

Social Integration of Refugees

Study of Third Country Resettled Bhutanese Women in Norway



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Abstract

This research studies the social integration prospects of third-country resettled Bhutanese refugee women in Norway in line with theoretical inferences of Social Integration Framework by Friedrich Heckmann. The concepts of core domains of integration of Ager & Strang and Translocational Positionality Framework of Anthias are also used to discuss the thematic findings. It explores the structural, cultural, identification and integrative aspects of women to understand integration outcomes in a Norwegian society, their challenges

This research is carried out in a qualitative approach by using semi-structured interview method. It collected data from 12 participant Bhutanese refugee women living in Norway via third country resettlement program. They are selected using snowball sampling method. The data are collected through face-to-face open-ended questions and are analysed using thematic analysis method.

The research exhibits the structural integration has been quite more successful than other aspects of integration. It is found that they have good access to housing, work, education, health, and welfare system. They are given political rights as citizens. However, it has become very difficult and challenging for them to be culturally integrated. Initially, the aged women had strong roots in their own culture, which made it difficult for them to adapt to Norwegian culture. Bi-cultural competence and acceptance is found more developed in young women and girls which has helped in their integration process. Interactive integration of the women was promoted through their social networks. Those who secured a job and those who pursued education got better chances for interaction and social participation which strengthened their social network. This interactive integration also became very challenging for elderly women due to the lack of exposure to education, job market, and weak social network. The shift in national identity and identifications is seen and changed related to positionality and time. From the conducted study, besides having many different challenges, Bhutanese refugee women are in the process of integration into Norwegian Society.

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List of Acronyms

| | |
|-------|---|
| APA | American Psychological Association |
| EU | European Union |
| IMDI | The Directorate of Integration and Diversity |
| IOM | International Organization for Migration |
| NAV | Norwegian Labour and Welfare Service |
| NORCO | Norwegian Cultural Orientation programme |
| NSD | Norwegian Centre for Research Data |
| OECD | Organization for Economic Co-operations and Development |
| SSB | Statistics Norway |
| UDI | The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| USA | United States of America |

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter provides a brief overview of the research paper. It starts with background information or a brief presentation about refugees, refugees in Norway, and the resettlement of refugees. The second part of the chapter introduces the aim and objective of the research together with the research questions. The later part presents the rationale, significance, scope and structure of the research paper.

1.1 Background

Refugees in World

The United Nations (UN) (2022) regards refugees as people with a well-founded fear of being persecuted due to a variety of reasons, including religion, race, nationality, membership of a specific group; residing outside of nationality; unwilling to avail protection of that country; not having the nationality of former residence; unable to return to habitual residence. At the end of 2019, 79.5 million people were forcibly displaced worldwide, and this number further reached 84 million in 2021 (UN, 2022; UNHCR, 2022). The reasons for displacement are classified into two categories, natural and man-made. The slow onset of climate, along with other natural calamities, including floods, hurricanes, drought, salinization of groundwater, and rising sea levels, are leading causes of displacement due to natural reasons. Whereas violence, riots, poverty, lack of quality education and healthcare, and other social and economic deprivations are leading man-made causes of displacement (UN, 2022).

Refugees In Norway

Norway is a member of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and supports and protects the rights of refugees fleeing from violence, conflict and prosecution to seek asylum. In addition, Norway also strongly supports vulnerable refugee women, men, boys and girls facing or struggling with sexual and gender-based violence (UNHCR 2022). Bhutanese refugee is one of the significant communities residing in Norway.

A majority of Bhutanese were descendants of Nepalese and migrated to Bhutan in early 1800 (Gharti, 2011). However, with the imposition of stricter citizenship regulations, a majority of them fled the country and sought asylum in several developed countries,

including the USA, Canada, New Zealand, Norway, the UK, and Netherlands (Shrestha, 2015). Norway actively provides resettlement to asylum seekers as per a quota system. The quota for resettlement is decided politically by the Norwegian parliament, the Storting, and the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (Norwegian Directorate of Immigration UDI 2022). For the successful resettlement of refugees, the Norwegian government enrolls them under an integration programme by The Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDI). Under this integration programme, refugees are taught the basic Norwegian language, society, culture, and labor markets (Praveen, 2020).

Impact of Resettlement of Refugees

Resettlement is the process of selecting and transferring refugees from their home country to a new country to provide them required protection and assistance (Iriyama 2009). Leaving a home country and resettling in a new country can be extremely challenging and overwhelming. Several researchers have identified the diversified impact of resettlement and the entire procedure and experimented resettlement of refugees. Henry (2019) emphasized upon stress and anxiety experienced by refugees due to migration and resettlement policies of asylum-providing countries, which negatively impact their mental health. Gömleksiz and Aslan (2018) identified challenges associated with the social and cultural adjustment refugees face in a new homeland. Due to a lack of familiarity with culture, values, and languages, adjustment become extremely difficult for refugees. Whereas Albrecht, Pérez and Stitteneder (2021) highlighted that the challenges faced by women refugees are higher and more intense than men refugees. The primary reason behind this is poor education, lack of work experience and labor market participation.

1.2 Research Objective and Question

Objective

The objective of this research is to explore the challenges of social integration of third-country resettled Bhutanese refugee women in Norway.

Research Question

What are the outcomes of Bhutanese refugee women's integration into Norwegian society with regard to structural, culture, social, and identification aspects? Do they face any challenges or not? And if yes, what kind of challenges?

1.3 Research Rationale

As identified above, the aim of the refugees' integration programme is to make them socially and economically independent. Culturally, Bhutan is considered a male-dominated country where the responsibilities of women are limited to managing the household (Parajuli et al., 2019). This has reduced Bhutanese women's ability to integrate successfully into Norwegian society. In addition, resettling in a new homeland can be extremely challenging for women compared to men. This has identified a gap between the effectiveness of integration programmes of the Norwegian government and their impact on the successful integration of Bhutanese women in Norway. There is a dearth of literature regarding issues faced by Bhutanese women during integration in Norwegian society and how it will impact Norwegian society. Considering the gap, this research is conducted.

1.4 Research Significance

This research will help the Norwegian government identify weaknesses in its resettlement and integration practices and making the required improvements for the successful integration of Bhutanese women in Norway. Successful integration of refugees is essential for their well-being as well as the social and economic development of the foreign country (new homeland of refugees). Therefore, this research will provide valuable insight regarding the challenges and issues faced by Bhutanese women and their impact on the social-economic and cultural aspects of the country.

1.5 Scope

This research will only emphasize the challenges Bhutanese women faced in resettlement and integration in Norwegian society. In addition, this research will only identify the outcomes associated with this integration on the social, economic, cultural, and structural aspects of the integration. Since experiences and challenges faced by refugees from other countries in Norway might vary, and therefore further research will be required for exploring the same.

1.6 Structure

The first chapter in this dissertation is Introduction. This chapter provides a brief overview of the dissertation, key areas of focus, objectives and research questions. The second chapter is Literature Review. This chapter critically evaluates existing literature and

identifies related theories and frameworks related to the research topic. The third chapter is Research Methodology. This chapter presents the method and processes selected for this research to collect and analyze data to reach a conclusion. The fourth chapter is Findings and Analysis. This chapter presents findings collected through the selected methodology and analyzes it using the identified theoretical framework. The fifth chapter is Conclusion. It summarizes the research findings thematically.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Bhutan is characterized as the land of perpetual happiness, where the country's output is measured through its famous "Gross National Happiness Index." This index measures happiness on nine domains, namely psychological well-being, living standards, health, education, ecological diversity and resilience, good governance, cultural diversity and resilience, time use, and community vitality. According to World Happiness Report (2019), Bhutan is ranked 95th out of 156 countries in terms of happiness (Helliwell, Layard & Sachs, 2019). However, the country's actual situation is worse as it is known as one of the world's biggest creators of refugees per capita. In 1990, it expelled one-third of its population of Nepali background. Lhotshampa, meaning people from the south, are Nepalese-origin people who have been residing in Bhutan since 1620. These people were craftsmen who migrated to Bhutan when the need for foreign labour was extremely high in the country (Giri, 2005). After its completion, this population remained in Bhutan and settled in southern Bhutan, one of Bhutan's major food-producing regions. Slowly, their population grew in the country. Later, Bhutan's Citizen Act was implemented which required residents to provide proof that they were residents of the country prior to 1958. Afterward, the Bhutanese government claimed Lhotshampa as illegal aliens which led to violence and discrimination against this community (Morch 2016). Due to increased ethnic tensions, approximately 100,000 Lhotshampa left Bhutan in 1988. As per the "Shadow Report on First Universal Periodic Review of Bhutan" by the Human Rights Without Frontiers, Nepal and the Association of Press Freedom Activists, Bhutan, in 2009, the government conducted an exclusive census with the intent to flush out the Nepali-speaking population from Bhutan. In this process thousands of Nepali Bhutanese were killed, arrested, tortured, and given life sentences. In addition to this, the Bhutanese government also forced and manipulated the evicted population to sign voluntary migration forms prior to their departure from the country, and their identity documents were also seized by the local authorities (Adhikari & Thapa 2009). Currently, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) is working in collaboration with the government of Nepal and Bhutan to provide protection and assistance to this displaced community. However, the Bhutanese government has refused to allow the displaced population to return to the country; meanwhile, the poor economic condition of Nepal is preventing the country from providing any assistance to these asylum seekers. Due to this, these refugees are being provided asylum in third

countries, including the UK, New Zealand, Norway, Australia, Denmark, and Netherlands (Frelick 2011).

As of now, Norway has provided asylum to approximately 316 Bhutanese refugees. Norway provided resettlement under its annual quota system and its annual quota is 1,200 per year (Gharti, 2011). In order to receive resettlement opportunities in Norway, refugees must meet certain criteria, such as the people must be in need of resettlement, must not have committed any crime, and must not have possessed any criminal behavior. In addition to this, Norway offers 55% replacement places to women and girls, and 15% places of all resettled is offered to refugees falling under the category “women-at-risk,” excluding dependents (Norwegian Directorate of Immigration UDI, 2022). The integration programme of Norway is managed under its resettlement program (Government of Norway, 2009). The integration programme in Norway is operated in close cooperation with the UNHCR. The aim of this integration programme is to ensure smooth integration of refugees in Norwegian society. This programme prepares them for initial adjustment after arrival in Norway, reducing cultural shock and adjusting to unrealistic expectations. Integration of refugees in Norway starts within the first five years after being settled (Government of Norway, 2009). This programme has nine essential elements. These are advanced placement and development of placement communities; arrangements regarding meeting resettled refugees and providing them initial accommodation; resources and systems for evaluating the need of refugees and providing them early settlement support; providing them financial assistance for meeting personal and household needs prior to being employed; providing refugees with language assistance through translators, volunteers and bilingual workers; providing language training to refugees; providing pre and post-arrival orientation; long-term housing facilities; employment and placement assistance; arrangement for healthcare; and providing legal assistance for permanent residence (Gharti, 2011).

The aim of this literature review is to understand the phenomenon of refugees and resettlement in the third countries while emphasizing the aspects of social integration. Integrating members originating from a community with different social and cultural values and practices in another country can be challenging due to the presence of factors like cultural and social diversity. Understanding key concepts, theories and arguments associated with this issue will help understand the perspective and situation of Bhutanese refugees and the challenges they face while seeking asylum in Norway. This literature review discusses the role of Norway as an

asylum provider and will further emphasize the concept of integration. The concept of integration is discussed from different perspectives with the light on challenges associated with integrating refugees and the social inclusion of refugee women. Afterward, the impact of refugees and the resettlement of the new homeland are discussed critically. After that, the theoretical framework is presented, which will be used further for analyzing collected data.

2.2 Norway as Asylum Destination

Till the 19th and early 20th century, Norway was mainly a sending country with USA as one of the popular destinations for emigrants. Religious intolerance, lack of cultivable land, and constantly escalating taxes were the reasons. This shift was a result of changes in the Norwegian economy. After the mid-20th century, migrants started migrating to Norway after escaping wars and seeking asylum. Therefore, refugees mainly were from countries such as Russia, Iraq, Afghanistan, Somalia, and Eritrea. After the increasing number of refugees and asylum seekers in Norway, the government also actively engaged in international cooperation to promote respect and protecting refugees (Parveen, 2020). Currently, the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) is the responsible state agency for granting refugee status, processing applications for asylum, running and managing asylum centres, and monitoring expulsion cases. Meanwhile, Chapter 4 of Section 28 of the Immigration Act of Norway deals with refugees and residence permits. As per this act, a foreign national is considered as a refugee, if a person

(a) has a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of ethnicity, origin, skin colour, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or for reasons of political opinion, and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of his or her country of origin [as per Article 1A of the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 28 July 1951 and the Protocol of 31 January 1967]. (Immigration Act, 2008, p. 13) or

(b) without falling within the scope of (a) nevertheless faces a real risk of being subjected to a death penalty, torture or other inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment upon return to his or her country of origin. (Immigration Act, 2008, p. 13) (Parveen, 2020).

Apart from this, Norway also works in collaboration with the UNHCR on the matter of the resettlement of refugees. Resettlement in Norway is conducted on a quota basis, which further consists of three sub-quotas: medical cases, emergency cases, and unallocated sub-quota.

Norway prioritizes quotas for women and girls due to its strong gender focus (Parveen, 2020; UDI, 2022).

Norway prepares integration programs that are aimed at integrating refugees into the social and working life of Norway. In 2003, Norway introduced the Introduction Act which mandates introduction/integration programs for refugees and immigrants in Norway at the time of their arrival. Under this program, immigrants will be provided basic Norwegian language training, fundamental insight into Norway's society and social conditions, and prepare for participation in the workforce of Norway (Introduction Act, 2003; IMDI, 2019). Failure to participate in this program for any reason other than illness or any other compelling reason results in a reduction of introduction benefits offered to immigrants. In addition, lack of or limited participation in these programs also negatively impacts the judicial status of refugees (Valenta & Bunar, 2010). From this, it can be understood that refugees' integration is tightly regulated and maintained in Norway for higher effectiveness.

The behavior, views and perception of Norwegians towards refugees are varied in nature. For example, during the refugee crisis of 2015 in Norway, an extremely high number of refugees (approximately 31,145) entered Norway. Due to this heavy inflow of refugees, the refugee camps started running out of capacity and this further resulted in different discourses among political parties (Parveen, 2020). The Socialist Left party and Liberal Party supported providing asylum to refugees in the country in collaboration with the EU (Grytvik, 2015; Parveen, 2020). Whereas Labour party emphasized adopting humanitarian along with a cost-and-capacity approach (Grytvik, 2015). As per this approach, the country must provide asylum to refugees, but it must also consider its capacity and capability to accept and manage refugees.

In addition to this, the response of locals towards refugees was also discourse since the issue is highly politicized. People were both in support as well as against providing asylum to refugees. However, negative behavior towards refugees and immigrants were high due to stereotypes and negative perception associated with certain religion or race (Paudel, 2018). For example, a right-wing extremist with anti-Islamist agenda, Anders Behring Breivik involved in a terrorist act in Oslo and Utøya which resulted in the death of approximately 77 people (BBC News, 2017). This incident discusses the extent to which people were against refugees from a certain community, religion or race in Norway. In the aftermath of this incident, a positive debate emerged regarding the creation of multicultural societies in Norway (Paudel, 2018). However,

the views of locals regarding the inclusion and acceptance of immigrants still vary. A survey conducted in Norway in 2012 revealed that approximately 55% of Norwegians are positive regarding immigrants and refugees, whereas 45% are negative about admitting more migrants into the country (Skodvin & Wood, 2018). Similarly, another survey conducted by the Research Department of the Unit for Social and Demographic Research on “*attitude towards immigrants and immigration*” found that 16% of the Norwegian population believes that the procedure for residence permit should be easier for refugees and asylum seekers. The same survey also revealed that 52% of the Norwegian population believes that access to residence permit must remain the same, whereas 28% believes that it must be stricter and more difficult (Statistics Norway, 2017). The latest survey conducted in 2022 revealed that the behaviour of Norwegians towards refugees and resettlement had been portrayed negatively by social media and mass media. The behaviour and support of Norwegians towards refugees and resettlement can be estimated by the fact that in the last two years, Norway has accepted more than 1,000 Afghans, 25 unaccompanied children, 1,000 Ukrainians, and recently exceeded its quota by taking 3,000 refugees for resettlement (Williamson, 2022). This implies a positive change in the attitude and behavior of Norwegians towards refugees and immigrants in the country.

This information regarding Norway's integration programmes and policies will help evaluate these programmes' effectiveness and identify limitations. This will assist in identifying challenges faced by Bhutanese women during their integration in Norway.

2.3 What is Integration?

The concept of integration is crucial in the literature on immigration. Integration of immigrants and their children has become a critical key for the European Union (EU) and Organization for Economic Co-operations and Development (OECD) countries in the last 20 years after increasing the number of humanitarian refugees seeking asylum. Immigrants' integration is essential for their inclusive growth and social cohesion of migrants by enhancing their ability to become self-reliant citizens (OECD, 2018). The concept of integration is broad; several researchers have defined this term differently. Penninx (2019) defined integration as the “*process of becoming an accepted part of a society* (5).” The integration process is associated with assisting newcomers (immigrants) in settling within a given society, assisting newcomers in interacting with the people in the new homeland, and maintaining social change emerging due to immigration. After entering a new society, immigrants face several difficulties in settling

such as finding a home, job and steady income, access to education and health facilities, and establishing cooperation with individuals and groups within the new homeland. The process of integration is a two-way process aimed at assisting migrants in adapting and changing while also assisting the society of the new homeland to adapt with the new group of people. Hellgren (2015) defined integration as a complex and politically continuous task aimed at allowing immigrants to participate in the society of the new homeland at the same level as natives. The success of integration is dependent on the ability of immigrants to successfully adjust within the society and culture of the new homeland, along with the ability of the new homeland to successfully accept and adopt immigrants and the changes brought by them.

Hamberger (2009) identified four classical dimensions of integration, namely social, economic, cultural, and political. The social dimension is associated with the insertion of immigrants into the new homeland's welfare system, such as education and healthcare. The economic aspect is related to the access provided to immigrants to the economic activities within the new homeland, such as employment and labour market. Both the social and economic dimension of integration pertains to the social and economic rights of residents irrespective of their nationality and citizenship. These rights are essential for the successful integration of immigrants since these directly impact the abilities of immigrants to engage in the growth and development of self and society (Penninx, 2005). The cultural dimension is associated with the knowledge and understanding of immigrants regarding the cultural aspect of the new homeland, such as values, norms, behaviour, language, and religion (Hamberger, 2009). The cultural dimension is extremely important because immigration results in multiculturalism. Therefore, the notion of cultural dimension is to shape a multicultural society because immigrants cannot become equal citizens of a society or state unless they are provided cultural freedom and the right to be culturally different (Penninx, 2005). The political dimension is concerned with the final stage of integration, such as the right to vote and stand in elections (Hamberger, 2009). The political or legal dimension is associated with immigrants as fully-fledged members of a society and the political community of the new homeland. The political dimension deals with serious questions such as whether immigrants have residence rights and to what extent they possess formal political rights and duties (Penninx, 2005).

Similarly, Spitzer (2018) also defined integration as a multi-dimensional process occurring in a structural, cultural, and social manner through which immigrants receive a sense of belongingness within a new homeland. Integration can be viewed and understood through three

lenses. The first is social integration which is associated with the participation of immigrants in social institutions. Heckmann (2005) defined the concept of integration as a generation-lasting process revolving around the inclusion and acceptance of immigrants within the core institutions, relations and statuses of society. As per this, for immigrants, integration is concerned with learning about the new culture, acquiring legal rights and responsibilities, achieving social status and position within the society, and developing relationships with individuals and groups. Whereas, for immigrants receiving society, integration is associated with accepting change brought by immigrants and assisting them in settling within the community. Adding to this, Ferguson (2008) states that promoting social integration depends on three distinct yet inter-linked processes that shape the extent to which people can live, interact and work together on the basis of equality. These are recognition, representation, and redistribution. Recognition is associated with recognizing diverse social groups, identities and cultures with an intent to promote dignity, respect, and co-operation. Representation involves identifying and representing political voices to ensure that diverse groups' interests are considered for decision-making and resource allocation. Redistribution of socio-economic resources between groups and individuals for preventing disparities and fragmentation based on ethnicity, gender, race, region, wealth, age, and other social identity (Ferguson, 2008).

The term integration is often confused with assimilation and multiculturalism. These are not similar, but all these three terms are somehow consistent. However, researchers and policymakers have different opinions regarding the inclusion of assimilation and multiculturalism in integration (Rogova, 2014). Assimilation refers to a linear process through which one group becomes culturally similar to the other over time. The approach of assimilation builds upon three core features. First, diverse ethnic groups come together through a natural process to share a common culture and have similar access to the socio-economic opportunities as natives of the new homeland. Second is the gradual disappearance of the original culture along with behavioral patterns of the immigrants after residing within a new homeland for a longer period. The third is set in motion in which the entire process moves towards complete assimilation. The concept of assimilation states that immigrants are bound to melt into the mainstream culture through an inter-generational procedure of cultural, social and economic integration (Facchini, Patacchini & Steinhardt, 2015). Lacroix (2010) states that assimilation-oriented integration policies emphasize one-sided adaptation processes. As per this, refugees must give up their past cultural, social and linguistic characteristics and adopt new values belonging to the new homeland. This approach is contradicted by authors such as

Glazer and Moynihan (1970) and by Handlin (1973) for undervaluing and failing to recognize cultural needs of minority groups. Therefore, another approach to multiculturalism is proposed as a normative integration policy. The multicultural approach states that instead of completely adapting new culture within a new community, immigrants actively shape their own identity. These preserved aspects of the cultural characteristics of immigrants result in the creation of an uneasy co-existence with the attitude of the new homeland (Algan et al., 2012). As a result, the society of their new homeland considers immigrants as ethnic minority members as an integral part of the community rather than just outsiders or foreigners. The third is identification integration which emphasizes on the identity of immigrants and their feelings regarding belongingness to a group. Sirkeci, Şeker and Çağlar (2015) state that identity is a complicated area which cannot be resolved with answering the “Who are you” question. Identification is interchangeable, multiple, situational, and subjective and are dependent on multiple factors including inheritance, education, and occupation. Therefore, identification integration is essential for the successful integration of immigrants within a new homeland. Therefore, multiculturalism-oriented integration policies promote acceptance of cultural diversity. Therefore, mutual opportunities and tolerance of the distinct culture of refugees are promoted (Meinhof & Triandafyllidou, 2006). From this, it can be understood that the process of integration involves several actors, including immigrants, the host government, and local communities. All these actors work together in collaboration to accept immigrants in the new society by providing access to resources and opportunities to engage in self-growth and development. However, integration is not as easy as it seems limited to dimension such as social, political and cultural aspects.

The success of integration programs is dependent on several factors. The first factor is language training. The language barrier is one of the prominent barriers faced by refugees and immigrants upon entering a new country. The inability to communicate in the language of the new homeland directly reduces the ability of refugees and immigrants to participate in the labour market. On the contrary, familiarity and awareness of the language provide more opportunities to access and exploit the labour market (Djuve & Kavli, 2019). Djuve et al. (2017) and Delander et al. (2005) identified that Nordic countries such as Norway, Denmark, and Sweden provided free language training to refugees in their introductory programmes. Formal education is another aspect that ensures the successful social and economic integration of refugees. Education ensures a higher probability of success due to the acquisition of practical skills and knowledge. Considering the significance of formal education, the Norwegian

government offers vocational education to refugees and immigrants to assist them in becoming self-reliant and overcoming challenges associated with required skills and language (Djuve et al. 2017). The third critical aspect is counseling which aims to provide customized training to refugees to meet their individual needs. Countries such as Finland, Sweden and Norway emphasize individually adapted training. This includes providing counseling to individual participants and careful matching of job seekers and employers (Djuve & Kavli, 2019). Meanwhile, the perspective of Madero et al. (2016) is different from Djuve & Kavli, (2019) as it emphasizes the significance of adaptability in the process of social integration. Adaptability implies that change is imminent and the only way of overcoming challenges associated with change is by adapting to these changes. Adopting a tolerant attitude ensures the effective integration of newcomers in a new homeland by allowing individuals to experience different cultures and build a heterogenous community. Culturally tolerant and adequate spaces create a sense of place and ownership, enabling refugees to feel at home and manipulate the space per their needs. This results in successful integration.

The findings of Anthias (2013) are associated with the relationship between integration and diversity. Anthias (2013) states that both these are second-order concepts underpinned by the nature of society and concepts associated with the parameters of differences and identity. This entire process builds upon two entities namely society and culture. *“Both ‘integration’ and ‘diversity’ point to difference and hold the danger of under-emphasizing commonalities and structural contexts, denoting static, a-historical and essentialist units of ‘culture’ with fixed boundaries”* (Anthias, 2013 p.324). This confirms that cultures are never fully distributed or coherent among a population and vary depending on aspects such as nation, gender, locality, territory, and class. In addition, the concept of culture and integration is also associated with belongingness. Belongingness has practical, experiential, and affective dimensions (Anthias, 2002). This implies that one might be identified but not feel like belonging in the sense of being accepted within a society. Apart from this, one might feel accepted and belonging but not fully identified and therefore, their allegiances might split. From the literature review, it can be understood that the process of integration is not just aimed at assisting refugees in becoming familiar with the culture and society of their new homeland. Rather, it is also aimed at assisting the people as well as different institutions of the new homeland in accepting refugees by providing them required supports, rights, and opportunities. This research is aimed at investigating challenges associated with the integration of Bhutanese refugee women in Norway and outcome associated with their integration in Norway. To achieve this aim,

understanding and utilizing the concept of integration is necessary, as the entire research revolves around this concept.

2.4 Challenges Associated with Refugee Integration

There are several challenges associated with the integration of refugees within society. The first challenge associated with integrating refugees within a society is related to the perspective and attitude toward immigrants and refugees. Hynie (2018) states that high-income countries often consider refugees and asylum seekers as an economic burden. Since refugees and asylum seekers have high social and financial requirements such as healthcare, education, employment, and housing, these directly impact the resources of a country without providing any major benefit. This perception of realistic threat and economic burden can be better understood with the theory of realistic group conflict (Hynie 2018). This theory posits that intergroup conflicts and prejudices often emerge when the members of one group feel threatened by the members of the outgroup. The threat can be both perceived and realistic and can be associated with materialistic resources such as housing, employment and healthcare as well as relative social status of the intergroup (Mutezo, 2015). As per this theory, if locals believe that refugees or immigrants will take their job and will use resources that will otherwise go to local citizens, they are expected to have a more negative attitude towards them. Adding to this, Zárate et al. (2004) state that perceived cultural threat is another threat faced by locals with integrating refugees and immigrants. Cultural threat refers to perceived harm to cultural values, norms and beliefs by immigrants and refugees. Therefore, when locals believe that the potential integration of immigrants and refugees threatens their culture, they respond more negatively toward that specific group. On a social and interpersonal level, this implies that integration will provoke more negative reactions among locals. This will directly impact the interpersonal relationships and the social statuses of refugees and immigrants in the new homeland. In the long run, this negative attitude creates challenges for refugees and immigrants by making their integration challenging in the new homeland.

Similarly, Hynie (2018) identified the perception associated with fairness and equity of refugees and asylum seekers as another challenge in their integration. Media coverage regarding refugees and asylum seekers involves discourse of suspicion related to their need for protection. Refugees are eligible for rights and protection that are not extended to other migrants. However, concerns related to whether refugees and asylum seekers are deserving of

these rights or not constantly emerge as a predictor of attitudes toward asylum seekers and refugees. This suspicion regarding fairness and equity results in negative emotions and attitudes toward refugees and asylum seekers. This negatively impacts the integration efforts directed toward refugees and asylum seekers and makes their integration more challenging. Another major challenge associated with the integration of refugees is poor mental health. Bempong et al. (2019) state that exposure to violence, an unaccompanied transition from one country to another and internalizing difficulties negatively impact the mental health of refugees. Trauma is one of the prominent mental health problems in the refugee population. Trauma manifest pre-displacement as well as post-migration and post-displacement adjustment among refugees. Refugees are subjected to torture, violence, killing, rape, atrocities, starvation, and incarceration, inhibiting their ability to integrate successfully within a new community (Bemak & Chung, 2017). Deteriorated mental health directly impacts the social skills of refugees and prevents them from engaging in social and interpersonal interaction with people of the new homeland. Adding to this, Fazel et al. (2012) identified the role of cultural shock in reducing acclimatization among refugees, which occurs in six stages. These are strain; feeling of loss and deprivation; rejection by the member of the new culture and the new homeland; confusion among refugees regarding their role and expectations; feeling of surprise, disgust, anxiety and indignation all at once; and feeling of impotence. In addition, residing in an uncertain environment characterized by limited access to resources and basic infrastructure and residing in provisional refugee shelters can cause emotional distress among refugees. Altogether, the deteriorated mental health of refugees prevents them from engaging and participating actively in integration programs. This not only reduces the effectiveness of integration programs but also prevents refugees from successfully integrating in the community of a receiving country.

Millere and Dobelniece (2018) identified a lack of preparedness for the new homeland as well as limited knowledge and awareness as another challenge associated with the integration of refugees and asylum seekers. Countries providing asylum to asylum seekers and refugees struggle with their own problems such as poor or insufficient institutional support, lack of coordination and insufficient support from state and municipalities, and lack of training along with limited training of essential service providers to refugees such as healthcare professionals and trainers. This directly hampers the ability of a country to assist and successfully integrate refugees and asylum seekers. For example, Latvia agreed to host approximately 531 asylum seekers from Italy, Turkey and Greece. Since the country had no previous experience in this area, the entire system was rebuilt for successful integration. However, Latvia's integration

programmes had many drawbacks such as a lack of a centralized language training programme and ineffective housing strategy (UNHCR, 2021; Millere & Dobelniece, 2018).

Another challenge associated with the integration of refugees in a third world country is related to the perception of both refugees and people of the new homeland regarding change or loss of culture. During the resettlement of refugees, a clash of culture in a new homeland is inevitable and the perceived risk of losing culture promotes negative emotions amongst both the locals of the new homeland and the refugees. These negative behaviours directly impact the effectiveness of the integration programmes (Bhattarai, 2015). This can be understood by the phenomenon of acculturation which occurs when more than one culture collides. Although acculturation is normal, however, the possibility of one culture dominating over other is extremely high in this. Acculturation is a salient form of social change and is synonymous to sociocultural change. Upon experiencing or encountering a change in culture, the result can be varied or unpredictable. Therefore, the probability of rejecting or supporting and accepting change in culture is both present and equal (Mesoudi, 2018). On one side, acceptance to change in culture results in the effective integration of refugees by making the new homeland more supportive and accepting of the refugees. On the contrary, the inability to adapt to change can result in negative outcomes which will further enhance complications for refugees to successfully integrate in the community of the third countries (Bhattarai, 2015).

Integration programmes are not new as these are hosted by several countries to provide shelter to displaced refugees. A study by Heiligers (2019) on the resettlement of Bhutanese refugees in the Netherlands identified that learning the local language, major cultural differences, acquiring rights and citizenship, getting education and employment, and independence were the five challenging areas related to integration. It was identified that learning a new language, learning the customs and traditions of the new homeland, and gaining employment and rights in the new homeland was challenging. However, refugees felt more secure, happy, and satisfied after acquiring rights and employment opportunities. Another study by Gharti (2011) identified that the integration policy index of Norway emphasizes health and education facilities, family unification, access to housing, access to labour market, anti-discrimination, political participation, and access to nationality as key measures of integration. However, freedom of speech and religion were key rights that Bhutanese refugees required to integrate successfully in Norway. A similar study conducted by Bhattarai (2014) revealed that Bhutanese refugees residing in Norway for a longer time had mastered Norwegian culture and language and were

successfully employed and self-sustained. At the same time, they also remain concerned regarding their culture, festivals, and values. However, they wish their coming generation would be known as Norwegians, not refugees.

The role of people and politics of the new homeland plays a pivotal role in making the resettlement and integration of refugees successful. Information related to challenges associated with the integration of refugees in new homeland was collected with an aim to identify different types of challenges faced by refugees in their new homeland and to what extent these challenges affect their integration. This information will help in gaining a better understanding of the challenges faced by Bhutanese women during their integration in Norway.

2.5 Social Inclusion of Refugee Women

Women make up approximately half of the world's population and therefore, it is impossible to integrate people into societies by adopting policies that are discriminating towards women. Generally, women are placed in a disadvantaged group in patriarchal societies. Due to this, in male-dominated societies, the role of women is specific to household tasks, and they are often provided no access to resources which also restricts their contribution in the decision-making process. By restricting women's access to resources and education and employment opportunities, they are often excluded from society which makes their integration extremely difficult in developing countries (Singh, 2016). Bhutanese society is identified as both patriarchal and matriarchal. However, the extent of these varies throughout the country. For example, women in the northern and eastern part of Bhutan enjoys more social freedom as compared to women residing in the southern region of the country. In rural areas, both men and women make collective decisions regarding the household such as education, children, and the purchase and sale of land. However, in the Southern region, men have more control over the decision-making process. Apart from this, some of the major women-related issues in Bhutan include trafficking, domestic violence, illiteracy, polygamy, and exploitation at home and the workplace (Priyadarshini, 2014). Giri (2005) pointed out that the displacement of Bhutanese women from Bhutan was associated with serious crimes such as abuse, rape and violence by local authorities and aid workers. While residing at refugee camps, most Bhutanese women and girls were raped and abused by social workers. An investigation conducted by UNHCR found 18 cases of sexual abuse of Bhutanese refugee women. Due to a range of

atrocities faced by women, their resettlement and social integration are much more difficult as compared to men.

Researchers conducting research in the area of female migrants such as Basnet (2018), identified that women from all backgrounds are more at risk as compared to men during the course of their lives and resettlement as they are more susceptible to gender and sex-based violence. In addition to this, refugee women are also more likely to experience a multi-layered form of racism based on nationality, race, cultural identity, gender, and ethnicity. Vartak (2008) also presented similar findings and stated that women form approximately 50% of the Bhutanese refugee community. Therefore, introducing and implementing a solution without their informed and active participation will be inadequate and inherently unjust. While conducting research in the area, it was identified that the role of women in Bhutanese refugee discourse is limited to the gendered aspect of refugee life. Whereas a little emphasis has been provided on their experience associated with the journey from Bhutan to camp life followed by forced migration. This has created a gap through the absence of a gendered analysis of the situation. Abdo (2000) also emphasized on the disadvantage and discrimination faced by Bhutanese women at every stage by excluding from social, economic, and political spheres.

Research conducted in the area of resettlement of refugees in third countries identified that for Bhutanese women, the feeling of being at home and belongingness is not entirely associated with safety and security. Rather, it is experienced at multiple scales such as individual home, community, and the nation (Valentine, 2001). The notion of home among refugee women and girls might be problematic as it might evoke traumatized experiences and emotions. Apart from this traumatized experience, refugee women also go through a loss of social networks, culture and values due to migration. Adding to this argument, Basnet (2018) states that post-resettlement issues such as language barriers, unemployment, cultural shocks, intergenerational clashes, and housing issues also evoke the feeling of fear, loneliness, isolation, and exclusion among women refugees. Whereas a study conducted by Hoellerer (2014) presented slightly different findings and identified multiple or hybrid identities adopted by Bhutanese refugees in the UK to overcome the state of liminality and generate a sense of belongingness. Hoellerer's study identified that Bhutanese refugees Negotiated between identities depending on the situation they are in. For example, while talking about shared history, they emphasize their Bhutanese culture and therefore legitimate their refugee status. However, whenever the need arises, they use their Nepalese network by proclaiming themselves as Nepalese. Similarly,

when talking about rights and citizenship, they consider themselves British or English. In this way, their identity keeps changing depending upon their need and situation.

Employment is crucial for the successful integration of refugees in the new homeland. It promotes social and economic participation and provides them with means to support themselves, family and the economy. However, challenges and struggles associated with securing employment is extremely high among refugee women (Bloch, 2004). The high rate of unemployment results in reduced economic participation, de-skilling, and reduced self-esteem of women refugees. Another study by Albrecht, Pérez & Stitteneder (2021) also identified limited access to education and employment opportunities for refugee women. The primary reason behind this is language barriers and cultural diversity. In addition to this, opportunities for women in economic such as labour and political areas are also limited as compared to male refugees. The lack of opportunities further widens the gap and creates more challenges for female refugees. Sipos (2020) identified discrimination towards refugee women in the labour market which places women in a disadvantaged position. Refugee women often face discrimination based on their gender, religion, ethnicity, and status and this trend is common in developed and developing countries such as Germany and Hungary.

Since this study is aimed at investigating challenges associated with the integration of Bhutanese refugee women in Norway, understanding the challenges associated with their social integration and what they have been through in another national context is necessary. This will further help in understanding the perspective of Bhutanese refugee women in a much better and more informed way and will be used in analyzing the findings.

2.6 Impact of Refugees and Resettlement on New Homeland

The resettlement of refugees has both positive and negative impacts on the new homeland. The emergence of refugees is directly associated with enhanced economic activities and economic development of the new homeland. Schenner & Neergaard, (2019) state that refugees and migrants fill niches in both declining as well as fast growing sectors of the economy of the new homeland. This results in enhanced labour market flexibility. As per the dual labour market theory, newcomers/vulnerable groups in a country fill the secondary labour market, which is often characterized by low earnings, low-level skills, job impermanence, easy entry, and low return to experience and education (Nour & Rahman, 2017). In this way, this phenomenon directly contributes in the economic development of the new homeland. The findings of

Cramarencu (2018) are also similar and confirm the positive impact of the refugee population on the economic development and well-being of the new homeland. A refugee population is often homogenous comprising of young and highly skilled men and women as well as old and under-skilled men and women. With the participation of young and highly skilled men and women in the labour force of the new homeland, economic productivity is enhanced. Also, the presence and participation of international actors such as the United Nations and other groups in the new homeland in the form of international aid create an economic advantage for the new homeland by increasing cash flow and international recognition (World Refugee Council 2018).

In addition to this, a high inflow of both skilled and unskilled refugees within a country encourages and forces the government of the new homeland to create more employment opportunities to meet the needs of the refugee population (Barslund, Di Salvo & Laurensyeva, 2018). This not only benefits the refugee population by providing them with employment opportunities but also benefits the local population by creating more employment opportunities. Meanwhile, the study conducted by Kouni (2018) highlighted the necessity of providing rights and access to refugees to generate positive economic outcomes. Refugees can only contribute to the economic development of the host countries if they are provided basic rights such as access to the labour market. This implies that refugees can only create economic advantages for the host countries if they are allowed to participate in economic activities.

However, the increased inflow of refugees is not always beneficial for the new homeland. With a steady inflow of refugees within a new homeland, the possibility of overcrowding also increases. Overcrowding results in increased consumption of resources within the new homeland and further contribute to the need for importing resources from another country (Shellito, 2016). In addition to this, overcrowding of refugees also increases the risk of the quick spread of diseases within a concentrated area (refugee camps). For example, diseases such as Hepatitis, malaria, jaundice, and cholera spread rapidly in the refugee camps of South Sudan (Sinha, 2012). Such spreads negatively impact the economy of the new homeland in the longer run by impacting early childhood and maternal health. Another negative economic aspect associated with hosting refugees is the strain on the resources of the new homeland. A report presented by World Refugee Council (2018) reported that refugees cause strain on natural resources by overwhelming health and educational facilities and public infrastructure

and place the burden on social and administrative services of the new homeland. Due to the lack of resources, the cost of services such as housing and goods increases.

Unlike economic impact, measuring the social impact of refugees on the new homeland is difficult. A report by UNHCR (2011) states that with the arrival of a large number of refugees in a new homeland, especially with distinct cultures and ethnicity, the risk of social tension, violence and conflicts increases. Fajth et al. (2019) emphasized perceived or real risks and threats to the social well-being associated with the transfer of refugees within the new homeland. Prior experience or exposure of refugees to violence increases their likelihood of perpetrating violence in the future. Whereas, Depetris-Chauvin and Santos (2018) also state that social and economic deprivations faced by refugees in their new homeland can directly increase their propensity to engage in criminal activities such as robbery to fulfill their needs. This implies that refugees who have experienced violence in the past or have fled violence in the past are more likely to engage in such activities in the future in a newly settled community. However, the findings of Feldmeyer et al. (2019) are completely different and have highlighted the positive impact of refugee communities on the social dynamics of the new homeland. The growth of immigrants and refugees from different countries revitalizes communities by creating beneficial neighborhood social processes. Adding to this, Fajth et al. (2019) also state that refugees bring diverse cultural values, practices and knowledge with them to the new community. These practices create new opportunities for the host communities and also directly impact the feeling of perceived safety.

Apart from social, the inflow of refugees in a new homeland also has political impacts. While hosting refugees, a new homeland often receives pressure from international bodies for effective integration and management. At this time, the political and administrative bodies of the host countries often struggle between coordinating with different state and international actors and maintaining stability and security within the country (World Refugee Council, 2018). Additionally, Dzimbiri (1993) also revealed significant political repercussions associated with hosting refugees. Since a new homeland is required to work in collaboration with several international actors to provide refuge and ensure successful integration, it often loses political autonomy in this process. This is mainly because a lot of actors participate in the decision-making, and therefore the power or control of the new homeland in this entire process reduces. In addition, the inflow of refugees in a country is also associated with changes in demography. A study by Cramarencu (2018) emphasized on the contribution of refugees'

inflow within a new homeland in demographic transformation. Providing an example of the European Union (EU), Cramarencu states that its population is going through an alarming population trend due to the dramatic shrinking of the young population and increasing aging population. The aging population of the EU was 28.8% in 2015 and it is expected to reach 50.3% in 2050 (Eurostat, 2022). In this case, the increased inflow of refugees can assist the EU in achieving the required demographic boost and maintaining the balance between the young and older populations.

In order to identify outcomes associated with the integration of Bhutanese refugee women in Norway, it is essential to analyse existing literature regarding different ways in which refugees impact the social, economic and cultural aspects of the new homeland. Therefore, this literature will help in analysing findings associated with the impact of integration on Norway.

2.7 Research Gap

By reviewing the literature, a population gap has been identified. A population gap is a type of gap in which a specific population has not been represented adequately or has been under-represented in the evidence of prior research. From the literature review, it is identified that several studies have been conducted on the forced migration and resettlement of Bhutanese refugees in Scandinavian countries like Norway and European countries. However, the population emphasized in these studies is either Bhutanese men or the focus has been neutral. Due to this, emphasis on challenges faced by Bhutanese refugee women has not been identified properly. In addition to this, the literature review also identified a knowledge gap. As discussed, the existing literature either emphasized on the challenges associated with the integration of Bhutanese refugees in Norway in a general way without emphasizing on women's condition or addressed only gender issues associated with the resettlement and integration of women. However, there is a dearth of literature regarding challenges associated with the integration of Bhutanese women in Norway with respect to social, economic, cultural and identification aspects. Therefore, this research has been conducted to understand the perspectives and experiences of Bhutanese refugee women regarding resettlement in Norway through the evaluation of social, economic, cultural and identification aspects.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework

This chapter will present and discuss the theories used in this research. The main theory used for this research is Social Integration Framework by Heckmann (2005). This theory is supported by the Conceptual Framework of Integration by Ager and Strang (2008) and Anthias's Translocational Positionality Theory.

3.1 Social Integration Framework

Since this research aims to understand Bhutanese women's integration in Norway, this research uses the Social Integration Framework of Heckmann (2005). This Framework has identified four dimensions of social integration. These are structural integration, cultural integration, interactive integration and identification integration. Interlink between these dimensions is represented in *image 1* attached below.

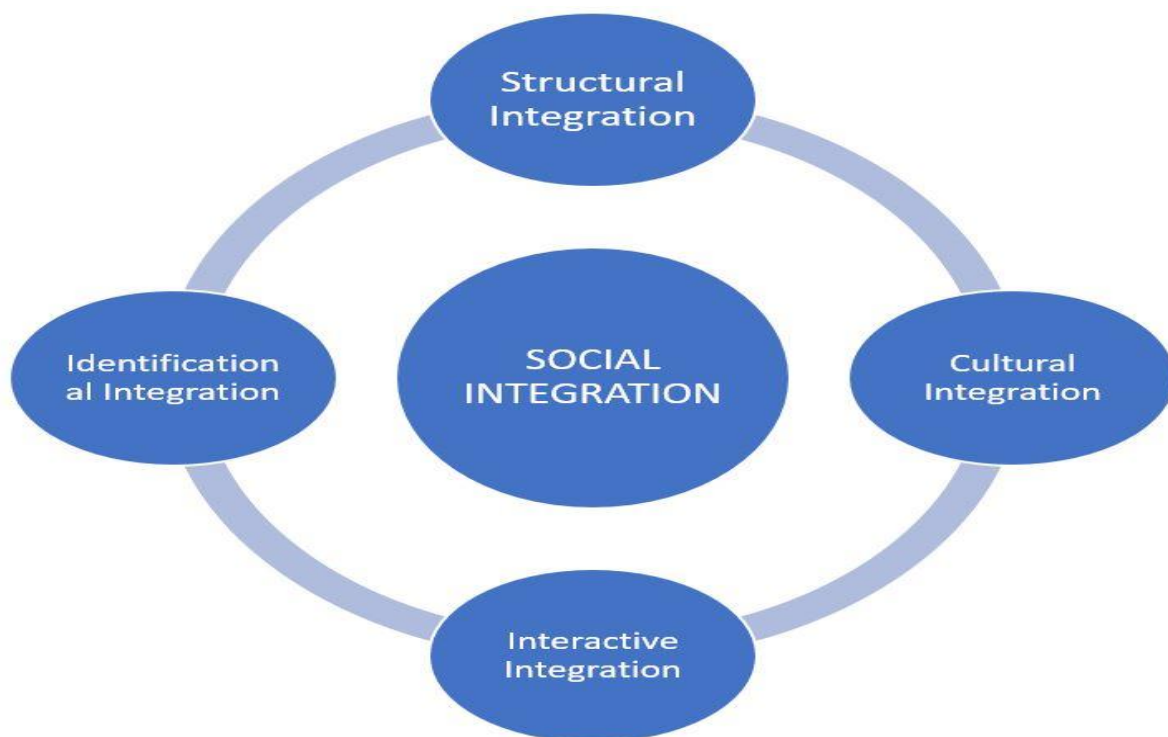


Image 1: Four dimensions of social integration (Source: Heckmann, 2005)

Structural integration is associated with the acquisition of rights and access to a certain position and status in the core institution of society. This means access to labour market, economy, education and qualification system, and welfare and housing system (Heckmann 2005 p.15). Access to these resources helps an individual for a refugee in receiving a social, economic status and opportunities within the market in the new homeland and therefore contributes to their structural integration (King & Lulle, 2016). Every society is built upon a

material base and therefore, the centrality of the economic institution in societies prepares individuals for those systems and their role and position within the social status. Since refugees and asylum seekers enter a new homeland to improve their life and social status, entering into the core institution of the new homeland is essential for them. Structural integration is an integration of refugees and asylum seekers into the nation's society, more precisely into the local and regional context (Heckmann 2005 p.16). For easy and effective structural integration, Norwegian law has certain mandates such as living in Norway for seven years consecutively and having a record of good conduct. Since structural integration is one of the key aims of the Norwegian government, this dimension will help in identifying and understanding the impact of Bhutanese women's integration in Norwegian society.

Cultural integration is a mutual process where not only immigrants learn new values, practices and norms but the whole society also learns new ways of relating to immigrants and adapting to their needs (Heckmann 2005). The concept of cultural integration is not limited to immigrants leaving their culture and adapting to a new culture. Rather cultural integration is also associated with cultural competencies and personality that enable refugees to successfully adjust to a new society without leaving their culture and identity. However, biculturalism and bilingualism require certain social mobility which is rather difficult to achieve. Considering the significance of culture, the Norwegian government has developed the Norwegian Cultural Orientation programme (NORCO) in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration (IOM). The aim of this programme is to provide pre-departure and post-departure training to refugees to ensure awareness with the culture and society of the country (IOM, 2022). Therefore, this dimension is used to measure the effectiveness of the integration programme of Norway for Bhutanese women and measure the outcome of integration.

Interactive integration is associated with the acceptance and inclusion of refugees and asylum seekers in the primary and social relationships and networks of the new homeland. Some indicators of interactive integration include social networks, partnerships, friendships, marriages, and memberships in voluntary organisations (Heckmann 2005). Some of the core elements of cultural integration such as communicative competencies are extremely important for the interactive integration of refugees in the new homeland. Initially, interactive integration into the social system provides required assistance to immigrants through the support and solidarity of relatives and sharing of information and experiences (Gidley & Oliver, 2015). This assist refugees in requiring the necessary cultural and social capital for entering into the

core institutions of the new homeland. Since this aspect of integration deals with social belongingness, status and inclusion of refugees within the social groups of the new homeland, this dimension is also utilized in this research to understand the effectiveness of these programmes for Bhutanese women in Norway.

Identification integration is the fourth and last dimension of social integration. Entering and participating in the core institutions of a new homeland without having acquired cultural competencies is impossible. However, it is possible to participate without identifying the goals of these institutions and developing a feeling of belongingness to the new homeland (Heckmann 2005). The feeling of belongingness may develop at a later stage among refugees in the integration process as a result of participation and acceptance in the new homeland. The inclusion of refugees in a new society on the basis of a subjective level is integrated by their feelings of belongingness and identification with the social groups, especially ethnicity, regional local and national (Gidley & Oliver, 2015). In addition, immigrants and refugees can only claim their rights and achieve a certain position in the new society if they acquire the core competencies of that society and its culture. In this context, integration is associated with an individual's cognitive behavioural and attitudinal changes (Heckmann 2005 p.16). Since this dimension is directly associated with the above three dimensions, it is also be utilized in this research to understand the effectiveness of the refugee integration programme of the Norwegian government (King & Lulle, 2016). This aspect is used to understand to what extent Bhutanese women are integrated in Norwegian society, and this will further help in understanding the impact of this integration in the Norwegian society.

3.2 Conceptual Framework of Integration

Ager & Strang (2008) also proposed a conceptual framework discussing the successful integration of immigrants and refugees in a new homeland. These domains are classified into four categories, namely markers and means, social connection, facilitation, and foundation. A pictorial representation of the conceptual framework is attached in *image 2* below. **Markers and means** are a number of areas in the public arena that are indicators of successful integration of immigrants and refugees within the new homeland. Key areas within markers and means include employment, housing, education, and health. Employment is one of the critical areas related to the integration of immigrants and refugees within the new homeland. Employment is directly associated with economic independence and planning for the future, meeting

members of society, and providing them with opportunities to restore self-esteem and self-reliance (Gidley & Oliver, 2015). There are certain barriers to securing employment in a new homeland such as non-recognition of qualification and previous work experiences. Due to this, many refugees fail to secure employment in their new homeland. Therefore, the successful integration of refugees in the new homeland is directly dependent upon their ability to find employment.



Image 2: Conceptual Framework Defining Core Domains of Integration (Source: Ager & Strang, 2008)

Housing is directly associated with the physical and emotional well-being of refugees. Several issues are associated with the housing of refugees and the housing environment. Since housing is directly related to the feeling of well-being, it is necessary for the successful integration of refugees within the new homeland (Gidley & Oliver, 2015). Education is associated with gaining skills and competence in subsequent employment which assist immigrants and refugees in becoming active and productive members of society. The education of refugees is directly affected by insufficient support for learning in the new homeland’s language, isolation and exclusion (Ager & Strang 2008). Therefore, it is necessary to provide refugees with the required support and assistance in assessing the quality of education and employment options in the future. In this way, education directly contributes to the integration of refugees in their new homeland. The good health of refugees is also directly associated with their successful and active engagement in a new society. Access to health service enables refugees to meet their

social, emotional and psychological health-related needs and therefore, directly impacts their engagement and participation in the community (Gidley & Oliver, 2015). Since domains within markers and means are associated with their social and economic well-being, all four domains (employment, education, housing, and health) are addressed and measured in this research. This will help in understanding the social, economic and cultural impact of Bhutanese women's integration in Norwegian society.

Social connection plays a fundamental role in driving the process of integration at a local level. The integration process is identified as two-way, relating to the conditions for and actual participation of refugees in all aspects of life, providing asylum along with refugees' own sense of belonging and membership (Ager & Strang 2008). Therefore, it is essential to develop social connections between refugees and the community of the new homeland. There are different forms of social connections, namely social bridges, social bonds and social links. Social bonds can be formed with family and groups such as co-ethnic, co-national, and co-religious (Gidley & Oliver, 2015). Developing social bonds help refugees in having a feeling of being settled and therefore contributes to effective integration. On the contrary, failure to establish social bonds directly impacts the social and mental well-being of refugees. Similarly, the social bridge is associated with the relationship between refugees and their new community. Ager & Strang (2008) identified that the friendly nature of locals towards refugees and being recognized and greeted by others make refugees feel "at home" and assist them in integrating within a community of the new homeland. Social link is another dimension of integration that discusses the connection between refugees and the structure of the state of the new homeland. To achieve genuine equality of access to services, additional effort is required from the refugees and the wider community (Ager & Strang 2008). Domains of social connection depict sharing and transfer of knowledge, values, practices, and experiences between Bhutanese women and people of the Norwegian community. Therefore, measuring these domains will help in understating the social and cultural impact of Bhutanese women's integration in the Norwegian society.

Facilitators are entities involved in ensuring and facilitating local integration. Two key aspects of facilitators are language and cultural knowledge, and safety and stability. Several researchers have highlighted the necessity of cultural integration of refugees. Being able to speak the native or widely spoken language of the new homeland ensures the successful integration of refugees (Ager & Strang 2008). Knowledge regarding language assist refugees in accessing essential

services within the new homeland such as healthcare. In addition to this, cultural similarity assists in promoting mutual understanding among refugees. Whereas cultural differences or inability to cope with cultural differences result in alienation and depression among refugees. Apart from this, the feelings of being at a safe and stable community also result in successful integration of refugees. Since refugees flee their country due to uncertain conditions such as violence and murders, they seek peace. Refugees seek peace and safety for themselves as well as others. This implies that if their arrival causes any unrest in the community, it also negatively impacts their integration in the community of the new homeland. The role of a facilitator is to remove barriers to integration and the successful integration of refugees (Gidley & Oliver, 2015). Since this domain deals with efforts and strategies of the government of the new homeland towards integration, its analysis also helps in understanding the impact of integration in the new homeland.

Foundation of integration consists of one key aspect namely rights and citizenship. The notion of rights, citizenship and nationhood might vary in countries. Therefore, it is essential for the government to develop effective policies regarding integration by clearly articulating policies on citizenship and nationhood (Ager & Strang 2008). In addition, three key rights that must be considered for successful integration include human dignity, freedom of cultural choice, and equality. Since the foundation helps in empowering refugees to achieve their full potential, this domain is also utilized in this research (Gidley & Oliver, 2015). By identifying the power of Bhutanese women, their social, economic, and cultural impact on the Norwegian society can be measured.

3.3 Translocational Positionality Framework

Refugees are compelled to move from one country to another in search of a quality of life. In this migration process, understanding and managing the identity of refugees often becomes a complicated task. Since identity is crucial for any individual, several researchers have discussed the issue of identity in their own ways. One of the most effective frameworks for understanding the identity of refugees and the factors affecting their identity was proposed by Anthias in 2002. This framework is translocational positionality framework. Translocational refers to social spaces that are defined by social boundaries and hierarchies (Anthias 2002), and positionality refers to the placement within a set of relations and practices. It consists of social positions and social positioning (Anthias, 2008). In this way, positionality is an

intermediate concept between objectivism and subjectivism and inhabits in a space between social constructionism and approaches stressing agencies. Anthias (2008, p.18) stated that translocational positionality is structured through the interplay of different locations related to ethnicity, gender, race, and class along with their contradictory efforts at times. It combines a reference to “*social position (as a set of effectivities: as outcome) and social positioning (as a set of practices, actions and meanings: as process). That is, positionality is the space at the intersection of structure (social position/social effects) and agency (social positioning/meaning and practice)*” (p.15). Collectively, translocational positionality emphasizes the issues related to identity in terms of geographical locations which are contextual and related to meaning and time rather than being fixed. Therefore, these involve shifts and contradictions (Anthias, 2002).

As per the translocational positionality framework proposed by Anthias, research conducted on migration and migrant population identified that migrants’ positions of subordination and privilege keep on fluctuating as per their location. In addition, the feeling of belongingness among migrants varies across space and time as per the social construction of their identity which is both self-constructed and externally ascribed by others (Doan & Portillo, 2017). Therefore, when considering from a spatially dynamic perspective, these varied identities might conflict with each other since internally constructed and externally ascribed identities have emerged from varied social hierarchies. The concept of identity plays a pivotal role in shaping the feeling of belongingness. Belongingness emerges in rational terms; we-ness which refers to those standing as selves, and otherness, which refers to the construction of those who cannot stand as selves or are unable to enter within the boundaries of others (Anthias, 2008). Since refugees are transferred to a third country, ensuring the promotion of the feeling of belongingness is pivotal for their successful integration. Belongingness refers to the experiences of people associated with being part of the social fabric and ways through which social bonds and links are manifested in practices. In addition, belongingness is also associated with rights and obligations related to citizenship (Anthias, 2008). Due to cultural and ethnic differences and the construction of boundaries and changes within them, enhancing a sense of belongingness through rights and citizenship is also crucial.

3.4 Theoretical Concept Application

As discussed earlier, the concept of integration of refugees is multi-dimensional. This implies that emphasizing only one aspect, such as social or cultural, will fail in answering to what

extent the integration programme has been proven effective for refugees. This review is aimed at investigating the integration of Bhutanese women in Norway and exploring its further impact on Norwegian society. Therefore, different dimensions and domains identified in the three frameworks presented above are utilized in the research.

Heckmann's four dimensions of integration framework- structural, cultural, interactive, and identification are interconnected and hence cannot be studied in the absence of others. Therefore, using all these dimensions is necessary. Social integration is one of the key focuses of this research because this phenomenon is concerned with the complete inclusion and acceptance of refugees in the core institutions, positions and relationships of the new homeland. Since this research will explore outcomes associated with the integration of Bhutanese women in Norwegian society, measuring social integration is necessary. Therefore, all four dimensions of social integration are utilized in this research. Meanwhile, facilitators and domains of integration identified and proposed by Ager & Strang (2008) in their conceptual framework of integration are used for understanding the outcome of the integration programmes. This conceptual framework identified ten domains, namely employment, housing, education, health, social bridges, social bonds, social links, language and cultural knowledge, safety and stability, and rights and citizenship. All these domains are explored as these help in understanding the social, economic, legal, political, and structural impact of the integration of refugees in the new homeland.

Considering the interdependence and similarities, Ager & Strang's framework can be further used to strengthen and theoretically deepen Heckman's model since the focus of both is somewhat similar. For example, structural integration deals with refugees' rights and positions in the core institutions such as employment and education. This dimension is operationalized and deepened in line with markers and means of Ager & Strang's determinant which includes key domains such as employment, housing, education, and health. Meanwhile, the interactive integration dimension of Heckmann agrees with the social connection determinant of Ager & Strang. Therefore, all domains from these two frameworks are utilized in this research to understand the social, cultural, structural, and identification aspects associated with integrating Bhutanese women in Norway. Lastly, the translocational positionality theory emphasizes the interaction between different locations regarding gender, ethnicity, race, and class and their contradictory effect. This theory is used to understand the social position and social positioning of Bhutanese women in Norway. This proposed theoretical framework is used to answer

research questions presented in the introduction (What are the outcomes of Bhutanese refugee women integration into Norwegian society with regard to structural, culture, social, and identification aspects? Do they face any challenges or not? and if yes, what kind of challenges?) and achieve its aim. For this purpose, domains of these frameworks have been translated into questions that are further asked from research participants. In this way, relevant and required data are collected with the use of this model and analyses are made.

Chapter 4: Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Research methodology refers to a systematic and theoretical analysis of methods used within a specific field of study. It consists of a theoretical analysis of methods and processes associated with a specific branch of knowledge (Igwenagu 2016, p.4). This theoretical underpinning helps a researcher to identify the most suitable methods to reach research objectives and practices that can be applied in the context of a specific topic, case or issue. This research methodology chapter aims to discuss the most suitable approaches, methods and practices that will help achieve this research's objectives while answering the raised research question. This research is aimed at identifying and investigating challenges associated with the social integration of Bhutanese women in Norwegian society and its social, cultural, and structural impact on Norway. In order to prepare a methodology for this research, research onion framework proposed by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012, p.102) will be used. This framework consists of six layers namely research philosophy, research approach, research strategy, research choice, time horizon, and data collection and analysis procedure.

4.2 Research Philosophy

Research philosophy refers to a collection of beliefs or ideas adopted by a researcher in order to identify, collect and analyse data. Selecting a research philosophy is dependent on the nature of the area being investigated (Kirongo and Odoyo 2020, p.36). Research philosophy is classified into three categories namely epistemology, ontology, and axiology. The selected philosophical approach for this research is an epistemology which discusses what constitutes acceptable knowledge within a field of study. Epistemology is a way of looking at the world and making sense of it. Three core types of epistemology are positivism, constructionism, and interpretivism. The positive approach believes that knowledge can be explored with the use of scientific methods which are further used for explaining causes. This approach uses scientific methods to study society, human beings and is mainly used for knowledge that is posited. Constructionism supports the notion that both subject and object emerge as partners in the development of meaning. The interpretivism approach believes that it is essential for a researcher to understand the difference between human beings in their role as social actors (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2012). However, it is understood and examined in a much wider sense now with the emergence of new aspects such as feminist epistemology. Feminist epistemology is a modern concept associated with women's way of knowledge or their

experiences and is central to feminist research. Approaches within this include gender-structure, gender symbolism, and sexism (Abakedi, D. E., & Egbai, 2020).

Out of all the philosophical approaches, the most suitable for this research is **constructivism with regard to epistemology**. Since feminist epistemology deals with studies related to gender, feminism and women, and the focus of this research is also on understanding the perspective of women, this philosophical approach is selected. Meanwhile, constructivism is selected due to its core belief that knowledge existing in the world always remains human and social construction. Therefore, reality is constructed to a certain extent and can be invented by someone who observes it. With these approaches, a better understanding regarding integration and perspective of Bhutanese women with their integration in the Norwegian society can be understood.

4.3 Research Approach

The next layer of the research onion is selecting a suitable research approach. “*Research approach refers to plans and procedures spanning steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis and interpretation*” (Creswell 2014, p.3). Research approaches are classified into two categories namely inductive approach and deductive approach. The inductive approach alludes to a logical process under which specific events and situations are monitored and analysed to establish general principles. The inductive approach aims at developing a theory by identifying and understanding multiple propositions in order to make an informed decision and reach a conclusion. On the contrary, under the deductive research approach, theories or hypotheses are developed and tested using a research strategy (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2012, p.117). In the deductive approach, inferences for logic are drawn from multiple premises. It helps in establishing the relationship between the proposition and the conclusion.

The selected approach for this research is **inductive**. This approach is selected due to its basis on building generalization through observation of specific events. It enables a researcher to extract information from dominant, frequent and significant themes emerging in data. With the inductive approach, a researcher can gain a basic understanding of challenges that are faced by Bhutanese women during their integration in the Norwegian society and its further impact on the Norwegian society.

4.4 Research Design

Research design refers to an overall strategy selected by a researcher in order to integrate different aspects of research in a systematic and coherent manner. Therefore, it provides a blueprint to a researcher regarding how research should be conducted and how to select or arrange conditions that will help in achieving the research aim and objectives efficiently. There are three types of research design, namely exploratory research design, descriptive research design, and explanatory research design. Exploratory research design answers “what” and is aimed at exploring what is happening by seeking new insights and assessing an event/phenomenon from a new perspective. Three key ways of conducting exploratory research include literature search and review, interviewing experts on a specific subject, and conducting a focus group interview. However, since the probability of finding a new piece of information is extremely high in exploratory research, a researcher must be willing to change the course of the research upon finding something new (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2012, p.133). Descriptive research design is an extension of the exploratory design and is aimed at presenting a detailed and accurate profile of an event, person or phenomenon (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2012, p.134). Explanatory research design aims at establishing a causal relationship between two variables. Explanatory research is used for investigating a problem or situation in order to identify a relationship between two or more connected variables (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2012, p.134).

The selected design for this research is *exploratory*. Exploratory research is conducted in order to collect in-depth information regarding an issue or to explore new information. Since this research is aimed at understanding what are the key challenges that Bhutanese women are facing during their social integration in Norwegian society. Therefore, to know more about this issue, information regarding the perspective and experiences of Bhutanese women is required. This helps in understanding this issue from the perspective of the social actors involved (Bhutanese women) and will help in gaining new and unique insight regarding this issue.

4.5 Research Strategy

Research strategy is an extension of a research design and also provides a step-by-step plan of action for conducting the research. There are seven types of research strategies, namely experiment, survey, case study, action research, grounded theory, ethnography, and archival

research (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2012, p.135). Experiment research strategy is used in the field of natural sciences. The purpose of this strategy is to explore casual links between independent and dependent variables. Experiment design is often used in exploratory and explanatory research in order to answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ research questions (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2012, p.136). Survey is another research strategy that is mostly used for answering research questions related to what, where, who, how much, and how many. Survey is used to collect a large quantity of data from a sizeable population in an affordable manner (Ponto 2015, p.168). Case study involves an in-depth and detailed investigation of a specific phenomenon or organization using multiple sources of evidence. Case study research strategy is more suitable if a researcher wants to gain a rich understanding of an issue. It helps in answering why, what and how-based research questions (Starman 2013, p.30). Action research emphasizes on action in research and involves a collaboration between researchers and practitioners. This research starts with a clear focus and involves a diagnosis based on evaluations to plan further actions. Grounded theory strategy is used for both inductive and deductive approaches and it is used to explain or predict behaviour with a key focus on theory development. This process starts with developing a theoretical framework to collect data through a series of observations (Noble and Mitchell 2016, p.1). Ethnography is associated with a field of anthropology and its purpose is to explain and explores the cultural phenomenon in the social world from the point of view of the subject of the research. This strategy is time-consuming as it requires the researcher to immerse himself/herself in the research (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2012, p.143). Archival research is the last research strategy that uses administrative records and documents as the key source for data. Archival research strategy is suitable to understand evolution or changes within a specific area or phenomenon (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2012, p.143).

4.6 Research Method

Research methods refer to a specific mode of data collection and analysis (Igwenagu 2016, p.8). There are three research methods, namely qualitative research, quantitative research, and mixed-method research. The qualitative research method refers to the process of naturalistic inquiry aimed at gaining detailed insight regarding a social phenomenon within its natural setting. Qualitative research aims at answering why instead of what of social phenomenon and therefore relies upon the experiences of human beings. Since this research aims at collecting descriptive data, it involves collection and analysis of narratives and open or close-ended

observations. The qualitative method is mainly used to investigate complex problems or phenomena by gaining a detailed understanding of human behavior, attitudes, experiences, intention, and motivations (Ahmad et al. 2019, p.2829). The quantitative method is number-based research that relies upon and collects numerical and statistical data and hard facts. The primary objective of the quantitative method is to establish a cause-and-effect relationship between two or more variables using computational, mathematical and statistical methods. Unlike qualitative, quantitative research is context-specific therefore, human behaviour must be investigated holistically rather than manipulated. Another characteristic of quantitative research is that it can be accurately and precisely measured and therefore, reliability and validity remain extremely high (Ahmad et al. 2019, p.2829). The third research method is a mixed method. A mixed method is a general term used for research that uses both quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis techniques (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill 2012, p.145). A mixed method is considered an effective method since it helps in gaining rich understanding of an issue or phenomenon which cannot be understood fully using just quantitative or qualitative methods. With the integration of several methods of data collection and analysis, complex problems can be investigated (Dawadi, Shrestha and Giri 2021, p.27).

The most suitable method for this research is *qualitative*. The emphasis of qualitative data remains on understanding the behavior and perspective of human beings in order to understand why and how something is happening. Since this research is also aimed at understanding the perspective of Bhutanese women regarding their social integration in the Norwegian society and the challenges faced by them during this process, a qualitative approach is more suitable. By using a qualitative approach, these issues and areas can be investigated in detail. The quantitative method was not selected for this research due to its focus on a numerical and large quantity of data. In order to reach a conclusion, this research requires detailed information rather than numerical or mathematical information. Similarly, since quantitative data is not required, the mixed method was also rejected.

4.7 Time Horizon

Time horizon refers to a researcher's time and the evidence collected to complete a study. Time horizon is classified into two categories, namely longitudinal study and cross-sectional study. Longitudinal research refers to observing people and collecting data over a period while exercising a measure of control over variables that are being investigated. The longitudinal

study holds the capability to study change and development regarding a specific event or phenomenon. However, performing a longitudinal study is a time-consuming process and cannot be utilized for research with time constraints. On the contrary, the cross-sectional study refers to the study of a specific phenomenon during a specific time. Cross-section study is used for investigating issues and completing research with time constraint.

Considering the need of this research, *cross-sectional study* is more suitable. The key reason for selecting cross-sectional time horizon is the time constraint and focus of the research. To achieve research's aim and objectives, this research will collect data from Bhutanese women who attended the integration programs of the Norwegian government for socially integrating in the Norwegian society. Therefore, there is no need to study these participants over a period of time. Instead interacting with them and observing them regarding the integration issue will help in collecting relevant data. Therefore, this time horizon is more suitable for this research.

4.8 Data Collection

4.8.1 Type of Data

Data is extremely important in research. In research, data is classified into two categories, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data refers to raw and unstructured data which is collected first handed by the researcher related to a specific research topic. Primary data is considered more authentic, reliable, and valid as it is not altered by human beings and is available in its true and accurate form (Kabir 2016, p.204). On the contrary, secondary data is used and structured data that has been collected in the past by other researchers for a completely different purpose (Kabir 2016, p.205). Since secondary data has already been altered during analysis and interpretation prior to publishing in a research journal, therefore its reliability, authenticity and validity is comparatively low than primary data.

The selected data for this research is *primary data*. This research wants to investigate and understand the perceptions, experiences, and opinions of Bhutanese refugee women related to their integration in Norwegian society to identify challenges they faced during their social integration. Therefore, the researcher will have to interact with these Bhutanese refugee women to collect in-depth data and identify their challenges. Since primary data will help in collecting accurate and authentic data, primary data is selected. Whereas secondary data is rejected for this research because the literature will fail to provide accurate and detailed account of data.

Although there is sufficient data related to the integration of Bhutanese women in Norwegian society, however, this data is outdated. Primary research is conducted with the intent to gain a fresh and accurate perspective in this area and therefore make required improvements for more effectiveness in the future. In addition, collecting primary data will allow the researcher to access new and unidentified knowledge in an area which further enhances the effectiveness of any research.

4.8.2 Data Collection Method

Data collection refers to methods used by a researcher to collect data related to a specific research topic. Since this research will require primary data to achieve its aim and objectives, primary data collection methods will be utilized. There are several primary data collection methods, but the most used methods are focus groups, interviews, and case studies (Kabir 2016, p.208). The selected primary data collection method for this research is *in-depth interview*. An interview is a method for collecting primary data by recording and analysing participants' opinions, beliefs, experiences, and ideas related to a specific topic or issue. The interview method helps in collecting detailed and rich data since it involves direct interaction between a researcher and participants. In addition, an interview is considered suitable for research topics dealing with sensitive issues (Parveen and Showkat 2017, p.4). This research requires detailed information related to the experiences, beliefs, and opinions of Bhutanese refugee women in Norway related to their social integration and interview helps in collecting rich and detailed data. Meanwhile, this is a sensitive topic and deals with the emotions of Bhutanese refugee women. Therefore, conducting an interview will enable the researcher to develop trust and connection with the participants to encourage them to share more information. This will promote richness in the research. Focus group and case study methods are rejected due to their inability to provide relevant and rich information.

The mode of the interview will be *face-to-face*, and the questions used will be *open-ended*. The face-to-face interview is selected due to the need of monitoring participants' practices and expressions while answering questions along with information shared by them. As discussed above, due to the sensitive nature of this research topic, building connections and trust will be necessary. Therefore, this mode is selected. At the same time, open-ended questions will be used to build conversation and encourage participants to share new and detailed information (Weller et al. 2018, p.18). Interview will be conducted in Nepali language (mother tongue of

participants) to form a connection and extract as much information as possible (as long as participants are comfortable in this language).

The data that is expected to collect in this interview is mainly associated with identifying the integration outcome of Bhutanese refugee women in Norway is, as it is one of the key aspects of the research aim, objective, and questions. Another aspect of this research is to understand structural, cultural, interactive, and identification impact. Therefore, questions addressing these aspects are included in the interview. Some key aspects that interview questions focus upon include employment, education, housing, cultural differences, Norwegian language, interaction with Norwegian people (through friendship and perception of Norwegians such as “as immigrant”), membership in social organizations, and personal identity after integration. These questions are framed with the intent to gain a thorough understanding regarding the impact on structural, cultural, interactive, and identification aspects of Bhutanese women in Norway. Apart from these, other questions related to satisfaction/dissatisfaction of resettled Bhutanese women, their intent related to return to the home country, facilities/assistance provided by the Norwegian government, and personal opinion regarding integration are also collected. The intent behind this is to make a better and more informed interpretation.

4.8.3 Sample

Sampling refers to the process of selecting a sample from a large population in order to accomplish the research objective (Bhardwaj 2019). While conducting research, it is impossible for a researcher to include all suitable participants in the research. Therefore, the research identifies and selects some of the participants meeting research requirements in order to complete the study. Sampling is of two types, probability sampling and non-probability sampling. The selected type of sampling for this research is *non-probability sampling*. In non-probability sampling, each member of the population does not have a known probability of being selected as a sample in a study, unlike probability. It is used for research that targets a specific population with certain characteristics (Bhardwaj 2019, p.161). This sampling method uses subjective judgement and emphasizes on a convenient selection of participants from the population. As discussed earlier, non-probability sampling identifies and selects specific samples that align the most with research needs and requirements. This research is aimed at identifying and understanding key challenges faced by Bhutanese women during their social integration in Norwegian society. This implies that this research requires Bhutanese women, who are refugees in Norway and have fled Bhutan, enrolled in the social integration programs

of the Norwegian government, and have experience of these programmes. Therefore, non-probability sampling approach is selected as it will help in identifying the most suitable participants for this research.

There are four most used methods within non-probability sampling. These include convenience sampling, purposive sampling, quota sampling, and snowball sampling. The selected sampling method for this research is *snowball*. In snowball sampling, one or more respondents identify other respondents. This sampling method is used in situations where identifying and locating participants become difficult (Showkat and Parveen 2017, p.8). It is used for research where a sample is unknown and rare. This method is selected because finding and locating Bhutanese refugee women in Norway who have also participated in the social integration programme is extremely difficult. Therefore, identifying even one participant will help in finding other participants as well through referrals, friends, family members, and other known ones. Other methods were rejected for several reasons such as their inability to find suitable participants for this research, high time-consuming nature, and probability of sampling error.

In order to collect the sample, the researcher was required to identify and locate one participant meeting the research requirement. One of the participants was met in a Nepalese cultural event. The participant was asked to share information regarding other potential participants that can meet this research's requirements and participate in this research. The main challenge was meeting all research requirements for participants.

4.8.4 Sample Size and Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

The sample size for this research is 12 participants. As identified above, data from participants is collected through an in-depth face-to-face interview of around 40 to 60 minutes which will be further transcribed and analysed. In addition to this, finding and locating Bhutanese refugee women in Norway can also be extremely challenging and time-consuming. Therefore, this sample size is selected as it is feasible, and the qualitative data collected is easily manageable. Another reason for this sample size is the point of saturation in data. In research, when researcher keeps on receiving the same and repetitive information and statements, again and again, saturation occurs. Since conducting the interview of 12 participants will anyway familiarize the researcher with all perspectives associated with the issues, this sample size is selected.

The inclusion criteria of participants include that participants must be refugee Bhutanese women and descendants of Nepalese migrants who migrated to Bhutan and were forced to flee Bhutan due to their reclassification as illegal migrants. In addition, these refugees must be resettled in Norway with the help of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and have enrolled in the introduction or integration program of the Norwegian government. The exclusion criteria include Bhutanese women who have migrated to Norway for education, employment-related or any other purpose other than asylum seeking, women who have not enrolled in the integration programs of Norway, and who did not face any challenge in the integration program.

In the end, a sample of 12 participants was recruited in this research. These participants were resettled Bhutanese women who were integrated in Norway through Norwegian government social integration programmes. The age of these participants was in between 25 to 65 years. Out of 12 participants, nine were married and three were unmarried. They came to Norway in different years. All participants followed Hinduism and were descendants of migrants from Nepal who settled in Bhutan in search of employment and were forced to leave Bhutan due to policy changes implemented by the Bhutanese government.

4.9 Data Analysis

Data analysis refers to a systematic process involving the application of statistical and logical techniques to illustrate, summarize and evaluate collected data. Since this is qualitative research, qualitative data analysis techniques, *thematic analysis* will be used. Thematic analysis is a process of organizing data by creating codes and themes. This method is used for identifying uniqueness, commonalities, and idiosyncratic meanings within a dataset (Braun and Clarke 2012, p.2). Qualitative studies require a thorough understanding of diverse aspects of data and thematic analysis enables a researcher to discover different aspects of a dataset through interpretation. With this, the relationship between the different opinions and experiences of participants can be compared and evaluated (Alhojailan 2012, p.40). Thematic analysis is selected for this research because it helps a researcher in making sense of single or collective experiences and meanings. It will help the researcher to identify commonalities in the experiences of Bhutanese refugee women during their social integration in Norway, which is the aim of this research. Other qualitative data analysis methods include narrative analysis which involves narrative inquiry and analysis of stories related to people, culture and societies

(Wolgemuth and Agosto 2019, p.1). This method is not selected due to its emphasis on understanding the content and structure of stories rather than their meaning.

This thematic analysis was conducted manually. For this, the interview transcript was analysed thoroughly and was read again and again for identifying both repetitive and new information. These were then converted into codes and then themes. Through this analysis, different themes emerged that were highlighting different aspects associated with the issue. One most significant challenges faced while conducting this analysis was related to interpretation. Participants were using certain terms with multiple meanings, making it difficult to understand the context.

4.10 Ethical Consideration

Research ethics are incredibly crucial as they play a pivotal role in governing the entire research process (Abrar and Sidik 2019, p.188). Since this is primary research, the biggest ethical consideration is ensuring the safety, dignity, and well-being of participants. For this, personally identifiable information was collected from the participants due to the nature of this research; however, this information was not published in the study. Participants have also been addressed through synonyms such as Participant 1, Participant 1, Participant 3, and so on in this study. This helped maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of participants. In addition, seeking permission to conduct primary research is also essential. For this purpose, permission from the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) was granted. Meanwhile, this research requires participants to share personal information such as their experiences and their perceptions and values. European Data Protection Supervisor (2020, p.18) states that consent must be freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous. Therefore, a consent form was shared with the potential participants to inform them about the purpose and data requirements of this research. Only participants providing informed consent were included in this study. Lastly, information collected from the participant will not be utilized for any other purpose other than this research without the prior consent and approval of the research participants. This research has also collected and used secondary data in the literature review and for the interpretation of primary data. Therefore, the work of all researchers has been acknowledged through citations and referencing and to prevent plagiarism. In addition, this ensured that secondary data is not altered or manipulated in any way and higher accuracy is maintained. Lastly, while conducting this research, Norwegian ethical guidance for social research has been followed throughout.

4.11 Limitations and Delimitation of the Study

The first limitation of this research is the lack of generalizability. Norway provides asylum to refugees from several countries, including Syria, Bhutan, Turkey and Eritrea (UNHCR 2022). Due to cultural differences and the extent of the struggle faced by refugees, their experience related to their social integration in Norway might vary. This research is only aimed at investigating challenges faced by Bhutanese refugee women during their social integration in Norway. Also, since the sample size is extremely small, it is also not sufficient to generalize findings on Bhutanese women refugees and their challenges associated with integration in Norway. Therefore, further research is required to ensure generalizability. Emphasis on only refugee Bhutanese women in Norway is also the first delimitation of this study. The second limitation of this study is its dependence on the interpretative abilities of the researcher. As identified, in thematic analysis, codes and themes are created based on the interpretation made by the researcher. Therefore, the probability of unintentional bias is also present in this study which is its another limitation. In addition to this, challenges associated with the social integration of Bhutanese women in some other country other than Norway might also vary due to differences in practices, cultural differences, and social support. This is the third limitation of this research, and further research might be required to explore this issue. Since this research is limited to the geography of Norway, it is another limitation of this research. The other limitation is that only 12 participants are selected due to feasibility.

4.12 Positionality

The researcher of this study is of Nepali origin and has certain cultural similarities with the participants (since they are the descendants of Nepalese who migrated to Bhutan several years back). Due to this, the researcher is aware of the culture, religion, values, and beliefs of the participants. This cultural similarity will enable the researcher to understand the perceptions and opinions of the participants and therefore interpret them more effectively. In addition to this, the researcher is currently residing in Norway and has faced similar problems during his migration, such as language and cultural adjustment. This assists the researcher in understanding the problems faced by participants while integrating in the Norwegian society in a more effective manner since he also has faced similar problems. However, considering the ongoing tensions between Nepal and Bhutanese, there might be a conflict between the researcher's and the participant's opinions and perceptions. This will prevent the participants'

ability to express themselves and encourage the researcher to create biases in data openly and honestly.

In addition to this, the researcher being a male, interviewing women who have experienced both physical and emotional assault in the past created a barrier between them. Resettled Bhutanese women were hesitant to share some parts of the information. Apart from this, the researcher is well-educated and belongs to Nepalese ethnicity is, creating a power imbalance that might have affected the ability of the researcher to effectively collect data from participants and interpret them.

Lastly, the social status of the researcher is entirely different from the participants in Norway. This might also have prevented the participants from sharing their honest opinions, as there might be something that participants do not agree with or are dissatisfied with but are unable to criticize.

4.13 Summary

This chapter discusses a suitable methodology adopted to undertake this research. This is exploratory research which is aimed at identifying and understanding challenges faced by Bhutanese refugee women in Norway during their social integration. A qualitative method using primary data is selected for this study. The qualitative study collects thorough and in-depth information and primary data has helped in collecting rich and detailed information while ensuring accuracy and authenticity. Therefore, this method is selected. Primary data is collected using face-to-face and detailed interviews using open-ended questions. This has helped in extracting rich data from participants. Participants are selected using snowball sampling due to the inability to find suitable participants. Collected data is analysed using thematic analysis to identify uniqueness and commonalities in the dataset.

Chapter 5: Analyses of Results and Findings

This chapter presents and analyses the finding of all four dimensions of Integration based on the Social Integration Framework by Heckmann 2005. Four dimensions of Social Integration as presented by Heckmann (2005), are Structural integration, cultural integration, interactive integration and identification integration. Ager & Strang's (2008)'s core domains of integration will further facilitate understanding the outcome of integration in the findings.

5.1: Structural Integration

This section will present and analyse the findings on various aspects of structural integration like labour market and economy, education and qualification system, and welfare and housing system. These aspects of structural integration are operationalized in line with markers and means of Ager & Strang's (2008)'s determinants which include employment, education, housing, and health as key domains. The findings will also be analysed through the lens of translocational positionality theory.

5.1.1: Labour Market Integration

Employment is vital for every individual, and it plays even more pivotal role in supporting structural integration of refugees. Finding a job in Norway has been identified as difficult by almost all Bhutanese refugees, especially by those who have not completed their education and do not have a complete understanding of the Norwegian language. Through interviews, it was identified that 3 out of 12 Bhutanese refugee women failed to acquire a job in Norway due to their limited understanding of the language, no prior work experience, and insufficient educational qualification. Therefore, despite their intention, they were unable to work in Norway. They were also asked if the condition is same with the male members community, and they claimed that it is comparatively easier for men because they still have better exposure than women. 9 of the total respondents were found working in Norway under different employers but claimed that it was very difficult for them to find a job.

Participant 1 said *“I would like to work but there are very few job options matching my qualification and physical ability. I understand the Norwegian language, but I am not fluent. Also, employers here mainly prioritize Norwegians. I don't know why, but men are getting the job more easily than women in our community. It might also depend upon the type of work maybe.”*

Participant 3 said, *“I got this job very difficultly. I had applied and failed in more than 30 places before I got this job. However, I am very happy that I can live on my own and contribute to my family.”*

Participant 4 said, *“Yes, I want to work, but I regret that I wasted my years in refugee camps without a job. Now, I am physically weak for the jobs I get here. I do not think that I will be able to work here in Norway.”*

The respondents with the job were asked if they were satisfied with their job. Most of them seem complacent with their job because they compare their job with their miserable situation in the refugee camps in Nepal. Finding a job was an overwhelming success for them. Finding a job and being independent has also changed their recognition and position in their family and community. Their position while they were in Bhutan and refugee camps in Nepal is totally different from their recognition here in Norway. This has also helped to promote gender equality which lacked in Bhutanese community.

Participant 2 said, *“Yes, I am satisfied. I got a job in my interest area, and I can pay almost all my expenses with this salary. With this job, I feel independent and free. Working provides me a sense of autonomy and security. I am not a mere housewife but also a contributor to family expenses. This has also helped me a lot in adjusting to the work-life of Norway.”*

Participant 8 said, *“Yes, If I recall my memories back from the refugee camp, I must say that I am satisfied with my job because it has helped me to buy a home in this county. I also feel valued and contributing to my family and community.”*

In addition to satisfaction, employment must also assist refugees in fulfilling their basic needs and supporting their families. 7 out of 9 participants with the job answered they must be very economical to cover their total expenditures. It was understood that employment has provided refugees access to finances which further assist them in fulfilling their needs without relying on the government and living a dignified life in their new home country. In this way, the ability and competency of refugees to work, earn money on their own, and fulfilling their own and their family’s needs and expenses provide them a feeling that they have been positioned in society.

Participant 3 said, *“Managing the expenses of a family can be difficult but luckily my salary helps in managing a lot of these expenses.”*

Participant 4 said, *“Yes, it is sufficient. I can manage my expenses, support my family and fulfill their needs, and live with dignity in the Norwegian community. My husband also works. Collectively, our salary is sufficient to cover our household expenses and save for the future. This is all I want for now.”*

Participant 5 said, *“It sometimes becomes a little difficult because I also pay the installment of the house. But since the house is also a type of investment and saving for my future and my children, it is satisfactory but not sufficient. I have no savings.”*

5.1.2: Access to Equal Opportunities and Facilities for Refugees

From interviews with refugees, it was identified that refugees have received equal opportunities such as employment, education and healthcare in Norway. These opportunities have enabled Bhutanese refugees to improve their growth, well-being, and development. Refugees have identified access to key resources such as education and healthcare as mandatory to integrate into society. Since Norwegian government have provided Bhutanese refugees access to these resources, they are not only satisfied but also feel more connected with their new homeland.

Participant 7 said, *“Yes, I have received equal opportunities and facilities in Norway as the government has provided us access to world-class health care, education and employment facilities.”* She further added, *“I have never faced any discriminatory behaviour towards me. I think both employers and employees are helpful. They helped me in understanding the work culture and achieving fluency in the language for more effectiveness.”*

Participant 3 said, *“Despite being a refugee, I think I get equal facilities and opportunities as the Norwegians do. I have a passport. I have access to world-class free education, employment, and health care facilities.”*

Participant 4 said, *“There is no discrimination in Norway's health and education system, which makes it much better than the employment sector. My children have the opportunity to receive quality education and healthcare facilities here.”*

Access to these opportunities and facilities has directly helped Bhutanese refugees successfully integrate into Norwegian society. The interview identified that health and education systems have provided a sense of being valued, secure, and included among Bhutanese refugees, which has positively influenced their feelings and emotions towards the country. Most of the refugees confirmed that while staying in Bhutan or refugee camps in Bhutan and Nepal, they did not

have access to good quality health, education and employment facilities. This not only affected their personal and professional growth but also negatively affected their intention to stay at these places. Since refugees have access to these resources in Norway, they are not only satisfied with their stay in Norway, but it has also positively influenced their behaviour and perception towards the country.

Participant 12 said, *“As the education and health system of this country is almost free, it has helped us. We don’t have to worry much about the education of our children. While in Bhutan, we had to work hard to save some money for our treatment and to pay the school fee of our children. While we were in refugee camps of Nepal, it was very difficult to send our children to school. It is far better here. I would like to thank the Norwegian government for it.”*

Participant 4 said, *“Yes. While staying at the refugee camps, I constantly remained worried about the future of my children. After resettling in Norway, we have received the best education and health care system. This has helped me a lot in integration.”*

Successful integration occurs only if both the immigrants and the receiving society accept the difference and adapt to each other (Hellgren, 2005). So they were also asked if they feel any discriminatory behaviour from the state and the people. 2 out of 12 answered that they are discriminated against by the state and the people. It was identified that some Norwegians are good towards refugee women; however, some demonstrate discriminatory behaviour towards them. Those different perceptions are illustrated by the statements from the participants below.

Participant 9 said, *“I do not think that Bhutanese refugees have equal facilities and opportunities as the Norwegians. Although we have a Norwegian passport, the passport mentions our Bhutanese origin. I feel it as discrimination by the state. May be our children will be mentioned as Norwegians. We face racism and discrimination from the Norwegian government as well as Norwegian locals.”* She further added, *“There is a lot of discrimination and racism in the job market of Norway. They first prioritize the whites and will only hire the other people if they do not get any Norwegians. There might not be any problem in finding unskilled jobs, but for the skilled job position, Norwegian employers prefer Norwegians over refugees even if they are less competent than us.”*

Participant 6 said, *“I have faced discrimination sometimes. Sometimes there are comments of colleagues, and sometimes employers prefer locals over us for promotion or managerial position.”*

5.1.3: Access to Stable Housing Facility

Housing is one of the major necessities of all refugees. Through interviews, it was identified that Bhutanese refugees were provided housing facilities during their resettlement by the Norwegian government. From the interview, it was found that the respondents were very happy with the government which had already arranged housing for them at their arrival. Statement from participant 5 and participant 7 illustrates it.

Participant 5 said, *“A house was already rented in our name before we came. The house was rented by a governmental agency, but we had to pay the rent ourselves. How could we rent a house by ourselves? We had no idea at all. They used to give us some benefit pay for almost three years, from where we had to pay for all our costs, including our house rent. Later we started to work and earn some money.”*

Participant 7 said, *“No, I did not buy this because who will provide a house to a refugee with no steady source of income? This house was arranged by the Norwegian government for me.”*

Comments from Participants 2 and 10 below well represent that housing facilities helped Bhutanese refugees successfully integrate in Norwegian society by residing in local communities and communicating and interacting with local Norwegians. In addition to this, it was also identified that after being displaced from their homes in Bhutan and then moving back and forth between Bhutan and Nepal, Bhutanese refugees were in dire need of permanent residence. This housing facility has provided them a sense of security and permanent residence which further promoted positive emotions among them regarding the country. It is well illustrated by the statement of participant 3.

Participant 2 said, *“Being a refugee, people always look at you as a stateless person with no identity. With a house, you have an identity, and you can also easily maintain a relationship with people residing nearby.”*

Participant 3 said, *“I think it has somehow helped in integration because either we buy or rent a house, it comes with all the facilities needed for the house, and we feel it as our own house.”*

You know we were in very poor and pathetic conditions after we had to escape from Bhutan. Now we have such a good place to live in. so I think it has helped in integration.”

Participant 10 said, *“Yes, with a house, I feel more connected with Norwegian people and the country. My house is my identity, and people identify me with it. While living in refugee camps, I missed this so much. I feel more connected with the country now.*

5.1.4: Created Identity with Norwegian Citizenship

Upon being resettled in Norway, Bhutanese refugees are entitled to Norwegian citizenship after living for specific years and passing the language test. Norwegian citizenship provides them access to all facilities and fundamental rights as Norwegians. Above all this, they get a national identity and a travel document. They found that they were delighted with the resettlement scheme. When asked if they want to move to other countries, none of them were interested. From interviews, it was identified that since these refugees were denied citizenship from both Bhutan and Nepal, they were stateless. Living as undocumented immigrants or refugees prevented these refugees from accessing basic rights and necessities for life. Heckmann (2005) opines that citizenship gives migrants power and position in the political system, and most importantly, they can stay safely in a country. It is well illustrated by the statement of participant 2 below. All 12 participants responded that citizenship remains to be their main achievement which is in line with Ager & Strang (2008)’s conceptual framework defining core domains of integration. It has presented citizenship and right as the foundation for successful integration. The idea is supported by the statement of participants 10 and 1 below.

Participant 2 said, *“. I want to feel safe. After being relocated to multiple countries, I am looking for stability in my life right now. I feel lucky to reside in Norway. Since I have a house, my citizenship, and a position in society with access to many necessary facilities in Norway, I cannot think of migrating anywhere.”*

Participant 10 said, *“I am very satisfied with the resettlement programme, although I miss my friends and relatives who were resettled in other nations. I am a passport holder of Norway now which implies that I am a Norwegian citizen. I am very proud that I am a citizenship of a country after being stateless and homeless for more than 20 years. Citizenship is the main thing. I can move and travel anywhere in the world, but I have no plans for now.”*

However, 2 out of 12 participants have not acquired Norwegian citizenship because they could not pass the obligatory language test, which is considered a prerequisite to being a citizen of Norway. Through interviews, it was identified that they want to have a Norwegian passport but have not acquired it because the process has become stricter in recent years. Getting a Norwegian passport requires passing the language test along with other requirements. This is well illustrated by the statements of participant 1 and participant 5. Both were asked about the reason for not passing the language test. They answered they were both illiterate, and the language course was insufficient to pass the exam. They can understand and speak Norwegian at a very basic level, which is insufficient to pass the language and citizenship tests. They just have a residence permit but want to get citizenship of Norway to access their rights and remove the tag of “refugees.”

Participant 1 said, *“of course. I want to take Norwegian citizenship. I have been a stateless person until now. My country Bhutan reclassified us as illegal migrants even after getting citizenship. I think that those who have citizenship in a country do not feel its importance. For us having citizenship of a country is a great success and gives us immense happiness.”*

Participant 5 said, *“I feel helpless that I do not have citizenship and passport until now. I feel homeless even after having a home. I wanted to apply for a Norwegian passport, but I needed to pass a language test, which I failed. Three years of residence and passing a language test is necessary. I understand and speak Norwegian language at a very basic level. I never got an opportunity to education before I came here. How can I pass the language and citizenship test now. Either the provision or the language classes must be revised.”*

5.2: Cultural Integration

This chapter will present and analyse the findings on different aspects of cultural integration as a dimension of social integration in line with the Social Integration Framework by Heckmann 2005. Ager & Strang (2008) has considered language and cultural knowledge as facilitators for successful integration in their conceptual framework, which defined core domains of integration. Findings related to culture shock in Norway, Impact of Norwegian Culture on Behaviour of Refugees, Cultural Adjustment by Bhutanese Refugees in Norway and Impact of Norwegian Culture on Cultural Beliefs of Refugees is presented and analysed.

5.2.1: Cultural Shock in Norway

It is natural for everybody to experience culture shock after moving from a familiar culture to the one that is unfamiliar. During the interview they were asked to share their first impression when they landed in Norway. It was found that cultural shock was experienced by all the respondents upon entering to Norway. It is further elaborated from the statements of participant 3 and participant 12.

Participant 3 said, *“We were the first family who came to this place. We came in the month of January. I felt like we were in a completely different world. I remember all my excitement dying when I felt freezing cold and saw everything covered with snow. They took us to a home and said that this was our place. Everything was ready in the home. Beds, television, and dishes. It was a full furnished house. But the food they had bought was totally different from the food we used to have. They had also given some money. They showed us the shop where we could buy groceries. Once I went to buy salt in a shop but couldn’t buy it. I could neither ask nor identify which the salt is. It was a very difficult time.”*

Participant 12 said, *“Norway is nothing like Bhutan or Nepal. From people to food and language to culture, everything was new for me. I remember receiving stares from locals. Anyways, I was required to adjust, and so I made every effort from my end to adjust here, such as learning their language and adapting to their culture.”*

They were also asked about the major differences they noticed between them and their receiving society. They answered language and climate have the main difference, followed by culture, food habits, lifestyle, and climate. Some of the responses are:

Participant 4 said, *“People here follow a different religion, celebrate different festivals, different language and different way of life. One good thing about the people here is that they are very helpful. I like that people smile and say hi when they see others, even if they do not know them. We do not talk or smile when we meet with a stranger. I see that they do not have any forms of discrimination like gender, caste, and religion. I found their society is open.”*

Participant 5 said, *“Their culture is so different. They leave their parents and home when they are adult; we have a different culture like their children, especially the sons, are responsible for looking after their parents in their old age. Parents' property is divided among the sons. Or the son who looks after the parents gets the parents' property. I heard that couples live together*

before their marriage, 'living together.' It is not considered good in our culture. Boys and girls can only live together and have a child after getting married in our culture.”

5.2.2: Impact of Norwegian Language on Practices of Refugees

One of the critical aspects of the resettlement of Bhutanese refugees in Norway is to understand and adapt to the Norwegian culture. To assist Bhutanese refugees in the same, they were provided multiple opportunities to get acquainted with the Norwegian culture. Heckmann (2005) writes cultural distance makes the learning and socialization process harder and requires more effort. And knowing one's language is also necessary to appreciate and adapt to a new culture. Through the interviews, it was identified that all the refugee women participated in the introductory course, which was the main platform that helped Bhutanese refugees in getting familiar and acquainted with the Norwegian language and culture. These courses were aimed at improving cultural competence of refugees by teaching them Norwegian language, culture, history, values, and traditions. In addition to this, these refugees were also taken to other places such as meetings and coffeehouses, to interact with local people and understanding the Norwegian culture more closely. The fact is illustrated by the statements from participant 2 and participant 9.

Participant 2 said, *“After being relocated to Norway, all refugees were required to enroll in the introductory course. In this course, I get acquainted with the native culture. It helped me to learn Norwegian culture and language better. Sometimes we had a weekly meeting with the Norwegians. I forgot its name, but I think it was called 'coffee club' or something like that. We couldn't communicate well, but we used to meet.”*

Participant 9 said, *“The course was extremely good and provided me with all types of assistance for getting acquainted with Norwegian culture. It helped me in learning more about the history, culture, and values of Norway. This type of knowledge is necessary when you are living in a new country as it helps you in making better choices and getting adjusted easily.”*

However, it was found that the introductory language course was not equally effective for some people with different abilities. Refugee women who were literate, and who had been to school while in refugee camps in Nepal were highly benefitted. But some illiterate and elderly people were not equally benefitted. They opine that the course must have been designed in a way that suits every people with different abilities. It is understood from participant2's view below.

Participant 2 said, *“The course was good. I got to know about the cultural norms and values of Norway. But I couldn’t learn well because I was illiterate before I moved here. I learned and practiced speaking in the Norwegian language, but it is very poor. They must have taught us differently or allocated extra time.”*

5.2.3: Impact of Norwegian Culture on Cultural Practices of Refugees

Initially, Bhutanese refugees were struggling with understanding and coping with the Norwegian culture. However, after some time, due to living amongst Norwegians and being able to interact with locals, Norwegian culture started influencing the practices and attitudes of Bhutanese refugees. From interviews with refugees, it was identified that, they have become open and more acceptive of Norwegian cultural values. They also feel the change in their practices, food habits, lifestyles, and preferences. From the interview it was also noticed that younger women have adapted more to the Norwegian culture than elderly people. And that was because of youths having more exposure with the Norwegian institutions and people. Statements from participant 2 and participant 4 support the fact.

Participant 2 said, *“I think there are many behavioural and attitudinal changes in me after coming here. Despite growing up in a very traditional and radical Hindu culture, there is some intercultural competence developed in me. My way of seeing this Norwegian culture has changed. My way of life, food habits, and dress codes have also changed to some extent.”*

Participant 4 said, *“I have started liking and celebrating Norwegian festivals with Norwegian friends. I enjoy Norwegian foods like Kjøttkaker and Rømmegrøt. I think there are many changes, some can be explained, some not, but we have changed ourselves.”*

The interview also clearly revealed that they also love their culture, festivals, language, and practices. They use Nepali language (mother tongue) while communicating at home and they do not want their children forget their language. They celebrate their cultural festivals and practice their traditional values. This agrees with Heckmann (2005) where he says that cultural integration does not entail that the migrant group give up the cultural element of their home country. Cultural influence is found to be higher among youths and children since they have more exposure and limited to no knowledge regarding their traditional Bhutanese culture. They are worried about their children, who might forget their culture. One of the participants, participant 7, said, *“Yes, a lot has been changed, but we are worried that our children might*

finally forget our cultural values language. We used to live in big families, but now our children prefer nuclear families and show disrespect to their parents. Some of them even have living together relationships which is not considered good in our society.”

From the interview, it can be derived that their culture positionality has also changed. They had different positionality while in Bhutan and Nepal which is different from their recent cultural positionality. Their original culture and the culture of their new homeland are influenced by each other. One of the participants said, *“I celebrate the Norwegian festivals but not as the Norwegians do. There is also a little change in the way we celebrate our festivals. We used to have a public holiday while we were in Nepal and Bhutan but not here. So, a lot of practices are compromised and customized as per the need.”* This development must be natural in the process of integration as Anthias (2002) emphasizes translocational positionality as contextual related to meaning and time rather than fixed, and involves shifts and contradictions.

The participants also admitted that they have been influenced by the culture of peace, trust and friendly behaviours of Norwegians and are applying in their life. Children have also been a source of learning Norwegian culture. They bring home different culture they learn at school and kindergarten. The statement from the participants below elaborates on it.

Participant 2 said, *“I am really impressed with the culture of trust, peace, and friendly behaviour of Norwegians. I am also trying to apply them on my own and with my family.”*

Participant 4 said, *“We have learned Norwegian culture from our children. They copy what their Norwegian friends do in school. During Christmas small kids demand the Christmas tree at home with their parents. Their school or workplaces remain close. So, we get an opportunity for the whole family to cook delicious foods and eat together. So, for me, it helps to integrate well with my family than with the Norwegians (laughs).”*

5.2.4: Cultural Adjustment of Norwegians

Although Norwegians from the immigrant community have not participated in the interview, their adjustments and attitudes towards the refugees were asked from the eyes of refugees. Both parties have an equal role in the integration process of integration. Integration is not only concerned with immigrants and their descendants but an interactive mutual process that changes the receiving society as well (Heckmann, 2005). The participants have mixed

responses. From their perspective, some Norwegians are very friendly, whereas some do not show any concern for us. Participant 8 and participant 12 shared their feeling this way.

Participant 8 said, *“I have found Norwegians very friendly and helpful. Some of my neighbours have learned a few Nepali words and used them while meeting with us. As we are new to this community, they ask us if they could be of any help. I don’t think they feel us as outsiders because I am also a member of this community now. We are not problems to one another until any harm is felt to any side.”*

Participant 12 said, *“I have met with many friendly and helpful Norwegians in public offices, schools, and supermarkets. I might be wrong, but I don’t think two of my neighbours think good of us. They look at us in a strange way, and it feels like they want to avoid us. Yes, the Norwegian government has been our saviour at some point of time. But now we are working, paying taxes to the government, and living on our own. Sometimes we feel bad.”*

5.3: Interactive Integration

This part presents and analyses the findings on interactive interaction. Heckmann (2005) believes social networks, partnerships, friendships, marriages, and memberships in voluntary organizations as some of the indicators of interactive interaction. Ager & Strang (2008)’s conceptual framework believes social connection plays a fundamental role in driving the integration process. The framework mentions social bridges, bonds, and links as different forms of social connection (Ager & Strang, 2008). So, this section will investigate the social connection of Bhutanese refugee women and how it has helped in integration.

5.3.1: Positive Impact of Social Networks on Integration

Bhutanese refugee women who participated in the interview were asked if they have Norwegian friends and how their connection with the Norwegians helped in their integration. 10 out of 12 confirmed that they have friends with Norwegian origins. 2 of them said they do not have Norwegian friends. They just stay at home, with no job or school because they neither go to a job nor school. Those who have friends from the receiving society were asked about where did they make friends; those participants responded that they made friends in their workplaces, schools, and communities where they are being settled. Developing social bonds help refugees in having a feeling of being settled and therefore contributes to effective

integration (Gidley & Oliver, 2015). This applies to Bhutanese refugee women also because they responded that their Norwegian friends have assisted Bhutanese refugees in successfully integrating in Norwegian society by promoting a feeling of belongingness and being valued. Statements from participant 1, Participant 2, and participant 9 further illustrate how having Norwegian friends has helped in integration.

Participant 1 said, *“Yes, I have Norwegian friends. I met them at my workplace. Having Norwegian friends helps us to learn their language, culture norms, and values. When I am with them, I feel like I am an insider, but not the people from the next country. They share experiences of shopping and other issues and suggest and recommend us for those. We also get a lot of information regarding education, health facilities, and many other things. So, having Norwegian friends is helpful in many ways and helps in integration.”*

Participant 4 said, *“Yes, integration means getting along with the people of a culture. By making friends, I feel that I am being accepted as well as supported by Norwegian people. With their help, I learn more about Norwegian history, society, culture, life, food, and many other things. I have learned what is good and what is to be avoided while living in an unfamiliar setting. I find them more effective than introductory course.”*

Participant 9 said, *“In my opinion, due to my Norwegian friends, I constantly feel that someone is supporting me and is with me in every challenging difficulty that I face. I do not feel like an outsider anymore.”*

5.3.2: Mixed Behavior of Norwegians Towards Bhutanese Refugees

They were asked about Norwegians' behaviours towards Bhutanese refugee women. There was a mixed result from the interview. Seven of them said Norwegians are good humans, whereas 4 of them said some Norwegians demonstrate discriminatory behaviour. It is normal that refugee's perceptions of the natives and natives' perceptions of Norwegians might vary from person to person and based on circumstances. Ager & Strang (2008) identified that the friendly nature of locals towards refugees and being recognized and greeted by locals make refugees feel “at home” and assist them in successfully integrating within a community of the new homeland. Both views are illustrated from the statements of participant 1, participant 9, participant 5 and participant 6 below.

Participant 1 said, *“They are very good people; they invite us to their homes on some festivals and occasions. Sometimes we also invite them to our home and offer them Nepali food. They are very fond of our typical meals and other dishes. They ask us if they can be of any help to us. Everybody here is busy, so we do not meet often, but they behave well with us.”*

Participant 9 said, *“I found Norwegians very helpful and kind in nature. My neighbours always ask me if I am having any difficulty and share their meals with us during any special occasion.”*

Participant 5 said, *“Norwegians do not show their real self with us. They smile seeing us and seem helpful, but I think they don’t like the immigrants. I experienced discrimination from my Norwegian friends while in school. They don’t want to make us friends. I used to be alone during my school days. And now also in the job market. They think immigrants have made the job market more competitive and difficult to get jobs. This is just my opinion, and others might not agree, but this is what I have experienced.”*

Participant 6 said, *“I won’t say discrimination just because our perspectives do not match, but sometimes they see us differently, such as while applying for a job or at school by the teachers.”*

5.3.3: Limited Impact of Social Media on Social Integration of Refugees.

Social media is one of the key platforms used in the contemporary world by many people. From the interview, it was identified that 10 of the Bhutanese refugee women were found using virtual social networking sites to stay connected with their friends and family. Some of them use it with the help of younger people, and 2 of them do not. Virtual social networking is especially used by young refugees, for making friends in a new country, remaining in touch with their old friends, and learning new information. However, from the interview it was discovered that most of them sometimes communicate with their Norwegian friends but more with the people in their community. 2 of them said that they use it use social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram for information purposes. It shows that social networking sites have a limited impact on the social integration of Bhutanese refugee women which can be illustrated by the direct statements from participant 1 and participant 3.

Participant 1 said, *“I have some Norwegian friends in my social networking site in Facebook, and Instagram. We communicate for some of my school projects and to send good wishes during festivals and occasions. We have some groups in the school which is only active only during school affairs.”*

Participant 3 said, *“No, it hasn’t helped me that much. I only use Instagram and Facebook messenger to catch up with my friends and family abroad and in other parts of Norway. Learning about the life of my classmates in Norway, that’s all.”*

5.4: Identification Integration

This section will put forward the findings related to identification integration of the Bhutanese refugee women and analyse it. It will present the finding related to the change and development of identification after resettlement, and efforts at an individual level to retain identification and perception of refugees regarding becoming a Norwegian.

5.4.1: Personal Identification as Norwegian after Integration Efforts

Through interviews, it was identified that after resettlement in the Norwegian society, Bhutanese refugees have started identifying themselves as Norwegian nationals. All participants confirmed that they feel like they are a part of Norway since they have Norwegian citizenship and rights, speak Norwegian and work for Norwegian employers. However, the interview also identified that these Bhutanese refugees have not left their original culture and language. Some want to be called Bhutanese, some as Nepali-speaking Norwegians, and some as Norwegians. The finding can be referred to translocational positionality theory, which emphasizes the issue related to identity, which is contextual or related to meaning and time rather than being fixed (Anthias, 2002). From the interview the change was identified in gender positionality. Their patriarchal way of thinking has also changed as many refugee women started working and generating income for their families. Statements from participant 1 and participant 6 illustrate it.

Participant 1 said, *“I identify myself as Norwegian with Bhutanese origin since I was born in Bhutan; my identification has changed over time and period. I was a refugee while in Nepal. I came here as an asylum seeker and finally became a Norwegian citizen. We are also a minority ethnic group and Hindu Norwegians as we follow Hinduism. I am all in one (laughs)”*.

Participant 6 said, *“After resettlement, my role in the family, community, and way of thinking of the resettled community has changed. Our patriarchal way of thinking, women being more limited to the household, our feeling of inferiority, and gender discrimination have changed. I feel like I have my different existence.”*

Apart from these, some refugees have more bad memories and experiences associated with Bhutan and Nepal and none wants to return to Bhutan if provided opportunity in the future. Respondents confirmed that despite being citizen of Bhutan, Bhutanese government forcefully displaced them from the country, renounced their citizenship, and seized all their rights. So they do not want to resettle in Bhutan. It can well understood from the statements of participant 3 and participant 9 below.

Participant 3 said, *“I can’t return to Bhutan permanently. I have some feelings and sentiments attached to the country and my birthplace in Bhutan. I also have some relatives there. So, I can probably go and visit there, But I can’t live there now because I also have some bad memories attached to the country. Also, Norway is my home now.”*

Participant 9 said, *“I was two years old when my parents escaped from Bhutan and I remember nothing about there. But I have more feelings for refugee camps in Nepal, where I grew up, had my schooling, had my friends. I visited Nepal twice after I came here, but never thought about visiting Bhutan from where our parents had to run away at mid-night leaving all their properties and birthplace.”*

5.4.2: Change in Personal Identification after Integration

After residing in Norway for some time, interacting with its communities and people, and going through resettlement programs, all Bhutanese refugees have confirmed that their personal identification is changing. 10 out of 12 refugee women confirmed that their preferences, practices, and interests are changing, and they are liking Norwegian lifestyle, culture, and behaviour like Bhutanese or Nepalese. It is illustrated from the statements from participant 1, participant 3, and participant 8. It is found that their feeling of being insiders and being an entity of the community and nation is developing. From the findings, it can be assumed that they are in the right way of identification integration as Heckmann (2005) says, participation and acceptance develop the feeling of belonging in the later stages of integration Heckmann,

2005, p.17). Heckmann (2005) coins the term bi-cultural socialization and identity formation in the second generation, which is seen in the statements of participant 1.

Participant 1 said, *“Yes, it is changing. I feel more connected with Norwegian culture, and I have also not forgotten my culture. We feel like we have two cultures merged into one. I don’t know why but I have started liking both. I have become more open and accepting. I have learned to speak Norwegian and have been working and contributing Norwegian government with tax.”*

Participant 3 said, *“Yes, it has changed a lot. I love Norwegian cuisine; I have Norwegian friends. And the Norwegian government also thinks of us as their own people, and we have the same rights and duties as the Norwegians.”*

Participant 8 said, *“Yes, it has. I feel more belonged or connected to Norwegian than my own people. I do not support Bhutan or Nepal, rather, I feel prouder of being a Norwegian. Also, my lifestyle has changed. I no longer think myself as refugee, I am a citizen of this country.”*

5.4.3: Efforts at Individual-level to Retain Identification

As identified above, some Refugees want to be identified as Norwegians only, whereas other want to be associated with culture and therefore want to be identified as Bhutanese-Norwegians or Nepalese-speaking Norwegians. To retain their preferred identification, these refugees are making several efforts, including taking classes to learn Norwegian language, passing on traditional cultural values (Nepalese and Bhutanese) to their future generation, and encouraging children to learn Norwegian culture. From the interview it was found that the respondents have different positionalities in different contexts.

Participant 1 said, *“I am continually learning Norwegian language, culture, its norms and values, and someday my children will be identified solely as Norwegians. I want them to have identification in Norwegian institution.”*

Participant 7 said, *“I am transferring my mother tongue to my children. I totally speak Nepali in my home. I teach and celebrate Hindu and Nepali festivals in my home and try my best not to let my traditions, culture, and language die. They learn Norwegian culture, and language and practice socialization in the school and community.”*

Participant 11 said, *“I teach my children about their original Bhutanese and Nepalese traditions along with Norwegian. It is important for me to make my children aware of Bhutanese culture also. So, we celebrate all Bhutanese and Norwegian festivals at home, enjoy different cuisines, and learn both cultures.”*

Chapter 6: Discussion

This chapter discussed the findings in reference to the leading theory employed in this study which is the Social Integration Theory by Heckmann (2005). This social integration theory has four dimensions, namely structural integration, cultural Integration, interactive Interaction, and Identification integration. Ager & Strang's (2008) Conceptual Framework Defining Core Domains of Integration and Anthias's Translocational Positionality Theory are used to operationalize and deepen the understanding of the social integration of Bhutanese refugee women.

6.1 Structural Integration

Structural integration is the first dimension of social integration of refugees and is mainly associated with the acquisition of rights and access to specific status and position within the society of the new homeland. Some key aspects that ensure the structural integration of refugees within a new homeland include access to labour market, health care, education, and housing system (Heckmann 2005). From the interviews, it was identified that employment opportunities provided an opportunity for Bhutanese refugee women to position themselves in Norwegian society. Refugee women with a job are living with dignity in their families. Refugees were able to manage their personal and their families' expenses, needs, and requirements from the income from their jobs. This has also reduced the gender inequality rooted in their patriarchal Bhutanese community. However, refugees identified that finding a job in Norway was a difficult task since employers prefer Norwegian to immigrants and require cultural competence, such as Norwegian language skills. This aligns with the findings of Gidley & Oliver (2015), which state that employment is directly associated with the economic independence of refugees and helps in restoring their self-esteem and self-reliance. However, cognition, qualification, and past work experiences are a few barriers that prevent refugees from securing jobs in their new homelands.

In addition to employment, Bhutanese refugees were also provided access to other facilities such as healthcare and education. The education and healthcare facilities of Norway are world-class and affordable. Access to these facilities has not only enabled Bhutanese refugees to support their personal and professional growth and well-being but also make them satisfied and more connected with their new homeland. It was identified that since Bhutanese refugees spend most of their lifetime relocating from Bhutan to Nepal's refugee camps, it not only prevented

them from accessing basic facilities like education and healthcare but also prevented them from progressing on a personal or professional level. This finding aligns with the determination of Ager & Strang (2008) and Gidley & Oliver (2015), who stated that maintaining the education and well-being of refugees is necessary for promoting active engagement of refugees in their home country by equipping them with the necessary skills and competence. This finding is also in line with the finding of Hamberger (2009), which identified that integration of refugees into the welfare system of a new homeland country is necessary through education and healthcare as it directly affects their ability to further participate in the labour market of the new homeland. The interview confirmed that access to employment, education, and healthcare facilities had developed a feeling of satisfaction and self-reliance among refugees, which they had lost after being displaced from their home country in Bhutan. Therefore, re-access to these facilities is directly strengthening their relationship with the new homeland. It has also positively influenced their behaviour and perception toward their new country.

Successful integration occurs only if both the immigrants and the receiving society accept the difference and adapt to each other (Hellgren, 2005). But it was also discovered that some Norwegians are good toward refugee women while some show discriminatory behaviour, which has a detrimental effect on their integration process.

It was also identified that being displaced was directly associated with being stateless. Bhutanese refugees were displaced from Bhutan, and their citizenship was seized. Therefore, to develop a feeling of “being at home” for refugees, Norwegian government rented housing to all the refugees’ family. They confirmed that renting a house by themselves would be extremely difficult. Access to housing helped them feel more connected with Norway and assisted them in establishing a relationship with locals. This finding is in line with the study of Gharti (2011) and Hoellerer (2014), which identified access to housing as a key measure for integration and reducing the feeling of fear, loneliness, and exclusion. Therefore, with housing facility, Bhutanese refugees felt more integrated and secure in Norway. In addition to this, most of the Bhutanese refugees were also provided Norwegian citizenship, with which they also received basic rights and access to different opportunities in the country. It is crucial to understand that Bhutanese refugees have been displaced from their country forcefully, which resulted in renouncement of their citizenship and basic rights. Whereas Norway provided them a citizenship and a new national identity due to which Bhutanese refugees are feeling a sense of belongingness which has also contributed to their identification integration. Ager & Strang

(2008) and Gidley & Oliver (2015) identified citizenship as a key aspect of integration and its direct impact on equality, cultural choices, and dignity of refugees. Apart from creating and establishing identification and a feeling of belongingness, citizenship also plays a pivotal role in the political rights of refugees. Since citizenship is directly associated with the empowerment of refugees, it positively affects their integration into a new homeland.

However, some refugees also faced discriminatory behaviour of locals and employers towards them. It was identified that refugees faced discrimination from employers which prevented them from accessing job opportunities. In addition, refugees also faced discriminatory behaviour from some locals which created challenges for them and prevented their integration. This finding is in line with the findings of Sipos (2020) which also identified discrimination as one of the major challenges faced by women refugees. Altogether, from the interviews it was identified that Bhutanese refugees have received constant support and assistance from the Norwegian government and communities, which has not only equipped them with necessary facilities and competencies to support their growth and development but has also promoted positive emotions towards Norway among them. However, discrimination towards Bhutanese refugees exist to some extent among Norwegian people, which can have detrimental effect in integration. Overall Bhutanese refugees have access to necessary rights and facilities in Norway, have employment and are in positive process of integration.

6.2 Cultural Integration

The culture of Bhutan and Norway was found different from each other in many aspects which made refugees feel a major cultural shock during their relocation to Norway. Bhutanese refugees identified language, climate, lifestyle preferences, food habits, religion, and family structure of Norwegians different from Bhutanese. These differences created challenges for Bhutanese refugees by preventing them from successfully integrating into their new homeland. This finding supports the finding of Bhattarai (2015) who identified cultural clash as an inevitable phenomenon during the resettlement of refugees. Accepting or adjusting to another culture can be difficult due to the perceived risk of losing own culture and values. Bhutanese were unable to understand the language and culture of Norway and subconsciously were also afraid of not being able to integrate in the host society. However, irrespective of challenges or fear, they were required to change accordingly to adjust successfully in Norway. Therefore, they were required to join introductory lessons.

The study by Hellgren (2015) also confirmed the necessity for adapting to the new homeland's culture for successful integration and acceptance by locals. For successful adaptation, all Bhutanese refugees went through an introductory course introduced by the Norwegian government which was aimed at enhancing cultural familiarity and improving the cultural competence of Norwegians. These training programs assisted Bhutanese refugees in adjusting to Norwegian culture, and the impact of these programs can be estimated by the fact that slight behavioural and attitudinal changes have been observed among refugees. For example, almost all refugees confirmed that they have started celebrating Norwegian festivals. Their perception of Norwegian culture, lifestyle, and preferences have also changed. They have started only taking the good cultural practices of both culture and are adapting to new culture. As identified above, since refugees are required to accept and adapt to the culture of their new homeland, slight attitudinal and behavioural changes will be observed once they will start adapting. It can be better understood by the findings of Mesoudi (2018), which confirmed that the probability of a dominating culture (culture of new homeland, Norway) influencing the least dominating culture (Bhutan's) remains extremely high, which result in cultural changes. Similarly, the findings of Djuve & Kavli (2019) are also in line with this research findings. Djuve & Kavli (2019) identified that change is imminent in the process of adaptability. Therefore, refugees are required to adapt and change as per the culture of the host country in order to integrate. Similarly, these findings are also in line with the results of Rogova (2014) which confirmed that changes in behavioral patterns and the gradual disappearance of the original culture after residing in a new country for a specific period of time are expected. Refugees or immigrants are bound to melt into the mainstream culture of a country through social, economic and cultural integration. However the research shows that practice positive aspects of both culture. they have become open and more acceptive of Norwegian cultural values. They also feel the change in their practices, food habits, lifestyles, and preferences. From the interview it was also noticed that younger women have adapted more to the Norwegian culture than elderly people.

One of the critical components of cultural integration is knowledge of the language. A majority of Bhutanese refugees confirmed that they have achieved a basic understanding of the Norwegian language. Being familiar with the Norwegian language is extremely important in order to take advantage of facilities such as employment and education, create and maintain social relationships and communicate personal needs and requirements. Norwegian introductory program teaches several cultural competences to refugees, including the Norwegian language. The importance of the Norwegian language for integration can be

estimated by the fact that refugees who have a basic to an advanced level understanding of Norwegian language achieved success in getting a job, whereas refugees with limited to no knowledge of Norwegian language failed in getting a job in Norway. This finding is in line with the findings of Ager & Strang (2008), which state that ability to speak the native language of a new homeland helps in forming better connections, overcoming alienation, and adapting successfully to the new culture. Findings are also similar to the study of Djuve & Kavli (2019), which also identified language as a major barrier creating distance between refugees and natives of their new homeland. Inability to communicate in the native language prevents refugees from creating social relations, participating in economic activities such as employment, and accessing other necessary facilities such as education and healthcare. As a result, they feel more distant and different.

Overall, there is change in Bhutanese refugee women's practices, food habits, lifestyles, and preferences. And they have become more acceptive to native cultural values. They are also preserving their language, cultural values and traditions which they consider as good.

6.3 Interactive Integration

Creating a social network has been identified as crucial for the interactive integration of refugees. In order to integrate in a new home country, it is essential that refugees create social networks, social links, and bonds. Through interviews, it was identified that many refugees have Norwegian friends. Some refugees made friends at school, some made at work, and some made friends in their neighborhood. Having Norwegian friends directly affects the integration of Bhutanese refugees. It was identified that friends help refugees understand Norwegian culture in a much better and more thorough manner, help in learning more about Norwegian culture and history, and make better and more informed decisions related to different things such as shopping. This constant support and assistance provide a feeling of being valued and looked after to refugees, impacting their integration. This aligns with the finding of Gidley & Oliver (2015), which identified that developing social relationships and becoming part of voluntary organizations help refugees receive necessary support and assistance through the constant sharing of information and experiences. This assist refugees in becoming a core member of society. Similarly, this research is also in line with the findings of Heckmann (2005) which also identified inclusion and acceptance of refugees in communities by creating and maintaining relationships with individuals and groups within a society. This implies that it is

necessary for individuals and groups in the new home country to allow refugees to become a part of their community. This not only enabled refugees to learn and understand the new culture in an effective manner but also supported the process of integration. Since Bhutanese refugees have also identified that their friends provide them with recommendations and suggestions related to a variety of issues and also assist them in decision-making, it can be understood that social relations have played a pivotal role in their integration in Norwegian society.

In order to create social relations between refugees and Norwegians, it is essential to understand the behaviour of Norwegians towards refugees. Through interviews, it was identified that the behaviour of Norwegians towards refugees is mixed. Some demonstrate good and supportive behaviour whereas some demonstrate discriminatory behaviour. Refugees mainly have experienced discriminatory behaviour in the employment market. This finding is in line with the findings of Sipos (2020) who states that discrimination towards refugee women is common in the labour market of the new home country as compared to men. This directly impacts the ability of refugee women to position themselves in the society of the new homeland, and therefore their integration is also affected negatively. In interviews, refugees confirmed that the main reason behind the discriminatory and unfriendly behaviour of Norwegians towards them is the perception that refugees are reducing resources for them, such as jobs and houses. This finding is in line with the findings of Mutezo (2015) and Hynie (2018). The study by Mutezo (2015) also identified that natives believe that refugees directly impact the economic resources of a country, such as education, employment and housing, and therefore create economic burden. Similarly, the study by Hynie (2018) also identified that natives experience realistic and perceived threats from refugees. Natives believe that economic resources that are being utilized by refugees have otherwise gone to them. This perception results in more negative behaviour of natives towards refugees and therefore, directly affects their ability to create social relationships with refugees.

The above-presented studies imply that economic advantages are the only concerns of natives of a country since they directly impact their personal well-being and professional growth. Therefore, this study contradicts the finding of Zárata et al. (2004) which identified a potential threat to culture by the integration of refugees in a country as major reason for promoting negative attitudes and behaviour among natives towards refugees. Since refugees go through introductory programs in Norway which are aimed at improving the cultural competence of refugees and assist them in overcoming cultural shock and barriers in the country, the

probability of Bhutanese refugees influencing the culture of Norway in any way is impossible. Therefore, cultural threat has not been identified as a dominating factor preventing Norwegians from establishing good social relations with Bhutanese refugees. In addition to this, all Norwegians do not demonstrate unfriendly or discriminatory behaviour towards Bhutanese refugees. Through interviews, it was confirmed that some Norwegians who work with refugees in companies, are studying with refugees in schools and universities, and are living in the same neighborhood as refugees demonstrate friendly behaviour towards these refugees. This behaviour not only assists Bhutanese refugees in adjusting and settling successfully in Norway but also assists in generating more positive emotions towards the country.

Social media is one of the widely used platforms by young people to interact with friends living nearby or geographically dispersed. To understand the role of social media in promoting the interactive integration of Bhutanese refugees in Norway, they were asked about the role played by social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram in developing social relationships with Norwegians. It was identified that social media has assisted the young girls to communicate with their friends, but their communication with the natives is very limited. They only communicate regarding their school group projects or assignments. Elderly women also use them with the help of their children but it has not helped to interact with the natives.

6.4 Identification Integration

Identification integration is another critical dimension of social integration which deals with the entering and participating of refugees in the core institutions of their new home country. Identification integration is associated with the feeling of belongingness to the new homeland and this feeling can be achieved through several methods including access to basic rights and citizenship. When asked about how they identify themselves, all Bhutanese refugees confirmed that they identify themselves as Norwegian national. Norwegian government provided citizenship, employment opportunities, access to health and education facilities, and the platform to learn about Norwegian culture and integrate successfully in the Norwegian community, Bhutanese refugees feel more valued, connected and belonged to the Norwegian community. Bhutanese refugees also have not left their original culture and language. Some want to be called Bhutanese, some as Nepali-speaking Norwegians, and some as Norwegians. The finding can be referred to translocational positionality theory, which emphasizes the issue related to identity, which is contextual or related to meaning and time rather than being fixed

(Anthias, 2002). This finding is in line with the study conducted by Gidley & Oliver (2015) which confirms that the inclusion of refugees in a new community based on a subjective level is promoted through their feeling of belongingness and identification with social and political groups. This study further added that refugees could only claim their position or rights in a new society if they are provided opportunities to do the same. With more opportunities, refugees utilize their rights and take advantage of provided opportunities which helps them in connecting more with their new home country. The finding of this study also aligns with the findings of Anthias (2008) who also identified that the identity of refugees plays a crucial role in shaping the feelings and emotions of refugees. This implies that if refugees have succeeded in negotiating their identity in their new home country, then the probability of refugees feeling more integrated with their new home country is extremely high. On the other hand, if refugees do not have the feeling of belongingness or being included, then the probability of refugees feeling more disconnected and understood from the communities and people of their new home country remains high.

However, some of the refugees also confirmed that they do not want to leave their original identification behind due to past memories associated. Therefore, some of the refugees want to be identified as *Bhutanese Norwegians* or *Nepalese-speaking Norwegians*. This finding is in line with this study conducted by Anthias (2002) which identified that the concept of belongingness has experiential, effective, and practical dimensions. This implies that one might feel identified in a community but does not feel completely belonged or accepted in a community. Therefore, their allegiance towards the country and culture might split. Since some of the Bhutanese refugees confirmed that they have faced discrimination, are distant from the culture of Norway, and different from Norwegian people, they might feel different despite accessing all rights and necessary facilities. From this, it can be understood that the process of integration needs to be holistic, where equal attention should be provided to promoting cultural familiarity and access to necessary rights and social relationships along with a feeling of belongingness and acceptance.

When asked about changes in personal identification after integration, a majority of Bhutanese refugees confirmed some changes. The change was also identified in gender positionality. Their patriarchal way of thinking has also changed as many refugee women started working and generating income for their families. Their gender identification has changed from their identification while they were in Bhutan or refugee camps in Nepal. Altogether, it was

identified that Bhutanese refugees are satisfied with their resettlement in Norway because Norwegian government has helped them in regaining their identity, access their basic rights and accessing all other necessary rights that are important for living an independent and dignified life.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

Research aimed at investigating challenges associated with the integration of Bhutanese refugee women in Norway and outcomes associated with their integration in Norway was conducted. Culturally, Bhutan is a male-dominated country where the responsibilities of most of the women are limited to managing a household. Therefore, their participation in education and employment was low and limited. Leaving one's country behind and moving to another country permanently can be extremely overwhelming, especially for women who have remained dependent on men throughout their lives. Considering these differences in gender positions, this research was conducted in order to understand what are the key challenges faced by Bhutanese refugee women during their integration in Norway and exploring their integration outcome. The question that this research intends to answer is "What are the outcomes of Bhutanese refugee women's integration into Norwegian society with regard to structural, culture, social, and identification aspects? Do they face any challenges or not? And if yes, what kind of challenges."

The research is based on Social Integration Theory by Heckmann (2005) which believes in four important dimensions of integration which are structural integration, cultural integration, interactive integration, and identification integration. Structural integration is associated with the ability of refugees to access certain rights and position themselves in the society of their new homeland. Four key components of structural integration include access to the labour market, education, healthcare system, and housing facility, which are found to be more crucial than the other dimensions of social integration.

The finding reveals that most refugee women received success in acquiring employment opportunities in Norway. Although they come from a patriarchal society where most of the women were limited to household work, after resettling in Norway, to become independent and interdependent, Their patriarchal way of thinking has also changed. Gender discrimination is not noticed as many refugee women started working and generating income for their families. However, it was identified that hardships faced by refugee women while integrating in the Norwegian society is comparatively more challenging than the refugee men.

The Norwegian government assisted refugees by providing language training to achieve employment opportunities. Since language is one of the key requirements for working in Norway, this skill helped refugees to participate in the labour market of Norway. However,

some women failed to acquire employment due to a lack of fluency in the Norwegian language and no prior work experience. Despite the failure, all Bhutanese women were eager to work in Norway. In addition to employment, refugees were also provided access to education and healthcare facilities in Norway. The education and healthcare facility of Norway is one of the best in the world. Accessing these facilities enabled refugees to maintain their well-being and sustain growth. Education opportunities enabled Bhutanese refugees to complete their education and develop the knowledge and skills necessary for acquiring employment opportunities in Norway. Similarly, access to healthcare facilities enabled Bhutanese refugees in maintaining their well-being and therefore participate effectively in the social and economic markets of Norway. Lastly, to promote the feeling of belongingness among Bhutanese refugees, the Norwegian government provided housing facilities to all refugees. These housing facilities helped Bhutanese refugees in developing their identification and status in the community of their new homeland. They also feel safe and belonged to native country. Altogether, employment, health care, education, and housing facilities directly affected the integration of Bhutanese refugees in Norway by promoting the feeling of being at home. These facilities provided a sense of being independent and self-reliant among Bhutanese refugee women, which positively affected their integration into Norway.

Cultural integration is another critical dimension of integration associated with learning a new language, cultural practices, norms, and values of the new homeland. Cultural integration is much more than adapting to a new culture. Instead it is also associated with refugees creating their identification in a unique cultural community. Bhutanese refugees confirmed that they started learning about Norwegian culture, history, lifestyle, preferences, and practices after they moved to Norway. To assist Bhutanese refugees in getting acquainted with the new culture, the Norwegian government provided introductory programs for Bhutanese refugees, and it played a pivotal role in encouraging the participation of Bhutanese refugees in labour market and equipping them with cultural skills that further assist refugees in developing social relations in Norway. Introductory course not only developed their language competence but also helped them to interact with other people, build social networks and change their practices and attitudes.

Younger refugee women and men are found more competent in cultural integration also as they have greater exposure to institutions, labour market, and society. Young refugees are more concerned about getting a job or getting admission to a school; because of this, their priorities

lie in learning cultural competencies such as the Norwegian language, history, and norms and values, which eventually resulted in greater success. Moreover, some refugee women have identified the need for making slight changes in the introductory course based on the learning ability of the beholder. Age, educational background, and learning pace must be considered during the introductory course and while applying the provisions for citizenship, as 2 of the participants are found incapable of getting Norwegian citizenship. This population might be even higher as there are many other refugee women who are not included in the study. Therefore, making these changes will help these refugees integrate into Norway in a much better and more effective manner.

The study found that their perception and attitude toward the new culture is gradually changing. They are becoming more competent and bi-cultural as their lens of viewing their own culture and the different culture of their new homeland is changing. They have started to adopt the positive aspects of both cultures and gradually forgetting their traditional values which they think are not better. Their cultural position has changed as they appreciate both cultures customizing in a way that suits them.

Interactive integration has been identified as one of the most critical dimensions of integration as it deals with developing social relationships and social networks. To integrate successfully in Norway, it is essential for Bhutanese refugees to create social networks comprising Norwegian people. It was identified that since younger refugees have more opportunities to interact with Norwegian people in schools and in companies, as they have larger social networks in Norway. Due to this, this behaviour and acceptance of Norwegian culture is also higher. However, elderly Bhutanese refugees receive limited opportunities to go out and interact with Norwegians. Due to this, their social network is comparatively limited and their acceptance of Norwegian culture is also limited. The creation of a social network has been identified as crucial because it helps maintain the flow of information, which not only assist refugees in learning more about the local culture of a country but also encourage locals to accept refugees. In this way, social networks help refugees in feeling a sense of belongingness in Norway. Interactive integration is extremely important for the social integration of refugees because it also enables refugees to receive the support and solidarity of Norwegians. Through research, it was also identified that Norwegians the behaviour and attitude of Norwegians toward Bhutanese refugees is a mix. Some Norwegians demonstrate good, friendly and supportive behaviour towards refugees. As a result, they approach refugees, and it also helps

refugees to feel belonged and connected to Norway and its culture. However, some refugees demonstrate discriminatory behaviour towards Bhutanese refugees and this behaviour negatively influenced and impeded the pace of integration of Bhutanese refugees. For example, some Norwegians believed that the resettlement of Bhutanese refugees in Norway is directly impacting the labour market of the country. This implies that jobs that could have gone to Norwegians are now going to refugees. This resulted in generating a feeling of hatred toward Bhutanese refugees. Due to this, some Norwegian employers prefer Norwegians over Bhutanese refugees for jobs despite higher qualification and skills of refugees. This type of negative behaviour negatively impacts the integration of Bhutanese refugees in Norway by limiting their opportunities for participating in the labour market and accessing other necessary facilities and create their position in the country.

Identification integration is another dimension of social integration that has helped in understanding how refugees are participating in the core institutions of their new home country. The concept of identification is essential in shaping the feeling of belongingness among refugees. Belongingness is associated with the feeling of being a part of the social fabric, where behaviour and practices are affected and influenced by social pressure. For the successful integration of Bhutanese refugees in Norway, it is essential that refugees are also part of Norway in social groups. To understand the integration outcomes of refugees in a new home country, it is crucial to understand their identification with state institutions. Most Bhutanese refugees identify themselves as Norwegian nationals. These refugees were forcefully displaced from Bhutan and spent the majority of their lifetime in refugee camps in Nepal as refugees or undocumented immigrants. After resettling in Norway, the national identity of these refugees was created with Norwegian citizenship. So, they feel more connected with Norway and want to be addressed as Norwegians. However, some of the Bhutanese refugees also confirmed the necessity of accepting and moving forward with their memories and cultures so want to be identified as Bhutanese-Norwegian or Nepali Speaking Norwegian.

It is crucial to understand that privilege and position of subordination among refugees keep on fluctuating as per their resettlement from one place to another. This is one of the main reasons why the feeling of belonging among refugees varies. It has been identified that the social construction of the identity of refugees is constructed by self as well as ascribed by others. They have started working in different sector and companies in different positions it has given them different recognition. Their position in their family has changed as they started to earn and support their family. Their gender positionality has changed.

To sum up, with the help of engagement in labour market, availability of the best health facilities, education and housing facility, their structural dimension of integration is on best development process. Awareness of native language and culture, having Norwegian friends and social links and bonds, citizenship of the new homeland, and their better change identification and position helped them to integrate in their new homeland. They are in the positive process of integration.

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