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**Utilization of Higher Education:
A Review of Employment Challenges and Job Practice among
Refugees in Norway**

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to my best friend and mother. You always had faith in me and helped me unconditionally. My friend, you always told me, “You can do it.” Thanks for inspiring my love for education. We made it!!

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Acronyms

AÆTAT	Norwegian Public Employment Service
AID	Ministry of Labor and Social Inclusion
ECTS credits	European Credit Transfer System credits
GSU list	General Entrance Requirement list
GTZ	German Technical Corporation
NAIC	National Academic Information Center
NAV	Norwegian Labor and Welfare Organization
NGO	Non Governmental Organization
NOKUT	Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PA	Pedagogic Agency
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
QIP	Qualitative Interpretative Paradigm
UDI	Norwegian Directorate of Immigration
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
VOX	Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning

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Research Map



Map of Norway: Participants in the study reside in these cities: Oslo, Bergen, Namsos, Tromsø, Halden, and Moss

Abstract

Purpose of the study: If refugees from Africa and Asia are able to use their foreign higher education in the labor market of Norway is the main topic of this study. Thus, the study explores the impact of Norwegian language training, foreign higher education recognition, NAV job seeker courses, service/job provision by employers, further higher education in Norway, etc., on the labor market outcomes of 18 refugees who fled to Norway with tertiary foreign higher education from West African, East Africa, and Asia. Methods, theories, and strategies: Qualitative interpretative phenomenology is the research paradigm adopted to focus on the participants' experiences, describing the different meanings and commonality of phenomena in their experiences. To answer the research questions, the section on the analysis and interpretations of the findings incorporates 'thick descriptions' and direct quotations drawn from a one and a half hours semi-structured interview conducted with each participant. Results: Norwegian language deficiencies six months after their participation in a one-year Introduction Program creates initial unemployment and underemployment for about 94 per cent of the refugees with prior foreign higher education. This evidence suggests that the labor market constraints refugees with foreign higher education face initially had not changed significantly after the first 18 months in Norway to create educational-skill job-match relationships. The significance of duration of residence and undertaking relevant Norwegian education are more important for Norwegian language proficiency and finding a relevant job.

Chapter 1

Justification of the Study

1.1 Introduction

Refugees flee to save their lives. Refugees' flight to obtain freedom are initiated by political conflicts within or between countries, ethnic issues, persecution of minorities caused by racial discrimination, unfairness in rationing natural resources and development projects, etc. Other flights are due to natural disasters such as floods, hurricanes, drought, etc. The UNHCR (2008) indicates that the number of people who fled as a result of conflict and persecution was about 42 million in 2008. The total includes 16 million externally displaced refugees and asylum seekers and 26 million internally displaced people in refugee-like circumstances forced to flee their residence, but unlike externally displaced refugee, remain within their country. Refugees whose flight from their country stems from war or persecution are either threatened or not protected by their own government. The refugee convention of 1951 does not protect internally displaced people because it defines refugees as people who are outside their country of nationality or habitual residence and have a well-founded fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion. In 2008, the world's largest sources of refugees were non-western countries, especially Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, etc. Many refugees from non-western countries have sought protection in western countries. (UNHCR: 2008)

Norway is among countries in world regions that accept refugees needing protection. In statistics on immigration, Statistics Norway (2007) indicates that Norway's population in 2007 approximated at 4,700,000 people comprise about 125,000 refugees equivalent to 2.5 per cent of that country's population. In further report on immigration, Statistics Norway (2007) indicates that refugee population in Norway equaled 28 per cent of about 415,000 immigrants, born by foreigners/foreign-born parents and registered as residents in Norway.

The UDI (Norwegian Directorate of Immigration) Definition of Terms (2003) categorizes three kinds of refugees who have brought their experience, hopes and dreams to Norway: refugees resettled in Norway who sought refugee protection from outside Norway through the UNHCR

resettlement program, asylum seekers who come on their own and make refugee protection claims within Norway, and people immigrating through family connection to these two kinds of refugees.

Egner, an advisor at *NOKUT* (Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education) (2007) indicates that 15 per cent of refugees in Norway have some form of higher education upon their arrival. Experiencing linguistic and cultural diversities, refugees with foreign higher education do not initially speak the Norwegian language, '*Norsk*;' and do not have other social resources to establish themselves in the Norwegian labor market and need help. Thus, before refugees can use their foreign higher education credentials to seek employment or pursue further higher education in Norway, three institutions established by the Norwegian government to assist refugees get initial assistance are these:

- The Introduction Program which provides compulsory language and society instruction for newly arrived refugees in Norway;
- The Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT) which provides recognition of foreign higher education credentials;
- The Norwegian Labor and Welfare Organization (NAV) which offers job seeker courses, and provide participation in the labor market through job practice that gives an initial network of people and understanding of the system.

1.2 Experience and Personal Goal

Maxwell (2005) indicates that one's experience is what inspires one to research specific phenomena. Hence, I am a Liberian with foreign higher education who resettled in Norway from Cote d'Ivoire five years ago along with nine other family members. My family, including siblings and children, came to Norway through the UNHCR resettlement program for refugees. We had earlier fled to Cote d'Ivoire during the Liberian civil crisis that erupted in late 1989. Upon arrival in Norway in April 2004, we were settled in Namsos city within Nord-Trondelag County. The local authorities in Namsos required adults in my family to participate in a two-year Norwegian 'Introduction Program,' to learn Norwegian social studies and particularly '*Norsk*,' the Norwegian language which is the national language used in education and the civic culture of Norway.

Thus, during academic year 2004-2005, I participated in the Introduction Program at the Namsos Adult Education Center (*Namsos Voksenopplæringscenter*) in a class comprising other refugees newly arrived in Norway where we underwent basic Norwegian language skills and society studies. During academic year 2005-2006, I got admission at the Olav Duun Secondary School in

Namsos where along with other refugees I underwent a college preparatory course in intermediate Norwegian language training and Social Studies instruction through the Norwegian-language-medium.

During the Introduction Program period, NOKUT granted recognition of my four-year undergraduate degree in Secondary Education (emphasis in English and Literature) which I obtained from Cuttington University College, Liberia, in 1986. Since August 2006, I am a resident of Oslo, the capital of Norway, where I obtained admission in this graduate program, Multicultural and International Education, through my undergraduate degree (B.Sc.) and work experience from Africa. Studies in the graduate program are conducted through the English-language-medium through which I can appreciably communicate discussions I develop in this master's thesis.

Since I graduated from Cuttington University college in 1986, I worked in education in the following capacities: secondary school Language-Arts (English) teacher in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire; Language-Arts (English) curriculum developer at the Ministry of Education in Liberia, and teacher, curriculum developer and school principal within the German Technical Corporation (GTZ) Multilateral Programs for displaced Liberian refugees including Ivorian students in the program; as well a joint primary and secondary school principal in Abidjan for students from diverse nationalities especially Liberian refugee children. My experience as a teacher, school principal, and curriculum developer for students from diverse nationalities stimulated my interest to undertake this master's studies covering these four modules: Human rights, language rights and education; Introduction to multicultural and international education; School and development internationally, and Epistemology and research methods. My experience through the modules was educationally stimulating and challenging as I was guided through relevant literatures and tutorials on language and cultural diversity issues in international education, how the multicultural classroom uses education to inclusively harness a society that has diversity issues, etc. This thesis will deepen my knowledge of theories, methods and skills acquired in the graduate program through their relevant application to practical experiences of participants in this study.

1.3 Rationale

Macmillan English Dictionary (2007: 1229) defines a rationale as an underlying reason “a plan or belief is based on.” Therefore, the rationale for this research derives from two authoritative

references that justify an inquiry into issues of the absorption of African and Asian refugees with prior higher education credentials into the Norwegian labor market.

Firstly, the Norwegian Labor and Welfare Organization (NAV) analysis on employment in 2008 reviews quite slow absorption of immigrants into the Norwegian labor market while refugees from the ‘south’ remain the most disadvantaged. The reference indicates that though unemployment rate is nearly 3 times higher among immigrants than ethnic Norwegians, it is non-westerners who are overrepresented as low income workers in industries, hotels, and restaurants as well as in careers that do not require formal education.

Secondly, a publication on immigrant unemployment in *Statistics Norway* (2008) indicates that unemployment rates in 2008 among immigrants in Norway from Africa and Asia (dominantly refugees) remain respectively 5.7 times higher among Africans and 3.4 times higher among Asians than that of the total population of Norway as indicated in table 1.1 below.

Table 1.1 Number of People Unemployed in Immigrant Groups and Total Population of Norway along with Unemployment Rates in 2008

People unemployed	2,244 Africans	4,744 Asians	1,501 Eastern Europeans (exclude EU countries)	441 South and Central Americans	947 from EU countries in Eastern Europe	674 from other Nordic countries	95 from North America and the Oceania	534 Western Europeans	Unemployed in total population in Norway 44,364
Unemployment rate	10.4 %	6.5 %	5.7 %	4.7 %	2.3 %	1.9 %	1.9 %	1.8 %	1.9 %

Source: Statistics Norway, Immigrant unemployment (2009)

The unemployment figures in table 1.1 above are based on NAV’s registered job seekers calculated as a fraction of Norway’s labor force. The table indicates the number of people unemployed and registered as job seekers in each immigrant group in Norway as well as in the total population. Also, the table shows each per cent of those unemployed as the rate of unemployment among the total population of Norway’s labor force in that group. I deduce from the unemployment figures that there is a ratio of 5 persons registered as job seekers to each 50 Africans in the Norwegian labor force, and a ratio of 3 job seekers to each 50 Asians in the Norwegian labor force. In comparison, the figures reveal that there is a significant difference in other groups especially in the ratio of 1 job seeker to each 50 persons in the total labor force of Norway.

There appears to be a large ratio of African and Asian refugees with higher education who may be underemployed or unemployed in Norway. This speculation stems from ratios of the unemployed in various immigrant groups and the total population as compared with ratios of the unemployed among the African and Asian groups; as well as indication of an overrepresentation of non-westerners, predominantly refugees from Africa and Asia, in low income work not requiring higher education. Specifically, there is an omission in the references above which should give a concrete picture of the use of African and Asian refugees' higher qualification utilization in the Norwegian labor market as about 15% of refugees in Norway have higher education upon arrival. In light of this, I see a dire need to explore higher education recognition issues, Norwegian language issues, and employment issues refugees from Africa and Asia with foreign higher qualifications may be confronted with through their experience in Norway to obtain employment relevant to their education and how that might be explained from different points of view.

1.4 Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Research

The participants in this research are 18 refugees from Africa and Asia with prior foreign higher education before settlement in Norway with whom I share similar experiences. There is a need to ask whether these refugees have been able to utilize their prior foreign higher education in the Norwegian labor market. Time spent beginning from the Introduction Program seems to be important for acquisition of Norwegian language and other cultural specific qualifications seen as important for the work life of African and Asian refugees in Norway. However, worthy of assessment is a concern or contention raised by one refugee/participant in this study with foreign higher education which is typical among refugees in Norway. The refugee states,

From a thirteen-year teacher/teacher trainer experience from Africa, I sent out 50 fruitless job applications after completion of the 1 year (800 hours) Norwegian language training and Social Studies instruction through the Introduction Program.
(William-West Africa no. 1 from Liberia, 2007)

Usually, there are factors contributing to needs and conditions of refugees such as the one above which require assessment. Precisely, they may stem from a variety of factors as follows:

- A lacking of relevant skills, knowledge, or awareness,
- Debilitating attitudes or harmful values,
- Social challenges or limitations,
- Resources or access to institutional or systematic services, and

- Policies, practices or laws and their consequences.

Thus, it is essential to indicate the research problem which defines the mission and objective behind conducting this research. These scholars, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005: 73) contend that the research problem is a “fairly broad and general statement” that indicates the key issue that needs to be researched. Therefore, this research focuses on how and if refugees with foreign higher education from Africa and Asia are able to make use of their higher education credentials in the new context in Norway, giving access to relevant employment and further education. It becomes essential to establish the “general purpose of the research” (Cohen et al., 2005: 73). Thus, the goal or general purpose of the research is to explore and understand various transitional processes the refugees with foreign higher education from Africa and Asia undergo after the Introduction Program to obtain employment relevant to their higher education credentials. Cohen et al. (2005: 73) indicate that the general purpose or goal of the research establishes a stage for “additional underlying research interests.” An underlying issue supportive of the research purpose is that what refugees with foreign higher education do during the transition after the Introduction Program to enter the Norwegian labor market and how they do it is the focus of the study—something which has been under-researched. For this reason, I will concentrate on how each participant is affected in the Norwegian labor market by the following:

- Norwegian language challenges after the Introduction Program,
- Foreign higher education recognition challenges,
- Other challenges in finding employment commensurate with the refugees’ education, and
- Explore what might be coping strategies adopted by the refugees during the transition.

Cohen et al. (2005: 73) emphasize that “the purpose(s) of the research determines the design and methodology of the research.” Thus, data for this research was drawn from semi-structured interviews I conducted among the 18 refugees who are participants in this study, while context document analysis, tentative theories, and related literature review inform the research. In light of this, the research paradigm adopted is the qualitative research approach.

This research is intended to contribute meaningfully to practices of and knowledge about immigrants from the ‘south’ (especially Africa and Asia) and the difficulties they may face in relation to employment in Norway. The secondary audience benefiting is approximately 4,600,000 ethnic Norwegians who support refugees, the primary beneficiaries. This study is intended to be a reference to assist those people responsible for planning, and managing

institutions intended as stepping stones to refugees' integration. However, this research work is not a detailed guide.

Cohen et al. (2005: 73) indicate that "the general purpose of the research is translated into objectives and specific research questions requiring concrete answers." Thus, to conduct a critical and effective research, I develop the following research objectives and research questions.

1.4.1 The Research Main Objective

The main objective of the research is to investigate the role that prior higher education from abroad plays in the lives of refugees in Norway.

1.4.2 The Research Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the research are the following:

- Review implementation mechanisms utilized by institutions such as the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT), the Norwegian Language Introduction Program, and the Norwegian Labor and Welfare organization (NAV). These institutions are intended as stepping stones for appropriate labor market absorption of immigrants, especially refugees, in Norway;
- Explore refugees with prior foreign higher education transition in Norway through language training, education, and employment with regards to whether the transition is a process of assimilation or integration; and
- Analyze contextual changes and challenges refugees with foreign higher education encounter in new types of jobs roles in Norway.

1.4.3 The Research Questions

Specifically, the research will answer the following questions:

- Do refugees face challenges in using their higher education credential (from their country of origin or in refugee situation elsewhere) in relation to employment in Norway?
- What factors affect a refugee's ability to access employment relative to his/her educational credential?

1.5 Limitation of the Study

Macmillan English Dictionary (2007: 876) defines limitation as “the rule or situation that confines, restrains or puts a limit on something.” All research has limitations which then are the description of the scope of work that will be performed by the research. Therefore, according to Macmillan (2007: 390), the work that will not be undertaken, “showing a borderline,” is described as the delimitations of the research.

The study is limited to a qualitative approach based on semi-structured interviews conducted among the sample of 18 refugees with foreign higher education who arrived in Norway between the years 2000 and 2005. Two-thirds of the sample of refugees for the study comes from Africa and one-third from Asia. Initially, after arrival in Norway, each refugee benefited from Norwegian language and society instruction offered by the Norwegian government before or during the establishment of the mandatory Introduction Program. The Introduction Program is meant to facilitate refugee absorption and inclusion in the Norwegian labor market.

1.6 Background Information

Webster’s Dictionary (1991: 123) defines the concept ‘background’ as “circumstances or events essential to understanding a problem or situation.” Basically, the background described in this section is support information to enlighten the statement of the problem and purpose of the research. This background describes earlier circumstances of immigrants and refugees in Norway, as well as present conditions that form the setting where refugees with foreign higher education from Africa and Asia are situated in Norway. Developments in the background raises further concerns to investigate how and if refugees with foreign higher education credentials from Africa and Asia can access employment relevant to their foreign higher education and/or seek further higher education in Norway. The background information is discussed briefly under three sub-topics as follows: the emergence of refugees in Norway, the Introduction Program: Norwegian language training for refugees in Norway, and education and labor in Norway.

1.6 1The Emergence of Refugees in Norway

In 2008, Statistics Norway (2008) shows that refugee influx and entry into the Norwegian labor market came long after Norway became an independent nation in 1905. The report indicates that during the late 1960s, a combination of a booming economy and a population shortage led

Norway to accept a number of labor migrants from non-western countries; firstly, from Morocco, Yugoslavia and Turkey; and later from India and Pakistan. The immigrants were guest workers expected to work on temporary basis, but they remained and were later followed by other migrants, including refugees and family unification candidates. (Statistics Norway: 2008)

On the other hand, Cooper (2005) relates that western immigrants from the Nordic countries Denmark, Sweden, and Finland have had free access to the Norwegian labor market since 1954 and the right was extended to other western immigrants from Iceland in 1982 and the EU in 1994. Cooper relates that before 1975, permission to stay on a permanent basis was given to foreign persons holding a contract with a Norwegian employer. Indications of migration mismanagement from other European countries along with threats of sudden increase in the flow of non-western immigrants from developing countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America motivated the Norwegian government to legislate an 'immigration stop' in 1975 officially restricting immigration. However, exemptions were made for key personnel, which in practice meant highly skilled workers from OECD countries. As skill level became important criteria for immigration, the border closed particularly for low and medium-skilled workers. Migrant application shifted to family unification and asylum while world events such as civil crisis led to greater resettlement refugees' admission. Despite the tight immigration policy the relative number of non-western immigrants has increased since the mid 1970s especially from first generation economic immigrants to persons arriving through family reunification, marriage, asylum seekers and resettled refugees. (Cooper, 2005)

The *IntroEnglish* publication (2009) indicates that in the 1980s and 90s, refugees from civil conflicts, mainly asylum seekers came to Norway from non-western countries like Chile, Iran, Sri Lanka, Vietnam, Turkey, Somali, and the former Yugoslavia, among others. The situation of asylum seekers differed from labor immigration, as many asylum seekers were placed in reception centers in the municipalities often away from the urban areas. When asylum seekers arrive in Norway, they are not entitled to cash benefits, unemployment benefit, nor are they allowed to work as long as their asylum application are being processed. However, they are provided petty cash for pocket change and they receive free medical attention. In the 1980s and 90s, many granted asylum experienced difficulty in procuring a job and a home. However, fleeing from political oppression many saw the move to Norway as a fresh beginning. (*IntroEnglish* Publication: 2009)

1.6.2 The Introduction Program: Norwegian Language Training for Refugees in Norway

In a Ministry of Labor and Social Inclusion (AID) publication in Norway, Aanes (2008) reveals that legislation on Norwegian language training and society instruction affecting refugees' absorption in the Norwegian society has been changing. Aanes indicates that the Norwegian parliament adopted the 'Adult Education Act' (*Voksenopplaringloven*) in 1976 not as a right, but as a manifestation of the intension that adults should have the opportunity to receive education subsidized by the Norwegian government. Aanes indicates that in the 2000s, when Norway accepted large groups of UNHCR resettlement refugees from Liberia, Sudan, etc., new legislation were enacted enhancing language training and social studies instruction through an Introduction Program intended for refugees' inclusion in the Norwegian society. Thus, in accordance with these, Aanes (2008) cites,

- The 'Introduction Act' was implemented on September 1, 2003 and became obligatory on September 1, 2004 offering a two-year 'Introduction Program' (800 hours) in Norwegian Language training and Social Studies instruction for refugees;
- Amendments to the Introduction Act came into effect on September 1, 2005 establishing participation in the Introduction Program through at least 300 to at most 3,000 hours as 'a right and an obligation' that the foreign citizen portrays fluency in Norwegian language and society instruction. This becomes a condition for all non-EU immigrants arriving after that date to receive permanent residence permit or citizenship.
(Aanes, 2008)

To compliment the preceding policies, the participants in the Introduction Program should be able to achieve the following goals, as Aanes (2008) cites,

- Acquire basic Norwegian language and Norwegian society instruction: Depending on previous education and mother tongue, the goal is that participants undergo the training through any one of three different tracks, while participants may switch from one track to another dependant on his/her acquisition of spoken or written Norwegian during the program. The three tracks are suitable for these:
 - * Track one for participants with a little education,
 - * Track two for participants with some education,
 - * Track three for participants with a lot of education,
- Prepare for further education;
- Participate through job practice which focuses on both Norwegian language and Norwegian labor market training: A job practice place for a minimum three months is assigned a participant to conclude the Introduction Program. Thus, the Introduction Program may collaborate with NAV which offers job seeker courses and participation in the labor market though job practice;
- Evaluate the refugee's foreign higher education credential at NOKUT for a possible recognition (through a collaborative effort of the Introduction Program).
(Aanes: 2008)

Aanes (2008) indicates that the Introduction Program is compulsory for all newly arrived resettlement refugees, former asylum seekers granted refugee status by the Norwegian authorities, and persons with residence permit for family unification to these two refugee groups. This includes refugees with prior foreign higher education. An annual benefit of Norwegian kroner 133, 624 or 94, 060. 87 Euro is distributed through monthly salary to each resettlement refugee for participation in the Introduction Program. One of the important ideas behind considering the introduction benefit as salary was to create an alternative to social assistance for the refugee (Aanes, 2008). After the Introduction Program, the refugee is expected to pursue a job or further education. However, a concern is that in 2008, dependency on social assistance was increasing among residents in Norway as the Norwegian Labor and Welfare Organization (NAV) states (2008),

Approximately, 700,000 persons in the Norwegian work force receive different kinds of benefits. Statistics shows that this number is on the increase. An extensive reform is required to reverse this development.
(NAV: 2008)

1.6.3 Education and Labor in Norway

Statistics Norway (2006) survey on education of 2004 indicates that a total of 146,829 immigrants between ages 25 and 64 with attained tertiary higher education was recorded among Norway immigrant population of 215,676 people. Thus, table 1.2 below shows the per cent in each immigrant group in Norway that has record of attained tertiary higher education.

Table 1.2 Population of Immigrant Groups in Norway and Per cent of Attained Tertiary Education in 2004

No. of immigrant in Norway by world regions	13,651 African	55,010 Asians (Turkey Included)	6,569 South and Central Americans	22,876 Eastern Europeans	26,607 people from foreign Nordic countries	18,105 Western Europeans (Turkey not included)	3,904 people from North America and the Oceania
The % of immigrant with tertiary higher education	23.4 %	24.2 %	31.1 %	32.1 %	41.4 %	51.8 %	66.3 %

Source: Statistics Norway, Education Statistics (2006)

Table 1.2 above shows that among immigrant groups in Norway from world regions, non-western immigrants from Africa and Asia (Turkey included), predominantly refugees, have the lowest recording of tertiary higher education attained with 23.4% per cent among African immigrants as

the minimum. Also, the table shows that western immigrants have the highest per cents of attained tertiary higher education with a maximum of 66.3% immigrants from America and the Oceania. Thus, the above mentioned variation in the percentage levels of tertiary higher education attainment among western and non-western immigrants imply that most non-western immigrants from Africa and Asia have low education from their country of origin, and may obtain unskilled jobs in Norway. Yet there is reason to believe that some non-westerners from Africa and Asia with tertiary higher education may be unemployed or otherwise underemployed because of not finding work relevant to their education.

Statistics Norway (2008) indicates that in 2006 immigrants in Norway hailed from 213 countries, influenced by autonomous religions, different educational backgrounds and cultures. They are fluent in other languages as mother tongue or language through which they obtained formal education.

Specifically, table 1.3 below which is an extract from Statistics Norway (2007) shows diversified refugee populations of mostly non-westerners and not the wider immigrant population in Norway. The table shows that refugees in Norway of over 1000 persons per country hail from Eastern Europe, Asia, and a few African and South American countries. The table shows that smaller refugee communities in Norway of less than 1000 persons per country background are predominantly from African countries such as Liberia, Burundi, Sudan, Algeria, Rwanda, Uganda, Sierra Leone, Kenya, Morocco, and Ghana.

Table 1.3 Selected Refugee Groups in Norway and Number of Persons per Country Background in January 2007

Total no. of refugees	125,149
Iraq	16,806
Somalia	13,994
Bosnia-Herzegovina	12,522
Iran	11,284
Vietnam	10,860
Serbia	7,968
Afghanistan	6,380
Sri Lanka	6,224
Chile	4,492
Russia	3,853
Ethiopia	2,260
Turkey	2,015
Eritrea	1,999
Croatia	1,892
Pakistan	1,553
Burma	1,345
Macedonia	1,134
Congo	1,092
Syria	908
Liberia	806
Palestinian Territory	758
Sudan	672
China	527
Ghana	427
Algeria	419
India	413
Rwanda	412
Morocco	328
Uganda	321
Colombia	318
Romania	315
Sierra Leone	290
Cambodia	272
Philippines	254
Thailand	240
Ukraine	231
Indonesia	204
Rest	9,361

Source: Statistics Norway, Refugees per Country Background (2007)

1.7 Definition of Terms

- **Western Immigrant**

Under definition of terms, *Statistics Norway* (2005) defines western immigrants as immigrants from the Nordic countries, Western Europe (except Turkey), North America and the Oceania.

- **Non-western Immigrant**

Further, *Statistics Norway* (2005) defines non-western immigrants as immigrants from Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, South and Central America and Turkey.

- **Refugee**

The UDI (Norwegian Directorate of Immigration) *Definition of Terms* (2004) defines a refugee is “a person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reason of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.” (This definition is from the Refugee Convention of the United Nations in 1951 and the pertaining protocol of 1967, article 1)

- **Resettlement Refugee**

The UDI Definition of Terms (2004) defines resettlement refugee as a “refugee who is permitted to come to Norway following an organized selection process, normally in cooperation with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).” This person is mandated as refugee by the UNHCR in the country in which he/she is previously hosted as refugee, having fled outside of his/her country of nationality for a well-founded fear of being persecuted as indicated by the definition of the Refugee Convention of 1951. A resettlement refugee is primarily at risk of being sent back to unsafe situations in his/her home country and is at risk in the first asylum country such that the UNHCR wishes to arrange resettlement for him/her. Further, the publication indicates that UNHCR requests resettlement for any of these refugees: a refugee who does not receive necessary medical treatment in the first asylum country, who has family in a third country, or who has lived for many years in the first asylum country with no prospects of returning to his/her own country or being granted full rights in the first asylum country. It is upon the willingness of the Norwegian government to grant for such a refugee a resettlement to Norway

that the collaborative selection process is enhanced by the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) and the UNHCR. (*UDI Definition of Terms*: 2004)

- **Asylum Seeker**

The *UDI Definition of Terms* (2004) defines asylum seeker as a “person who on his or her own initiative, and without prior notification, asks the authorities for protection and recognition as a refugee. This person is called an asylum seeker until a decision has been made on the application.” The asylum seeker requests refugee status in Norway for political asylum, on the basis of humanitarian grounds, or for collective protection in the situation of mass flight. In Norway the police are responsible for registering an asylum seeker as well as investigating both the truthfulness of his/her stated identity and how he/she travelled to Norway. Also the publication states that the UDI decides asylum cases in the first instance, and the Immigration Appeal Board (UNE) considers appeals against decisions made by the UDI pursuant to the ‘Immigrant Act’ on the entry of foreign nationals into the Kingdom of Norway. (*UDI Definition of Terms*: 2004)

- **Unemployment**

Macmillan (2007: 1288) defines unemployment as “the state of being unemployed” or “the state of not being engaged in a gainful occupation.” One may say that unemployment is marked by the fact that individuals who actively seek jobs remain un-hired. Unemployment rate measures the number of unemployed persons as a percentage of the total available workforce—meaning the total number of people able to work. Thus, unemployment rate measures all those in a nation-state who are not employed and are of the appropriate age who are able to work. In other words, unemployment rate measures all who desire employment in a nation-state, irrespective of whether or not they actively try to obtain a job.

The level of unemployment varies with the economic condition of a nation-state and the circumstances of the various social classes thrown out of employment. Therefore, in order for the government to measure the level of unemployment, information is required on how many people are unemployed; how they get to become unemployed; how long they have been unemployed; whether their number is increasing or decreasing; whether they are men or women; whether they are young or old; whether they are white, black, etc; whether they are skilled or unskilled; whether

they are the sole supporters of their families or not; whether they are more concentrated in one area of a nation-state than others; etc. Also, the economic condition revealing a general high unemployment rate in a country generally indicates an economy in recession with few job opportunities. Therefore, together with other economic data, economic information such as given above should help policy makers in making decisions as to whether measures should be taken to influence the future course of the economy or to aid those affected by joblessness.

- **Underemployment**

Macmillan (2007: 1286) defines underemployment as “the condition in which people in a labor force are employed at less than full-time, or employed at irregular jobs, or at jobs inadequate with respect to their training or economic needs.” This means a worker is employed, but not in the desired capacity, whether in terms of compensation, hours, or level of skills or experience. Therefore, while not technically unemployed, the underemployed may often be competing for available jobs. Thus, underemployment usually describes the employment of workers with high skill levels in low-wage jobs that do not require such abilities. For example, underemployment means someone with a college degree may be tending bar, driving a taxi-cab, or being a cashier. This may result from the experience of unemployment, and with bills to be paid and other responsibilities, the person take almost any job available even if he/she does not use his/her full talent.

Underemployment may occur with individuals, who are discriminated against or who lack appropriate trade certification/degree. Also, the condition of an economy of a nation-state in recession or depression may cause underemployment. Therefore, four common human situations prone to underemployment are immigrants, new graduates, someone who holds high quality skill for which there are no market demands, and involuntary part-time workers.

For example, when highly trained immigrants arrive in a country, their foreign credentials may not be recognized or accepted in their new country, or they may have to do a lengthy re-credentialing process. When doctors and engineers from non-western countries immigrate, they may be unable to work in their profession, and they may have to seek menial work and become underemployed.

For example, new college or university graduates may also face underemployment because even though they have completed the technical training for a given field for which there is a good job

market, they lack experience. For example, a recent graduate with a master's degree in accounting may have to work in a low paid job as an underemployed staff until he/she can find work in his/her field.

For example, while it is costly in terms of time and money to acquire academic credentials, many types of degrees, particularly those in fine arts and classics are valued poorly by market places. A number of survey show that skill-based underemployment in North America and Europe can be a long lasting phenomenon.

For example, another kind of underemployment refers to involuntary part-time workers. There are job seekers who would like to have full-time employment but can only find part-time work either within their own profession or outside even as low-skilled contractors.

Beside the four human situations given above, underemployment prevails when an economy becomes stagnant during recession or depression. During these times many of those who are not unemployed are underemployed. These kinds of underemployment arise because labor markets do not enhance doing wage adjustments adequately. Instead, there is a non-wage rationing of jobs.

1.8 Summary of Chapter One

Chapter one has constructed a logical justification about the inquiry to be researched in this study. The chapter has indicated what the study is about; why the study is needed; who benefits from the study; and what the limitations of the study are. Also, this justification has engaged the inquiry by focusing its goals and research questions leading a way for the study to be pursued in succeeding chapters.

Chapter 2

Research Design and Methodology

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will discuss the research design and methodology for conducting this inquiry. Cohen et al. (2005: 73) indicate that there is no established blueprint for designing research projects, and the design a researcher employs for the project is curved by “fitness for purpose.” Also, Cohen et al. insist that research design guides a researcher in establishing the study’s framework, covering each stage of the procedures. Therefore, in this chapter, I will vividly describe the research paradigm adopted, and give further detailed specifications about methods and strategies for both conducting the study and developing each chapter of this thesis. As proposed research designs are usually not rigid, with flexibility researchers peruse their course of action following the blueprint of the design they employ responding to arising situations throughout the research methodology (Cohen et al., 2005: 73).

2.2 The Qualitative Choice

Research designs vary depending on whether the research adopts the qualitative or quantitative paradigm. Therefore, I adopt the anti-positivist qualitative interpretative paradigm in constructing this research design. Cohen et al., (2005) indicate that qualitative research aims at understanding and interpreting the meanings of human actions. I employ the qualitative interpretative research approach because the anti-positivist (2005) argues that individual behaviors can only be understood through interpreting direct experiences of people in specific contexts or situations. In light of this, the qualitative interpretative researcher adopts a naturalistic approach which describes the phenomena as subjectively perceived by the participants or clients being investigated. Therefore, the interpretative nature of the qualitative paradigm is that inquiry begins with human experience and sets out to understand the interpretation of the world around them as Cohen et al., (2005: 22) state,

The central endeavor of the interpretative paradigm is to understand the subjective world of human experience. To retain the integrity of the phenomenon being investigated, efforts are being made to get inside the person and understand from within. The imposition of external form and structure is resisted, since it reflects the viewpoint of the interviewer as opposed to that of the actor directly involved. (Cohen et al., 2005: 22)

This means the interpretive approach unearths key themes to be investigated when probing the essence of a lived experience. The approach reveals the unobservable meanings of human actions.

2.3 Key Qualities of Quantitative Scientific Paradigm (QSP)

The qualitative approach of qualitative interpretative paradigm (QIP) is more successful when the question asked by the research poses puzzles regarding human interactions, difficult if not impossible to address using the approach of the conventional quantitative scientific paradigm (QSP) of positivism. Before moving on it is important to review the conventional scientific theory of positivism not adopted by this research. For example, in scientific quantitative research, the world of cells yields to methods based on the introduction of the microscope. In scientific research, the hypothesis, a scientific guess is established initially from the beginning of the research as theory to be verified through using the microscope during the research. Subsequently, Cohen et al. (2005: 138-139) contend that the “hypothesis is tested and verified in a controlled laboratory” where variables of empirical data gathered by the researcher are manipulated through deductive reasoning. In research under the conventional QSP, Cohen et al., (2005: 38) contend that beforehand the hypothesis/theory or scientific guess is “pre-established at the beginning of the research” to be verified rather than emerging gradually throughout the research using analytical induction as in the qualitative paradigm. As a result of analytical deduction used in the conventional QSP; ‘empiricism’ is the term describing scientific facts obtained from testing and verifying the hypothesis or theory pre-established. Smith (1999: 42) indicates that empiricism originates from the realist’s scientific theory of positivism which takes the view that “science provides us with the clearest possible ideals of knowledge.”

2.4 Key Qualities of Qualitative Interpretative Paradigm (QIP)

On the other hand, the positivist approach used by the realist in scientific research becomes less successful for the naturalist when being applied to the study of human behavior in the context of the anti-positivist. Therefore, I would like to briefly review the qualitative theory of qualitative interpretative paradigm which is adopted by this research. For example, in the context of the labor market and educational system, there are challenges in seeking employment, in job experiences, in teaching/learning situations in the classroom, and in related cultural and social human interactions. These phenomena pose challenge for the realist. Hence, regarding social phenomena such as these, Cohen et al. (2005. 138) advocate that the “anti-positivist’s naturalistic approach” using

“inductive analytical interpretations” is a successful research tool. According to Maxwell (2005: 6), a typical quality of the “anti-positivist QIP” is that the researcher implements his/her plan in applying inductive reasoning while responding to situations regarding human behavior. As a result, the theory generation process suggests the operational qualitative research paradigm which is confirmed at the end of the research (see Maxwell’s design below). Therefore, to commensurate each stage of the qualitative research I undertake, I employ research design which Maxwell terms as the ‘interactive model.’

2.5 Maxwell’s Interactive Model for the Qualitative Interpretative Paradigm (QIP)

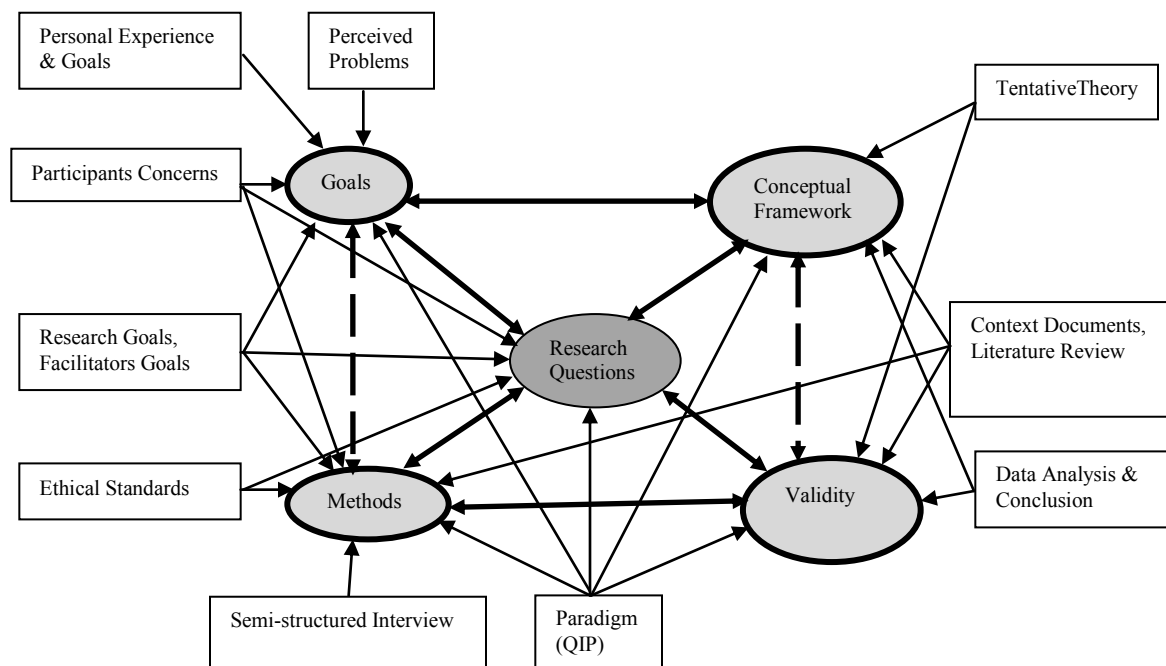


Figure 2.1 Maxwell’s ‘Interactive Model’ for Research under the Qualitative Interpretative Paradigm (QIP)

Source (Maxwell, 2005: 6)

Maxwell’s model design for qualitative research has five key components: the goals, the conceptual framework, the research questions, the methods, and validity. Maxwell’s qualitative research design provides a suitably practical and innovative approach. The design’s five main components include additional design complementary components that interact with each other. His interactive approach presents a clear strategy that creates a coherent relationship among the design’s contextual components in the qualitative paradigm. This said, Maxwell (2005: 5) argues that it is not the empirical data gathered by the researcher that is valid but the inferences or interpretations drawn from it. Thus, (Maxwell, 2005: 33) contends that inferences or

interpretations from empirical data are made valid when the conceptual framework informs the research and the methodology designed by the researcher adequately answers the research questions. Therefore, in describing the structure of the interactive model above as user-friendly, Maxwell details how through the interactive approach, a researcher plans to answer the research questions and justifies the choice of this strategy. Therefore, concerning the model, Maxwell, 2005: 5) states,

The upper triangle of the model should be a closely integrated unit. Your research questions should have a clear relationship to the goals of your study, and should be informed by what is already known about the phenomena you are studying and the theoretical concepts and model that can be applied to these phenomena. In addition, the goals of your study should be informed by current theories and knowledge, while your decision about what theories and knowledge are relevant depends on your goals and questions.

Similarly, the bottom triangle of the model should also be closely integrated. The methods you use must enable you to answer your research questions, and also deal with plausible validity threats to these answers. The questions, in turn, need to be formed so as to take the feasibility of the methods and seriously of particular validity threats into account, while the plausibility and relevance of particular validity threats, and the way these can be dealt with, depends on the questions and methods chosen. (Maxwell, 2005: 5)

Because the contextual components of Maxwell's design are interactive in nature, they will give coherence to this study. Hence, in this study, Maxwell's research design which includes main five components will interact with other complementary components I employ to address the unique sets of issues as discussed in the following:

2.6 The Goals/ purposes

Maxwell's design begins with the research goals or purposes. Macmillan (2007: 645) defines a goal as "something one hopes to achieve." Maxwell (2005: 22) design portrays three categories of goals/purposes: "personal goals, practical goals, and intellectual goals." In this research I consider all of these goals. According to Maxwell (2005: 21), a personal goal or purpose is "what inspired one to undertake a research project." It inspires ones interest in a specific phenomenon or one's interest in altering or transforming a present situation. The practical and intellectual goals of research are also significant not only for the researcher but for other people. Macmillan (2007: 1161) states that the practical purpose or goal "describes the actual effect of a situation." This means a practical goal is aimed at achieving something such as fulfilling a need, altering or transforming a situation, or reaching a goal—including administrative or policy goals. Maxwell (2005: 21) contends that the intellectual goal is "aimed at understanding something." To illustrate,

my research intellectual goal/purpose will seek to understand the meaning of participants in the study, and to understand the meaning of their actions and the explanation they give of their experiences. Secondly, another of my intellectual goals/purposes will seek to understand the context within which the participants act and the influence the context has on their actions. Thirdly, my intellectual goal/purpose will identify phenomena and hopefully generate theories for their interpretation. In this manner the goals interact with other contextual components of the design.

Therefore, Maxwell (2005: 15-16) contends that the research goals and purposes “guide other design decisions” to guarantee that the study is worth undertaking. Hence, my research goals will shape the description and interpretation of context documents I analyze, relevant literature I review, theories I create or critique in the research, and strategies for defending data interpretation. Further, my research goals have shaped the relevant data collection method which is the semi-structured interview I have employed in this research. Through this interactive approach, possible validity threats or roots of bias will be curtailed.

2.7 The Conceptual Framework

Macmillan (2007: 595) defines framework as “a set of principles, ideas, etc., that you use when forming your decisions or judgments;” or “a system of rules, laws or agreements, etc., that establish the way that something operates in society.” Cohen et al. (2005: 73) contend that the key components making up the general framework of research design are “interpreted differently for different styles of research,” and are incorporated into the general framework of every research paradigm. Thus, Cohen et al. (2005) pose that the general framework of a study comprises all the key components of the design like a uniformed map giving coherence to every empirical research. To illustrate, the general framework of this qualitative inquiry incorporates all Maxwell’s five key components of research design as indicated in the blueprint above. Hence, all the design’s other contextual components as spelled out by the blueprint, systematically outline the possible course of actions to be undertaken by the entire research and presents a reliable approach to interpret the phenomena under scrutiny.

While the general framework of a research is broad in scope to cover the entire research, the conceptual framework’s scope is narrower. Precisely, Maxwell (2005: 33) points out that a conceptual framework is the specific component of the design (see Maxwell’s design above) that

works as “a system of concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that supports and informs the rest of the research.” To clarify, the conceptual framework is a development of the ideas about what is going on with the phenomena being studied. Further, Maxwell (2005: 33) claims that in qualitative research the conceptual framework functions as a “tentative theory” of the phenomena under scrutiny. This means there is a critical analysis enhanced by the conceptual framework which interacts later with data analysis. Maxwell contends that a productive theoretical framework, an alternative name for conceptual framework, is used to conduct a critical analysis of different lines of investigations, theories, and arguments to inform the data interpretation process. Because the theoretical framework suggests a particular focus for the research, Cohen et al. (2005: 137 & 139) contend that the framework may stimulate “theory generation” for each human phenomenon during data analysis to address the insider’s view of reality. This means, the researcher draws on concrete inferences from what informs the research such as theories, concepts, beliefs, or expectations to assist in interpreting data gathered from experiences of the participants to answer the research questions.

Maxwell contends that a qualitative researcher should consider the conceptual/theoretical framework (Maxwell, 2005) as a worthy resource about what is going on regarding the context investigated that informs the data. However, this may not be perfect. At such, to ensure validity during data analysis and interpretation, Maxwell insists that the qualitative researcher is sufficiently sensitive and reflexive to frame alternative schemes of theory and additional analytical themes of the data topics during the emerging analysis processes if deemed feasible.

In light of this, to inform this research and be flexibly aligned with Maxwell’s approach, I have included within this thesis a conceptual framework component comprising three chapters to inform the rest of data analysis, interpretations, and conclusions. Precisely, the conceptual framework comprises chapter three which does an analysis of context documents; chapter four which does an assessment of theories; and chapter five which does a review of other related literatures.

2.7.1 Context Documents

In chapter three under the conceptual framework component, I will analyze context documents on the participants’ setting. People distinguish different settings within any social context. Hence, the term ‘context’ is described by Hammersley and Atkinson (2006: 52) as a social construction

comprising different settings of “people with varying behavioral patterns.” Also, *Macmillan* (2007: 319) defines context as “the general situation in which something happens which helps to explain it.” Therefore, the qualitative interpretative paradigm (QIP) portrays a social context as having four kinds of settings (Cohen et al., 2005: 312),

- Physical setting: (i.e., school, work site, office, etc, for example);
- Human setting: (i.e., people, race, sex, etc. for example);
- Interaction setting: (i.e., the status and role of participants’ skills and education, for example);
- Program setting: (i.e., how policies and goals are met, for example).

As such, chapter three will cover the conceptual framework portion that consists of context documents analysis of the Norwegian institutions NOKUT that recognizes foreign higher education credentials. Cohen et al. (2005: 147) contend that context documents are often available at “low cost, and are a rich source of information that have the attraction of being factual.” Also, Cohen et al., (2005: 147) contend that even though these context documents frequently have face validity, they may be “unrepresentative, selective, and deceptive.” Further, Cohen et al. (2005 147) contend that context documents usually “uncover works that took place before the research began.” Therefore, context documents I will analyze include: policy and procedure manuals, labor market strategy planning documents, higher education recognition procedures, evaluation and progress reports, training manuals, and web sites.

To inform the research, context documents analysis will cover policies and programs of the institutions in the refugee receiving country, Norway. The institution intends to improve, among others, the livelihood of refugees with foreign higher education in Norway. Hence in this thesis, context documents analysis on the institutions will interact with data analysis as it shapes the themes for semi-structured interviews employed for data collection from participants and informants. Further, context document analysis, according to Hammersley and Atkinson, may pose “triangulation or problemazation” (sic) of data interpretation (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2006: 132). Hammersley and Atkinson insist that the researcher erase views that analysis of both context documents and data unproblematically produce a concrete picture. In this study, the term ‘triangulation,’ which draws on two or more alternative methods or theories on the same object of study, will relate inferences. For example, to heighten insider validity through inferences enhancing validity check, I will compare commentaries provided by participants in the interviews, and commentaries provided by other researchers in context document. Thus, the comparison will

relate the group being studied to naturalistic settings such as local community groups and local cities (i.e., in Norway) that produce cultural products.

2.8.2 Tentative Theories

To inform this research, chapter four of the conceptual framework will consider an assessment of tentative theories. Maxwell (2005: 42) contends that in qualitative research, tentative theory (see Maxwell design above) discusses what is happening and why it is happening. In addition, according to Macmillan (2007: 1551) a theory is “one or more ideas that explains how or why something happens,” or “a set of general principles that a particular subject is based on.” This means in qualitative research, tentative theories are used to inform inquiry and may draw a researcher attention to what he/she sees in the research. Thus, tentative theories may draw attention to particular phenomena in the data and organize the data. Through this process, Cohen et al. (2005) contend that the interpretive paradigm as research tool becomes a catalyst for the emergence of the actual theory from data analysis through an analytical induction process.

To inform research, Cohen et al. (2005:153) contend that theories scrutinize “power relations” socially located in society where certain social group exerts more power than others. Given this situation, they theorize that ideological suppression is more apparent when dominated groups see their situation as inevitable, natural, or necessary. Thus, they pose that individuals studied and their culture are located in the context of power and interest. For example, I will explore cultural capital, agency, linguistic capital, and human capital as tentative theories to study the process of empowerment in the labor market. Bourdieu’s cultural and linguistic capital theories (May, 2001: 155) and Becker’s human capital theory (Becker, 1993: 17) suggest that any “competence” in a social market of society can become a “capital.” In this regard, Cohen et al. (2005: 153) insist that phenomena coming under scrutiny in data analysis may pose unequal power relation between “dominant” and “dominated” groups in society. Thus, the theoretical inquiry on power relation scrutinizes the legitimacy of the contexts of theories in society.

In light of this, theory emerges when processing and interpreting data findings in qualitative interpretative research. Cohen et al. follow the procedure as they (2005: 151) state,

- Data are scanned to generate categories of phenomena;
- A case of a phenomenon each is studied in light of an hypothesis with an objective of determining whether or not the hypothesis fits the facts in the case;

- If the hypothesis does not fit the facts, each hypothesis is reformulated or the phenomena to be explained is redefined; and
 - This process of examining cases, redefining the phenomena, and reformulating the hypothesis is continued until a universal relationship and theory are established.
- (Cohen et al., 2005: 151)

2.8.3 Other Literature Review

Thirdly, under the conceptual framework, the literature review portion covers chapter five of this thesis. Maxwell (2004: 33) insists that a good “literature review” provides an analytic range of applications of concepts, expectations, and beliefs, which reflect current knowledge on a particular field or topic. In essence, Hammersley and Atkinson (2006: 31) contend that “frameworks of theories” developed from literature review aid researchers to formulate conceptual and empirical areas of inquiry.

In the literature review, I will compare conceptual views expressed by different authors to formulate arguments. For example, I will compare connotations of the ‘assimilation’ and ‘integration’ of refugees with foreign higher education. The comparisons are indicators of diverging theories within the same topic. Therefore, the goal of the literature review forms basis for further research needed in the area, and the literature review may give the background to better focus the research. Hammersley and Atkinson (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2006) contend that diverging conceptual views on the topic may enable the researcher differentiate relevant researchable categories of topics for analysis and interpretation to answer the research questions. In particular, the literature review I have conducted so far has informed the research while the data collection was still in progress. Data collection started after the project proposal was written.

2.9 Data Collection Method and Strategies

This section discusses three data collection methods and strategies as follows: semi-structured interview method I employed for data collection, sampling of participants from whom data was collected, and ethical issues arising in this inquiry. Macmillan (2007: 944) defines method as “a way of doing something, especially a planned and established way.” The raw data for this research was collected after the research proposal was written. I begin by discussing why the semi-structured interview method is relevant for data collection in qualitative interpretative research.

2.8.1 The Participant Semi-structured Interview

(Kvale, 1996: 27) states:

The qualitative research interview is semi-structured: It is neither an open conversation nor a highly structured questionnaire. It is conducted according to an interview guide that focuses on certain themes, and that may include suggested questions. (Kvale, 2007: 27)

In this study, I conducted semi-structured interviews among the sample of 18 refugees with foreign higher education from Africa and Asia. Cohen et al., (2005: 273) argue that the semi-structured interview is neither highly structured comprising only close-ended questions formulated ahead of time nor is it unstructured such that the client interviewed talks with “greater flexibility and freedom” about issues on the topic. In light of this, it is with considerable flexibility—between structured and unstructured interviews—that the semi-structured interview is like a conversation between the interviewer and interviewee. Meaning the semi-structured interview effectively guides exploration of key issues within confines of the broad topic on participant’s lived experiences.

I transcribed the semi-structured interviews from an audio tape recording. Kvale (2006: 27-29) suggests reading the “transcribed data text” a number of times, documenting emerging themes from phenomena in participants’ life world, identifying a list of “central themes” from data findings for the emerging analysis and interpretations which includes direct quotations and thick descriptions of the transcribed data texts. Thus, during each interview, I aimed at understanding lived experiences from each of the 18 participants’ perspective and probed for interpretation or meaning of the phenomena. I probed for description of specific phenomena based on each participant’s subjective and factual information, and not the participant’s opinions of the phenomena. I was cognizant of unexpected phenomena emerging during the interviews to avoid my pre-establishment of hypothesis and theories. At some stage in the process of collecting data, I started to organize key themes of the data that findings will be organized under in chapter six of this thesis. Also, in chapter six of this thesis, the research questions will be answered to make sense of the data. Thus, further analytical themes for an analysis and interpretation phase will reflect individuals, groups, behaviors, or classifications with relevance to the participants. After this, the conclusions will give the results of the research with confirmation of theories, concepts, and beliefs from the conceptual framework that supported the analysis and interpretation.

2.8.2 Purposive Sampling of Participants

The semi-structured interview conducted among the participants is based on purposive sampling for representativeness of participants. Cohen et al., (2005: 98) indicate that “purposive sampling for representativeness of participants” in qualitative research requires a range of strategies for selecting an appropriate small sample size of individuals that is representative of the people who have experienced a particular social phenomenon. Thus, firstly, the 18 participants in this research who arrived between 2000 and 2006 as refugees and completed the Introduction Program provided for refugees in Norway, reside in 6 cities of 5 counties in Norway as follows: 4 participants live in Oslo City of Oslo County, 5 in Bergen of Hordaland, 4 in Namsos of Nord-Trondelag, 1 in Tromsø of Troms, 3 in Halden of Ostfold, and 1 in Moss of Ostfold. As refugees are placed in all 19 counties of Norway upon arrival, the participants live in 6 cities (see research map on page IX) of Norway randomly within the 5 counties indicated. Thus, the participants in this study are spread across the length and breadth of Norway, each underwent the Introduction Program, and each obtained guidance from a refugee service office in a county like all other refugees in Norway. This creates an opportunity to do generalizations of the conclusions derived from this study’s data analysis and interpretations as being possibly representative of labor market outcomes of the target population of refugees with foreign higher education from Africa and Asia in Norway.

Secondly, I obtained participants names through authorities entrusted with refugee affairs as follows: 1 refugee service office (that meet needs especially of UN resettled refugees), 2 reception centers for asylum seekers, 1 Introduction Program that provides Norwegian language and society instruction, and 1 NAV office that provides job seeker courses. Because different authorities provided the participants’ names, bias of over-representation or underestimation within the findings from the interviews will be curtailed. For example, refugees with higher education arrived in Norway at different times, lived in different places, attended different schools, and worked in different places in Norway. Thirdly, each participant is a Non-westerner from Africa and Asia with prior higher education from West Africa, East Africa, or Asia. Six participants hail from each region as follows: 4 Liberians, 1 Senegalese and 1 Beninese from West Africa; 3 Congolese, 2 Rwandan, and 1 Sudanese from East Africa; and 3 Iraqis, 2 Palestinians, and 1 Thai from Asia. The sample of participants from the three regions will create an opportunity for making comparisons.

2.8.3 Ethical Issues

Researchers must rectify many ethical issues arising in qualitative research concerning rights of the participants studied (Maxwell, 2005) and the research work itself. There are five important ethical issues I considered in this study. Hamersley and Atkinson (2006) articulate three of them; Thus,

- Informed consent takes place when the researcher ensures that participants interviewed have “adequate comprehensive information about the research, and have free choice to consent or decline participation in the research.” (Hamersley and Atkinson, 2006: 264)
- “To reduce risk of exploitation and harm” to participants/institutions, researchers must find solutions to ethical dilemmas. (Hamersley and Atkinson, 2006: 272)
- The “researcher honesty” about what he/she reports is “essential for the validity and reliability of the research.” (Hamersley and Atkinson, 2006: 275)

Speziale and Carpenter (2007) have also suggested two of them; Thus,

- Confidentiality is “an ethical pledge a researcher upholds” that information given by participants is unobtainable by others, and the identity of the provider is concealed when reporting the findings. (Speziale and Carpenter, 2007: 65)
- Anonymity takes place when data is recorded in ways that “erase indications” that even the researcher can use to associate participants with their information obtained. (Speziale and Carpenter, 2007: 65)

Regarding informed consent, an official letter from my supervisor at the Oslo University College faculty of education in Norway introduced me as student doing field work, gave the purpose of the study and program, and the involvement of participants. For quick access, I wrote an e-mail with similar content as that from my university college; disseminated it; and through telephone, text messages, and e-mail, obtained interview appointments with participants at different locations in Norway. I served each participant a copy of the official letter introducing me upon my arrival for each interview.

Even though I selected a small sample size of participants to do ‘thick descriptions,’ I will adhere to confidentiality and anonymity as I do detailed assessment of data findings to judge for meanings to validate the research. According to Cohen et al., (2005: 61), “personal data uniquely identifying the person providing it without permission is a violation of privacy.” Thus, I obtained

participants' permission to utilize relevant strategies of data analysis and interpretation and at the same time refrain from using participants' names. Therefore, both a disguised name and numerical representation will indicate each participant in the data analysis and interpretation of this study.

Humaneness to participants concerns regarding exploitation and harm is essential. For example, in this study while coping strategies of participants are assessed and compared in the data analysis and interpretations, the ethical dilemma confronting me is to weigh the research benefits such as better knowledge and new solutions for existing problems, against participants' interests such as confidentiality, avoidance of harm, and desisting from exploitation of participants' privacy. Another suggestion (Cohen et al., 2005: 69) has to do with admonishing participants that the purpose and benefits of results of research is to pursue good and not bad causes. Thus, during the interviews, I admonished participants that the public will benefit from empirical knowledge in the results, while support organizations and the public's right to know new solutions for existing concerns is significant. Researchers are expected (Cohen et al., 2005) to send feedback of a written outline of findings to participants who request it, for example.

Lastly, concerning honesty, it is emphasized (Cohen et al., 2005) that reporting wrong or misleading information in any parts of the research process is against federal and state legal statutes, against ethics review committees in universities and other institutions, and against the personal ethics of the individual researcher. Therefore, to establish credibility, trustworthiness, or dependability in this research process, I identified, among others, primary sources and actors and obtained context rich comprehensive information and research strategies to ensure validity within this research. At such, I consider it significant to uphold key ethical responsibilities about the research goals, the context in which the research is conducted, and the interest of actors I involved.

2.9 Validity

Maxwell (2005) and Cohen et al. (2005) contend that bias must be erased in research as bias may creep in if a researcher in and of participants' world does not closely check interactions with participants studied. Thus, research bias I considered in this study are these:

- Being an insider sharing similar role with participants investigated, the researcher could take things for granted becoming biased when doing assessment of the data (Maxwell, 2005: 108-109),

- Some participants may “deliberately twist, falsely present, or be selective of information revealed during the interviews” (Cohen et al., 2005: 156),

As a result, I will enhance three basic approaches to erase research bias in this study’s data findings, analysis, and interpretations as follows:

- I will ensure a reliability of the data: A reliability of the data means a “fit between what the researcher record and what really occur in the natural setting researched as a degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverage” (Cohen et al., 2005:19)
- I will ensure a validity of the data: A validity of the data means the “honesty, depth, richness, and scope of the data, the participants approached, the extent of triangulation, and the objectivity of the researcher” (Cohen et al., 2005: 105)
- I will ensure a generalizability of the conclusions: Firstly, this involves internal generalizability which means “generalizing the conclusions within the setting or group studied,” and secondly, external generalizability which means “generalizing the conclusions beyond the setting or group studied” (Maxwell, 2005: 115)

2.10 Summary of Chapter Two

In chapter two, I have discussed that as basis of his discourse on informing research, Maxwell, (2005: 31) contends that the ‘purpose of the research’ is key issue that becomes operational when research employs conceptual framework to inform research. Further, Maxwell (2005: 36) contends that research paradigm is established at the end of his research design (see Maxwell’s design above) because of ontological assumptions made by the research about reality of the nature of phenomena under scrutiny, and epistemological knowledge about how themes derived from the phenomena are understood.

For example, in this chapter some ontological methods I adopted to conduct this research are qualitative research, anti-positivism, naturalism and interpretation. Additionally, I adopted instruments for data collection such as semi-structured interview and purposive sampling of participants. Also, I have discussed key research instruments such as functions of context documents, tentative theories, literature review, ethical issues, and validity in qualitative research. As such, Maxwell (2000) contends that confirming qualitative research paradigm at the end of Maxwell’s interactive research model is not a free choice as it is based on strategies adopted.

Finally, the research design and methodology illustrates that foresight in selecting methodological strategies will enhance unearthing, in the next chapters, epistemological knowledge in the actual

conceptual framework and data analysis to curtail validity threats in the research. Thus, Maxwell (2005: 37) defines a research paradigm as a world view comprising a framework of beliefs, values, and methods, within which research takes place.

Chapter 3

First Element of Conceptual Framework: NOKUT, an Institution Facilitating Refugees in Norway

3.1 Introduction

To inform this research, this chapter discusses an institution responsible for foreign higher education recognition in Norway. The institution was established in Oslo by the Norwegian government to facilitate refugee absorption into both the Norwegian labor market and the higher education system. The discussion, a documentation analysis, is an overview of the key functions of the institution, the Norwegian Agency for Quality Assurance in Education (NOKUT).

3.2 NOKUT Foreign Higher Education Recognition in Norway

In the publication on recognition of foreign higher education qualifications, NOKUT (2005) indicates that foreign higher education general recognition is an overall responsibility of NOKUT, an autonomous Agency established in Oslo by the Norwegian government. The publication contends that the recognition of foreign degrees is not new in Norway as the National Academic Information Center (NAIC) was established in 1991 by the Ministry of Education and Research for that purpose, as a unit accountable to that ministry. The publication indicates that in January 2003, to instill stricter quality mechanisms, a new policy on recognition of foreign degrees brought NOKUT, an independent agency, into existence dissolving the NAIC. The amendment in “cf. section 48 of the Act relating to universities and universities colleges” distinguished between these two forms of recognitions, as the publication on the recognition of foreign higher qualifications by NOKUT (2005; 10) cites,

- General recognition: NOKUT decides on all applications for general recognition of foreign higher education qualifications; i.e., NOKUT awards a number of ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) credits to the foreign higher education and determines its level or equivalence to a Norwegian higher education in terms of years of ECTS credits. Through this, NOKUT determines the duration, scope and level of that course of study as wholly or partially equivalent to a Norwegian higher education, and for this reason can give (or decide not to give) general recognition that the education is equivalence to, for instance, the Norwegian ‘*Høgskolekandidat*’ (associate) degree, bachelor’s, master’s, or Ph.D (doctor of philosophy) degree.
- Subject specific recognition: Higher education institutions decide on applications for subject specific recognition; i.e., whether a foreign higher education qualification is academically

equivalent to a subject specific scope and depth requirements of a specific degree, part of a degree, or other qualification awarded by the receiving institution concerned. Specific recognition may confer a Norwegian academic degree and give the right to use that academic title (NOKUT-Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications, 2005: 10).

In the same publication, NOKUT (2005) contends that the agency is divided into three different sections: the Quality Audits Unit which supervises and helps to develop the quality of higher education in Norway, the Recognition of Foreign Degrees Unit which considers individual applications for general recognition of foreign qualifications, and the Accreditation Unit which is the Norwegian ENIC and NARIC center responsible for providing foreign institutions and partners with information on the Norwegian educational system and the system for recognition of foreign higher education qualifications. (NOKUT-Recognition of Foreign Higher Qualifications, 2005) In this chapter, reference to NOKUT is a consideration of only the unit on Recognition of Foreign Degrees.

3.3 NOKUT Adopts the Bologna Process Reforms

In another publication describing the system of education in Norway, NOKUT (2006: 19) indicates that showing a potential employer how much higher education a refugee obtained prior to immigration, the refugee must first apply to NOKUT for a general recognition of the foreign qualification credential. The NOKUT publication contends that 60 ECTS credits is equivalent to a full-time workload of one academic year in Norway. Therefore, both a new degree system as well as a new grading system (the ECTS credits) adopted from the Bologna Process were introduced in Norway. According to the NOKUT publication, being a supplement of measures in the Lisbon Convention policies for foreign higher education recognition, the Bologna Process which started in 1998, in Bologna, was a declaration signed by the European ministries of Education aimed to increase the mobility of students, teachers and workforce alike, and to improve both the quality and competitiveness of European education. Thus, in the publication on the system of education, Bologna declaration affects higher education recognition process in the European region, and particularly in Norway after that country launched these key Bologna quality reforms in 2001 as NOKUT (2006: 19) cites,

There has been an introduction of a 3-year bachelor's, a 2-year master's, and a 3-year PhD model degree; respectively replacing the old ones in Norway of a 4-year bachelor's, a 2-year master's, and a 3-year PhD degree models at the same levels.

There has been an introduction of at least 180 ECTS credits for a bachelor's degree completion, at least 120 ECTS credits for a master's completion, and at least 180 ECTS credits for completing a PhD degree.

There has been an introduction of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees in Norway, using the diploma supplement as the instrument to accomplish this. The purpose of the diploma supplement is to provide sufficient recognition data to improve international transparency and provide fair academic and professional recognition of qualifications (diplomas and degrees). The diploma supplement contains information identifying the holder of the qualification and the qualification; information on the level, the content, the results, and the function of the qualification; as well as information on certification and the national higher education system. In EU countries, the diploma supplement is awarded to accompany the diploma or degree as additional information which does not replace the diploma or degree. (NOKUT-the System of Education, 2006: 19)

In that NOKUT publication on the system of education, Norway which has 6 universities, 6 specialized colleges, 26 accredited state university colleges, 2 state university colleges of arts and 20 private university colleges has established these exceptions to the degree structures of 3-year bachelor's and 2-year master's; thus, NOKUT (2006: 7) cites,

- The 'Høgskolekandidat degree' --a college candidate or associate degree (2-year degree program)
 - General teacher training (4-year degree program),
 - Some Master's degree (1 to 1.5-year duration),
 - Medicine (cand. Med., 6-year degree program),
 - Psychology (cand. Psychol., 6-year degree program),
 - Theology (cand. Theol., 6-year degree program),
 - Architecture at the Oslo School of Architecture (5.5-year degree program),
 - Veterinary science (cand. Med. Vet., 6-year degree program).
- (NOKUT-the System of Education, 2006: 7)

Clarifying what these degrees represent in the publication on the system of education, NOKUT (2006: 7) contends that all the exceptions above are retained from the old degree system in Norway. As indicated above, the 'høgskolekandidat' degree obtained after a 2-year college study can be built upon to obtain a bachelor's degree. Further, having a bachelor's as pre-requisite, a master's degree is obtained in some fields after 1 or 1.5 years of study, unlike the regular 2-year master's programs. Next, a degree in medicine, psychology, theology, veterinary science or in architecture is a one-tier 6-year or 5.5-year degree program considered above the level of the 3-year bachelor's. Also, general teacher training in Norway is a 4-year bachelor's degree program. (NOKUT-the System of Education, 2006: 7)

3.4 NOKUT's Criteria on General Recognition of Foreign Higher Education

In another publication identifying the criteria for recognition, NOKUT (2008) cites the relevant Act in the Norwegian Regulations that governs foreign higher education recognition, indicating what standards make a foreign higher education equivalent to an accredited Norwegian degree. Thus, NOKUT (2008) states,

The recognition of foreign education as being equivalent to an accredited Norwegian higher education is governed by the Act relating to universities and university colleges of 1 April 2005 no. 15, section 3.4 (2) and the section 5.1 of the regulations concerning accreditation, evaluation and recognition Pursuant to the act relating to universities and university colleges (NOKUT-Criteria for Recognition, 2008).

That Act sanctions NOKUT's general recognition of a foreign education qualifications if the value of credits obtained, having been measured in European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits, is equivalent to a specific Norwegian degree; and if the level of the foreign higher education qualification is equivalent to, for instance, the Norwegian 'høgskolenkandidat,' bachelor's, master's or PhD degree. Therefore, regarding the level of a qualification, an Act on recognition of higher education has been established as the criteria for recognition from NOKUT (2008) states, "The higher education qualification must be at the same level as Norwegian higher education, cf. section 5-1 (1)." (NOKUT-Criteria for Recognition, 2008) With relevance to the preceding act, the term 'level' connotes the 'length,' 'scope' and 'level' of the higher education qualification which are discussed briefly in the next sections..

3.5 General Recognition on Length of the Foreign Higher Education

In line with the publication on the system of education in Norway, NOKUT (2005) indicates that general recognition reflects 'length' of an education through time stipulated for training measured in European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits. This means that for recognition, every foreign higher education is assessed to correspond with the length of specified higher education degree in Norway. NOKUT indicates that the foreign degree must fulfill the minimum requirements for admission to university studies in Norway. This minimum requirement, the initial point from which the length of higher education is measured is the completion of primary and secondary education. Primary and secondary schooling has a 13-year stipulated duration in Norway. (NOKUT-the System of Education, 2005) Also, in the afore mentioned criteria for recognition, NOKUT (2008) contends that during assessment for a general recognition, deductions

of ECTS credits are made from a foreign higher education for significant differences in its equivalence to the length of any of these specific Norwegian degrees:

- The 'høgskolekandidat' degree which is a 2-year study program/120 ECTS credit of higher education as a completed associate degree at that level;
- The bachelor's degree which is a 3-year study program/180 ECTS credits as a completed degree;
- The master's degree which is 5 years/300 ECTS credits: The credits include the bachelor's as minimum requirement;
- The Ph.D degree which is an 8 years/480 ECTS credits: The credits include both the bachelor's and master's as minimum requirements.

(NOKUT-Criteria for Recognition, 2008)

3.6 General Recognition on Scope and Content of the Foreign Higher Education

In accordance with the recognition of foreign high education qualifications, NOKUT (2005) indicates that the 'scope' of the education reflects the stipulated duration of the course and the 'content' reflects the set of specifications of the training. Therefore, for assessment for general recognition, deductions are made from the foreign higher education for significance difference in specifications of the training or in specific stipulated duration of the scope measured in ECTS credits. For instance, the contention is that the foreign higher education must be both a completed degree in the country where it was taken and adhere to specifications of the training in that country. Also, the foreign higher education must correspond with a set of specifications of a specific Norwegian degree, and deductions are made in the foreign higher education for these significant deficiencies as NOKUT (2005: 10) states,

- lack of practical,
- non-academic subjects, and
- for some countries where the higher education was taken, minimum requirements regarding marks attained.

(NOKUT-Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications, 2005: 10)

Considering the preceding deficiencies, the publication on the recognition of foreign higher education qualification by NOKUT (2005) contends that significant differences such as a lacking of relevant practical enhances deduction of ECTS credits in bachelor's in Education, Nursing and Engineering where practical is essential specification of the training. The argument being raised is that a lacking of practical creates a gap between the student's competence and the awarding institution's requirements. If the foreign higher education is achieved mostly through learning

theories, there seems to be a double qualification to achieve in the country of immigration. Thus, handling artifacts connected with the new culture together with operating technical equipment are both proficiencies necessary to master as prerequisite for admission to advanced studies or to become a complete participant in that profession within the labor market in the country of immigration. The main noteworthy feature being raised by NOKUT is that a foreign higher education must firstly meet the challenges of acquisition of competences as imposed by the institution that awarded the degree (NOKUT-Recognition for Foreign Higher Education Qualification, 2005).

Moreover, in that publication on recognition, NOKUT (2005) indicates that deductions are made for non-academic subjects that cannot replace the number of ECTS credits required for professional courses not undertaken in a field of study in which a foreign higher education was taken. For general recognition, NOKUT does not require that the subject specifications of the content of each course of a foreign higher education degree conform to the content of each course of a Norwegian degree as in specific recognition. Therefore, it is expedient that general recognition takes into account different modes of adaption. The argument raised in the NOKUT publication is that professional courses of a foreign higher education should relevantly correspond to a set of specifications of a Norwegian degree. For example, NOKUT general recognition recognizes the scope of the foreign higher education as overtly relevant to a set of specifications of a Norwegian degree, even though it does not recognize the subject specific content of the foreign education as overt tally with the subject specific course content of the Norwegian degree. The emergence of rapid application of new knowledge in an occupational area in most western societies may enhance new areas of emphasis in that profession course program. Hence, NOKUT contends that the number of academic subjects of a foreign higher education, equivalence measured in ECTS credits must portray a professional proficiency that corresponds with the set of specifications which makes it equivalent to the specified Norwegian degree. (NOKUT-Recognition for Foreign Higher Education Qualifications, 2005) For instance, in the criteria for recognition, deductions are made for significance differences in equivalence to the following specifications of the Norwegian master's and doctoral thesis as NOKUT, (2008) cites,

- The master's or doctoral thesis must adhere to the criteria of independent research corresponding to what is determined in Norway.
- The master's thesis is worth between 20 to 60 ECTS credits, and the PhD at least 120 ECTS credits corresponding to 2-year research in Norway.

- Supervision and grading of content and scope of the master's and doctoral theses in the awarding country should be entrusted to a competent committee just as required in Norway. (NOKUT-Criteria for Recognition, 2008)

Therefore, for criteria regarding specification of scope and contents in the preceding examples, NOKUT indicates, "A comparison of the higher education systems in Norway and the country where the education was taken forms the basis for determining if a criterion has been met" (NOKUT-Criteria for Recognition, 2008).

Additionally, there are regulations in Norway on both the awarding country accreditation and documentation of the foreign higher education to enhance transparency and give sufficient recognition data. Specifying these essential regulations in the publication NOKUT (2008) cites,

The qualification must be essentially documented by the awarding institution or by the country's educational authorities, cf. section 5-1 (2) of the regulations. The qualification must be accredited or officially recognized as higher education in the country of origin, cf. section 5-1 (3) of the regulations. (NOKUT-Criteria for Recognition, 2008)

For verification, the publication on recognition of foreign higher education qualifications by NOKUT (2005) contends that the authenticity of the foreign higher education is validated by requesting of the applicant to provide an academic record of the scope and content of courses from the awarding institution along with a Norwegian authorized copy of the foreign degree/diploma including its accreditation/certification from the awarding higher education system. As higher education credentials from Africa and Asia are not usually awarded diploma supplements as done in EU countries, the academic record NOKUT requests of the applicant must contain relevant recognition data identifying the holder of the qualification, the qualification, its level, results and functions (NOKUT-Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications, 2005).

To avoid fraud and fraudulent documents if in doubt, NOKUT may do verifications through contacting the awarding institution as well as the national accreditation institution which may be the Ministry of Education in the awarding country. Also, the internet and Information Technology are useful in doing verifications. Fraudulent documents and other types of documents that cannot be recognized are cited in the criteria for recognition as NOKUT (2008) indicates,

Documents with forgeries,
Altered higher education credentials,
Degrees awarded by unrecognized institutions,

Degrees awarded by degree mills, and
Documents that are translated incorrectly.
(NOKUT-Criteria for Recognition, 2008)

3.7 General Recognition on Level of the Foreign Higher Education

In the publication on recognition of foreign higher education qualifications, NOKUT (2005: 10) indicates that the ‘level’ of the education is recognized initially “in relation to the minimum requirements for entry to university studies in Norway” (NOKUT-Recognition of Foreign Higher Education Qualifications, 2005). Thus, if the level of the foreign education is above the threshold of university studies minimum entry requirement in Norway, NOKUT recognizes it as higher education. In this regard, NOKUT compiled the GSU (General Entrance Requirement) list which specifies what level of education applicants with foreign higher education from different countries outside the European Union (EU) require to enhance minimum recognition requirements as higher education in Norway or enhance admission to Norwegian higher education. Essential information included in the Norwegian general entrance requirements (GSU list) are the following:

The name of each country for which Norwegian general entrance requirements are listed for foreign applicants admission to higher education in Norway;
The high school diploma and/or certificate conferred upon a candidate for completion of secondary school in each foreign country;
Any requirements concerning English language proficiency;
One year of university education must be completed by applicants from certain countries in Africa, Asia, Central and South America, countries of the former Soviet Union, and the United States of America in addition to secondary education to meet university minimum admission requirements in Norway.

In light of this, table ‘C’ below shows an abstract from the Norwegian GSU list comprising countries in Africa and Asia where the 18 refugees on which the study in this thesis is done obtained their prior higher education: The 18 refugees obtained their prior higher education either in their country of origin or in refugee situation elsewhere before immigration to Norway. The list shows the kind of diploma/certificate obtained in that foreign country upon secondary school completion. In light of this, the list shows what each person with foreign higher education credential needs as minimum requirements to enhance admission to Norwegian higher education, or the minimum requirements above which NOKUT recognizes an education as higher education in Norway.

Table 3.1 Abstract from Minimum Requirement for Admission to Norwegian Higher Education--the GSU (General Entrance Requirement) list /or Minimum Threshold above which NOKUT Assesses Foreign Education as Higher Education in Norway

Country	Certificate awarded	English test required?
Algeria	Diplome de Bachelier de l'Enseignement de Second Degree & 1 year university education	Yes
Benin	Baccalaureat de l'Enseignement Secondaire	Yes
Congo (DRC)	Diplome d'Etat d'Etudes Secondaire de Cycle Long & 1 year university education	Yes
Cote d'Ivoire	Diplome de Bachelier de l'Enseignement de Second Degre.	Yes
Guinea	Baccalaureat Deuxieme Partie	Yes
Liberia	Senior high School Certificate & 1 year University Education	Yes 2
Iraq	Sixth Form Baccalaureat/Certificate of Preparatory Studies & 1 year University Education	Yes
Rwanda	Certificat de Humanites Generales & 1 year University education	yes
Russia	Attestation on complete general secondary education (Portrait format) & 1 year university education	Yes 1
Senegal	Diplome de Baccalaureat	yes
Tanzania	Advanced Certificate of Secondary Education (ACSE) with 3 Principal Levels	no
Thailand	Maw 6 & 1 year university education	yes

Source: NOKUT's GSU list (2008)

Information on certain countries in the abstract from the GSU list above indicates that one year of the foreign higher education are deducted to meet minimum university admission requirement in Norway. The level of upper secondary education certificate in Norway is based on 13 years of primary and secondary schooling. Subsequently, refugees with higher education from Africa and Asia who seek recognition of their foreign qualifications must meet the same basic Norwegian higher education admission requirement of a 13-year primary and secondary education. This is the reason the GSU list requires many countries in world regions whose primary and secondary education system are based on 12 or 11 years of schooling to also have 1 year college education as portion of Norway's minimum requirement for college admission (see GSU list above). In Norway, assessment of a foreign higher education from one of these countries for equivalence to Norwegian higher education is measured according to time principal. A NOKUT publication states, "In case of substantial differences in terms of length of content between the upper secondary education in the two countries, additional requirements may be made for meeting the

general entrance requirements for studies in Norway” (NOKUT- Foreign Education- GSU List, 2008). The additional requirements (a deduction of ECTS credits from the foreign higher education to meet general university entrance requirements in Norway) infers that there is a substantial difference in the levels (measured in ECTS credits) of the foreign upper secondary education as compared to that of Norway because of a stipulated additional one year of study in upper secondary school in Norway.

Therefore, when there is deduction in the foreign higher education to meet minimum admission requirement to Norwegian higher education, the level of the remaining higher education is also normally recognized according to time principal to enhance recognition of that foreign higher education. Thus, a one-year study in the country providing the education is equivalent to one-year study in Norway/60 ECTS credits. As the foreign education must comprise full ECTS credits load equivalent to a Norwegian degree, the deduction from the applicant’s foreign education to enable crossing the threshold of university studies minimum entry requirement is able to render the remaining foreign higher education as incomplete studies not equivalent to the specified Norwegian degree in terms of ECTS credits. Regarding evaluation done on the level of foreign higher education NOKUT (2008) indicates, “The criteria for general recognition as equivalent to an accredited Norwegian degree are applied in addition to the criteria for minimum requirements and equivalence in ECTS credits” (NOKUT-Criteria for Recognition, 2008). Hence, this specification conforms to the Act, “The foreign higher education must be at the same level as Norwegian higher education, cf. section 5-1 (1) of the Regulations” (NOKUT- the Criteria for Recognition, 2008).

3.8 Recognition for Regulated and Non-regulated Professions

In discussing the system of education in Norway, NOKUT (2006: 11) points out that “most jobs or professions in Norway are not regulated” by law for which they are termed as “non-regulated” professions. (NOKUT-the System of Education, 2006: 10) Thus, for non-regulated professions, Norwegian employers do not require former authorization by law from Norwegian authorities to determine whether an applicant satisfies the professional qualifications required for employment. Therefore, general recognition from NOKUT is sufficient in these cases.

However, the publication on the system of education by the agency NOKUT (2006) contends that general recognition of a higher education credential does not automatically confer the right to practice a profession that is regulated by Norwegian law. Thus, for professions regulated by Norwegian law formal authorization is required. In this light, this means a profession is said to be regulated by Norwegian law when it is a statutory requirement to hold a diploma or other occupational qualification in order to pursue the profession or job in question. However, the professional authorization does not necessarily result in recognition in terms of academic equivalence. Further, NOKUT contends that applications for authorization to practice regulated professions must be sent to specified ministries, directorates, or institutions authorized by law in Norway to authorize the holder of a qualification in any of those specific professions to practice under a professional title or to pursue activities concerned under that professional title. Therefore, differentiating regulated and non-regulated professions in Norway NOKUT (2006: 10) cites,

Some positions require academic recognition, while others require recognition of professional equivalence. Recognition of professional equivalence does not necessarily entail that academic credit is granted. Requirements also differ according to whether professions are non-regulated or regulated. Regulated professions in Norway include among others: medical doctor, dental hygienist, psychologist, nurse, midwife, physiotherapist, chiropractor, veterinary surgeon, lawyer, regulated accountant, teacher and master mariner.
(NOKUT-the System of Education, 2006: 10)

For example as a regulated profession, certain minimum requirements must be met by teachers with foreign teaching credentials in Norway to enhance obtaining a professional authorization. It is possible that NOKUT may grant a foreign teaching credential general recognition which is the type of academic recognition granted by NOKUT and this could enhance obtaining a teaching post upon an employer's scrutiny of the qualification. Nevertheless, employers of teachers in Norway for primary and secondary schools may request of the applicant a professional authorization. However, to obtain the professional authorization from the Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training to teach in Norway, an applicant from outside the EU must be prepared to undertake an extra education, training or test based on assessment findings of specific requirements made of the qualification. The requirement or extra education or training is an obligatory specific that the education profession in Norway requires which must be satisfactorily completed. If the requirement is an extra education, it is offered at a university or university college in Norway. In due course, the professional authorization is granted when the applicant fulfills the requirement by undergoing the training and making a pass measured in ECTS credits. To facilitate job search or

employment, all regulated professions in Norway attentively follow a similar protocol for professional authorization for higher education credentials obtained outside the EU.

At the same time, the abstract from the GSU list shows that applicants with foreign higher education must document sufficient Norwegian language and English language skills to be able to enter Norwegian higher education (and/or enter the Norwegian labor market).

3.8 Summary of Chapter Three

This chapter has discussed NOKUT's purpose for foreign higher education recognition in Norway. The review indicates the fervent desire and determination of NOKUT, the requisite authority in Norway, to uphold the fundamental obligations of general recognition of the 'length,' 'scope,' and 'level' of a foreign tertiary higher education degree/diploma. The measures taken through NOKUT clearly reveal an honest effort to accommodate people from outside Norway obtain admission to the higher education system and the labor market of Norway. A similar position, Norway's fellow European member states have also taken through reforms of the "Bologna Process" which were supplements for measures by the "Lisbon Convention" policies on higher education recognition in Europe.

Also, this chapter has briefly cited two other kinds of foreign higher education recognition processes in Norway; namely, 'subject specific recognition,' the responsibility of universities and university colleges in Norway; and 'recognition for regulated-professions,' the responsibility of specified directorates in Norway. The central endeavor of institutions clothed with authority for these two latter recognition processes is to bridge any gap or in-balance central to performances on the job in Norway, or central to the provision of requisite education and training to support professional work in Norway.

Chapter 4

Second Element of Conceptual Framework: Tentative Theories

4.1 Introduction

Kuper et al. (2008: 337) state,

Theories provide complex and comprehensive conceptual understandings of things that cannot be pinned down: how society works, how organizations operate, and why people interact in certain ways. Theories give researchers different lances through which to look at complicated problems and social issues, focusing their attention on different aspects of the data and providing a framework within which to conduct the analysis.

Kuper et al., (2008: 337)

Just as there is no one way to understand why, for instance, a culture in society has developed in a certain way; many theoretical lenses will be applied to each issue to be encountered in chapter six of this thesis where analysis and interpretation of data collected in this study focuses on different aspects of the data. Therefore, four tentative theories will be discussed in this chapter; namely, cultural capital, agency, linguistic capital, and human capital theories. The different dimensions of lenses provided by these tentative theories are a conceptual framework that informs data analysis and interpretation in chapter six of this study. The deliberation on each tentative theory articulates social relations within the independent roles of education and cultures of labor markets within society. Thus, each tentative theory confers power and status to higher education utilization in the labor market of a society. Hence, the deliberation on each concept employs a field such as the educational system, labor market or employment system to analyze inequality within the social market of a nation-state.

4.2 The Theory of Cultural Capital

Pierre Bourdieu (1986) defines cultural capital as any competence in the form of knowledge, skills, education, and advantages a person has in society that enhances for him/her a higher status to succeed easily. Bourdieu (1986) contends that a competence becomes a ‘capital’ if it facilitates for a person a large appropriation of society’s cultural heritage even though unequally distributed among individual persons thereby creating opportunities for exclusive advantages. Paramount within analysis of the cultural capital theory, Bourdieu analyzes the social reproduction of

educational competences in society. Thus, for in-depth scrutiny of cultural capital, the meanings of three key concepts, ‘capital,’ ‘field,’ and ‘habitué’ which Bourdieu uses in his discourse on ‘cultural capital’, are discussed briefly.

4.2.1 The Concept ‘Capital’

Derrick Robbins (Robbins, 2000: 33) indicates that Bourdieu took the concept ‘capital’ as developed in economic theory and applied it to culture, when Bourdieu used the term to argue that student achievement in higher education is not directly a natural reflection of individual abilities or social class. Steven Siedman (2008: 143) injects that Bourdieu sees ‘capital’ as resources or qualities an individual possesses that have either social influence or currency. Therefore, Robbins (2000: 33) proposes Bourdieu argument that cultures students possess when commencing higher education were accumulated earlier in primary and secondary school; thus, cultural position-taking was acquiring a capital or social independence through earlier school work.

Bourdieu (1964) argues that parents whose culture at home commensurate that of their children at school provide their children with cultural capital, the attitude and knowledge that makes the educational system a familiar place to succeed easily. Thus, this makes the degree student aspire to perform in higher education correlate with the level of their achieved position. As a result, Robbins (2000: 33) contends that Bourdieu suggests the school of thought that certain professions in college possess a capital that students without it exclude themselves assuming they are not able to compete for admission.

4.2.2 The Concept ‘Field’

Richard Jenkins (2002: 85) contends that instead of dividing society into classes, Bourdieu divides it into ‘fields,’ the social platform like the educational system or labor market where people persevere to obtain profitable resources. Siedman (2008: 143) contends that Bourdieu insists different fields value different types of capital or resources, while a society with more technology and social diversity has more fields. For instance, Siedman (2008: 143) contends that cultural capital in the form of knowledge and credentials are a key resource battling for dominance in the academic field and much less so in competition in the economic field. As a result, Jenkins (2002: 85) defines a ‘field’ as a system of social positions occupied by individual agents/persons/institutions whose positions to each other are in domination, subordination or equivalence through capabilities to obtain goods/resources/capitals. In light of this, Jenkins (2002:

85, 87) contends that Bourdieu uses the 'symbolic market' metaphor as an alternative for the 'field,' arguing that individual agents/persons/institutions within the symbolic market whose 'habitué,' meaning their acquired schemes of perceptions, thoughts, and actions, are dominant reproduce the structure of the field.

4.2.3 The Concept 'Habitué'

Robins (2000: 29) contends that Bourdieu defines 'habitué,' as one's acquired schemes of perceptions, thoughts and actions which embody the attitudes we inherit, even though it does not constitute a stimulant for how we behave. Therefore, Robin (2000: 29) contends that Bourdieu insists we do not regulate our present actions by reference to any future goal. This makes our behaviors not pre-calculated but adaptive; for example, in fields like the educational system or labor market. Siedman (2008: 142) contends that Bourdieu believes individuals sharing a class have similar, repeated experiences that produce a common habitué which organizes their social practices by determining protocols and border lines that permit individual differences. Hence, Siedman (2008: 142) contends Bourdieu perceives that individuals are never completely free agents or static products of social organizations as habitué always works in connection with 'fields' and 'capitals.' In light of this, dominant agents/persons/institutions, whose habitué commensurate the field, possess large amounts of cultural capital which the dominant impose upon dominated agents (i.e., the working class, ethnic minorities, and refugees) with little cultural capital.

Jenkins contends (2002: 104) that Bourdieu recognizes one form of culture as not superior to others, unless the power dynamics the dominant culture is embedded within sets that culture up as superior. Jenkins (2002: 104) contends that Bourdieu believes a single principle, symbolic domination, is at work in a symbolic market, a field such as the employment system, labor market, or education system. This domination is achieved through the process of 'symbolic violence' as Jenkins (2002: 104) cites,

Symbolic violence,' according to Bourdieu, is the imposition of systems of symbolism and meaning (i.e. culture) upon groups or classes in such a way that they are experienced as legitimate. This legitimacy obscures the power relations which permits that imposition to be successful. Insofar as it is accepted as legitimate culture adds its own force to those power relations, contributing to their systematic reproduction. This is achieved through a process of 'misrecognition': the process whereby power relations are perceived not for what they objectively are but in a form which renders them legitimate in the eyes of the beholder. (Jenkins, 2002: 104)

In the preceding discussion, the key theme has been that Bourdieu conceptual analysis explains how an agent acquires cultural capital in the educational system or labor market where a dominant habitué/competence is paramount for social reproduction. Precisely, through ‘symbolic violence,’ even the agent from a minority ethnic group who the competence may be imposed upon will perceive the particular habitué imposed by the dominant culture as valued more highly in the field (i.e., the educational system or labor market) where an unequal relationship exists between the dominant and dominated cultures. Thus, that dominant habitué/competence becomes a legitimate culture capital in the eyes of the beholder (i.e., the dominated agent who it is imposed upon). In light of this, let’s discuss ‘agency’ another model of symbolic violence through which a dominant ideology is internalized.

4.3 The Theory of ‘Agency’

Webster’s dictionary (1991: 63) defines ‘agency,’ as the capacity individual humans have to exert power independently to achieve a goal. Jenkins (2002: 108) argues that agency is the choice an individual makes as a result of deliberate self-conscious insight that he/she can strategically manipulate rules of a social situation to accomplish his/her aim. Jenkins (2002: 108) points out that agents are complex and their range of choices depend on their social, psychological, and behavioral dispositions determined by the historical conditions in which they occur. Jenkins (ibid: 108) argues that the non-conformist is an agent whose deliberate self-conscious action to succeed leads to an attack on the remaining forms of social solidarity. On the other hand, Jenkins (ibid: 108) argues that the conformist is an agent whose actions are based on the insight that in order to succeed one has to comply by internalizing the dominant ideology.

In this argument, Jenkins (2002: 106) portrays individual agents conforming to ‘agency’ as symbolic violence in the educational system and labor market because the agents know the dominant culture favors symbolic mastery over mere practical mastery. To illustrate, Jenkins (ibid: 106) indicates that new systems of structural instability and diverse social identity in modern society create endless delayed entry into labor markets and continuous lifelong education. Jenkins argues that these circumstances put the legitimacy of higher education acquired by working-class people under pressure. Thus, formal educational credentials are dependent on their trade-in value understood by the labor market as symbolic capital. In light of this, Jenkins (2002: 106) indicates

Bourdieu contends that modern society requires ‘pedagogic agency,’ a symbolic violence made possible through a subtly different model of Bourdieu’s habitué to obtain pedagogy authority. For clarity, Bourdieu’s perception of ‘pedagogic agency’ is articulated by Jenkins as he cites,

Pedagogy agency is a ‘process of inculcation’ which he describes as ‘training’...suggests that explicit teaching is more important than implicit experience in the internalization of the habitué. Because of pedagogic work, pedagogic action takes time and requires consistency, distinguishing it from other forms of symbolic violence....Pedagogic agencies are also, therefore, of longer duration and greater stability than other agencies of symbolic violence.
(Jenkins, 2002: 106-107)

To enhance pedagogic agency, Jenkins (2002: 107) notes that Bourdieu classifies explicit and implicit training as two modes of inculcation through which pedagogic work is achieved. Jenkins (2002: 107) argues that Bourdieu portrays implicit training as assimilation of styles exemplified by inculcation of principles through the practical state as by an apprentice or technician. This strategy is below the level adopted in higher education institutions. On the other hand, Jenkins (2002: 108) indicates Bourdieu argues that explicit training is adopted in higher education fields as methodically organized strategies to inculcate rational knowledge and formalized principles. Two examples of explicit training are inculcation of specialized rational knowledge in the field of engineering, or inculcation of formalized principles and pedagogy in the field of education. As a result, Jenkins (2002: 108) indicates that explicit teaching in higher education possesses theoretical and practical aspects of training which imbeds implicit training, mostly practical, within explicit instruction of higher education institutions.

Jenkins (2002: 105) insists that the reason agents conform to acquiring pedagogic agency in higher education is to obtain a mastery that is symbolically favored over mere practical mastery because the symbolic strength of higher education training which has capacity to inculcate meaning functions as weight in society’s power relations. Jenkins (2002: 105) argues that in modern nation-states the pedagogic agency of the higher education paradigm agents (individuals) require for entry into labor markets is the symbolic violence within implications of pedagogic action, pedagogic work, pedagogic authority, and institutionalized education as discussed below.

Firstly, Jenkins (2002: 107) contends that pedagogic action is symbolically violent because it seeks to impose upon the agent arbitrary cultural meanings such as language, ethics, and educational principles in the context of arbitrary power relation within the higher education

training. Jenkins (2002: 107) contends that by pedagogic action, Bourdieu understands all attempts at explicit instruction as considered symbolically violent because the socializer (instructor) has arbitrary power over the individual student—as power rooted in the power relations of training. The term ‘arbitrary’ is understood as something that cannot be deduced from any universal principal, whether physical, biological, or spiritual.

Secondly, Jenkins (2002: 107) contends that pedagogic work is pedagogic action which is symbolically violent because socialization results in the *habitué* which are a durable set of habits based on the internalized principles of the dominant culture acquired during the training. Thus, Jenkins states (2002: 107), “Pedagogic work legitimates its product by producing legitimate consumers of that product.”

Thirdly, Jenkins (2002: 106) states, “Pedagogic authority is not uniform within or between all groups or classes.” Thus, a sense in which pedagogic authority enhanced through pedagogic action is objectively symbolic violence is that the meaning selected for imposition is a particular group or class of which Robins poses Bourdieu concept of them as follows (Robins, 2000: 59), “All pedagogic action (PA) is, objectively, symbolic violence insofar as it is the imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power.” Robins (2000: 59) argues that Bourdieu believes the reproduction of cultural capital is distributed among different agents and classes only if pedagogic action possesses ‘pedagogic authority.’ This authority exists because neither its dependence on the power structure nor on the culture/competence imposed is recognized ‘objectively.’ Jenkins (2002: 109) injects that pedagogic action turns power relations into legitimate pedagogic authority; as Bourdieu contends that pedagogic action presents an analysis of the paradox between domination and legitimacy of pedagogic authority. In light of this, Jenkins (2002: 109) contends that pedagogic authority confers cultural capital like much of physical property on individual agents by means of the higher education enhancing ‘human capital’ a basis for earning income. Thus, ‘human capital’ can be defined as an aggregate of wealth perceived in the form of knowledge and skills acquired by an individual.

Lastly, Jenkins (2002: 109) contends that institutionalized education provides pedagogic authority that is legitimate when sanctions at its disposal are confirmed for agents collectively by the market such as the educational institution and labor market the value of the products of the pedagogic action concerned is determined. In this connection, Jenkins (2002: 109) sanctions Bourdieu’s

insight that academic credentials and qualifications bestowed upon agents by a higher education institution are institutionalized forms of recognition of the individual's cultural capital understood in relation to the labor market. Thus, the argument is that the agency sought by the individuals through the higher education system are specialized form of education and linguistic competency portraying the social competency that are advantages to serve as trade-in value to the society's labor market.

It seems like agents (individuals/group) discussed here may have the potential to resist practices of the educational institution in some sense. Thus, the agents' conformity to internalize the dominant ideology is the result of deliberate, self-conscious action based on correct insight that to succeed, one has to comply with demands of the educational institution to obtain agency through an appreciable inculcation of higher education training. Agents know academic credentials obtained as result of acquiring human capital, linguistic capital, and educational capital serve as symbolic capital for admission to labor markets amidst new structural instability and diverse social identity. Hence, it is necessary to point out that agents are complex and their range of choices depend on their social, psychological, and behavioral dispositions bounded by the historical conditions in which they occur.

4.4 The Theory of 'Linguistic Capital'

According to Bourdieu (1990: 114), linguistic capital is an agent's mastery of a language, and the agent's embodied form of cultural capital. Additionally, Stephen May (2001: 155) cites, "Linguistic capital, in Pierre Bourdieu's terms, describes the 'value' given to one's linguistic habitué in particular linguistic markets." Therefore, as linguistic differences exist between dominant and minority language speakers in a society, May portrays how Bourdieu's concept of symbolic violence implants the dominant legitimate language as a distinct linguistic capital in the educational system, labor market and other social marketplaces in the civic culture of a nation-state. Thus, May emphasizes Bourdieu's concept (May, 2001: 155-156) as he cites,

In a given linguistic market such as the civic culture of a nation- state, some habitué are valued more highly than others. Symbolic violence occurs when a particular linguistic habitué, along with the power relations in which it is embedded, is 'misrecognized' as legitimate and accepted—even by those who do not have access to it—as a natural rather than a socially and politically constituted phenomenon. Bourdieu's analysis is helpful in explaining unequal relationship that exists between majority and minority languages and the devaluation of the latter by both majority and minority speakers."
(May, 2001: 155-156)

Language, according to Bourdieu involves a competitive struggle over the use and production of culture which are currency and commodity in both the academic and socioeconomic marketplaces as seen in these two analyses. Firstly, Jenkins (2002, 157-158) contends Bourdieu describes an academic process as symbolic violence that molds a student's language use during the student's academic studies through formal and informal peer-group teaching and testing dependant on word usage. In the academic field, Jenkins (2002: 158) contends Bourdieu argues that the key issue between linguistic habitué and the academic market is the way the agent's discourse which is the product of his work receives its price based on what is said, how it is said and how the academic market receives it. Therefore, Jenkins (2002: 158) indicates that in higher education field(s), if agents want to increase their linguistic capital, Bourdieu suggests an adoption of upgraded style of language use for the agents' discourse literary uniqueness to differ from casual daily language. Especially, this is essential for agents from minority ethnic groups including refugees undertaking higher education through a dominant foreign language. Jenkins (2002: 154, 159) requires of them an adoption of an upgraded style of the oral and written discourse for a linguistic capital termed by Bourdieu as acquiring pedagogic agency through pedagogic work where the socializer (instructor) through symbolic violence has arbitrary power rooted in the training. As indicated earlier, Jenkins (2002: 108) termed higher education teaching as explicit training which through formalized methods and principles upgrade the agent's discourse (language use) in specialized field(s). As a result, explicit teaching in higher education fields incorporates implicit teaching, practicalized training. The argument Bourdieu raises which Jenkins (2002) and May (2001) put forth is that acquiring language skills in higher education erases or appreciably reduces inequalities of linguistic competencies that characterize human communication among majority and minority speakers.

Secondly, Jenkins (2002: 154) indicates that in socioeconomic nation-building fields, the relationship between dominant (nationally legitimate) and dominated (situationally specific) discourses is the same competitive struggle taking place with respect to other cultural products. Jenkins (2002: 154) contends Bourdieu argues that socioeconomic nation-building produces unified linguistic markets/fields. In those fields, Jenkins argues that price is determined and profit is received through communication in the upgraded nationally legitimate language, accorded linguistic capital, and not the situational specific language for local use. As a result, linguistic differences in a nation-state reveal social differences that produce linguistic markets within

specific fields in the employment system or labor market. Jenkins (2002: 154) indicates that because the labor market itself is a linguistic market, it includes specialized fields where language elevation in the dominant discourse is required of its clients/employees/agents; including people from minority language groups—such as immigrants and refugees. Jenkins (2002: 154) contends Bourdieu argues that the dominant legitimate language priced in specialized fields is a distinct capital which in discourse produces the speaker's distinction as profit. Jenkins (2002: 154) contends that for all speakers—including immigrants and refugees—this distinction and its legitimate correctness reveal the excellence of the dominant language which receives profit in the specific field. As a result, Robins (2000) and May (2001) contends Bourdieu argues that agents without this capital assume they are not able to compete in the field.

In light of this, among others key issues, the next sub-topic discusses that foreign language readiness together with upgrading technical skills in a profession/field an agent earlier acquired mastery in elevates that person's 'human capital' and increases his/her productivity.

4.5 The Theory of 'Human Capital'

The 'human capital theory' was extensively developed by American economists Gary S. Becker (1930-) and Theodore Schultz (1902-1998), even though the theory's root stems from works of the Scottish economist Adam Smith (1723-1790). Becker (1993: 17) contends that the cost of learning a job is an important component of net advantage obtained. Becker, (1993: 17) contends that personal income vary according to the amount of investment in human capital—the education and training undertaken by an individual or a group. Becker's (1993: 17-18) contends that former educational attainment renders a person as productive in some economic context; implying education is investment with returns in wage, salary, or other compensation. In light of this, Becker (1993: 17-18) the human capital advocate theorizes that expenditure on training and education is costly, and should be considered an investment since education/training is undertaken with a view of increasing personal income. This is the reason 'human capital' can be defined as the stock of productive skills and technical knowledge imbedded in productive labor by the agent.

Becker (1993: 17) argues that “it is not natural ability but training” that is important in understanding wage differences as education and training are the most important investments in human capital. Becker (1993: 17) makes reference to an empirical example of the reasonably stable differences in average earnings between “college and high school graduates” in the USA

during the “1940’s and 1950’s.” During those decades, Becker (1993) argues that USA’s college graduates were rendered as having higher human capital and higher salaries because of their higher educational achievement enhancing higher productive skills. At the same time, Becker (1993) argues that high school diploma holders were rendered as having lower human capital and lower salaries because of their lower educational achievement enhancing lower productive skills. Thus, the argument raised by Becker is that the pedagogic agency the college graduates acquired through higher level training increased their productivity in workplaces scaling them as higher quality producers whose wages as a result were higher than that of the high school graduates.

On the other hand, Becker (1993: 17-18) suggests that there is criticism of the human capital theory of higher wages for higher education. Becker (1993: 17-18) indicates that empirical studies suggest that though some differences in earnings are due to skills learned, there are variances of under-employment and unemployment, attributed to the quality of schooling and/or the imperfect structure/functioning of the labor market. Becker (1993: 17-18) argues that raising standards of schools and providing relevant and specialized forms of education erases the concept of ‘overeducated’ people labor markets render their education irrelevant. Also, Becker (1993) argues for additional investment in education and training, concomitant employment schemes creating trade/skill related absorption in the labor market for better human capital. Becker (1993) aligns this with a keen focus on flexibility and regulatory structural reform. For example, foreign higher education utilization in an immigration country may require specialized course(s) to raise standard of technical skills, or rigorous upgraded language training for appreciable proficiency of the dominant language to work in specialized field(s) of study. Thus, Becker (1993: 30-31) emphatically poses that “learning new skills” such as foreign language skills and technical skills, and “perfecting old skills through on-the-job training increases human capital and workers’ productivity.” Becker, (1993) insists that for the best structural reforms, theories of firm behavior which aligns trade/skill related employment, augmentation of workers’ productivity through on-the-job skills and language training, and complementary salary increment when appropriate, improve human capital.

Becker, (1993: 21) contends, “Nothing in the concept of human capital implies that monetary incentives need be more important than non-monetary ones.” In light of this, Becker (1993: 21) argues that many studies show increase in human capital elevating cultural capital when parents with higher education have fewer children they provide with better education, health care and

nutrition. Additionally, (Becker, 1993) argues that a society/group with higher education is provided with higher human capital creating cultures like participating in community development initiatives, reducing smoking and health hazards, developing awareness for the importance of voting, etc.

Chapter 5

Third Element of Conceptual Framework: Other Literature Review

5.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises other literature review. Maxwell (2004) indicates that other literature review provide relevant information consulted in order to understand the research problem. Hence, in this research the literature review is an analytical clarification on diverging discourses provided by the concepts '*integration*' and '*assimilation*' in multicultural society. Providing current knowledge on the topic, the literature review intends to specifically inform the forthcoming data analysis in the next chapter. In the next chapter, the discourse below will be used to evaluate the transition of labor market absorption of African and Asian refugees with foreign higher education in Norway, to obtain an analytical clarification on the topic.

5.2 Multicultural Capital Accumulation—by Assimilation or Integration?

There are two means of acquiring cultural capital in a multicultural society: either through integration by multiculturalists or assimilation by monoculturalists. Firstly, Parekh (2006) describes multiculturalists as a community or nation-state whose ethos respect integration of the cultural capitals of their diverse communities or peoples. Thus, Macmillan English Dictionary (2007: 786) defines 'integrate' as "changing the rules of a place so that people of all races will enter it." On the other hand, Parekh (2006) describes monoculturalists as a community that assimilates their minority and immigrant communities into the mainstream or dominant culture of the nation-state either wholly or substantially. Thus, Macmillan English Dictionary (2007: 77) defines 'assimilation' as 'the process of becoming part of a community or a culture.' What then is a multicultural society? Parekh (2006: 6) indicates that "a multicultural society includes two or more cultural communities" that spread its cultural diversity either as "multiculturalists or monoculturalists."

5.3 Assimilation

Transnational movements may intensify assimilation. Gundara (2000: 63) argues that assimilation, for example, entails reflection of only the dominant "Anglo-centric" culture capital of a nation-state in a school curriculum and labor market as cited in these two examples. Firstly, Gundara

(2000: 62) argues that assimilation of “Asian settlers” in Britain through the Anglo-centric British curriculum developed “conservative settler groups” over the decades with “siege mentalities” that moved to more “mobile and hybridized identities” after the second and third generations. Thus, Gundara (2000: 63) argues that this prompted the process of advocacy for a “pluralistic curriculum” for a multicultural capital accumulation—in other words a British curriculum not “narrowly Anglo-centric but inclusive of Asian and other knowledge, histories, and languages.” In a second example, Gundara (2000: 63) argues that “there were lessons to be learnt from the failure of the policy of Affirmative Action,” which initially assimilated blacks and other minorities in the USA. Gundara (2000: 63-64) points out that the initial failure prompted African American anti-racist advocacy for appropriate “educational and social policies,” in the early 1960s for equality, co-existence, and adequate labor market absorption “to meet needs of excluded groups” in that multicultural society. The assimilation discourse had negative effect on social cohesion and produced closed-off communities of the minorities who became isolated in their host countries. As a result, the minorities found it difficult to integrate as it became impossible to accumulate appreciable cultural capital when a “shared value system” (Gundara, 2000: 63) for schooling and other civil rights was absent. This had negative effect on minority immigrants’ citizenship. Generally, as non-conformists to pure assimilation of host community social norms, minorities in Britain and the USA acquired human agency that led to conditions making policy makers accord the minorities genuine stakes “in both the educational discourse” and other civil society rights similar to that claimed by the dominant class. In line with this, Parekh, the social capital advocate laments (2006: 197),

There is nothing wrong with assimilation. If minorities freely decide to assimilate into the dominant culture, their decision should be respected and they should be given every opportunity and help to do so. The question is whether this degree of assimilation is necessary to ensure political unity and should be made a precondition of equal citizenship. The answer to this is in the negative. For reasons discussed earlier, minorities have a right to maintain and transmit their way of life, and denying it to them is both indefensible and likely to provoke resistance. Furthermore, it is not clear what they are to be assimilated into. The assimilationist assumes that society has a coherent and unified culture and moral structure, and that is rarely the case. (Parekh: 2006, 197)

5.4 Integration

On the other hand, Parekh (2006) argues that multiculturalists give everyone living in a heterogeneous nation-state the right to diversity of orientations as an opportunity to allow minorities/immigrants to also make contribution to the nation-state popular culture. The multiculturalist describes this process as integration since the nation-state popular culture respects

and includes orientations from its diverse constituent communities. In line with this, Parekh states (2006: 6),

Traditional culture alone should not be given pride of place. Minority cultures are equally central to its identity—meaning that the minority cultures should be respected and cherished and not encouraged to disappear over time, and ethnic minorities including immigrant communities should consist not of individuals but of organized communities entitled to make collective claims. (Parekh, 2006: 6)

From this background, one may say that ‘integration,’ is the discourse of the multiculturalist which has a dual purpose. Firstly, integration takes place when citizens realize that, for example, refugees bring changes through applying the diversity of previous knowledge from their home country into their work or career life in the host country. Secondly, individual refugees or groups realize changes in an integrated society when the new diversity of experiences in the host country enhance human agency which applies not only to overt social actions such as obtaining higher educational for symbolic and education capitals, but also to developing strategies for inclusion into the labor market or for dealing with cultural diversity in everyday life.

5.5 Hybridization

Parekh (2006), Gundara (2000) and Baumann (1999) argue that hybridization occurs when people from different cultural backgrounds mix traditional arts, incorporate innovative educational orientations, adopt diverse business strategies at the micro level, and dialogue through intercultural communications regarding their various backgrounds, to include these with the popular culture and institutional frameworks of a nation-state. This enables immigrants and people of the host community to express personal and cultural identities different from the existing ones. The argument being raised is that both assimilation and integration enhance hybridization of benefit to refugees or immigrants, although the process is of two different types. Firstly, Parekh (2006) argues that integration in a nation-state leads to diversity as in a cosmopolitan community which negotiates local and foreign cultures while innovations from diverse education and work backgrounds hybridize people benefiting from cultural openness and different educational orientations. This type of hybridization promotes not only an accumulation of cultural capital but also economic opportunities within the labor market to enhance human capital for all races who are residents of the social setting. Parekh (2006) argues that although a nation-state may be multicultural, it will not bring automatic cosmopolitan/multiculturalists’ belief in integration to enhance multiculturalism—the practice of acknowledging and respecting the various cultures,

religions, races, ethnicities, attitudes, and opinions within a society. Baumann (1999: 118-119) injects that multiculturalism is not “a patchwork of five or ten fixed cultural identifications, but an elastic web of crosscutting and always mutually situational identifications” that “cut across each other’s reified boundaries” processing integration and hybridization of peoples. Gundara (2000: 64, 184) injects that “intercultural education,” communication, and “inclusion” is paramount in crosscutting mutually situational identifications, integration, and hybridization. The argument raised by these scholars agrees that unlike assimilation discourse enhanced by monoculturalists, integration discourse enhanced by multiculturalists leads to multiculturalism. Hence, prompt hybridization becomes a bi-product usually bringing positive transformation in the character of immigrants/refugees for citizenship. Reiterating on the other hand, Gundara (2000) argues that wholly monocultural assimilation formerly enhanced in educational systems and labor markets of Britain and the USA leads to siege or closed-off immigrant communities for several generations—as assimilation makes immigrants relatively isolated lacking host country cultural capital. As a result, it becomes difficult to integrate until after several generations when hybridization can take place. This type of assimilation may have negative effect on social cohesion, absorption in the labor market, and even citizenship.

Chapter 6

Data Findings, Analysis, and Interpretations

6.1 Introduction

This chapter reports findings, analysis and interpretations of the data I collected in this study. The data findings derive from in-depth responses during a one and a half hours semi-structured interview I conducted with each of 18 refugees selected as participants in this study who obtained prior foreign higher education from Africa and Asia. Also, data findings derive from assessment of the participants' foreign higher education degree/diploma and Norwegian language training credentials during each interview. The 18 participants are a purposeful sample representing the target population of African and Asian refugees in Norway with foreign higher education before immigration to Norway who have obtained Norwegian language training provided newly arrived refugees in Norway. The 18 participants include 1 person residing in Tromsø who I interviewed over telephone while I was in Oslo; as well as individual face to face semi-structured interview I conducted with each of 3 participants in Halden City, 1 in Moss, 5 in Bergen, 4 in Namsos, and 4 in Oslo. All interviews in this research were conducted between November 2007 and August 2008. The various cities where the participants reside are spread across the length and breadth of Norway (see research area map on page IX). Webster's Dictionary (2005: 858) defines a participant as "a person who takes part in an activity."

In discussing themes emerging from data findings, Cohen et al. (2005: 153) indicate incorporating thick descriptions and direct quotations to "make clear the data that gives rise to the report, so the reader have a means of checking for reliability and validity and inferences." This chapter has two parts: Part one briefly presents data findings from participants' interviews. Part two comprise an analysis and interpretation of the data findings where I incorporate thick descriptions and direct quotations from verbatim transcripts of participants' interviews as I assess themes that emerge from the data focused on answering the research questions. The data analysis and interpretation purposes to assess how and if the refugees/participants from Africa and Asia are able to use their foreign higher education credentials to access relevant employment or further education in Norway. As a result, the study answers the following research questions:

- Do refugees face challenges in using their foreign higher education credentials in relation to employment in Norway?
- What factors affect a refugee's ability to access employment relevant to his/her education credential?

As analysis and interpretations of data themes progress, inferences for reliability and validity check and theory confirmation match the analysis with substances of commentaries provided by these:

- Context documents analysis from the conceptual framework;
- Related literature review from the conceptual framework; and
- Tentative theories from the conceptual framework.

6.1 Data Findings

The data findings comprise three parts: Language issues, higher education recognition and Education issues, and labor market and earning issues.

6.1.1 Language Issues

The data findings below in table 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 (pp. 67-69) show the study participants as 18 refugees between ages 27 and 49 who hail from 3 regions: 6 from 3 West African countries—Liberia, Benin, and Senegal; 6 from 3 East African countries—Sudan, Rwanda, and Democratic Republic of Congo; and 6 from 3 Asian Countries—Iraq, Palestine, and Thailand. Findings show that participants arrived in Norway between the years 2000 and 2006. The participants comprised 6 females and 12 males. They obtained higher education in their country of origin or in refugee situation elsewhere through languages foreign to '*Norsk*,' the Norwegian language. To enhance appreciable entry into Norwegian labor market in tertiary higher education position, findings show a lengthy transition in Norway of Norwegian language training among the participants. Findings show that all participants underwent the Introduction Program comprising Norwegian language training and Social Studies, and special emphasis was on language training to enhance entry to Norwegian labor market. Findings show unemployment and underemployment prevalent among the participants after the Introduction Program. Findings show a reduced level of unemployment

and under-employment among the participants after additional higher Norwegian language training such as *Study Competence* at local secondary school, *General Competence* at local secondary school, or advanced Level-three certificate program at a college in Norway—each a requisite Norwegian language course for admission to Norwegian-language-medium higher education. Findings show that the 18 participants participated in Norwegian language training and other training or educational programs in Norway as follows:

- 16 participants underwent the Introduction Program in 1 or 2 years period. The remaining 2 obtained at least 2 years of self-tutorial in Norwegian language training awaiting Norwegian authorities' response to their asylum application, followed by 3 to 4 months of Introduction Program which enhanced passing the *Bergen test* offered by Norwegian authorities to attest Norwegian language competence for the labor market or admission to higher education.
- 12 participants further pursued one of these: Some underwent the 1-year *Study Competence* course or at least 1 year of *General Competence* program, either of which is higher level Norwegian language training which entails senior secondary academic courses undertaken at Norwegian local secondary school obtaining *Real Competence* certificate as entry requirement to Norwegian higher education. Others underwent a Norwegian-language-medium Level- three certificate course offered at Norwegian college/university enhancing admission to Norwegian-language-medium degree program.
- A third group underwent higher education at master's level offered through the English-language-medium.
- Lastly, participants who did not pursue higher education found job contracts on their own or underwent NAV job seeker courses through the Norwegian-language-medium to enhance admission to Norwegian labor market.

6.2.2 Higher Education Recognition and Education Issues

The data findings below in tables 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3 (pp. 67-69) show NOKUT recognition/evaluation of the 18 participants foreign higher education credentials as follows:

- 3 participants obtained foreign master's degrees or credentials above bachelor's degree. Two obtained NOKUT full recognition equivalent to their Norwegian counterparts, and one obtained partial recognition.
- 10 participants obtained 4-year foreign bachelor's degrees. Nine of the 10 obtained NOKUT full recognition equivalent to the Norwegian 3-year bachelor's degree.
- 5 participants obtained the 3-year foreign university diploma. Only 1 of the 5 obtained NOKUT full recognition equivalent to the Norwegian 3-year bachelor's degree.

Thus, findings show 6 higher education credentials with partial or no recognition from NOKUT as follows:

- 1 master's degree, 1 4-year foreign bachelor's degree and 2 3-year foreign university diplomas obtained partial recognition from NOKUT,
- 2 3-year foreign university diplomas were invalid for NOKUT recognition.

Therefore, to obtain Norwegian bachelor's equivalence, findings show lengthy reaccreditation process through bridging courses NOKUT recommended for foreign credentials with partial recognition. This impeded immediate employment in the fields of study: Firstly, because of lengthy Norwegian language training through one or more years of Introduction Program; then through Norwegian language training through Study Competence/Real Competence/level-three certificate for admission to a Norwegian college offering the bridging course. Lastly, employment was impeded because of bridging courses—about 1-year study through Norwegian-language-medium.

Also, after the Introduction Program and Study/General Competence or Level-three certificate, findings show 2/3 of the participants under-employed or unemployed upon seeking employment. Thus, ½ of the participants obtained admission into higher education in Norway hoping to obtain relevant employment to commensurate their higher qualifications afterwards.

6.2.3 Labor Market and Earning Issues

The data findings in tables 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3 (pp. 67-69) below show that initially except for 1 participant, 17 others who arrived at different times and were located in different cities, obtained no high-skill employment relevant to their foreign higher education after the Introduction Program where monthly wage was given for participation. Further, findings after participants' completion of Study/General Competence course, where financial support was obtained from the Norwegian State Loan Fund (*Lanekassen*) for education, reveal that participants' foreign higher education recognized by NOKUT did not imply a prompt job offer. Findings show that employers insisted on Norwegian job experience and recommendation at interviews; employers' tendency to recruit people with work-ready/skill-related Norwegian language proficiency for professional work was apparent at interviews; employers' lack of confidence in some overseas education skill-specific

information for the Norwegian labor market was apparent at some interviews. As a result, salient findings show in addition to job application, participants firstly entered the Norwegian labor market through different types of social networks as coping strategies to obtain their first job in Norway as follows:

- 3 participants, through recommendation by personnel at local organizations assisting refugees in Norway, were the only ones that obtained sub-contracts relevant to their foreign higher education after a Study Competence or General Competence language training;
- 4 participants obtained NAV job seeker courses and job practice work which offered unemployment benefit as social assistance from the Norwegian government;
- 8 participants entered the Norwegian labor market through low income works not requiring higher education or not commensurate with their foreign degrees in hope of obtaining Norwegian job recommendation; and
- 3 participants firstly entered the Norwegian labor market only upon receiving an additional higher education in Norway in the tertiary higher education profession each had obtained his/her foreign higher education.

Findings show unemployment periods because of Norwegian language issues, higher education recognition issues, and NAV job seeker courses/job practice to acquire social network. Findings show initial employment characterized by sub-contracts, low wages, no job insurance, no in-house job related upgrading courses, or no advancement opportunities to a higher position. Among others, these factors triggered seeking higher education in Norway or going through a series of transitional jobs to improve the condition of their employment.

Each participant in this study is identified by a disguised name and a number along with his/her place of origin (such as *William-West Africa no. 1 from Liberia*, for example). Thus, the findings above obtained from the 18 participants unfold in details in tables 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 on pages 65 through 67 below:

Table 6.1 Findings from the 6 West African Refugees from Liberia, Benin, and Senegal

Region of origin/Nationality	Name I gave each participant	Sex/age/ Year of arrival in Norway	Foreign higher education before Norwegian Settlement/country and language medium	Did NOKUT evaluate foreign higher education? If yes, result. If no, why?	Norwegian language training certificates obtained in Norway	Higher education/NAV job seeker course in Norway	Transition of works/jobs in Norway
West Africa/ Liberian	WA No. 1 William	Male/ Age: 49 Arrival: 2004	4-year B.Sc. in Secondary Education: Minor: History, Obtained: Liberia (English medium)	Yes, recognized as equivalent to Norwegian bachelor's degree.	2 certificates (2-year study) from: 1)Introduction program, and 2)Bergen test-after Norwegian language course at university	Studying: Sociology—B.Sc. (Norwegian medium)	Logistics aid
"	WA No. 2 Ruth	Female/ Age: 33 Arrival: 2004	3-year Univ. Dip. in Nursing Mid-Wifery, Obtained: Guinea (French medium)	No, foreign education not at same level with Norwegian B.Sc.	2 certificates (3-year study) from: 1)Introduction program and 2)General Competence course	Studying: Nursing—B.Sc. (Norwegian Medium)	Nursing aid
"	WA No. 3 Wilbert	Male/ Age:33 Arrival: 2004	3-year Univ. Dip. in Accounting, Obtained: Cote d' Ivoire (French medium)	Yes, foreign education only a basis for entry to Norwegian higher education	2 certificates (1-year study) from: 1)Introduction program and 2)Bergen test	Studying: Information Technology--B.Sc. (Norwegian medium)	Cleaner/ Interpreter
"	WA No. 4 Wilfred	Male/ Age: 37 Arrival: 2004	3-year Univ. Dip. in Nursing, Obtained: Cote d' Ivoire (French medium)	Yes, recognized as equivalent to Norwegian B.Sc. Also, obtained license to work in Norway as nurse.	2 certificates (2 ½ -year study) from: 1)Introduction Program and 2)6-month Norwegian Level-3 training at a university	Studying: Public Health Science—M.PH. (lectures in Norwegian/ exams in English)	1)Nurse 2)Supervisor for nursing aids
West Africa/ Senegalese	WA No. 5 Rose	Female/ Age: 45 Arrival: 2001	4-year B.Sc. in Accounting, Obtained: Senegal (French medium)	Yes, recognized as equivalent to Norwegian bachelor's degree	2 certificate (2-year study) from: 1)Introduction Program and 2)Study Competence course	NAV job seeker course in computer (Norwegian Medium)	Accountant
West Africa/ Benin	WA No. 6 Wilace	Male/ Age:37 Arrival: 2002	3-year Univ. Dip. in Computer Program Management, Obtained: Benin (French medium)	No, did not send diploma for evaluation at NOKUT	1 certificate for taking and passing Bergen test after: 1)a 2-year self-tutorial and 3-month Introduction Program	NAV job seeker course in Computer (Norwegian Medium)	1)NAV job Practice 2)Warehouse clerk

Source: Author's data compiled from semi-structured interviews during fieldwork (Nov. 2007 to Aug. 2008)

A VOX publication (2008) indicates that remedial through Study Competence course (at a local secondary school) includes all academic courses in upper secondary school terminal class in Norway and satisfactory completion awards Real Competence certificate enhancing college admission.

The VOX publication (2008) indicates that the advance Level-three course (at a Norwegian college) aims at passing Bergen test, a Norwegian language written test, for an advance certificate equivalent to Norwegian secondary school leaving certificate.

Table 6.2 Findings from the 6 East African Refugees from Sudan, Rwanda, and Congo

Region of origin/ Nationality	Name I gave each participant	Sex/age/ arrival in Norway	Foreign higher education before Norwegian Settlement/Country and Language medium	Did NOKUT evaluate foreign higher education? If yes, result. If no, why?	Norwegian Language training certificates obtained in Norway	Higher education/ NAV job seeker course in Norway/Language medium	Transition of works/ jobs in Norway
East Africa/ Congolese (d. Rep)	EA No. 1 Eve	Female/ Age: 38 Arrival: 2000	4-year B.Sc. in Secondary education: Emphasis Social Studies, Obtained: Congo (French medium)	Yes, recognized as equivalent to Norwegian bachelor's degree		Obtained: 1) B.Sc., Major: Education. 2)M.Sc., Major: Comparative Education	1)Kindergarten Caregiver 2)Interpreter 3)Substitute Teacher 4)Teacher
"	EA No. 2 Ernest	Male/ Age: 44 Arrival: 2000	1)4-year B.Sc. in Secondary education: Emphasis Science, M.Sc. Ed Obtained: Congo (French medium)	Yes, recognized as equivalent to their Norwegian counterparts	ertificates (2-year dy) from: ntroduction program Bergen Test- after vel-three course	Obtained: 1)AETAT job seeker course 2)B.Sc.-Major: Education	1)Tutor 2)Teacher 3) Social Worker
"	EA No. 3 Emmet	Male/ Age:46 Arrival: 2000	1)4-year B.Sc. in counting 2-year M.Sc.-in gional Planning tained: Congo (French medium)	Yes, recognized as equivalent	1 certificate (1-year Study) from: Introduction Program	None	Mail delivery
East Africa/ Rwandese	EA No. 4 Etta	Female/ Age: 40 Arrival: 2001	3-year Univ.Dip. in Physical Education(PE), Obtained: Cote d'Ivoire (French medium)	Yes, required 1-year bridging courses for Norwegian bachelor's recognition	2certificates (2-year Study) from: ntroduction program Study Competence	Obtained: 1)NOKUT re-gnition after year bridging urses at univ. 2) B.Sc. in Education	1)Teacher (contract) 2)Teacher (full employment)
"	EA No. 5 Elijah	Male: Age: 46 Arrival: 2001	5-year master's in Construction Engineering, Obtained: Senegal (French medium)	Yes, recognized as equivalent	1)Introduction Program	None	ogistics, reception, and personnel assistant Consultant--in Public Administration
East Africa/ Sudanese	EA No. 6 Esau	Male/ Age: 41 Arrival: 2003	4-year B.Sc.— Sociology Obtained: Sudan (English medium)	Yes, recognized as equivalent	2 certificates (2-year study) from: 1)Introduction Program 2)Study Competence	Obtained: B.Sc. in Social Works	1)Carpenter/ Painter 2)Social Worker- Counsellor

Source: Author's data compiled from semi-structured interviews during fieldwork (Nov. 2007 to Aug. 2008)

Table 6.3: Findings from the 6 Asian Refugees from Iraq, Palestine, and Thailand

Region of origin/ Nationality	Name I gave each participant	Sex/age/ arrival in Norway	Foreign higher education before Norwegian Settlement/Country and Language medium	Did NOKUT evaluate foreign Higher education? If yes, result. If no, why?	Norwegian language training certificate obtained in Norway	Higher Education/NAV job seeker course in Norway/Language medium	Transition of works/jobs in Norway
Asia/ Palestine	A- No. 1 Allen	Male/ Age: 35 Arrival: 2006	6-year M.D. degree in Medicine, Obtained: Russia (Russian medium)	Yes, equivalent	Introduction Program	None	Mail Delivery
”	A- No. 2 Amy	female/ Age:31 Arrival: 2003	4-year B.Sc. in Education: Emphasis—Russian, Obtained: Russia (Russian medium)	Yes, NOKUT requires 1-year bridging course at university for Norwegian B.Sc equivalence	Obtained: Bergen test certificate after: (1)3-year self-tutorial and 4-mon. Introduction Program. Studying: 2)1-year General Competence course for admission to 1-year bridging course to obtain NOKUT recognition	None	Sales Assistant
Asia/ Thailand	A- No. 3 Alex	Male/ Age:26 Arrival: 2005	4-year degree in Computer Engineering , Obtained: Thailand (Thai medium)	Yes, NOKUT Recognized degree as Equivalent, Pending license in regulated profession	1 year Introduction Program	Studying(M.Sc) Major: Information Technology— Network & System Administration (English medium)	Teaching Assistant (IT Lab.)
Asia/ Iraqi	A- No. 4 Alvin	Male/ Age: 27 Arrival: 2006	4-year B.A. in English Language Obtained: Iraq (English medium)	Yes, equivalent	Introduction Program	None	Translator (volunteer work)
”	A- No. 5 Abel	Male/ Age: 52 Arrival: 2006	4-year B.Sc. in Secondary Education: Emphasis: Social Studies Obtained: Iraq (Yes, equivalent	1-year Introduction Program	NAV job seeker courses: 1st. course, 2nd. “ 3rd. “ (Norwegian medium)	1)NAV Job practice 2)Self-employed Taxi Driver
”	A- No. 6 Annie	Female/ Age:35 Arrival: 2006	4-year B.A. in English Language Obtained: Iraq (English Medium)	Yes, equivalent	Introduction Program	NAV job seeker course (Norwegian Medium)	NAV job Practice as kindergarten caregiver

Source: Author’s data collection from semi-structured interviews during fieldwork (Nov. 2007 to Aug. 2008)

6.3 Analysis and Interpretation of the Data

This section comprise seven parts: Namely, Language challenge after the Introduction Program, Other challenges against Initial networks and resources networked to enter Norwegian labor market, Comparison of participant groups initial labor market status, Networks enhancing initial low-skill jobs for participants, NAV job seeker courses and job practice, Networks enhanced by the unemployed participants, After Study Competence, and Conclusions.

6.3.1 Language Challenge after the Introduction Program

To utilize their foreign higher education in the Norwegian labor marker, the sample 18 participants were challenged with going through a lengthy transition of Norwegian language training in Norway. Findings in participants' interviews revealed that a language challenge was posed after the Introduction Program as employers' showed a lack of confidence in participants' usage of the Norwegian language to function proficiently in tertiary higher education positions. Participants' interviews revealed that after the Introduction Program an education challenge was posed as employers' showed a lack of confidence in the skill qualification of some participants' overseas education as being able to meet demands of the Norwegian labor market. During the interviews, participants insist that these created employers' tendency to recruit people, particularly Norwegians, who studied through Norwegian-language-medium and obtained Norwegian higher education. Even when prior foreign higher education credentials were fully recognized as in these examples, the participants' interviews showed coping strategies through Norwegian language training programs and pursuit of further higher education in Norway to enhance functioning appreciably in Norwegian labor market as sample responses from participants relate,

I am a B.Sc. Education major and Geography minor from the English medium 4-year bachelor's degree in Liberia. After a thirteen-year teacher and teacher trainer work experience from Liberia and refugee situation in Guinea, I sent over fifty fruitless job applications in Norway upon completing Norwegian language training and civic studies in one-year Introduction Program period during 2004-2005 school year. Four employers' responses gave weakness in the Norwegian language and lack of teaching experience—requesting Norwegian job recommendation—in Norway as reasons for turning me down. In my experience, the Introduction Program did not provide the technical language capacity building that help people with tertiary foreign higher education develop Norwegian language proficiency in their fields. To deal with this language challenge, I decided to upgrade my Norwegian language skills through university education in Norway. To study through Norwegian language medium in Norway, I got Norwegian language Level-three Certificate for university admission through a one-year course in Norwegian language training at the Bergen University in Norway. Presently, through my NOKUT recognized foreign higher education; I am pursuing a three-year Sociology degree at that university to hopefully get

employment relevant to my qualifications afterwards. Through recommendation of a Norwegian friend who knows my present boss, I got a job at the university as logistics assistant during this transition. (William, West Africa no. 1 from Liberia, 2007)

In academic year 2003-2004, I underwent and completed the mandatory Introduction Program among a class of fifteen participants whose education ranged from secondary school to two persons including me—with undergraduate degrees. Afterwards, over telephone, I made a follow-up on one of the job applications I had sent and an employer admonished me to upgrade my Norwegian language skills as I lacked a work-ready Norwegian language competence to reasonably compete with other clients. Only a two-month carpenter and painter summer job I obtained, irrelevant to my English medium four-year undergraduate Social Works degree and vast work experience obtained in Tanzania as refugee. Thus, at a local secondary school, I did a 1-year Study Competence course in intermediate Norwegian language training awarded Real Competence certificate for university admission. Though I was the most proficient Norwegian language speaker and writer in my classes during the Introduction Program and Study Competence course often requested by the teachers to make speeches at school programs, yet I was never considered for job interview having sent out thirteen job applications. So I got admission at a university through my NOKUT recognized foreign higher education, and solicited study loan from the Norwegian State Loan Fund (*Lånekassen*) for education. I sought no further employment through another three-year bachelor's in Social Works—obtained at the Norwegian university—to meet challenges in developing work-ready Norwegian language capacity. In the last few months, an institution meeting needs of asylum seekers in the local community Namsos where I underwent the Introduction Program has given me a contract as social worker relevant to my Social Works degree.

(Esau, East Africa no. 6 from Sudan, 2008)

Through the French medium in Democratic Republic of Congo, I hold a B.Sc. degree in Secondary Education, specialty in Chemistry and Biology, and a M.Sc. degree in Science Education. In Africa, my work experience was ten years as senior high school science teacher and four years as project writer/project proposal writing at a research and technology organization. In the year 2000, I arrived in Norway as refugee, and my family got resettlement in Northern Norway. I had initial Norwegian language training (now the Introduction Program) in one year, and completed a computer course at AETAT (now NAV) in five months to further prepare for the Norwegian labor market as my skills in computer were limited. Then, I became a job seeker. My thirty job applications yielded no feedback from employers until my contact person at the refugee services local office, abreast of details regarding my Norwegian language skills, my African higher education and work experience, recommended me for employment as teacher in a local secondary school. My contract lasted three years in the school as Mathematics, Biology, and Chemistry tutor in study classes arranged for foreign pupils with learning needs. Three colleagues who were Norwegians in substitute teaching positions were considered for full employment—they had Norwegian higher education. Therefore, with my NAIC (now NOKUT) recognized foreign degrees; I entered Østfold University College in Halden Norway, and completed the level-three Norwegian language training in a one-year period as entry requirement to Norwegian-language-medium higher education. In three years, I completed an Education degree in Special Pedagogy, French and Mathematics at the same college. With my African and Norwegian education and work experiences, for the past two years I have had a contract as French and Mathematics secondary school teacher which has developed into full employment. Through a job application I wrote and a recommendation by a Norwegian neighbor working at the Child Protection Agency (*Barna Varn*), I was selected for an interview, and for the past two weeks I have a second contractor job in the area of therapy at the Child Protection Agency.

(Ernest, East Africa no. 2 from Congo, 2007)

The sample responses reveal that after the Introduction Program, employers screened applicants for hiring based on key characteristics, one of which is Norwegian language proficiency, one challenge confronting participants in this study. After the Introduction Program, a link exists between participants' Norwegian language skill level and their labor market outcomes. For example, in sample responses from William and Esau, employers demanded of them modest efforts to raise basic skills of the Norwegian language to a level on a par with the native Norwegian, to qualify for tertiary higher education positions in Norway. Also, from Ernest's response, one can infer that the overall Norwegian language proficiency level demanded by the Norwegian labor market to teach is relatively high even for lower level tertiary higher education employment as tutor—the position Ernest occupied after undergoing language training at the Introduction Program, and undertaking a computer course for job seekers at the Norwegian Labor Market Administration (AETAT). Inference from the phenomena sample participants experienced is consistent with Bourdieu's linguistic capital theory discussed earlier in this thesis which Jenkins (2002) advocates for through the school of thought that linguistic difference in a nation-state reveals social differences that produce linguistic markets in specialized fields in the employment system or labor market.

Analytical induction draws similarity among analysis of the sample responses. After completion of a one-year Introduction Program, the Norwegian labor market expectation of a linguistic capital or Norwegian language competence for employment in higher education fields remains on a par with the upgraded nationally legitimate Norwegian language discourse of native Norwegians. There is little doubt that mastery of Norwegian language skills is not only important for labor market integration, but for integration in the Norwegian society. As confirmed by an AID publication which was articulated earlier in this thesis, the Norwegian government policy on the Introduction Act of 2004, which was amended in 2005 indicates that is a “right and an obligation” that the foreign citizen in Norway portrays fluency in Norwegian language and society instruction to be eligible for citizenship (Aanes, 2008). Also, this means the Introduction Act supposes Norwegian language proficiency as a right and an obligation for appreciable integration into the civic culture and labor market of Norway. After the Introduction Program, William's fate in the labor market becomes no employment, Esau's becomes low level employment as carpenter/painter summer job, and Ernest's becomes under-employment as tutor position. An absence of appreciable Norwegian language competence or linguistic capital to function in tertiary higher education positions is one driving force behind William, Esau, and Ernest's low level labor market

outcomes of unemployment and under-employment after the Introduction program. As oral/written Norwegian language competence is a key tool in teaching pupils in Education field, a lacking of that competence as relevant commodity sold to possible employers did hinder William's admission to the Norwegian labor market when employers indicate that he lacked appreciable Norwegian language skills to teach as Geography teacher and demanded of him Norwegian job experience and recommendation. More so, dissemination of information being a paramount work tool in the teacher Education field, it can be inferred that a lacking of tertiary higher education technical language course at the Introduction Program as William indicates, hinders Norwegian language acquisition of a tertiary higher education vocabulary. A lacking of a tertiary higher education vocabulary hinders application of specialized knowledge/formalized principles acquired through prior tertiary foreign higher qualifications and become one driving force to an inability for Ernest to rise from the low level tutor position as well. Inference show that employers see hindrances to the job seeker's ability to meet clients' mental health needs through counseling when an employer stresses that Esau raises his Norwegian language skills to a level on a par with the national legitimate discourse of Native Norwegians. As a result, one interpretation drawn from the interview results is that there is tendency for low skill employment or no employment in Norway for refugees with foreign higher education who obtained only a short period of Norwegian language training. As such, the theory Bourdieu established which Jenkins (2002) advocates is that the dominant legitimate language priced in specialized fields is a distinct capital in discourse producing the speaker distinction as profit. Reiterating Bourdieu's linguistic capital theory, May (2001), Siedman (2008), and Robins (2000) argue that agents/participants without this capital—Norwegian language competence as in this case—are excluded assuming they are not able to compete in the social market or the specialized field.

Evidence in sample responses above aligns with all 18 participants labor market outcome six months after the Introduction Program as recorded in figure 6.1 below. The figure shows 10 participants in categories 1 and 4, who sought financial support from the Norwegian State Loan Fund (*Lanekassen*) for education, and were in school. Sample participant' interviews above reveal that the 10 were in higher level Norwegian language training through Study Competence, General Competence, or Norwegian language Level-three Certificate course which certify admission to Norwegian higher education, or hopefully improve linguistic capital for Norwegian labor market inclusion. Figure 6.1 shows 6 participants in categories 2 and 4 in low-skill jobs, 2 in this category are among those in language training. The figure shows 1 participant in category 3 in a

high-skill job, and 3 in category 5 in NAV job seeker courses to improve opportunities for Norwegian labor market inclusion as seen below.

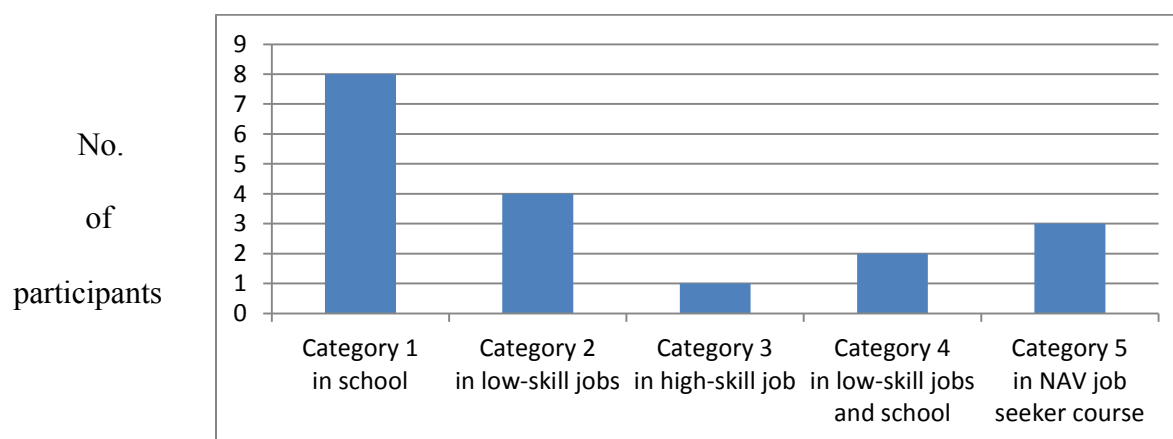


Figure 6.1 The 18 Participants 6 Months after Introduction Program

Source: Author's data compiled from semi-structured interviews during fieldwork (Aug. 2008)

The 18 participants six months after the Introduction Program were no longer entitled to monthly wage from the Norwegian government's 'introduction benefit' of 11 700 NOK or 1,300 Euros. Participants' interviews reveal that many had sent over thirty job applications and with bills to be paid, over half of the participants in a proportion of 10/18 resorted to financial support from the Norwegian State Loan Fund (*Lanekassen*) for education to acquire higher Norwegian language training. This is evident by sample responses from William, Esau, and Ernest who cited being in Study Competence or Norwegian language level-three certificate course having realized that language provision through the Introduction Program was insufficient to enable reaching the entry level for higher education or the labor market. Six months after the Introduction Program, a participant group in a proportion of eight in school had been unable to obtain any sort of employment as evident by Esau who cited completing pre-university transition course in Norway, retraining at a Norwegian university through the same profession of his prior foreign education, and acquiring host community education and linguistic capital in Norway before obtaining employment, a high-skill job in his profession as social worker. Also, the figure shows an additional 3 unemployed participants in NAV job seeker courses to improve opportunities for employment. Findings from 11 unemployed participants' six months after the Introduction Program reveal that 5 were overtly turned down by employers for poor mastery of the Norwegian language, while 6 complained of covert labor market discrimination and exclusion based on the same reason. Being open-minded, all 18 participants in this study agree that the Norwegian language is a key tool for transmission of thoughts that refugees and employers use to open doors

for hiring. Thus, both the participant's initial exclusion from employment overtly or covertly by employers after the Introduction Program due to weak Norwegian language skills, and participants' increased employment probability after higher level schooling/training through the Norwegian language medium, agree that there exist a high probability for Norwegian language challenge or deficiency to impede initial employment of refugees with foreign higher education in Norway. Coping strategies of William, Esau, and Ernest agree that the more they mastered higher Norwegian language skills through Study Competence, NAV job seeker courses comprising a Norwegian language training component, and further higher education in Norway, the better their professional integration became. Thus, good knowledge of Norwegian is one determining factor of appreciable social and professional integration of refugees who reside in Norway.

William, Ernest, and Esau evidences show variation of tailored-made Introduction Program implementation in different municipalities. The participants' evidences show a challenge regarding the highly-educated who undergo a one-year Introduction Program period and have access to adopted programs (Study Competences or Level-three certificate course) which are targeted courses for admission to Norwegian language medium higher education, or hopefully to the Norwegian labor market. In light of this, the participants' evidences show that tailored-made Introduction Programs in different municipalities, lacking vocational language training component as William indicated, seem more tailored to needs of people in secondary school than to other classmates with tertiary higher education. As a result, the high unemployment and under-employment figures which are respectively 11 and 6 out of 18 participants in figure 6.1, suggests that initial short period of Norwegian language training at the Introduction Program due to initial short residence in Norway creates high probability for initial unemployment and under-employment due to lack of accumulation of host specific linguistic capital.

In the next section, participants' network for high-skill and low-skill job attainment is discussed.

6.3.2 Other Challenges against Initial Networks and Resources Networked to Enter Norwegian Labor Market

Figure 6.1 above shows only 1 participant in a high-skill job six months after the Introduction Program. There were two contributing factors to his high-skill employment. Firstly, the Norwegian language level of that participant correlates with the Norwegian language preference of his employer. Why is this possible? Unlike 17 participants in this study who undergo one academic year or less of Introduction Program (see tables 6.1, 6.2, and 6.3) in different

municipalities, the participant in a high-skill job is the only one with two years participation in the Introduction Program. An evidence of two-year Introduction Program participation curtailed Norwegian language challenges when the participant underwent modules 1 and 2 in the first year followed by module 3 designed for people with a lot of education in the second year. Secondly, the participant networked obtaining job practice, job-skill recommendation, NOKUT foreign credential recognition, and Nursing license which correlate with his prompt employment and admission to Norwegian medium higher education as that participant cites,

I completed the Introduction Program within two years after arrival in Norway in 2004. In the first year, I ascended through modules one and two Norwegian language training, and in the second year, module three similar to the Norwegian language Level-three certificate course for admission to Norwegian medium degree program. To conclude the Introduction Program, I did vocational language and work practice at the hospital in Tromsø. In the sixth month, I got a job contract as nurse in the hospital's Mental Health Department when my boss wrote a positive appraisal of my nursing skills. Nursing being a regulated profession, the Medical Board in Norway had earlier examined NOKUT general recognition of my university diploma in Clinical Nursing from French Ivory Coast (where I lived as refugee from Liberia), and the attestation from my work practice at the hospital in Tromsø. The board requested that I take an exam. Upon passing, I was granted a license to practice Nursing in Norway. To improve advancement opportunity on the job, I'm doing graduate studies in Public Health Science at the University of Tromsø. Earlier, my lengthy Introduction Program period had engineered my passing the one-year Norwegian language Level-three certificate course at the University of Tromsø within a short period of only six months. Through that and other credentials such as my NOKUT recognized foreign degree, Nursing license, and work attestation, I got admission to my present graduate program conducted through Norwegian medium.

(Wilfred, West Africa no.4 from Liberia)

Wilfred evidence reveals that the simple integration model adopted initially, where Norwegian language proficiency level is an indicator of labor market status is not the only factor affecting Wilfred's employment. Regardless of his good Norwegian language skills, Wilfred's evidence shows that getting hired is also dependant on the degree of other networks the participant builds up in the host country as agency to improve human capital. Networks are imperative in giving access to opportunities such as familiarity to the workplace, host-specific cultural know-how, and the established support system which otherwise would be missed. Beside Norwegian language proficiency, getting hired in Wilfred's case was fueled by two other strong networks as catalysts to erase labor market challenges. Firstly, meeting work requirement through job practice in host community, and being awarded job-skill recommendation after work practice networked Wilfred's improved human capital. Secondly, an improved human capital is evident when network of education-skill job-match relationship sanctions NOKUT's general recognition and Nursing license for Wilfred's foreign education to be equivalent to institutionalized Nursing program in

Norway, a strong influence enhancing his corresponding professional employment. Through these networks, Wilfred's high-skill employment in the Nursing profession in Norway was viable.

Wilfred's evidence is a classic example of prompt Norwegian labor market integration in a prior foreign higher education profession. Wilfred experienced prompt integration in Norway when the diversity of phenomena enhance human agency which applied not only to overt social actions as entering the Norwegian labor market but obtaining further higher education that increased human capital. Wilfred's prompt two and a half year labor market integration process is networked when the host community gives Wilfred an opportunity to relevantly apply previous knowledge from Africa in his career life at the hospital in the host community Norway. Thus, service/job provision by employer/the host community, higher education recognition, license accreditation in a regulated profession, vocation-skill job training in host community, etc., are all prompt integration mechanisms networked as agency for improved labor market outcome and human capital. In line with this, Becker (1993) an American economist theorizes that firm/employer behavior for structural reforms provides for agents/job seekers/employees an improved human capital through on-the-job training, skill-relevant employment, and complementary salary increment.

6.3.3 A Comparison of Participant Groups Initial Labor Market Status

Table 6.4 below classifies the participants by world region they hail from. The table shows a proportion of 17 of the 18 participants whose professional skills were under-utilized through unemployment and low-skill employment while the East and West African groups fared significantly worse than Asians. The table shows 6 participants under-employed in low-skill jobs six months after the Introduction program. As Norwegian language skill level is not the only factor affecting labor market outcome, the table shows that other barriers against key networks were additional factors or challenges responsible for the 6 participants' initial low-skill employment. The table shows that 11 participants mentioned earlier as unemployed six months after the Introduction Program, agree that beside language challenge, they experienced other barriers that contributed to their initial unemployment. Thus, while initial barriers against networks contributed to initial low-skill jobs and unemployment of 17 participants, the table shows other network resources participants enhanced to improve labor market outcome and human capital.

Table 6.4 Participants' Region of Origin, Education, Labor Market Status, other Barriers to Initial Network for High-skill Employment, and Resources Enhanced for Employment Networks —6 Months after Introduction Program

Region of Origin	Name	Prior Foreign Degree	Employed	Job-skill level	Other barrier to initial network blocking possibility for employment relevant to foreign degree	Resources enhanced for employment networks
West Africa	William	B.Sc. Education	no		Employers' requested Norwegian job experience and recommendation	-Job recommendation from Norwegian friend, -Further higher education in Norway
	Ruth	Univ. Dip. Nursing Mid-Wifery	no		-University diploma invalid for NOKUT recognition	-Job recommendation from a NAV personnel, -Further higher education in Norway
	Wilbert	Univ. Dip. Accounting	no		-NOKUT partial recognition	-hopes cleaner job enhance recommendation, -Further higher education in Norway
	Wilfred	Univ. Dip. Nursing	Yes, nurse	High-skill	none	Further higher education in Norway
	Rose	B.Sc. Accounting	no			NAV job seeker course
	Willace	Univ. Dip. Computer Programming	no		-University diploma unavailable for NOKUT recognition	NAV job seeker course
East Africa	Eve	B.Sc. Education	Yes, kindergarten caregiver	low-skill		Further higher education in Norway
	Ernest	M.Sc. Education	no			Further higher education in Norway
	Emmett	M.Sc. Regional Planning	Yes, Mailroom aid	low-skill		
	Etta	Univ. Dip. Physical Education	no		-NOKUT partial recognition, -Lengthy re-credentialing process	Further higher education in Norway
	Elijah	M.Sc. Construction Engineering	no		NOKUT partial recognition	NAV job seeker course enhanced employment by NAV
	Esau	B.Sc. Sociology	no		Lack of host community job recommendation	Further higher education in Norway
Asia	Allen	M.D. (Medical Doctor)	Yes, mail delivery	low-skill	-Awaits results of ongoing regulated profession licensing process in Medicine	Study Competence
	Amy	B.Sc. Education	Yes, sales assistant	low-skill	-NOKUT partial recognition	Friendship network
	Alex	B. Ed. Computer Engineering	no			Further higher education In Norway
	Alvin	B.Sc. Education	no			
	Abel	B.Sc. Education	Interpreter	low-skill		Voluntary job network
	Annie	B.Sc. Education	Kindergarten caregiver	low-skill		NAV job seeker course And job practice

Source: Author's data compiled from semi-structured interviews during fieldwork (Nov. 2007 to Aug. 2008)

Table 6.4 above shows a proportion of 6 participants in low-skill jobs six months after the Introduction Program. This comprises none of 6 West Africans, 2 of 6 East Africans, a lower share than 4 of 6 Asians in low-skill jobs. Thus, the ratio is 0 per cent West Africans, 11.1 per cent East Africans, and 22.2 per cent Asians in low-skill jobs among the 18 participants. As mentioned earlier, Wilfred's evidence shows that he is the only participant (5.5 per cent from West Africa) in a high-skill job six months after the Introduction Program.

Table 6.4 shows a proportion of 11 unemployed six months after the Introduction Program. This comprises 5 of 6 West Africans and 4 of 6 East Africans unemployed, significantly worse than 2 of 6 unemployed Asians. Thus, the unemployment ratio is 27.8 per cent West Africans, 22.2 per cent East Africans, and 11.1 per cent Asians among the 18 participants. Each per cent of the unemployed or under-employed (in low-skill job) is a ratio among the total 18 participants.

Six months after the Introduction Program, there is an initial high unemployment and under-employment rate of 94.44 per cent among the participants which represents labor market under-utilization of 17 of the 18 participants; a pattern correlating strikingly with background literature in both NAV and Statistics Norway longitudinal survey report in chapter 1. In the background literature, African and Asian immigrant groups—not specifically refugees with foreign higher education as in this data findings—have the highest unemployment and low-skill job overrepresentation compared with other immigrant groups in Norway and the total population of Norway. Another key similarity is the fact that initial shares of unemployed West Africans (27.8 per cent) and East African (22.2 per cent) in this study are higher than that of the Asian group (11.1 per cent) with foreign higher qualifications, correlating with background literature which showed general unemployment among African immigrants significantly worse in ratio than Asians in Norway (see chapter 1).

It may seem like a criticism of a small participant sample of 18 is relevant when combined with single semi-structured interviews as in this study. However, as this research through qualitative interpretative paradigm assesses experiences of the well-educated participants, it shows variation of phenomena occurring in the life-world of refugees with foreign higher education in different geographic locations of Norway combined with diversity in labor market status of the participants. The experiences of the participants communicate phenomena in everyday life of refugees with foreign higher education from the ‘south’ as they negotiate employment in Norway. During the process, theories which indicate the degree of accumulation of society’s cultural wealth are integrated with sets of related phenomena to clearly interpret the participants’ experiences. A comparison of findings from participants groups or categories is linked with the theories in producing credible and defensible judgments. Also, the validity and trustworthiness of findings from participants are maximized through their comparison with prior research by Statistics Norway quantitative longitudinal survey on immigrant unemployment and NAV report on immigrant under-employment in chapter 1. These create opportunities for generalization of results

of this study to cover the community of refugees in Norway who have foreign higher education from the 'south.'

6.3.4 Networks Enhancing Initial Low-skill Jobs for Participants

Participants' evidences in table 6.4 show that recognition of foreign qualification, service/job provision by employers in private and public sectors, vocational job practice, NAV job seeker courses, Norwegian language, etc., have key role to play in networking refugee empowerment for high-skill employment. Six months after the Introduction Program, Amy and Allen are the only two with key higher education accreditation barriers among the Asian group in low-skill jobs. Thus, empowerment networked through other resources resulted to initial low-skill jobs irrelevant to their foreign professions as Amy and Allen cite,

NOKUT granted my Primary Education degree (with three-year teaching experience) a partial recognition on grounds that Russia, where I earned it has 11 years high school and 4 years college education, a significantly lower number of years than Norway with 13 years high school and 3 years college education. NOKUT resolved that full recognition needs additional one year (60 ECTS credits) college bridging courses in Norway. NOKUT said I need both English and Norwegian to study in Norway as my textbooks will be written in these languages. I had earlier done a 3-year self-tutorial in Norwegian language training while awaiting response from my asylum application in Norway. After that, I did 4 months Introduction Program participation and passed the Bergen test, a Norwegian language test attesting proficiency for admission to college or the labor market. Presently, I am doing a one-year English course in junior high school in Norway to be able to pass TOEFL test attesting English language proficiency. Excluding the asylum application period, it is 3 years that covers the re-credentialing process required by NOKUT. At the same time it has been impossible to find a job in Norway relevant to my Education degree. I sent 5 applications seeking employment as kindergarten assistant or teacher. Since I got partial recognition from NOKUT, during job interviews I was told that the systems in Norway and Russia were different and they (the employer) were uncertain as to how well I had learned pedagogy. I have a family, a child and a husband, and I need money now. Therefore, through friendship network, a friend of mine from Palestine (my homeland) introduced me to her Norwegian boss at a petrol station in Oslo when the friend was taking a maternity leave. Now, for over two weeks I started work in the evenings in my friend's post in a 40 per cent sales assistant contract until her leave is completed.

(Amy, Asia no. 2 from Palestine)

Within the period of eight months, NOKUT recognized my six-year degree earned in Medicine. I earned the degree in Russia as a Palestinian refugee. I have five years of working experience in Gaza as a medical doctor. In Namsos, I have sent no applications to work as a medical doctor because I have not yet been licensed in Norway to practice in the medical profession. I have applied to get an authorized license to practice in the regulated profession and await a response from the directorate responsible for the accreditation. I am ready and prepared to take any test deemed necessary by the directorate. As this is my second year in Norway, I have not perfected Norwegian language skills required which I am doing through Study Competence having completed the Introduction Program. I need proficient Norwegian language to communicate with patients in a hospital. As I would rather not sit and do nothing while I learn Norwegian, I only asked to deliver newspapers and I was given the job. I had no challenges in trying to obtain this

job as having an international driver's license before coming to Norway networked me as an asset. My work gives me a wage called day-payment dependant on the number of newspapers I deliver. I cover much land space to deliver many newspapers in a short time, and my fair Norwegian skills permit me to read signs, messages, and information such as addresses, etc.
(Allen, Asia no. 1 from Palestine)

Amy and Allen's evidence in sample responses above aligns with table 6.4 in showing NOKUT partial recognition, lengthy language training to undertake bridging courses required for NOKUT full recognition, lengthy process of licensing in regulated profession, lack of Norwegian job experience, etc., as initial barriers blocking Amy and Allen initial networks possibilities for high-skill employment. The evidence shows that low-skill jobs rendered professional skill under-utilization not commiserate with the participants' higher education abilities, even though some job is better than none when bills must be paid.

Amy's response shows Norwegian employers' skepticism about Amy's knowledge of Norsk pedagogy after she obtained NOKUT partial recognition of foreign education qualifications. Because of the partial recognition, Amy experienced a waste of human capital, when Norwegian employers hired individuals with familiar education backgrounds, meaning individuals with Norwegian degrees, host community work experience and job references more easily accessed than foreign ones. Also, undergoing lengthy qualification recognition and licensing process, Allen experienced a waste of human capital, lacking host community job-skill relevant work experience in Medicine, a robust network predictor of employer's credibility. The analyses show that Norwegian language up-skilling, re-credentialing process, licensing of education credential, are a bonus for professional integration. Amy and Allen evidence reveals that initial barriers or challenges created by foreign higher education accreditation process, including language training, may marginalize the group for an initial two or three years in Norway. In doing so, the marginalization produces a Norwegian professional class of refugees experiencing a waste of human capital due to Norwegian labor market exclusion in the foreign tertiary higher education professions.

All 4 Asians in low-skill jobs six months after the Introduction Program cited these barriers against networks for professional-job search. Two cited lack of Norwegian job experience, 1 cited NOKUT partial recognition of foreign qualification, 2 cited lengthy process of foreign qualification accreditation, 1 cited lengthy Norwegian and English language training to reach entry proficiency for college bridging courses, 1 cited lengthy duration of bridging courses (60 ETCS

credits—one year study) to make-up for partial recognition, and all 4 cited lengthy Norwegian language training to reach labor market proficiency level for relevant employment in profession. Thus, beside lack of appreciable Norwegian language skills, the Asian participants' evidences agree that lack of Norwegian job experience, NOKUT partial recognition, and a lengthy re-credential accreditation process are other barriers blocking the possibility to enhance networks for tertiary higher education employment.

Facing initial barriers against networks for high-skill employment, other resources the 4 Asian newcomers relied on and obtained initial low-skill contractor jobs during the first six months after the Introduction Program were these: 1 cited network through friendship, 1 cited network through owning an international driver's license, 1 cited network through a voluntary job due to knowledge of his native language Arabic from Iraq, and 1 cited network through NAV job seeker course. Thus, six months after the Introduction Program, these evidences in table 6.4 reveal that Asians had better access to initial networks for entry to Norwegian labor market than the groups from East and West Africa; even though jobs obtained were low-skilled lacking improved human capital indicators for people with higher education. On average, Asian participants in this study are the most recent arrivals in Norway from 2003 to 2006 (table 6.3) as compared with the West and East African groups whose arrivals are respectively from 2001 to 2004 and 2000 to 2003 (tables 6.1 and 6.2). To avoid an uneven distribution of Norwegian language ability to participant groups, further comparison of participants beyond six months after the Introduction Program is a comparison of phenomena in individual participants' experiences based on time principal.

Even though Asians in this study arrived late in Norway, they showed better initial network indicators for initial entry into Norwegian labor market due to a couple of reasons. As indicated earlier, possessing an international driver's license before his flight to Norway, Allen a Palestinian refugee from Russia networked himself as asset in mail delivery for daily wage while doing Study Competence during his second year in Namsos. In a second illustration, long residence of enclaves of Palestinian refugees in Norway over twenty years, provided friendship network and a job for Amy, a teacher who arrived in 2003. In a third illustration, a community of 16,000 Iraqi refugees in Norway as background literature cites in chapter 1 necessitated need of translation to Arabic, the mother tongue of many newly arrived Iraqi asylum seekers in Namsos. Assuming the translator post on voluntarily basis, Abel an Iraqi who arrived in 2006 networked with the Norwegian employer a twenty per cent contractor position, which offers daily wage. The

professional English teacher, Abel translated from English to Arabic while upgrading Norwegian skills through Study Competence during his second year in Norway. In a final illustration, Annie an Iraqi who arrived in 2006 completed a three-month job seeker course at NAV as kindergarten assistant after a one-year Introduction Program in Oslo. The NAV job seeker course included Norwegian communication skills on how to apply for a job as well as basic knowledge of the labor market, labor legislations, etc. Within six months after the Introduction Program, NAV's mentorship networked Annie's placement in a three-month work practice as kindergarten assistant which was followed by a short term contract with minimum wage.

Amy and Abel evidence above agrees that large ethnic enclaves of Asian refugees in Norway cited in background statistics in chapter 1, including over twenty years residence among some Asian enclaves, created initial ethnic networks of co-ethnic friendship and linguistic-ties. Networks of acquaintances and linguistic ties may provide initial low-skill job for a beginner's self-sustenance. However, to what extent do such networks assist a person with higher education in obtaining the exact type of job preference desired. Nonetheless, in comparison with the African groups, this initially was a higher predictor for individuals among the Asian group to reach Norwegian employers and obtain initial low-skill jobs. Regardless of strong initial network sources among Asians in low-skill jobs, the connection of Amy and Abel's actual educational skills to the human capital theory is weak, since the essence is to also mediate more reliable information about their actual host-specific skills for integration. Consequently, Amy and Abel evidences as professional teachers agree that NOKUT partial recognition, lack of host-specific job experience in profession, and low level Norwegian language skills through the Introduction Program show that lower degree of labor integration is inevitable for participants with short residency of two to three years in Norway.

6.3.5 NAV Job Seeker Course and Job Practice

Annie's evidence as kindergarten assistant mentioned earlier shows that NAV's mentorship may likely place participants with foreign higher education in vocational training in hope that the training and job practice provide innovative host-specific skills and education to commensurate participant's prior qualifications. Annie's evidence shows that mentorship through job seeker course and work practice enhanced by NAV links the participant's prior foreign education skills with host-specific linguistic skills and cultural knowledge to integrate an improved human capital. However, host-specific Norwegian language proficiency level before undertaking NAV job seeker

course and job practice serves as strong ties or weak ties in labor integration. The level of Norwegian language proficiency before NAV job seeker course and job practice are a predictor of stronger or weaker accumulation of host-specific cultural knowledge that link with the participant's prior foreign education skills.

Length of residence has strong significance here for integration as a longer duration of residence improves labor integration by the adjusted and affected skills the participant acquires according to signaling capacities. Annie's short duration of less than two years in Norway adversely influences Norwegian language skills and other host-specific cultural knowledge adjustment signaling a lower degree of accumulation of host-specific cultural knowledge and human capital. How well adjusted participant's skills are for labor integration is dependent on how well the employer perceives the worker's signaling capacities. Consequently, an evidence of a short residency in Norway of less than two years is a reason for Annie's low-skill job as kindergarten assistant six months after the Introduction Program.

In alignment with Annie's evidence, NAV's mentorship affects labor market outcomes of Eve, one of two East Africans in low-skill job six months after initial one-year Norwegian language training. After AETAT's (now NAV) mentorship, Eve a refugee and Congolese relates,

In the year 2000, my husband, four children, and I were resettled in Northern Norway. AETAT's recommendation got my first low-skill job as kindergarten caregiver, as I got no feedback from job applications I sent earlier after the initial one-year *Norsk* course. I worked very hard at learning oral *Norsk* through conversation with the children and staff during my six-month work as kindergarten assistant. After the job experience through AETAT, I got four low-skill job contracts through recommendations at different times networked by Norwegian friends even though I applied for one of the jobs. First, I worked at a high school as tutor for female refugees at upper secondary level for two years; next, with the Child Protection Agency as supervisor for a specific child over eight months period; next, with an institution for the mentally retarded as caregiver for one and a half years. At some point in time, I got a contract as interpreter at the office of the local county authority. I interpreted from two African languages and French to *Norsk* and from *Norsk* to these languages. I was given hourly wage when called to work. The best impact of this job was an attestation from the county authority indicating my fluency in *Norsk* as recommendation for college admission in Norway. Earlier, through the French medium from Congo, I obtained a B.Sc. in Education with emphasis in History and Social Science, recognized by NOKUT. In Africa, I worked as a teacher for one and a half years, and then at a development NGO for four years. I got admission at a university in Norway and obtained a B.Sc. in Social Science with emphasis in Political Science and wrote my thesis in *Norsk*. I am presently doing a master's in Education at the University of Oslo. After my B.Sc. in Norway, I saw an advertisement in the newspaper for a teaching position as French and English teacher in upper secondary school in Halden. Among six interviewees, four Norwegians and two Africans, I was employed. I believe I was employed because my demonstration of how to teach children who do not have prior knowledge of a language was better than the others as I did such work in Northern Norway as a tutor. At the interview, it was important that I did one year of French studies through my bachelor's in Norway,

even though I did all my education from Africa through the French medium which gave me an excellent proficiency in French. I studied English both in grade school and at a language institute in Africa. Being a teacher from Africa means I studied pedagogy in teacher's college. This was essentially scrutinized at the interview because of its key importance in the teaching field. When teaching French and English in Norway, one teaches civics through compositions written by students in French and English. The interview reflected that my bachelor's in Norway was of key relevance to my being selected, as Political Science taught in that degree program gave me good knowledge of civics. My knowledge of *Norsk* demonstrated well at the interview was an essential point of reference by the interviewers. I had a three month probation period at work, and I have worked for more than one year now.
(Eve, East Africa no. 1 from Congo)

Eve's evidence shows that job practice obtained through NAV mentorship after a one-year Introduction Program, will most likely place the participant with foreign higher education in low-skill jobs because of weaker host specific language proficiency from the Introduction Program. In line with this, Eve's evidence agrees with articulations earlier that most jobs for the newly arrived are obtained through social networks by friends, which puts the immigrant in a less favorable situation of being in low-skill jobs. Because of a short duration of residency in Norway, newcomers in these circumstances do not easily develop networks of professional references and contacts in their profession which are crucial to opening doors to suitable employment opportunities.

Further, Eve's evidence shows that not only Norwegian language proficiency is important. In part, Eva's evidence shows that employers' job-skill preference dictates that the immigrant possess certain 'background abilities'; in fact, relevant higher innate academic abilities or individual resources and personality necessary to function as teacher in Norway. Eve's evidence shows that this is true for both immigrants who attain their education abroad and the native-born Norwegians. Norwegians were turned down for the teaching position to which Eve was hired. Eve's evidence shows that these background attainments are the reason for the higher educational attainment in the first place, and to some extent it is these abilities which produce a greater success for the teacher in the Norwegian labor market, and not only the education credentials. Among others, Eve's knowledge of pedagogy from her African degree, her knowledge of political science and Norwegian language proficiency from her Norwegian degree, French from both Africa and Norway, English from Africa, and two-year job experience as tutor from Norway, were all innate academic abilities and individual resource that served as background abilities to function as teacher in Norway. Eve's evidence aligns with the literature review which describes such phenomena as integration through multiculturalism. Thus, a social theory advocate, Baumann

(1999: 119) injects that multiculturalism is not “a patchwork of five or ten fixed cultural identifications, but an elastic web of crosscutting and always mutually situational identifications” that “cut across each other’s reified boundaries” processing integration and hybridization of peoples. As a result, Eve’s evidence agrees that further improvement of host-specific skills through work experience and further higher education in Norway decrease the employment gap between the immigrant and the native born with time of residency that improves human capital.

The analyses on the participants in low-skill jobs show that even though initially the Asian group had better access to labor market networks than the African groups, all 6 in low-skill jobs six months after the Introduction Program experienced a relative waste of human capital because of lack of host-specific human capital due to their initial relatively short duration in Norway. Thus, all their evidences agree that their initial low-skill contractor jobs with minimum wage promised no guarantee for lifetime relevant employment in prior higher education profession. All their evidences agree that their initial low-skill jobs were characterized by poor working incentives such as sub-contract, low wage, no job insurance, no in-house job-related up-grading course in their prior foreign professions, and no advancement opportunity commensurate with foreign higher education professions. This is the factor that triggered Eva’s desire to pursue further higher education in Norway. As a result, the duration of residency is a key factor in labor integration.

6.3.6 Networks Enhanced by the Unemployed Participants

Six months after the Introduction Program, the eleven unemployed participants who experienced initial barriers that blocked employment, used other networks afterwards to increase their skills to enter the Norwegian labor market in education-skill job-match positions. These participants included 5 West Africans, 4 East Africans, and 2 Asians. Three sample participants, one from each world region, cite coping strategies in their experiences as each participant relate,

I scored all A’s in my exams in the first year of the English language medium master’s program in Network and System Administration at the Oslo University College in Oslo. In the second year of the master’s program, the head professor in my department gave me a part-time contractor job as lab course teaching assistant for 1st year students in the program. Both my bachelor’s in Computer Engineering and work experience from Thailand influenced my academic excellence in Norway and networked my obtaining the present part-time job contract. As I have only one year of Norwegian language training from the Introduction Program, I am making progress in studying the Norwegian language on my own from the internet. Norwegian language difficulties had impeded previous job search for me.

(Alex, Asia no. 3 from Thailand)

In 2001 the NAIC (later NOKUT) evaluation of my credential underrated my college education in Physical Education (PE). This is a 3-year university diploma from the French Ivory Coast while I lived as refugee from Rwanda. Upon completing an NAIC recommended 1-year (60 ECTS credits) college bridging courses in English and French language skills, the NAIC awarded my university diploma a Norwegian bachelor's equivalence. I sent 30 job applications to teach PE in secondary schools in Norway without getting employment until I completed an additional 2-year study awarding me another bachelor's degree through Norwegian language medium in preparation to teach in Norway. Hence, I got a contact to teach PE, English, and French in a secondary school in Moss after being awarded the Norwegian bachelor's in preparation to teach in Norway. I sent a job application and underwent a lengthy interview and was selected among a lot of applicants. After one year, I am now fully employed in the same position. I had earlier had one year each of Introduction Program and Study Competence, meaning I had been re-training to work in Norway for a period of 5 years.

(Etta, East Africa no. 4 from Rwanda)

In 2004 my 3-year university diploma in Nursing Mid-wifery from the French medium in Guinea was declared invalid for NOKUT recognition. According to my contact person in the refugee services office in Bergen, mid-wifery in Norway is a graduate program not equivalent in level with my undergraduate university diploma. I completed the 1-year Introduction Program (800 hrs.). To get into university in Norway, I was requested to complete the terminal class of the General Competence program—which is regular secondary school program in Norway—to fulfill the 13th year of Norwegian secondary schooling. Upon completion, I got a Real Competence certificate as regular high school graduate in Norway. I had earlier graduated from a 12-year secondary school program in Liberia. With an invalid higher education credential from Guinea, I could not be recommended as a mid-wife in Norway. Therefore, through the Real Competence and Nursing-Midwifery credentials and work experience as midwife from Africa, I was recommended by a personnel from AÆTAT with whom I pleaded to assist me get a job. Through that, I worked on probation as caregiver in an elder home and in six months I got a 40 per cent short-term contract in the same facility. Also, using the 2 credentials as prerequisite for admission, I am now studying Nursing at the University of Bergen in Norway.

(Ruth, West Africa no. 2 from Liberia)

In alignment with other articulations earlier, the participants' evidence above agrees that NOKUT partial recognition of foreign higher education, invalid higher education credential, and Norwegian language deficiency are key predictors of initial unemployment. The participants' evidence agrees that other indicators of initial unemployment are lack of initial network for the labor market such as a lacking of job-skill recommendation from the host community.

Alex curtailed the latter challenge through networking an education-skill job-match relationship sanctioned by his academic excellence of all A's, a strong influence enhancing his corresponding para-professional employment as Information Technology lab assistant. Etta curtailed labor market challenges by first fulfilling NOKUT's re-credentialing process and then completing an additional degree in preparation to teach in Norway, the strong indicators of her prompt full-time contractor job as Physical Education, French, and English teacher in Moss. These improved

human capitals lead to Etta's prompt full-time employment relinquishing being a contractor. Ruth, in the process of curtailing labor market challenges, re-did the terminal class of secondary school in Norway as her university diploma in Nursing-midwifery was invalid because it was not at the same level with Midwifery education, a graduate program, in Norway. Coping strategies and networks place Ruth in a low-skill caregiver position while she obtains admission in college in Norway to study Nursing.

The participants' evidence shows that additional higher education in Norway created the highest probability for being in high-skill employment relevant to profession. The participants' evidence shows that host-specific human capital accumulation through further Norwegian language medium higher education, or for Alex, through English language medium higher education in Norway, improved chances of education-skill job-match relationships and human capital. The participants' evidence shows that as years of residence increase the number of refugees with foreign higher education in employment increases.

The participants' labor market outcomes reveals that Norwegian higher education seems highly valued in the Norwegian labor market than some tertiary foreign higher education degrees from the 'south.' The participants' evidence above shows similarity to evidence of other participants earlier in this study. For example, earlier elsewhere in the analysis, Jack's evidence showed that even though he obtained the same degree in Tanzania including working experience, he obtained a contract as Social Worker in Norway only after he had obtained a three-year bachelor's degree in Norway in Social Works. Similarly earlier, Ernest's evidence showed that even though he obtained from Africa a bachelor's and a master's degree in Science Education through the French language medium, he got a contract as French and Mathematics teacher in Norway only after obtaining in Norway a three-year bachelor's degree in Special Pedagogy, French and Mathematics. Also earlier, William's evidence showed that though he had vast experience from Africa as secondary school teacher and teacher trainer, he was turned down four times for lack of teaching experience in Norway. William was still a student in college when he became a participant in this study. Even in the absence of formal barriers when occupational qualifications are fully recognized in the cases of William, Ernest, and Jack; challenges these skilled refugees face in getting jobs matching their foreign higher qualifications is not only a lack of expertise in the Norwegian language, but also employers' apprehension regarding skills of the profession in which they obtain higher education from the 'south.'

The participants' evidence agrees that further higher education in Norway enhanced adjustments to host-specific cultural traditions in the host country Norway. The argument is that employers do not seem to value some experiences gained outside of Norway and therefore evaluate skill participants as if they have no prior work experience in their fields. Thus, the transferability of the participants' foreign educational training are heightened after Norwegian higher education. As a result, the participant must rely on previous training from their country of origin and present training from Norway. The combination of individual attributes—levels and scope of the various educations, skills, and Norwegian language proficiency—are an increasing level of specialization that increases people's knowledge within specific job settings. For instance, good Norwegian language ability improves the presentation of the potential productivity of a participant who becomes a job seeker, irrespective of whether the key tool required for job performance is language/conceptual skills or technical skills. As evident by Etta job application and interview, the Norwegian language was used actively to signal the relevance of competence wanted by the employer. The Norwegian language becomes an attribute of social network, while the signaling skills for job performance reduce the effect of discrimination as the employer acquires more reliable information about the actual skills of the immigrant job applicant. In other words, the gap between the perceived and actual skills gets smaller as the employer receives more reliable guarantee about prospective performance.

Even though further higher education in Norway may seem like a relevant educational-skill job-match predictor, further Norwegian language training through Study Competence after the Introduction Program is assessed briefly for an improved labor market utilization and human capital.

6.3.7 After Study Competence

NOKUT recognized or partially recognized foreign degree did not curtail Norwegian language and other pertinent challenges posed by the participants' lack of linguistic capital and low labor market outcomes after the Introduction Program. As much as it seems difficult to justify Norwegian language training of long duration for people with higher education, there is relative improvement in labor market outcomes for the twelve participants in this study who underwent further Norwegian language training at intermediate level through the one-year Study

Competence, General Competence, or Norwegian language level-three certificate course as 2 sample participants' responses relate,

I arrived in Namsos in 2001 as a refugee from Rwanda, and underwent one academic year each of the initial Norwegian language training and the Study Competence course. I got NOKUT partial recognition of my five-year Master's degree. Through about 50 applications after the initial Norwegian language training, I tried to find a job as an engineer to commensurate my master's degree from Algeria in Construction Engineering, but got negative responses. Even the recommendation from the local municipal office in Namsos, Norway where I did job practice in the post of construction technical supervisor, to conclude the initial Norwegian language training, was unfruitful in assisting me obtain a job in my field. Upon giving up on finding a job in engineering, I did Study Competence to improve my Norwegian language skills in better preparation for the labor market as I had no intentions for additional higher education in Norway. Among many applications after Study Competence, I sent one to AETAT (now NAV) for a position as consultant in public administration, advertised in a newspaper. I went through an interview and was hired being most eligible among about one hundred applicants. My resume from Africa had showed eleven years of key responsibilities in construction engineering and management. However at AETAT, the job responsibility given me for the first two years was logistic, reception, and personnel assistant. Paramount skills demanded for the job were computer knowledge, fluency in the Norwegian language and communication skills. I finally rose to the post of consultant after two years. Thus, now I assess job applications and make decisions on them. I receive people, examine their employment and social/financial needs, and provide advice, etc. (Elijah, East Africa no. 5 from Rwanda, 2008)

I have a B.Sc. in Economics and Accounting from Dakar University in Senegal. Before my husband, children and I come to Namsos, Norway as refugees in 2001, I had five years of working experience as an accountant at a development NGO in Senegal. In Norway, I could not find a job after completing one year of Introduction Program and another year of Study Competence. I was unemployed for one additional year receiving financial assistance from the Norwegian government through AETAT while I continued job search. Then upon AETAT's request I did two job seeker courses, one in office communication and another in computer skills, and applied for an accountant position advertised in a newspaper. I immediately got the job after going through an interview. More than twenty Norwegians had applied for the same position, but my qualification, job experience, and the Norwegian certificates/recommendation from job seeker courses and Norwegian language training were instrumental in helping me get the job. Competences required for the job were precision, independence, good experience in accountancy, and computer skills. I had all these. Even though I spoke and wrote the Norwegian language fairly before I started the job four years ago, I have improved my Norwegian language skills on the job to a level I consider as good.

(Rose, West Africa no. 5 from Senegal, 2008)

After an additional one-year Study Competence course, analytical induction in this study compares participants' Norwegian language skills level with labor market outcomes. A VOX publication (2008) indicates that Study Competence is a remedial course at local secondary school in Norway which provides language-arts, social studies, science, and mathematics education primarily through Norwegian language medium. The VOX publication indicates that Study

Competence course is equivalent to secondary school leaving certificate enhancing admission to Norwegian language medium degree program.

Labor market outcomes of Rose and Elijah show that their Study Competence program provides Norwegian language competence at intermediate level that enhances relatively appreciable labor market absorption for refugees with foreign higher education in Norway. Elijah's labor market outcome shows that employers' labor integration strategy of flexible on-the-job Norwegian language training to rise from low-skill job to high-skill occupations in Norway works better after Study Competence as compared to Ernest's situation earlier in a tutor position after the Introduction Program. Rose's evidence suggests that Study Competence provides sufficient Norwegian language readiness for prompt employment to technical occupations where employers follow their business interests to employ persons skilled with technical knowledge and experience. The evidences from Rose and Elijah show Norwegian language requirement from employees in two categories. Rose's evidence shows that employers viewing technical skills as key tool for job performance in higher education positions have relatively lower preference of spoken language agency required of employees. Rose's employment as accountant is evident of lower preference of Norwegian language skills for job performance as the employer's higher preference/tool required for job independence demands technical skills such as good experience in accountancy and computer skills. Elijah's evidence shows that employers viewing language/conceptual skills as key tool for job performance have relatively higher preference of spoken language agency required of employees. A higher preference of Norwegian Language skills is evident when a demand on Elijah for language fluency is sanctioned by an availability of on-the-job Norwegian language and communication skills training for job performance. This leads Elijah through a two-year transition from a low-skill job responsibility to the high-skill managerial position he was hired to occupy.

In the preceding phenomena, the participants show an apt recognition that success meant deciding to acquire Norwegian language agency through the Study Competence course. Jenkins (2002:106-107) reiterates that yielding to Bourdieu's 'symbolic violence' through relevant training perfects the competence desired and enhances the required 'pedagogic agency' desired.

6.4 Conclusions

Given resource constraints, a small sample size of 18 refugees with prior foreign higher education from West Africa, East Africa, and Asia were interviewed through the semi-structured qualitative research approach in order to create the beginning of a comparison to enhance doing a generalization of the results of the study to cover immigrants with prior higher education from the 'south' who reside in Norway. To ensure a reliability of the data collected from the refugees who are participants in the study, I have ensured a "fit between what the researcher record and what really occur in the natural setting researched as a degree of accuracy and comprehensiveness of coverage" (Cohen et al., 2005: 19). To ensure a validity of the data, I have enhanced a credible and transferable "honesty, depth, richness, and scope of the data, the participants approached, and the objectivity of the researcher" (Cohen et al., 2005: 105). Thus, in the analysis and interpretation of the data, results from comparison of phenomena in participants' experiences compared participant groups from the three world regions as well as other key categories of the participants. This confirmed theories such as human capital, linguistic capital and the pedagogy agency of cultural capital that explain the accumulation of various societal wealth (capital) that participants acquired through competitive struggles in Norway. Phenomena in participants' experiences conformed to findings in prior research of NAV and Statistics Norway longitudinal survey report in chapter 1 on immigrant unemployment and underemployment in Norway. Phenomena in participants' experiences exposed the life-world of the participants through Norwegian language training, higher education recognition, NAV job seeker courses, further higher education in Norway, host community/employer provision of service/jobs, and other strategies for entry to Norwegian labor market. Phenomena in participants' experiences are explained by other key concepts such as 'integration' and 'multiculturalism,' exposing the complexity of diversity for acculturation of the refugee with foreign higher education in Norway. This study has not discussed the concept of 'discrimination' as other terms such as 'barrier' and 'challenge' were relevant in describing the difficulties in phenomena of participants' experiences. Thus, the authenticity of the qualitative interpretative paradigm is confirmed as it has offered interpretive insights into how individual participants in the context make sense of given phenomena in their experiences while confirming theories that were generated in the process. With that said conclusions on deliberations in the analysis and interpretation of the data that answered the research questions are put forth.

Norwegian language deficiencies six months after their participation in a one-year Introduction Program create initial unemployment and underemployment for about 94 per cent of the refugees with prior foreign higher education. This evidence suggests that the labor market constraints refugees with foreign higher education initially had not change significantly after the first 18 months in Norway to create higher education-skill job-match relationships.

The significance of duration of residence and undertaking relevant Norwegian education are more important for Norwegian language proficiency and finding relevant job.

NOKUT full recognition did not curtail challenges of under-utilization of refugees' foreign higher education such as these:

- Lower quality of refugee education/skills, or less relevant to the Norwegian workplace,
- Employment of the refugee below actual level of skills, and
- Lower wage for the immigrant doing work at the same level as native born Norwegians.

Other predictors of initial unemployment and underemployment were NOKUT partial recognition, invalid credentials, lengthy licensing process in regulated profession, lack of Norwegian job experience, and a lengthy duration of Norwegian language training to do bridging courses. Coping strategies were Norwegian higher education which created the highest probability for being in a high-skill job, while the Study Competence course and the mentorship of NAV job seeker course and job practice provided a significant probability for education-skill job-match relationships.

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Appendix

The Guide for Participants' Semi-structure Interview

Nationality of Interviewee: _____

Gender: _____

Age: _____

Mother Tongue: _____

Country of Origin: _____

Duration in Norway: _____

1. What higher education did you obtain prior to your arrival in Norway and with what degree?
2. Have you obtained a formal recognition of that education in Norway? If yes, how? If no, why?
3. What was the language of instruction during your studies prior to your arrival in Norway?
4. Describe your proficiency of the language through which you obtained that education?
5. What was your occupation prior to your arrival in Norway?
6. Why did you seek such employment?
7. What were your responsibilities at work?
8. How many years did you work at that job?
9. Have you obtained any further education in Norway?
10. What kind of education have you obtained?
11. In what language did you obtain that education?
12. Describe your proficiency in oral and written Norwegian? Very poor/poor/fair/average/good/very good/excellent
13. What is your current employment in Norway?
14. Why did you seek such employment?
15. Describe the process through which you acquired your present job?
16. In your opinion, what challenges did you encounter in getting the job?
17. What strategies did you adopt to deal with the challenges?
18. What were the major skills needed for your employment?
19. What are your actual job responsibilities as compared with those perceived before

employment?

20. What personal qualities were required for the job?
21. Is the job you have today relevant in relation to the higher education you obtained prior to arriving in Norway? Why? Why not?
22. Is your present job relevant to the education you have obtained in Norway if any? Why? Why not?
23. If you do not have a job relevant to your higher education, what do you think are the reasons?
24. How long did it take before you became employed in Norway? Why?
25. Does your company offer you advancement opportunities? If yes, can you explain how?
26. What do you see as the employer's objective for recruitment to the position you hold?
27. What opportunities did you expect before employment?
28. Does your company offer you any incentives?
29. What do you consider as your greatest benefits from the work?
30. What are your goals for working?
31. To what extent are these goals being reached?
32. What do you think of higher education?
33. Do you encourage your friends or family to take higher education? Why/Why not?
34. Do you feel that having a higher education is worth the effort? Why/Why Not?