about the system and cultural insensitivity of the service workers; the later one has received much attention by the Ethiopian immigrant parents. Parenting is socially constructed, and hence child rearing is practiced differently in the different parts of the world, as there is no universal way of practicing it (Rashid & Amin, 2012). The concept of childhood differs in time, space, political and economic as well as socio-cultural contexts, and the participants agreed that the child welfare system in Norway is inconsiderate of the above factors of childhood and parenting.

According to Rashid & Amin (2012), the state of Norway is officially registered as a caregiver of children, with full power and control to discipline children. The power of the state hence represents the political and cultural aspect of the country, which apparently does not recognize the comprehensive concept of parenthood. Following this, most

immigrants have been victims of the system, and according to the Ethiopian immigrant families, the state has failed to advocate for these groups. In Ethiopian culture, for example, forced feeding is not considered as inappropriate but instead a way of showing love and care for children, however this same act is categorized as neglect in Norway. According to one of the participants, Ethiopian immigrant families are losing their children for the state because of practicing their own way of parenting like pinching children when they do wrong.

The Ethiopian immigrant families have reflected on the concept of “the best interest of the child” in Norway, as they believe intervening in family affairs and taking away children from their beloved ones could not be defined as best for children in any context. This act makes the participants question about the cultural sensitivity of the Norwegian child welfare service since most of the victims are non-whites, specifically immigrants. According to Statistic Norway (2011), 11,700 cases were handled by the Norwegian child welfare service, and 10,000 children were placed in foster home by 2011. This shows the state’s trust over the Norwegian foster parents, as they are believed to provide what is best for the children and raise them as per the Norwegian culture. According to Kim (2008), the Norwegian child welfare service shows discrimination against immigrants, which is reflected by their cultural insensitivity to non-whites.

The intention behind child removal in Norway and the overall intervention of the state in family life is questioned by most immigrants, because the Norwegian child welfare services disappear when there are cases of abuse and neglect in the foster homes (Rashid & Amin, 2012). Since foster parents are Norwegians and are automatically assumed they don’t do wrong, it seems like they are exploiting the system; most cases of neglect and abuse in foster cares are undocumented in Norway (Rashid & Amin, 2012). According to the UNCRC, the family is the preferred unit to raise a child, and removing the child from the home especially without the consideration of the cultural background of individual family members, contradicts with the document. Removing a child from home according to (Rashid & Amin, 2012) should be the last option, and the result of this study reflects the contrary since the child welfare services do not even conduct a proper assessment and follow-up before making such decisions.

6.2.2.1 Implication to acculturation theory

Challenges experienced by immigrant parents can be explained by assimilation and separation strategy (Schaefer & Simon, 2017). According to assimilation strategy, immigrants are all about fully participating in the life of the host society, where as immigrants practicing the separation strategy want to keep their original identity. However, regardless of the strategies adapted by immigrants, challenges always exist during acculturation. According to Kriz & Skivenes (2010), the Norwegian integration approach is assimilation, which is also reflected in the result of this study, as Ethiopian immigrant parents were expected to be bilingual and bicultural. The assimilation approach recognizes the diverse ethnic background of immigrants since they came from different culture; the approach however, expects immigrants to gradually lose their original culture and move towards a complete assimilation.

Acculturation theory recognizes the fact that not all migrants adopt the culture of the host community in the same way, as attachment of individuals to their origin country and culture varies. Thus, the state and community members of the host country should be patient with immigrants during their acculturation period. Hence, immigrants need to be oriented about the rules, regulations, cultures, and laws of the new environment so they can easily integrate to the society. The result of this study however shows failure of the state of Norway in providing the needed information and knowledge to acculturating individuals particularly related to parenting, as most Ethiopian immigrant families are still experiencing challenges during integration due to lack of information, which mostly end with them being a victim of the system.

The integration approach designed and implemented in Norway is not sensitive to the structural and institutional contexts of migrants, and this affects the labels given for immigrant parents as they are seen as unconscious about the welfare system of the society. According to Algan et al., (2013), cultural diversity and cultural identity need to be given much attention for successful integration and smooth acculturation to happen; however, Norway has not been dealing well with the cultural heterogeneity of immigrants. At the micro level, local citizens of host countries need to promote tolerance and respect towards

immigrants' culture while at the macro level, the state design an accommodating system for the diversified culture of immigrants. At both levels, the intention according to Algan et al., (2013) should be understanding individual immigrants' socioeconomic and cultural background, as it impacts their behavior and actions.

6.2. Opportunities of Ethiopian immigrant parents

The intention of this research is to find out the opportunities of immigrant parents. The result of the study presents the opportunities of Ethiopian immigrant parents in relation to exposure to a new culture, better standard of living, and support system from the state; however, I highlighted the issue of better standard of living since it was given much emphasis by all the participants.

6.2.1. *"I have now a better standard of living both in terms of material and non-material means"*

Migration has always been mentioned together with difficulties since migrants are viewed as vulnerable groups that are likely to experience hardships. However, an improved standard of living after migration proves migration is beyond hardship and crises. The social, economic, cultural and educational status of individuals interacts differently to resources and level of life satisfaction, hence recognizing the distinct differences between immigrants context is important to be able to understand the opportunities accessible to them.

All Ethiopian immigrant families' in the study have acknowledged better standard of living in Norway, and they considered it as an opportunity for immigrant families. According to one of the participant, his better standard of living in Norway has resulted from his own resource which he explained it as educational resource but not from the welfare system of Norway. He explained his financial stability in Norway as an opportunity but he emphasized that it is because of his previous academic status and work experience. The study conducted by Sam (1998) shows the positive relationship between integration and education, as education is linked to better economy which leads to better income and easier integration.

For the other participants however, access for employment in Norway is high regardless of the educational backgrounds, which later contributes to the financial stability of families. The report by OECD (2015a; 2015b) shows the same result by describing the economic

situation of Norway as very favorable; low level of unemployment and government debt, which also contributed to the high level of political stability and social life in the country.

According to Sam (1998), a sudden change in the life of people disturbs their wellbeing and later affects their life satisfaction; hence, immigrants need a strong social network, which supports their emotional and psychological wellbeing and good financial status, which supports their economic life. From the socio-psychological point of view, life satisfaction is all about 'global' wellbeing, which is discussed in relation to non-material resources. All the Ethiopian immigrant parents have discussed about better standard of living in Norway from non-financial aspects, particularly to the safety of children.

The social welfare system of Norway assists immigrant parents in cases of any kinds of disruptions, which guarantees safe family life. According to Engel et al., (2015), the social assistance of welfare countries are safety nets that serves unable citizens, including those who are not entitled for the services of the country. The Ethiopian immigrant parents have emphasized on Norway's childhood education and care in explaining about safety of children. According to Engel et al., (2015), there has been a rapid expansion of service provision in Norway following the country's funding allocation on early childhood education. Children of asylum seekers for example don't have the right to attend kindergarten however, the state has granted these families the access to 'child base' that allows children to stay in school at least for 3 hours a day.

According to Engel et al., (2015), kindergartens in Norway are overseen by the municipalities, which allow local authorities in private and public service provisions. Hence, any inadequate conditions will be reported to and fixed by the municipality, which leads to higher level of trust by parents in the welfare system. Some of the parents have mentioned time freedom as an opportunity for immigrant families, as it allows them to spend quality time with their children. The time freedom was discussed in particular to the generous parental leave in Norway.

6.3. The differences in parental behavioral practices in Ethiopia and Norway

The main aim of this research question is to understand the difference in parental behavioral practice in Norway and Ethiopia in relation to socio-cultural context. As a result, the study presents the difference in parental practices in relation to social life, which

is discussed as a challenge in the Norway context and an opportunity in the Ethiopian context. Hence, the next section highlights the concept of social life in both countries.

6.3.1. “As you can see, everyone in Norway lives in a closed door”

According to Kagitcibasi (1996), the concept of self-esteem and independence is highly valued in individualistic countries, which affects parenting and parental socializations. The Ethiopian immigrant parents have reflected on the low social life in individualistic countries in relation to its challenges for immigrant parents when it comes to raising children, as immigrants need the support of a community given the fact that they are far from their home and loved ones. The study by Andvig et al., (2022) shows the same result by discussing the importance of peer support for the empowerment of individuals especially when the individual is from a disadvantaged group.

According to Schmidt (2018), the loss of the extended social network will eventually cause stress among immigrants, which was shared by the Ethiopian immigrant families as well. One of the participants has discussed the low social life of Norwegians in relation to her experience during birth. According to her, since she didn't have people around, she passed through a very hard time both during pregnancy and child birth. The study by Reupert (2022) shows a positive relationship between mental health and community support.

6.3.2 “Your neighbors’ doors are always open, which is a sign that anyone who needs help can come inside and ask for it.

Families will encounter adversities in the different stages of life, which can be mitigated by the support of others, however according to Reupert et al., (2022), there is no one specific sector to provide support for families. The “village approach”, which discusses the responsibility of different organizations for the upbringing of children, is therefore useful in addressing family problems. In Ethiopian culture, families receive support from their surroundings; friends, relatives, neighbors and others, and this is discussed by the Ethiopian immigrant parents in terms of its advantage in raising children. Most of the participants have discussed about the support from neighbors as a resource, which they couldn't find in the Norwegian society.

In collectivist cultures, according to Markus & Kitayama (1991), support for individual and family's wants and needs are characterized by the interdependence and social

connectedness. It cannot be denied that parents are the primary caregivers of children; however it is important to recognize the support of others during child rearing since parents cannot exist or function in a vacuum.

6.4. The influence of the past cultural context on present parental behavioral practices

This research question was designed with the intention of understanding the influence of the past context on the present parental practice, as I believe human beings are embedded in their past culture and way of socialization. The cultural distance between the host country and origin country causes behavioral change in both parents and their children, by making them subject to their past life. Parental behavioral practices will therefore start to change upon migration.

The Ethiopian immigrant families discussed this behavioral change from both positive and negative aspects. Parents have the desire of raising their children in the same way they were raised because of the respect they have for their culture, and this will end up in creating confusion in the children if it is not properly managed and regulated. The interaction of families with the larger society could be best explained by family system theory, which determines families place in the system. According to Smith et al., (2009), the family system has the tendency to balance changes caused by micro and macro environments in order to maintain the status quo of the family. Family is a unit and according to Walsh (2015), it should be viewed from the ecological and family system perspective

Chapter Seven: Conclusion and Recommendation

7.1. Conclusion and Recommendation

This phenomenological study assesses the lived experiences of Ethiopian immigrant parents raising their children in Norway. The main objective of the study was to understand and add knowledge on the lived experience of immigrant parents in Norway by focusing on their perceptions and challenges. The experiences of four immigrant parents were explored using semi-structured interviews. The results showed that immigrant parents' perceptions towards the parental practices in Norway were attributed to the support they received from the state and community.

Ethiopian immigrant parents in Norway, poses various challenges at different point after migration, and they have struggled with the shifting social and cultural roles and responsibilities. The main challenges of immigrant parents found in this study are related to the child welfare system of Norway that doesn't encourage cultural diversity. The Norwegian child welfare service by its nature limits parental rights, as the state plays the main role in the life of children and families. Hence, the challenges Ethiopian immigrants face are commonly resulted from this, as state's involvement in the life of families in Ethiopia is minimum and these groups are not familiar with the welfare system.

Moreover, immigrant parents also use individual, community and state resources to cope with their challenges. Common among all participants, better standard of living in Norway in terms of material and non-material means was considered as a resource and opportunity as an immigrant family. The process of dragging the past culture including language, religion and ways of socialization, into the present parental behavioral practices comes with challenges as well. The authoritarian parenting style in Ethiopia and the democratic parenting style in Norway, which considered children as rational beings, is the main idea that was salient to the experience of Ethiopian immigrant parents in the topic of balancing the past to the present.

7.2. Recommendation

To improve the lived experience of immigrant parents, based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested. I believe it is important for all micro, mezzo and macro level intervention programs to give attention to the cultural difference in

parenting practices and lifestyle of each families and individual members. Social workers should play the role of advocates for vulnerable groups like immigrants by updating themselves on the wants and needs as well as challenges of immigrants. As much as it is important for social workers to implement the policies of a given country, I also believe it is their responsibility to be the voice of the voiceless. The state should also be flexible in terms of parental practices by recognizing the different cultural identify of individuals, and involve in family cases only when children are at risk. The local citizens should support the immigrant groups as well for easier integration, and the state should create the platform for it.

REFERENCES

- Abebe, T., 2008. The Ethiopian” family collective” and child agency. *Barn–forskning om barn ogbarndomi Norden*, 26(3).
- Adger, W.N., 2000. Social and ecological resilience: are they related?. *Progress in human geography*, 24(3), pp.347-364.
- Ado, D., Gelagay, A.W. and Johannessen, J.B., 2021. The languages of Ethiopia: Aspects of the sociolinguistic profile. *IMPACT: Studies in Language and Society*, pp.1-12.
- Adugna, G., 2021. Once primarily an origin for refugees, Ethiopia experiences evolving migration patterns. *Migration Policy Institute*.
- Akbar, M. and Preston, V., 2019. *Migration and resilience: Exploring the stock of knowledge review of literature: 2000–2016*. Research report]. York University, CERIS. https://bmr-irmu.info.yorku.ca/files/2020/06/Immigrants-and-Resilience-Working-Paper_Final_new7.pdf.
- Albert, I., 2019. Dynamics of intergenerational relations in the context of migration—A resource perspective at the intersection of family and school. *Psychology & Society*, 11(1), pp.28-34.
- Andreasson, J. and Herz, M., 2022. Family practices, deportability and administrative violence: an ethnographic study on asylum seekers’ family life in the Swedish migration context. *Families, Relationships and Societies*, 11(2): 157–74, doi:10.1332/204674321X16381850636644.
- Angell, O.H., 2004. Welfare, church and gender in Norway. *Welfare, church and gender in eight European countries*, pp.63-102.
- Antony-Newman, M., 2019. Parental involvement of immigrant parents: A meta-synthesis. *Educational Review*, 71(3), pp.362-381.
- Arends-Tóth, J.V. and Van de Vijver, F. J. R., 2006. Issues in conceptualization and assessment of acculturation. In Bornstein, M. H., and Cote, L. R. (eds.),

- Acculturation and parent-child relationships: Measurement and development. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum. pp. 33-62.
- Aroian, K.J., Templin, T.N. and Hough, E.S., 2014. Longitudinal study of daily hassles in adolescents in Arab Muslim immigrant families. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health, 16*, pp.831-838.
- Arora, S., Bø, B., Tjoflåt, I. and Eslén-Ziya, H., 2022. Immigrants in Norway: Resilience, challenges and vulnerabilities in times of COVID-19. *Journal of Migration and Health, 5*, p.100089.
- Bahari, S.F., 2010. Qualitative versus quantitative research strategies: contrasting epistemological and ontological assumptions. *Sains Humanika, 52*(1).
- Baker, S. and Edwards, R., 2017. How many qualitative interviews is enough? Expert voices and early career reflections on sampling and cases in qualitative research. *National Centre for Research Methods Review Paper*.
- Baumrind, D., 1966. Effects of authoritative parental control on child behavior. *Child development*, pp.887-907.
- Baumrind, D., 1971. Current patterns of parental authority. *Developmental psychology, 4*(1p2), p.1.
- Berg, B., Paulsen, V., Midjo, T., Haugen, G.M.D., Garvik, M. and Tøssebro, J., 2017. Myterogrealiteter. *Innvandrerensmøter med barnevernet*.
- Berger, E., Reupert, A., Campbell, T.C., Morris, Z., Hammer, M., Diamond, Z., Hine, R., Patrick, P. and Fathers, C., 2022. A systematic review of evidence-based wellbeing initiatives for schoolteachers and early childhood educators. *Educational Psychology Review*, pp.1-51.
- Berry, J.W. and Kim, U., 1988. Acculturation and mental health. In Dasen, P.R., Berry, J.W., and Sartorius, N (Eds.), *Health and cross-cultural psychology: Towards application*. Newbury Park, CA: SAGE. pp. 207–236.

- Berry, J.W. and Sam, D.L., 1997. Acculturation and adaptation. In Berry, J.W., Segall, M.H., and Kag, C. (eds.), *Handbook of cross-cultural psychology*, Vol.3: Social behavior and applications (2nd ed)., Boston: Allyn & Bacon. pp. 291–326.
- Boehm, D.A., 2012. *Intimate migrations: gender, family, and illegality among transnational Mexicans*. New York: University Press.
- Boonk, L., Gijssels, H. J. M., Ritzen, H. and Brand-Gruwel, S., 2018. “A Review of the Relationship between Parental Involvement Indicators and Academic Achievement.” *Educational Research Review* 24: 10-30. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.oslomet.no/10.1016/j.edurev.2018.02.001>.
- Bradley, R. H. and Caldwell, B. M., 1995. Care giving and the regulation of child growth and development: Describing proximal aspects of care giving systems. *Developmental Review*, 15(1), 38-85.
- Breiner, H., Ford, M., Gadsden, V.L. and National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine., 2016. Parenting knowledge, attitudes, and practices. In *Parenting Matters: Supporting Parents of Children Ages 0-8*. National Academies Press (US).
- Brekke, I. and Mastekaasa, A., 2008. Highly educated immigrants in the Norwegian labour market: permanent disadvantage?. *Work, employment and society*, 22(3), pp.507-526.
- Bryceson, D. and Vuorela, U., 2002. ‘Transnational families in the twenty-first century’ in Bryceson, D. and Vuorela, U. (eds) *Transnational family: new European frontiers and global networks*. Oxford and New York: Berg, pp. 3-30.
- Bryman, A., 2016. *Social research methods*. 5th ed. Oxford university press.
- Bufdir., 2020. *Barnevern stiltaktil barn med innvandrerbakgrunn*. Norwegian Directorate of Children, Youth and Family Affairs. Available at:

- https://www.bufdir.no/Statistikk_og_analyse/Barnevern/Barnevernstilak_blant_barn_med_ulik_landbakgrunn/#info-graphics-header. (accessed March 2023).
- Cardoso, J.B. and Thompson, S.J., 2010. Common themes of resilience among Latino immigrant families: A systematic review of the literature. *Families in Society*, 91(3), pp.257-265.
- CIA-Central Intelligence Agency., 2010. The World fact book: Ethiopia (2009). Available at: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the_worldfactbook/geos/et.html (accessed March 2023).
- CSA., 2002. *Child labour survey in Ethiopia*. Central Statistics Authority: Addis Ababa.
- Darling, N. and Steinberg, L., 1993. Parenting style as context: An integrative model. *Psychological bulletin*, 113(3), p.487.
- Dreby, J., 2010. *Divided by borders: Mexican migrants and their children*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Elias, S., 2014. Parenting styles, some selected socio demographic variables and the attitude of young adults towards marriage in some private colleges of Addis Ababa. Addis Ababa: Addis Ababa University
- Elizalde-Utnick, G., 2010. Immigrant families: Strategies for school support. *Principal Leadership*, 10(5), pp.12-16.
- Engel, A., Barnett, W.S., Anders, Y. and Taguma, M., 2015. Early childhood education and care policy review. *Norway: OECD*.
- Englander, M., 2012. The interview: Data collection in descriptive phenomenological human scientific research. *Journal of phenomenological psychology*, 43(1), pp.13-35.
- Ericsson, K., 2000. Social control and emancipation? Ambiguities in child welfare. *Journal of Scandinavian Studies in Criminology and Crime Prevention*, 1(1), pp.16-26.<https://doi.org/10.1080/14043850050116237>.

- Evenson, R.J. and Simon, R.W., 2005. Clarifying the relationship between parenthood and depression. *Journal of health and Social Behavior*, 46(4), pp.341-358.
- Falicov, C. J., 2005. Ambiguous Loss: Risk and Resilience in Latino Immigrant Families, in Suarez-Orozco, C., Suarez- Orozco, M. and Qin-Hilliard D. B. *The New Immigration: An Interdisciplinary Reader*, New York: Taylor and Francis.pp.197- 206
- Finch, D.J. and Morgan, D.H., 2022. Two families, many stories and the value of autobiography. *Families, Relationships and Societies* 11(2): 274–86, doi: 10.1332/ 204674321X16311914213298.
- Foote, M.Q. and Gau Bartell, T., 2011. Pathways to equity in mathematics education: How life experiences impact researcher positionality. *Educational studies in mathematics*, 78, pp.45-68.
- Friberg, J.H. and Bjørnset, M., 2019. Migrasjon, foreldreskapog sosialkontroll. *Fafo rapport, 1*, p.2019.
- Fylkesnes, M.K., Iversen, A.C., Bjørknes, R. and Nygren, L., 2015. Frykten for barnevernet-En undersøkelseav etniskem minoritetsforeldres oppfatninger. *Tidsskriftet Norges Barnevern*, 92(2), pp.81-96.
- Garcia Coll, C., 2005, April. The immigrant paradox: Critical factors in Cambodian students' success. In *Biennial meeting of the Society for Research in Child Development. Atlanta, Georgia* (pp. 7-10).
- Gilbert, N., Parton, N. and Skivenes, M. eds., 2011. *Child protection systems: International trends and orientations*. Oxford University Press.
- Giorgi, A., 2009. *The descriptive phenomenological method in psychology: A modified Husserlian approach*. Duquesne university press.
- Groenewald, T., 2004. A phenomenological research design illustrated. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 3(1), pp.42-55.

- Hammersley, M., 2000. Taking sides in social research. London: Routledge.
- Handulle, A., 2022. Beyond fear of child welfare services: An ethnographic study among Norwegian-Somali parents: University of Stavanger.
- Hantrais, L., 2004. Family policy matters: Responding to family change in Europe. Policy Press.
- Hays, P. A., 1996. Addressing the complexities of culture and gender in counseling. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 74(4), 332-338.
- Hegna, K. and Smette, I., 2017. Parental influence in educational decisions: Young people's perspectives. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 38(8), pp.1111-1124.
- Hill, N. E. and Tyson. D. F., 2009. "Parental Involvement in Middle School: A Meta-Analytic Assessment of the Strategies that Promote Achievement." *Developmental Psychology* 45(3): 740-763. doi:10.1037/a0015362.
- Holmes, A.G.D., 2020. Researcher Positionality--A Consideration of Its Influence and Place in Qualitative Research--A New Researcher Guide. *Shanlax International Journal of Education*, 8(4), pp.1-10.
- Hycner, R. H., 1999. Some guidelines for the phenomenological analysis of interview data. In Bryman A. and Burgess R.G. (eds.). *Qualitative research* (Vol. 3, pp.143-164). London: Sage.
- International Labor Organization., 2020. Addressing the Root Causes of Migration in Ethiopia: A Project of the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Ethiopia.
- Ispa, J.M., Fine, M.A., Halgunseth, L.C., Harper, S., Robinson, J., Boyce, L., Brooks-Gunn, J. and Brady-Smith, C., 2004. Maternal intrusiveness, maternal warmth, and mother-toddler relationship outcomes: Variations across low-income ethnic and acculturation groups. *Child development*, 75(6), pp.1613-1631.

- Joseph, J., 2013. Resilience as Embedded Neoliberalism: A Governmentality Approach. *Resilience: International Policies, Practices and Discourses*. 1(1), pp.38-52.
- Kaplan, D., Levy, G., Buzhish-Sasson, H., Biton, A. and Kohan-Benlulu, R., 2022. Doing family while poor: agentic hopelessness as lived knowledge, *Families, Relationships and Societies*, 11(2): 208–26, doi: 10.1332/204674321X16474246365913.
- Karacaer, S., Gohar, R., Aygün, M. and Sayin, C., 2009. Effects of personal values on auditor's ethical decisions: A comparison of Pakistani and Turkish professional auditors. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 88, pp.53-64. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-009-0102-4>.
- Kikulwe, D., Falihi, A., and Watkinson, A. M., 2021. Newcomer parents with child welfare histories: Dilemmas of caring and control. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 1–23. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15548732.2021.1965941>.
- Kim, H. and Byun, S.Y., 2019. Immigrant integration policy and native adolescents' attitudes towards ethnic minorities: a comparative study of European Countries. *Multicultural Education Review*, 11(3), pp.172-188.
- Kojan, B. H., 2011. Norwegian Child Welfare Services: A successful program for protecting and supporting vulnerable children and parents? *Australian Social Work*, 64(4), 443–458.
- Korzeniewska, L., Bivand Erdal, M., Kosakowska-Berezecka, N. and Żadkowska, M., 2019. Trust across borders: a review of literature on trust, migration and child welfare services.
- Korzeniewska, L., Erdal, M. B., Kosakowska-Berezecka, N., and Żadkowska, M., 2019. Trust across borders: A review of the literature on trust, migration and child welfare services. Gdansk.
- Kruger, D., 1988. *An introduction to phenomenological psychology* (2nd ed.). Cape Town, South Africa: Juta.

- Langdrige D., 2007. *Phenomenological Psychology: Theory, Research and Method*. Harlow, UK: Pearson Education.
- Ledesma, J., 2014. Conceptual frameworks and research models on resilience in leadership. *Sage Open*, 4(3), 1–8.
- Lee, R.M., 2005. Resilience Against Discrimination: Ethnic Identity and Other-group Orientation as Protective Factors for Korean Americans. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52(1), p.36.
- Lester, T.W. and Nguyen, M.T., 2015. The economic integration of immigrants and regional resilience. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 38(1), pp.42-60.
- Leung, C., and Tsang Kit Man, S., 2014. Parenting Style. In: Michalos, A.C. (ed) *Encyclopedia of Quality of Life and Well-Being Research*. Springer, Dordrecht. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-007-0753-5_2071.
- Lunde, C. T., 2019. *“It’s typically Norwegian to be good”: a case study on Norwegian migration policy concerning Ethiopia* (Master's thesis, Norwegian University of Life Sciences, Ås).
- Luthans, F., 2002. The need for and meaning of positive organizational behavior. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 23, 695–706.
- Luzia, K., 2010. “Travelling in Your Own Backyard: The Unfamiliar Places of Parenting.” *Social and Cultural Geography* 11 (4): 359–75.
- Masten, A.S. and Obradović, J., 2006. Competence and resilience in development. *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 1094(1), pp.13-27.
- McCubbin, H. I. and Patterson, J. M., 1983. The family stress process: The double ABCX model of adjustment and adaptation. *Marriage & family review*, 6(1-2), 7-37.
- McCubbin, L. D. and McCubbin, H. I., 1988. Typologies of resilient families: Emerging roles of social class and ethnicity. *Family Relations*, 37(3), 247–254.

- Midtbøen, A. H., 2014. The invisible second generation? Statistical discrimination and immigrant stereotypes in employment processes in Norway. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 40(10), 1657-1675.
- Montero-Sieburth, M., Giralt, R.M., Garcia-Arjona, N. and Eguren, J. eds., 2021. *Family practices in migration: Everyday lives and relationships*. Routledge.
- Morgan, D., 2020. Family practices in time and space, *Gender, Place & Culture*, 27(5), 733-743
- Morgan, D.H., 2019. Family troubles, troubling families, and family practices. *Journal of Family Issues*, 40(16), pp.2225-2238.
- Morrow, S. L., 2005. Quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research in counseling psychology. *Journal of counseling psychology*, 52(2), 250.
- NESH., 2019. Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Humanities, Law and Theology. Available at: <https://www.forskningsetikk.no/en/guidelines/social-sciences-humanities-law-and-theology/guidelines-for-research-ethics-in-the-social-sciences-humanities-law-and-theology/>. (accessed April 2023)
- Norad., 2019. Ethiopia. Available at: <https://norad.no/en/front/countries/africa/ethiopia/>. (accessed March 2023)
- Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs., 2018. Increased funding for International Organization for Migration [Press release].
- OECD., 2015a. National Accounts Statistics (database). Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/na-data-en>.
- OECD., 2015b. Labour Force Statistics, OECD Employment and Labour Market Statistics (database). Available at: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/lfs-data-en>.
- Okpokiri, C., 2021. Parenting in fear: Child welfare micro strategies of Nigerian parents in Britain. *The British Journal of Social Work*, 51(2), 427-444. <https://doi.org/10.1093/bjsw/bcaa205>.

- Onwujuba, C., 2015. A tale of two cultures: A qualitative narrative of Nigerian immigrant parenting in the United States (Publication No.-06092015-101851) [Doctoral dissertation, Louisiana State University]. LSU Digital Commons.
- Oppedal, B. and Røysamb, E., 2007. Young Muslim immigrants in Norway: An epidemiological study of their psychosocial adaptation and internalizing problems. *Applied Development Science*, 11(3), pp.112-125. DOI: 10.1080/10888690701454583.
- Picot, A., 2014. Transforming child welfare: From explicit to implicit control of families. *European Journal of Social Work*, 17(5), 689–701. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691457.2014.932273>.
- Polkinghorne, D. E., 2005. Language and meaning: Data collection in qualitative research. *Journal of counseling psychology*, 52(2), 137.
- Pösö, T., Skivenes, M., and Hestbæk, A.D., 2014. Child protection systems within the Danish, Finnish and Norwegian welfare states—Time for a child centric approach? *European Journal of Social Work*, 17(4), 475–490. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691457.2013.829802>.
- Qiu, S., 2022. Family practices in non-cohabiting intimate relationships in China: doing mobile intimacy, emotion and intergenerational caring practices, *Families, Relationships and Societies*, 11(2): 175–91, doi: 10.1332/204674321X16468493162777.
- Rashidnejad, M., 2020. Iranian Families' Experiences of Migration and Social Life in Norwegian Context (Master's thesis, NTNU).
- Redfield, R. Linton, R., and Herskovits, M. J., 1936. Memorandum for the study of acculturation. *American Anthropologist*, 38, 149-152. doi:10.1525/aa.1936.38.1.02a00330.
- Riggio, H. R. and Weiser, D. A., 2008. Attitudes toward marriage: Embeddedness and outcomes in personal relationships. *Personal relationships*, 15(1), 123-140.

- Sam, D.L and Virta, E., 2003. Intergenerational value discrepancies in immigrant and host-national families and their impact on psychological adaptation: *Journal of Adolescence*, 26 (2003) 213-231.
- Sam, D.L., 1998. Predicting Life Satisfaction Among Adolescents from Immigrant Families in Norway, *Ethnicity & Health*,3:1-2,5-18,DOI: 10.1080/13557858.1998.9961844 .
- Sam, D.L., Vedder, P., Liebkind, K., Neto, F. and Virta, E., 2008. Immigration, acculturation and the paradox of adaptation in Europe. *European journal of developmental psychology*, 5(2), pp.138-158.
- Sawrikar, P., and Katz, I. B., 2014. Recommendations for improving cultural competency when working with ethnic minority families in child protection systems in Australia. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 31(5), 393–417.
- Schaefer, C. D., and Simon, B., 2017. Opportunities for Immigrants' Acculturation and Identification Varieties. *Political Psychology*, 38(6), 959–975.
- Schmid, E. and Garrels, V., 2021. Parental involvement and educational success among vulnerable students in vocational education and training. *Educational Research*, 63(4), pp.456-473.
- Sikes, P., 2004. Methodology, procedures and ethical concerns. *Doing educational research.*” *Doing Educational Research: A Guide for First Time Researchers*,., pp.15-33.
- Skar, A.M.S., Von Tetzchner, S., Clucas, C. and Sherr, L., 2014. The impact of a parenting guidance programme for mothers with an ethnic minority background.
- Smette, I., and Rosten, M.G., 2019. Et iaktattforeldreskap. Om a vaereforeldreogminoriteti Norge. Oslo, Norway. NOVA, Oslo Met.
- Southwick, S. M., Bonanno, G. A., Masten, A. S., Panter-Brick, C. and Yehuda, R., 2014. Resilience definitions, theory, and challenges: Interdisciplinary perspectives. *European Journal of Psychotraumatology*, 5(1), 25338.

- SSB., 2017. Immigrants and Norwegian-born to immigrant parents. Available at: <https://www.ssb.no/en/befolkning/statistikker/innvbef>. (accessed April 2023)
- Statistics Norway., 2005. Befolkningsstatistikk. Innvandrerbefolkningen, (Population statistics. Immigrant population, January 1, 2005). Statistical Analyses.
- Statistics Norway., 2017. Lavereieierandel blant innvandrene. Available at: [https://www.ssb.no/bygg bolig-og-eiendom/artikler-og-](https://www.ssb.no/bygg-bolig-og-eiendom/artikler-og-)(accessed April 2023)
- Statistics Norway., 2021a. Immigrants and Norwegian-born to Immigrant Parents at the beginning of 2021. Available at: <https://www.ssb.no/en/befolkning/>. (accessed April 2023)
- Tamis-LeMonda, C. S., Way, N., Hughes, D., Yoshikawa, H., Kalman, R. K., and Niwa, E. Y., 2007. Parents' goals for children: The dynamic coexistence of individualism and collectivism in cultures and individuals. *Social Development*, 17, 183–209.
- Tamrat, P. G., 2010. Ethiopian immigrant women within the framework of the Norwegian integration policy: Their daily experiences, thoughts and opinions of the Norwegian society (Master's thesis).
- Tataru, G.F., 2020. Migration- an Overview on Terminology, Causes and Effects. 7(2), pp: 10-29
- Tembo, M.J, Studsrod, I. and Young, S., 2021. Governing the family: immigrant parents' perception of the controlling power of the Norwegian welfare system: *European Journal of Social Work* 2021, 24(3), 492-503 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691457.2020.1738349>.
- United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Population Division (2019). World Population Prospects 2019. Available at: <https://population.un.org/wpp/>. (accessed April 2023)

- United Nations., 2020. Migration. Available at: [https://www.un.org/en/sections/issuesdepth/migration/index.html#:~:text=The%20UN%20Migration%20Agency%20\(IOM,the%20causes%20for%20the%20movement.](https://www.un.org/en/sections/issuesdepth/migration/index.html#:~:text=The%20UN%20Migration%20Agency%20(IOM,the%20causes%20for%20the%20movement.) (accessed March 2023)
- Van Nes, F., Abma, T., Jonsson, H. and Deeg, D., 2010. Language differences in qualitative research: is meaning lost in translation?. *European journal of ageing*, 7, pp.313-316.
- Walsh, F., 2015. *Strengthening family resilience*. Guilford publications.
- Walsh, F., 2016. Family resilience: a developmental systems framework. *European Journal of Developmental Psychology*, 13(3), 313–324.
- Ward, C., Leong, C. H., and Low, M., 2004. Personality and sojourner adjustment: An exploration of the Big Five and the cultural fit proposition. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 35, 137-151. doi:10.1177/0022022103260719.
- Welman, J.C., and Kruger, S.J., 1999. *Research methodology for the business and administrative sciences*. Johannesburg, South Africa: International Thompson.
- Wilder, S., 2013. “Effects of Parental Involvement on Academic Achievement: A Meta-synthesis.” *Educational Review* 66 (3): 377-397.
- Wilkinson, S., 1988, January. The role of reflexivity in feminist psychology. In *Women's Studies International Forum* (Vol. 11, No. 5, pp. 493-502). Pergamon.
- Wood, K., Featherstone, B. and Gupta, A., 2022. Reordering family practices in an unequal and disorderly world: contemporary adoption and contact in the UK, *Families, Relationships and Societies*, 11(2): 192–207, doi: 10.1332/204674321X16388097229006.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Information and Consent form

Project Title: Lived Experience of Ethiopian Immigrant Parents in Norway: Balance between the past and present

Explanation and Purpose of the study

My name is Yosan Sahlu. I am a graduate student in European Master's in Social work with Families and Children at the University of Stavanger, Norway. This form is prepared to give you the full information about the above state study and ask for your permission to take part in it. The main purpose of the study is to understand and add knowledge on the lived experience of Ethiopian immigrant parents in Norway and the challenges they face in balancing the past and present in relation to parenting/raising children. In this letter I will give you information about the purpose of the project and your role and participation in the study.

Purpose of the project

In order to meet the research objective and address the research questions, I designed a semi-structured interview basing relevant literatures. The research will take place in the Western part of Norway, which has a high level of immigrants from all over the world including Ethiopians. With the aim of focusing on a particular community and culture, immigrant parents who are originally from Ethiopia will be selected. The research project will be conducted in fulfillment of a master's thesis in Social Work with Children and Families at the University of Stavanger.

Project's objectives / research questions

The research has the objective of adding knowledge on the lived experience of immigrant parents in Norway and their daily experience along with any challenges they might encounter in balancing the past and present. In order to address the research objective, the following research questions will be assessed:

- What are the experiences and challenges of Ethiopian immigrant parents in relation to parenting?
- How do Ethiopian immigrant parents living in Norway reflect on the differences in parental behavioral practices in the two countries?
- How do Ethiopian immigrant parents' parental behavioral practices are being influenced by their past and present cultural contexts?

Hence, the collected personal data will only be used for the purpose of answering the above research questions. All personal data remains confidential and destroyed after the end of the project.

Who is responsible for the research project?

University of Stavanger is the institution responsible for this research project.

Why are you being asked to participate?

Given my cultural background, I believe it is easier for me to communicate with Ethiopian community because of language and cultural similarities. Therefore, you are being asked to participate in this research as I believe you meet the project's criteria given you are an Ethiopian immigrant lived in Norway for at least ten years and have children. For the purpose of this research, I will interview 4 Ethiopian immigrant parents and snowball sampling will be implemented to reach out to these participants. Before asking for participants contact details during snowballing, I will make sure approval/permission is obtained.

What does participation involve for you?

- If you choose to take part in this research project, you will be asked to spend 30-45 minutes of interview with the researcher. The survey includes questions about your general experience as an immigrant parent and challenges you face in raising your children in a new environment. The interview will be held in a place and time that is convenient for you and you can answer the interview questions alone or together with your partner. All your answers will be recorded electronically (no video

recording) and additional notes will also be taken by the researcher. All the data will be dismissed once the research project is presented to the school.

- All the information needed for the interview will be collected from the participants and no secondary sources like educational records will be used. No children will be interviewed in this research project and no focus group discussions will be conducted.

Participation is voluntary: Participation in the project is voluntary. You can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason and you have the right to skip questions that you don't want to answer. 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

I will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. I will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act).

- The researcher's colleagues, supervisor and external examiner will have access to the research but only the researcher will have access to the personal data of the participants, as nothing personal will be published on the report.
- In order to ensure that no unauthorized persons are able to access the personal data, I will replace the name and contact details of the participants with a code. The list of names, contact details and respective codes will be stored separately from the rest of the collected data; I will store the data on a research server, locked away.

Describe whether participants will be recognizable in publications or not, and to what extent. Participants will be recognized and acknowledged for all the information they provide for the researcher in the beginning of the thesis report and in future publications (if any).

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

The project is scheduled to end June 6, 2023. All the personal data including the digital recordings will be destroyed after the researcher is done with the transcription, final write up and defence of the project. There will not be a need for further storage or archive as the

researcher is not planning to do follow-up studies. Therefore, all the personal data will be safely stored and later deleted so no other person has access to it.

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 is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- 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 University of Stavanger, data Protection Services 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 Stavanger via Mikhail Gradovski. *Contact detail:* Dr. Mikhail Gradovski, Professor of Social Pedagogy, Department of Social Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, and University of Stavanger Norway. mikhail.gradovski@uis.no

Yours sincerely,

Project Leader

(Researcher/supervisor)

Yosan Sahlu/ Mikhail Gradovski

Consent Form

I have received and understood information about the project “Lived Experience of Ethiopian Immigrant Parents in Norway: Balance between the past and present” and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

- to participate in an interview
- to provide information about me/myself to be published in a way that I won't be recognized
- for my personal data to be stored until the end of the project including transcription, write up and defence of the research.

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. June 6, 2023.

--

(Signed by participant, date)

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

According to Bryman (2016), in qualitative research design, research participants should be able to get the chance of explaining their social world freely; the research questions were formulated accordingly. The following interview questions are taken from a similar study conducted in Norway for the purpose of a Master's thesis with the title of "Iranian Families' Experiences of Migration and Social Life in Norwegian Context" in November 2020. The questions are slightly modified as per the research title; objective and area as this research mainly focuses on Ethiopian immigrant parents lived experience in the western part of Norway.

Interview guide for research with Ethiopian immigrant parents in Norway

Greetings,

Self introduction

A quick description of the research topic, objectives, participant rights and estimation of time

- 1- Tell me about yourself (name, educational level, marital status, number of children, age of children, years of stay in Norway)?
- 2- Number of children born in Ethiopia and number of children born in Norway?
- 3- How did migration affect your social life particularly with the ethnic Norwegian community (e.g-language barriers, cultural differences)?
- 4- How did migration affect your family life/interactions with your spouse and children?
- 5-What were the main challenges for you and your family after migration in relation to parenting/raising children?
- 6-How did you and your family manages the challenges?
- 7- How important it is for you to stay attached to traditions and habits of Ethiopia?
- 8- In what ways did your opinions change about parenting behaviors after living in Norway (behaviors you have to compromise after moving)?

9. How do you think child rearing is different in Ethiopia and Norway?

10- What are the similarities/differences of living in Ethiopia and Norway as in family or social settings/relationships?

11- How successful do you think you have been in integrating yourself and your family into Norwegian society?

12- In what ways do ethnic Norwegians, non-ethnic Norwegians (migrants)and the state have helped you to integrate especially in familiarizing yourself with the new way of rearing children in Norway?

13. What can they do better in this regard?

Appendix 3: Non-plagiarism declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis titled “The Lived Experiences of Ethiopian immigrant parents: Balance between the past and present” submitted to the Erasmus Mundus Master’s Program in Social Work with Families and Children:

- Has not been submitted to any other Institute/University/College
- Contains proper references and citations for other scholarly work
- Contains proper citation and references from my own prior scholarly work
- Has listed all citations in a list of references. I am aware that violation of this code of conduct is regarded as an attempt to plagiarize, and will result in a failing grade (F) in the program. Date (06/06/2022)

Name: Yosan Sahlu