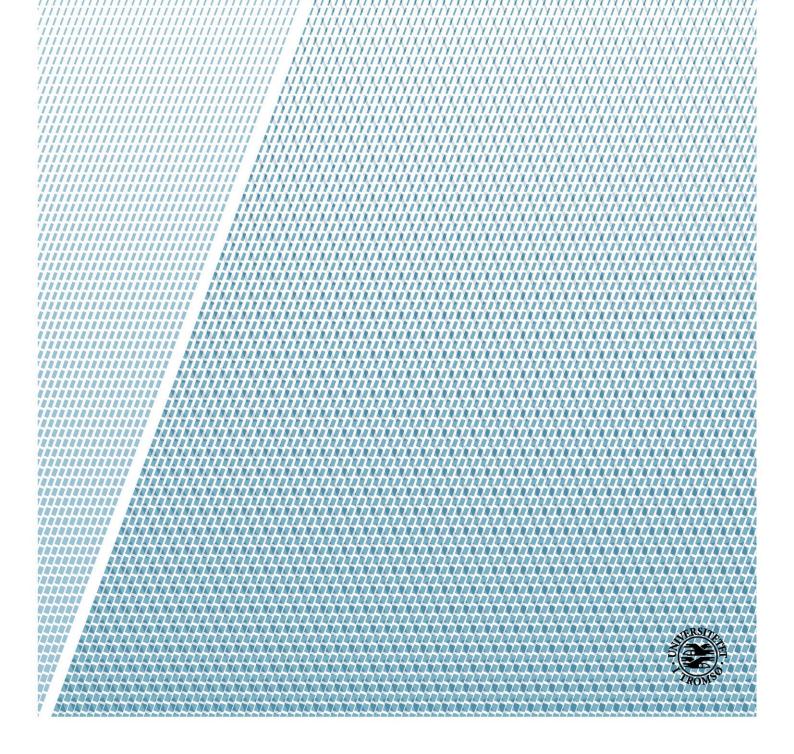# SOMALI WOMEN IN MINNESOTA AND NORWAY

A COMPARISON

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Master's Thesis in Political Science STV-3900- December 2016

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-SOMALI WOMEN IN MINNESOTA AND NORWAY: A COMPARISON

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SUMMARY

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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1. INTRODUCTION

In 1991, a decades-long rule of dictator came to an end in Somalia, the state collapsed and a civil conflict along clan lines escalated. Divided by war, famine and in the wake of ongoing unrest, over one million Somalis fled the country and subsequently resettled in countries around the world. For those who have fled involuntarily as refugees, migration becomes an experience of multiple, simultaneous losses: loss of extended networks of family and friends, of livelihoods, of a homeland. Among migrants and receiving societies alike, migration and integration necessitate discussions about the organizing principles of a given community, prompt articulations of national identity and shared values, and what it means to belong, all of which are informed by gendered, racial and ethnic hierarchies (Anthias 2013; Brah 2003; Yuval Davis 2006). In the many and varied places Somalis have relocated since the early 1990's, considerable attention has been given to them as a group (Al-Sharmani 2006; Brown 2014; Hopkins 2010; Pisani 2013; Voyer 2015). As gendered, racialized, often visibly Muslim migrants in Western societies, particular scrutiny has been directed towards Somali women. They have commonly been characterized as the quintessential Other (Bassel 2010; Kiil 2008; Mohamed 1999), frequently featured in media and political discussions concerning migrant integration (Fangen 2007a; Ngunjiri 2013; Schrock 2008).

Exceptions to these narratives exist, however. The most notable being the Somali community in the American state of Minnesota, where Somalis have established themselves as a prominent cultural and economic force, catering not only to the Somali community, but also to the larger Minnesotan society. In the past two decades, Somali women in Minnesota have established hundreds of businesses, and together with the community founded dozens of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), schools, and even a museum (Belz 2015; Carlson 2007; Golden et al. 2010; Horst 2007). The apparent success of the community in Minnesota is seemingly unparalleled in the global Somali diaspora and has thereby become a subject of comparison with the Somali communities in Finland (Harinen et al. 2014), Norway (Goff 2010; Helskog 2008; Schulze 2010), and Sweden (Carlson 2007). Somali professionals from the Nordic countries have held exchanges (Yuen 2011), and representatives from Norwegian and Swedish

municipalities have even made multiple trips to Minnesota with the express purpose of learning about "solutions" for integrating Somalis (Sandve 2016; Shah 2010). The reception of Somalis in Norway has been characterized by outright hostility. A common narrative Norwegian society asserts that Somalis are apparently unable or unwilling to integrate (Voyer 2015; Zimmerman and Zetter 2011). Somali women have faced ongoing media exposure involving intimate areas of their lives, concerning female genital cutting, rumors of welfare fraud, and their relatively low levels of labor market participation, (Bråten and Elgvin 2014; Fangen 2006; 2007a; OSF 2013).

Migrants leave and are received by societies shaped by their distinct paths to state formation, migration histories, labor markets, faith and social welfare systems, all of which are informed by gendered, racial and ethnic hierarchies (Anthias 2013; Brah 2003).

Minnesota and Norway are similar[1], yet distinct examples of "Western-ness", as evident in their different approaches to policies concerning migration and migrant integration (Hopkins 2010: 521). Variations in policy and institutional structures influence access to language classes, general educational opportunities, housing and employment, and as such, an individual's ability to establish themselves in a new society (Ali 2011; Capps et al. 2015; Hopkins 2010). Social categories of race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic status, or religion, change according to the given cultural context, as do the ways in which associated systems of oppression operate (Anthias 2012).

1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

My aim with this thesis is to synthesize the existing literature related to the integration processes of Somali women in Minnesota and Norway. To guide the assembly of a comprehensive overview, I adopt a postcolonial feminist approach, along with an intersectional framework. By illuminating how race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender and religion intersect, I seek to destabilize dominant perceptions surrounding the integration processes of Somali women. In order to achieve these aims:

I will collect literature from diverse sources to map out what is known of how the intersections of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender and religion are linked to contextual factors shape the ability Somali women in Norway and Minnesota

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[1] Some have suggested these specifically provide a particularly interesting case of comparison, considering the large population of Norwegian and Swedish migrants that settled in Minnesota throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Carlson 2007; Helskog 2008).

The use of a postcolonial feminist lens allows me to take into account the historical, political and social contexts that impact the lives of Somali women in the diaspora As well as I wish to direct attention towards the role the receiving society plays in determining the outcomes of Somali women; structural factors, societal - and what role affects the integration process experienced by Somali women. I seek to direct attention towards the ways in which these processes differ in Minnesota and Norway and the maintenance of dominant and subordinate positions in these societies. As axes of differentiation; race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender and religion intersect to influence the material circumstances of groups and individuals. With these intersections in mind:

Based upon an intersectional and postcolonial analysis of the existing literature, what specific contextual factors (policies, practices) can be identified in migration policy and practices that facilitate or impede the ability of Somali women to fully participate in the social, cultural, political and economic structures of Minnesota and Norway?

1.2 RELEVANCE/ CONTRIBUTION OF RESEARCH

Migration and integration are cross- disciplinary areas of inquiry and provoke continuous public debate. Responses range from emotional to strictly quantitative rational about access to employment, welfare models and budgets, national security, religious difference. More often than not, they are characterized by their negativity and lack of depth (Favell 2001). Furthermore, as Frideres and Biles (2012) comment the large scale of both settlement and integration programs, "does not lend itself to rapid change", which means cross-national, or sub-national comparisons are "invaluable". To possess a deeper understanding of the various approaches countries around the world attempt has the potential to guide more informed policy discussions and development (Frideres and Biles 2012).

The decision to include an extensive background was made with the intent to assemble as clear and concise a portrait of diversity among Somali women in Minnesota and Norway. Moreover, this section may serve as a useful resource for future research on Somali women in other diasporic locations.

1.3 TERMINOLOGY

In this section, I will clarify terms that I use frequently throughout the thesis. When quotes from sources are used within the text, they are cited as they appear in the original document, and may therefore use terms that do not necessarily correspond with those explained here.

1.3.1 Majority

Following Cecilie Thun (2012), I use the term "majority population" when referring to the numerical, and culturally dominant white majority of the population in Minnesota and Norway. I will also use the terms "majority-Norwegians" or majority-Minnesotans" as well. In turn, Minority Rights Group defines an "ethnic minority" as "a group which is numerically inferior to the rest of the population in a society, which is politically non-dominant and which is being reproduced as an ethnic category" (Minority Rights Group 1990: xiv, as cited in Thun 2012: 39).

1.3.2 Somali Women

For the purpose of this thesis, I use *Somali* or *Somali woman*, to refer to individuals who hold, or have held Somali citizenship, and arrived migrated to Minnesota or Norway, regardless of age or current citizenship. This does not necessarily exclude information about those with Somali ancestry who were born in Norway or the United States, but rather to clarify the main population this study will cover. If information is about that generation, it will be noted. In addition, it is necessary to emphasize that the term *Somali women* refers to a heterogeneous group of individuals whose lives are affected by a many other social identities beyond that of being a woman. Morris and Bunjun (2007), for instance, have underscored the importance of acknowledging the within-group diversity among Somali women in Canada. The Somali communities in Minnesota and Norway include women who have lived there for two months or two decades; they were born in these countries, Somalia or a third country; they are women who do not necessarily speak the same language as Somali has three regional dialects, and some are Arabic and Swahili speakers, some women are fluent in all of the above; they are women who hold a Ph.D. or have recently learned how write their name for the first time. They are women who are quite wealthy or living in poverty. They are women who have nine children or have none; they are women who wear the hijab, they are women who do not. They are women who hold very different ideas about what it means to be a woman, Somali, American, Norwegian, Muslim, mother, employed or empowered. It is necessary for this heterogeneity to be recognized so as to avoid construction of an essentialized idea or understanding of who a *Somali woman* is, or may be (Narayan 1998).

1.3.3 Refugee

Most Somali women in Minnesota and Norway have arrived as refugees. It is important to distinguish refugees from migrants, as these have legal definitions and therefore implications for migration, and circumstances of arrival. The United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention defines a refugee as: "someone who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself/herself of the protection of that country" (UNHCR 2016).

1.3.4 Migrant

The United Nations defines migrants as individuals who "choose to move not because of a direct threat of persecution or death, but mainly to improve their lives by finding work, or in some cases for education, family reunion, or other reasons. Unlike refugees who cannot safely return home, migrants face no such impediment to return" (UNHCR 2016). Although, unless otherwise specified, I generally use the terms "migrants" and "migration" when discussing general human mobility throughout the thesis.

1.3.5 Integration

The ways a new group are "located" within the many social relations of a receiving society[2] is vital to the group's future. Points of difference are created and maintained in an assortment of institutional practices, policies and economic processes (Brah 2003: 617). In the most basic sense, the term "integration" is often used to describe the processes that occur after a migrant been resettled in the receiving society. Robinson (1998) considers integration to be "a chaotic concept: a word used by many but understood differently by most[3]" (Robinson 1998: 118, as cited in Ager and Strang 2008: 166). One reason for this is that integration lacks a "single, generally accepted definition, theory or model" and the concept therefore, "continues to be controversial and hotly debated" (Castles et al. 2001: 12, as cited in Ager and Strang 2008: 166). This contention and uncertainty, Favell (2001) argues, has been crucial to integration's success by, "swallowing up other similar, but more precise, partial, or politically unfashionable terms for the same type of process" (Favell 2001: 352). Examples might include *assimilation*, *incorporation*, or *inclusion*. Assimilation, for instance, is a particularly loaded term that is often

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[2] For this study, I have decided to use the term *receiving society* to refer to Minnesota and Norway. Although "host society" is a commonly used term, it arguably conveys the notion of the migrant as a "guest" (for discussion, see Gullestad 2002a).

[3] Through the mid-20th century in the United States and arguably to this day, the term *integration* did not refer to immigrants in American society, but "the classic 'American dilemma' about the United States' native black minority population" (Favell 2001: 360).

associated with outdated, negative connotations of force or intolerance (Favell 2001; Joppke 2007). Several types of assimilation have been theorized, but a general understanding of the concept posits a need for migrants to leave their culture(s) behind, in order to fully adapt and embed themselves into the receiving society (Anthias 2013; Fennelly 2008; Joppke 2010). For the purpose of this thesis, integration is understood according to Frideres and Biles (2012), definition:

> the process (or end goal) by which immigrants become accepted into society, both as individuals and as groups, and are able to fully participate in the social, cultural, political and economic structures of their society [and is] a two-way process involving both immigrants and the host society. (Frideres and Biles 2012: 7)

This choice reflects the emphasis on what integration is often purported to be: a two-way process. Portes and Zhou (1993) consider these indicators (i.e., economic, cultural, residential, social integration) to be sub-processes of integration that lie within "the context of reception". The context of reception is composed of three elements: policies the receiving government has towards migrants (policies can vary from indifference and hostility to highly supportive); the attitudes or prejudices the receiving society has towards migrants; and "the qualities inherent in the migrant community itself" (Portes and Zhou 1993, as cited in Valenta and Bunar 2010: 466). The Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development's (OECD) evaluation of migrant integration, for example, utilizes socio-economic indicators that include labor market participation, income, and education, among others (Kunst et. al 2015). A 2015 OECD report emphasizes that "effective integration" is not merely an economic process concerned with employment rates, but important educational and social features as well. No single indicator is "mutually exclusive: disadvantage and the failure to integrate in one dimension are likely to have multiple repercussions" (OECD 2015: 19). To use policies as the sole contextual point of departure is problematic because it equates interethnic relations and integration with "official state structures such as rights, policies, legislation" (Favell 2001: 373). More importantly, policies simply communicate, "the extent to which the state succeeds in *defining, controlling, and managing* the phenomenon. It says little about whether this control is benevolent or highly dominating in its effects" (Favell 2001: 373, my emphasis). Anthias (2013) views integration as a "highly ideological notion" because it is based on the assumption of "integration into a given social fabric" (Anthias 2013: 328). More telling, perhaps, is that the term integration is not applied to all migrants. Newcomers from Western countries, for instance, are not met with the same demands to discard their "cultures" or learn the language of a receiving society

(Anthias et al. 2013). Favell (2001) stresses that focus should not only rest on the quantity of participation, but the *quality* of participation must be considered as well. The extent to which a group manages to influence policy and political outcomes (Favell 2001: 389). Do they influence agenda setting, issue definition, policy outcomes, or representation in public positions? These are important to keep for a postcolonial feminist framework, and its dedication revealing hegemonic structures and false universalisms and dominant understandings of Somali women in the two societies.

1.4 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This introduction has reviewed common terminology that will be used throughout the thesis; the aims and objectives; and research question: Based upon an intersectional and postcolonial analysis of the existing literature, what specific contextual factors (policies, practices) can be identified in migration policy and practices that facilitate or impede the ability of Somali women to fully participate in the social, cultural, political and economic structures of Minnesota and Norway? The next chapter will provide a brief background of Minnesota and Norway; with an in-depth overview of Somalia's history, from the precolonial period, through the Somali civil war. In the third chapter, I present the theoretical framework of postcolonial feminist theory and intersectionality. The fourth chapter details the methodology that was applied in this study; a cross-national case-based, multivocal literature review. In the fifth and sixth chapters, I examine the two cases: Minnesota and Norway respectively. In the seventh chapter, I analyze the findings from these cases.

2. BACKGROUND

Migration has been a continuous feature of American history and has played a central role in the construction of American national identity. In both the literal and figurative sense, the United States was "built by immigrants" (Martiniello 2013; Mollenkopf and Hochschild 2010). All white Americans are descendants of migrants, most of whom arrived in the United States between the 1840's and 1920's, and the ancestors of most black Americans were brought against their will, arrived as African slaves until the early nineteenth century (Mollenkopf and Hochschild 2010: 22). The United States have historically taken a laissez-faire approach to the integration of migrants, and long-regarded the process as something carried out, not by state or federal authorities, but the local community (Harinen et al. 2014). Despite nearly the entire population being composed of descendants of migrants, negative American public opinion and current political rhetoric may not necessarily reflect this (Mollenkopf and Hochschild 2010). Migration history is at times exploited by nativists, who claim the hardships experienced by migrants today reflect their personal deficiencies, when compared with the supposed ease and success of earlier generations of (European) migrants (Kutty 2010). Norway was once an emigration state[4] rather isolated from the migration trends of continental Europe (Muller Myrdahl 2010). In the first two parts of this chapter, I will present brief historical backgrounds of the two cases, Minnesota and Norway.

In this section, I will present a historical background and review the key organizing facets of Somali society. In line with the postcolonial feminist theoretical framework, this will include pre-colonial and colonial era Somalia, the post-independence period, through the Barre regime and the civil war. Somalis have been commonly been described as an ethnically homogenous community with "one religion, one language and one culture" (Brown 2014: 53). This observation has generally overlooked the importance of gender, class, and clan in producing a wide variety of social positions and determinants of accessibility to resources, such as education (Hopkins 2010; Moret 2006). In accordance with an intersectional framework, I have given priority to themes of gender relations or roles; how those have changed, or intersected with other social divisions in Somali society. The aim of this background is therefore to provide a foundation for a broader historical understanding of Somali society, and the multiplicity of social locations Somali women have occupied, past and present, as these necessarily influence

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[4] A combination of religious persecution and economic hardship fueled mass emigration from Norway, and more than 800,000 Norwegians migrated to the United States between 1825 and 1925 (Norway.org 2016).

the international migration and resettlement process in various ways (Abdi 2007; Kapteijns 2009; Kleist 2010; Mohamed 1999).

2.1 MINNESOTA

Minnesota is located in the Upper Midwestern region of the United States, and shares a border with Canada, and the states North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, and Wisconsin. Two Native American tribes, the Dakota and the Ojibwe, originally settled the area. Large-scale migration of white Europeans, primarily from Germany and Scandinavia, began in the mid- nineteenth century, and in 1858 Minnesota officially became the 32nd American state (Arnold 2015: 415). Minnesota was not a slaveholding state, nor was there the subsequent institutionalized segregation in the form of Jim Crow[5] laws that black Americans elsewhere in the country lived under. In the minds of many, not to mention geographically, Minnesota has always been far-removed from the slavery, civil unrest and racism southern United States. Throughout the mid-nineteenth century, white settlers in Minnesota (and eventually, the federal government) engaged in combat with the Dakota people. During this period, indigenous Americans were killed, tortured and forcibly relocated to reservations, often in other states (Arnold 2015). Meanwhile, the State Board of Immigration actively promoted European resettlement (MDHR 2008). The state once had some of the highest numbers of foreign-born residents in the country: as recently as 1920, one in five Minnesota residents were foreign-born (Otteson et al. 2010; USCB 1999). The demographic composition of these migrants was quite different[6] from that of today, and deliberately so. In the 1920's, the United States federal government introduced strict migration legislation, including national origin quotas which limited non-European migration, and effectively barred certain races from entry (Boyle and Ali 2009). On a local level, in 1948 the city of Minneapolis enacted the first municipal fair employment law in the nation. At the state level, a series of legislation[7] were passed in the following years outlawing discrimination in employment on the basis of race, color, creed, national origin and religion; protections that did not appear on the federal level until nearly a decade later with the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (MDHR 2008).

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[5] Jim Crow laws refer to "more than 400 state laws, constitutional amendments, and city ordinances legalizing segregation and discrimination" against black Americans (MDHR 2008) that were passed in the United States after 1865, into the early twentieth century. Largely, but not exclusively confined to Southern states.
[6] Over 90 % of migrants who arrived in the United States prior to 1960 were from Canada or Europe (Bean and Stevens 2003 as cited in Boyle and Ali 2009: 51).
[7] Fair Employment Practices Act of 1955; State Act against Discrimination in 1961; the Minnesota Human Rights Act of 1967 (MDHR 2008).

Major policy reforms enacted in the Immigration and Naturalization Act of 1965 abolished the national-origin quotas and non-European migrants have since dominated American migration (Abdi 2012). The Refugee Act of 1980 removed the requirement that refugees had to be persons fleeing from a communist country (Shandy and Fennelly 2006), and further opened the United States to the broader world. The Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area is the state's economic and political center, and has a long tradition of being politically progressive, though there are notable urban-rural divides in Minnesota (Ali 2011). These policies, along with Minnesota's interior location have shaped its historical demographics, and the state was long one of the more homogenous[8] , and in many ways still is. The foreign-born population and their children[9] comprised 10.9 % of Minnesota's population in 2014 (Minnesota Compass 2016a). In the Minnesota, Somalis are a part of the larger African diaspora, as well as a historically disenfranchised native black population (Kutty 2010; Martiniello 2013). Minneapolis-St. Paul has a well-educated population, high median incomes, and a relatively low unemployment rate. The general prosperity of white residents in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul area obscures what are among the worst racial disparities in the United States, as evidenced by the considerable gaps between black and white residents[10,] levels of education, employment, poverty, and homeownership rates (Metropolitan Council 2016). The nuanced forms of racism and prejudice remain pervasive in American society, and affect both native-and foreign-born blacks. Furthermore, the differences between the public welfare systems in Norway and the United States, though worthy of thorough attention, are far beyond the scope of this thesis (Goffman 2010; Helskog 2008; Schulze 2010).

2.1 NORWAY

Norway is located in the Northern periphery of Europe, and shares a border with Sweden, Finland and Russia. Following four hundred years of Danish colonial rule, Norway gained its independence in 1814, though shortly after entered into a union with Sweden. In 1905, Norway became an independent nation, interrupted several decades later, when occupied by Nazi German forces from 1940-1945. In the aftermath of the World War II, the Norwegian welfare state emerged characterized by its emphasis on "general welfare actions aimed at encompassing all citizens" (Valenta and Bunar 2010: 468). In 1968, migrants comprised less than 1% of the country's population, most of whom were refugees and laborers from elsewhere in Europe

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[8] In 1960, about 1% of Minnesota's population were people of color (Minnesota Compass 2016a).
[9] Foreign-born individuals made up 7.5 % of the population; the native-born population with at least one foreign-born parent was 3.4 % (Minnesota Compass 2016a)
[10] Includes foreign-born black and white residents.

(Muller Myrdahl 2010). In 1969, when massive oil reserves were located in the North Sea, and the demand for labor in Norway grew exponentially[11]. The arrival of several hundred Pakistani workers in the spring of 1971 is considered the start of a "new era" of immigration, and integration (Muller Myrdahl 2010; Østby 2013). In a matter of decades, Norway became one of the largest oil- and natural gas-exporting, countries in the world, accumulating enough wealth to live "in an economic universe of its own" (Stærk 2013).

In 1975, Norway imposed an "immigration stop", citing the need to focus on the integration of the new migrants (Østby 2013). It is technically correct that Norway, prior to the 1970's, did not have an integration policy or an official plan to improve ethnic relations that concerned *foreigners*[12] (Valenta and Bunar 2010). It was a ban on low- or unskilled labor migration, namely the positions that African and Asian migrants were usually considered to work in (Muller Myrdahl 2010). Since 1975, nearly all migrants from Africa and Asia have entered Norway as asylum-seekers or refugees, or through family reunification (Muller Myrdahl 2010). Meanwhile, students and skilled migrants from "the West" continued to enter Norway. The "immigration stop" of 1975, "altered the ways in which migrants from 'non-Western' countries arrived in Norway" (Muller Myrdahl 2010: 75), and I would argue, had an effect on how these migrants have been perceived since. Refugees and family members that join them in reunification consistently have lower levels of employment, income, and occupy some of the most disadvantaged locations in Norwegian society (Henriksen 2010; Østby 2013). The foreign born-population and their children[13] made up 16.4% of the population in 2014 (Statistics Norway 2015a). In Norway, Somalis were the first substantial black African *and* Muslim migrants, and their arrival belonging, culture, and integration (Kutty 2010; McEachrane 2014; Muller Myrdahl 2010).

In Norway, the term "integration" was intended to convey a message of acceptance own cultural and religious beliefs, favored as a more positive alternative to the controversial "assimilation". The term was (Alseth et al. 2014). Scholars have noted a distinct shift from an overall group-oriented approach to a greater emphasis on "individual *duties* to participate in society and conform to state bound norms and values" them (Siim and Skjeie 2008: 326, my emphasis), rather than the "opportunities" migrants have available to them. Policies in Norway have taken

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[11] Norway's largest newspaper, *Aftenposten* "reported on its front page that 13,000 more workers were needed across various industries" (4 January 1971, as cited in Muller Myrdahl 2010: 83)

[12] The assimilationist policies of "Norwegianization" (*fornorskingspolitikken*) the Norwegian government implemented towards the Sami.

[13] 13.4%

a turn into "on the one hand 'minority group', on the other hand, 'majority' concerns" (Siim and Skjeie 2008: 328).

Norway, along with the other Nordic countries, is known for its "female-friendly" welfare regime, well-established policies of "state feminism" and universal social rights (Borchorst and Teigen 2010; Midtbøen and Teigen 2014). The key elements of the welfare model that emerged in the twentieth century have premised a relatively high degree of social equality (Siim and Skjeie 2008). Norwegian integration policies have developed over the past three decades in response to increased migration, and revised under various governments. Research has shown a shift in their focus from a more multicultural view to that with an emphasis on personal responsibility (Jacobsen and Gressgård 2003; Muller Myrdahl 2010). Borchhorst and Teigen (2010) consider the "multiple policy logic" underlying the nature of the social policies developed to tackle inequality in the Scandinavian countries. First, welfare policies that were primarily intended to reduce socioeconomic inequalities. Policies promoting gender equality were adopted through the 1970's and onward, and policies concerning integration emerged in full at the beginning of the twenty first century (Borchhorst and Teigen 2010: 25-26). In the Norwegian context, emphasis on inequality has been placed in a successive order: first on class inequality, *then* gender inequality. Ethnicity made its way to the Norwegian political agenda in the past decade, "but with much less emphasis on inequality compared to class and gender" (Borchhorst and Teigen 2010: 26). Relatively little of the formalized approaches to gender equality has been applied to "equally formalized minority sensitive political recruitment practices" (Siim and Skjeie 2008: 326), also known as "affirmative action". 9).

2.2 SOMALIA

2.2.1 CLAN AND KINSHIP

Somalia is a coastal nation located on the Horn of Africa, and neighbors Djibouti, Ethiopia and Kenya. The country has a population of roughly 10.6 million[14], 85% of whom are ethnic Somali, and the remaining 15% consists of minority ethnic groups, such as the Bantu (CIA 2016). Clan, or *qabil*, has provided the most important organizational structure in nomadic-pastoral Somali society in terms of economics, politics and social safety nets (Kutty 2010). Along with Islam, it is considered a basic component of a collective Somali identity. Most social customs, norms

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[14] This is a July 2015 estimate derived from the last official census conducted by the Somali government in 1975 (CIA 2016).

and gender roles among Somalis originate from a combination of customary laws, called *xeer*, and Islamic tradition (Baadiyow 2015). There are two main clan groups, the Samaal, who are generally pastoral nomads, and the Saab, who are generally agro-pastoralists. Descendants of the Samaal, are further divided into four major clans: the Darood, the Dir, the Hawiya, and the Issaq (CMFC 2011). These make up roughly 75% of the Somali population. The remaining 20% are Saab descendants, further divided into the minor clans, Digil and the Rahanweyn, and all of the above are then split into various sub-clans (CMFC 2011). These are generally associated with various regions, the southern part of Somalia being more diverse than the North. Clans are based on the notion of common ancestry; they are patrilineal and passed through the male lineage in what Somalis call *tol,* which means, "to sew" (Omar 2009). A woman belongs to her father's clan by birth and technically remains so for the rest of her life. After marriage however, a woman is considered a part of her husband's clan, as they then "have claims on her productive and reproductive labor" (Al-Sharmani 2006: 67). Women, in other words do not have an exclusive clan identity, while men's identity is closely tied to their clan membership (Gardner and El Bushra 2004: 16). Exogamous marriages have been used as a means for sub-clans or families to form alliances or coalitions to minimize conflict, as will be discussed in the sections that follow.

2.2.2 PRE-COLONIAL SOMALIA

Somalis were first introduced to Islam in the 7th century, when groups of persecuted Muslims Arabs fled across the Gulf of Aden (Metz 1993). As a result, the Islamic faith was well established along the Somali coastline long before Islam gained traction in its origins (Metz 1993). The religion has since been a unifying force, as it transcends the clan divisions that have often fractured the Somali communities. The vast majority[15] of Somalis are Sunni Muslims, and today these two identities are so closely intertwined that "it is nearly impossible to disentangle what it means to be Somali from what it means to be Muslim" (Leet-Otley 2012: 14). Arab sailors and merchants continued to establish themselves in the port cities of Mogadishu and Zayla throughout the following centuries. Their cultural influence, however, did not travel far inland from the coast. Instead, populations in the interior received influence from came from Egypt, through Ethiopia (Metz 1993; Opsal 2005). In a review of historical oral literature, Lidwien Kapteijns (1995) analyzed gender relations in the late pre-colonial and

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[15] Estimates suggest up to 99% of Somalis identify as Muslim (Robillos 2001; Yusuf 2013).

early colonial period in northern, pastoral Somali society. The kinship ideology, as told through oral literature, provides insight as to what it meant to be a proper girl and wife. Surgical modification of her genitals was to remind a girl of the significance of protecting her sexual organs and honor. Once in puberty, a girl could take part in courtship practices, though her virginity was to be guarded, as dictated by both customary and Islamic law (Kapteijns 1995: 249).

Marriage was a central institution in pre-colonial Somali society; one that individuals had few, if any, alternatives to. Although only men had the authority to select marriage partners, it has been argued that the political importance of women was exemplified through the practice of exogamous marriage (Ingiriis and Hoehne 2013; Kapteijns 1995). This was to the extent that, "each married woman was therefore the bearer of social capital in that she represented the rights and duties of reciprocal sharing" (Kapteijns 1995: 247). Given the possibility of divorce though, women were encouraged to establish strong relationships with their children, especially their sons. A son represented a continuation of the clan, as daughters would be married into other communities. It must be emphasized that these are "not a description of social reality but of the dominant ideology's prescriptions for social reality" (Kapteijns 1995: 249), and though individuals took different approaches, "the prescribed structural inequalities outlined in this model were real and affected the lives of everyone" (Kapteijns 1995: 249).

Livestock signified the wealth of a family in pastoral society. Women traditionally did not own livestock, they oversaw the husbandry of goats and sheep and processed products such as meats, milk and skins and had full control over product exchange or sale (Gardner and El Bushra 2004; Ingiriis and Hoehne 2013). Therefore, in addition to their reproductive labor and management of households, women in precolonial pastoral society made important economic contributions as well.

2.2.3 COLONIAL PERIOD

Upon completion of the Suez Canal in 1869, the Red Sea region attained strategic importance. The arrival of Europeans shook the pastoral society and interfered with most of their traditional practices and modes of production (Kleist 2010). In the late 1880's. the region was drawn up[16]

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[16] The European "Scramble for Africa" in the late nineteenth century saw the division of the almost the entire continent, with only the Dervish state (a small section of present day Somalia), Ethiopia, Liberia remaining independent. The borders of African countries were sketched out with little attention to ethnic groups, and some countries have very "diverse ethnic tensions" Somalis were somewhat unique, as they were a people that were divided into five countries (Metz 1993).

and divided: Ogaden in the East was annexed by (and remains part of) Ethiopia; French Somaliland is present-day Djibouti, and today's Somalia was composed of British Somaliland in the North and much larger Italian Somaliland in the South (Yusuf 2013). The colonizers created townships where grazing lands had once been and pastoral social relations were altered in highly gendered ways. Changes were accelerated for those individuals resettled in towns as kinship ideology lost influence in terms of the acquisition and growth of capital. Labor was now obtained through wages, not the reciprocal rights and duties of the group (Kapteijns 1995: 255). This had a drastic effect on the institution of marriage, which became a particularly strong point of contention, and resulted in Italian and British legislative action. The southern part of Somalia was and still is, more diverse than the North, and the disparate styles of colonial rule have likely contributed to dimensions of the ongoing conflicts (Jabang 2015).

Intended as a means of increasing the productivity of male workers, the Italian colonial administration introduced a regulation that became known as "Italian marriage", in the 1920's, in which a man could marry a woman- without her or her family's consent (Aidid 2010: 106). Marriages in urban areas were increasingly becoming more of a relationship between two individuals and their immediate families rather than a union between communities (Ingiriis and Hoehne 2013; Kapteijns 1995). These urban developments caused enough confusion and turmoil that in 1928, British Somaliland enacted the "Natives' Betrothal and Marriage Ordinance", legislation that gave precedence to "tribal custom", the term they used to describe male authority over female kin (Aidid 2010). The "tribal custom", however, could be ignored if the woman in question went to the British magistrate of her district and stated that her kin was exercising unwelcome authority (Kapteijns 1995: 256). In essence, the creation of such a legal loophole meant that the colonial state allowed individuals (women, though more commonly men manipulating women) to circumvent the customary law *Xeer*. By doing so, the colonial state discretely reinforced the development of the urban marriage, but also institutionalized the control of Somali women in the hands of colonized Somali men (Aidid 2010: 108), reflecting the irrevocable fact that women (and children) had never been seen as anything other than dependents of men (Kapteijns 1995: 257).

The lived realities of urban and rural Somali women became increasingly dissimilar. Women's labor was a vital component of rural, pastoral communities, and although women's reproductive labor was still essential in the urban society, her status as "bearer of social capital" was severely diminished, replaced by new roles now defined by class (Aidid 2010). Urban, middle-class Somali women faced complete exclusion from working in the colonial administration and

private sector, and were instead encouraged to be sewing,-fine cuisine-cooking consumers and economically dependent on their husbands (Ingiriis and Hoehne 2013). Lower-class Somali women had to work out of necessity, and exchanged or sold small items they produced, such as woven mats. Their behavior was monitored closely however, and a vague pretense could have a young woman "delivered back to" her kin if a District Court deemed there was even a possibility that she *may* become a prostitute (Kapteijns 1995). With little access to education, barred from most employment opportunities, new social parameters and expectations, urban women in colonial Somalia "were marginalized by two forces of authority: the state and their communities" (Crosby 2008: 74). This is not to say women were submissive or accepting of their situation. When the British lifted a ban on political organizations in the 1940's and 1950's, urban, middle-class Somali women joined the Somali nationalist movement en masse. Through the use of a traditional form of oral poetry, women spread politicized messages, and liberation from colonial rule was high on their agenda (Aidid 2010).

2.2.4 POST-INDEPENDENCE

In 1960, British and Italian Somaliland declared independence, and united to establish the Somali Republic. Women had been essential to the independence movement. Nevertheless, as has happened in other countries[17], not a single major position in the new administration was given to a woman (Ingiriis 2015; Kapteijns 2009). In response, the 1960's saw the formation of feminist movements composed exclusively of urbanized middle-class women, the wives of political leaders. The deep divide between urban and rural women made it difficult to establish common ground ideals and stunted the feminist movement's spread to rural areas, which is where most Somali women lived (Ingiriis 2015). Unlike other former British colonies, "there is not a foot of railroad" in Somalia (Roble and Rutledge 2008). The British, invested in the Somali port cities, and did very little to develop infrastructure in the country's interior[18].

In 1969, Major General Siad Barre came to power through a coup d'état, and formed the Somali Revolutionary Socialist Party, and aligned the state with the Soviet Union in the Cold War (Southers and Hienz 2015). The subsequent socialist military regime banned all independent political and social associations, thus ending women's freedom of association. On paper, women's rights were seemingly advanced under the Barre regime, as they were granted equal

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[17] Egypt, for instance (Kapteijns 2009).
[18] The lack of infrastructure is among the reasons why nomadic tradition has remained so widespread, for so long (Roble and Rutledge 2008). In 1987, just a few years before the onset of civil war, nearly 65% of Somalis were nomadic pastoralists, the highest percentage of any country in the world (Green 2003: 82).

access to jobs and paid maternity leave (Ingiriis 2015). In addition, numerous women served as members of Barre's pseudo-parliament and as senior public officials. However, such positions of influence were granted to women who were related to high-ranking military officers through clan affiliation or marriage (Ingiriis 2015). The same was true of the Somali Women's Democratic Organisation (SWDO), which was established and used to legitimize and further the regime's interests, more so than women's equality. The SWDO did however, increase efforts to eradicate the practice of FGC (Crosby 2008; Ingiriis 2015).

In a plan to "modernize" Somali society, Barre introduced the Family Law of 1975, which declared men and women equal in various social issues such as inheritance, divorce, and marriage. The legislation was extremely controversial from the outset, as it contradicted both the customary and Islamic laws of Somali society (Ingiriis 2015). Little was done in terms of its enforcement, nor did it reflect the reality of most urban Somali women. Only a small, upper-class group of urban women stood to benefit from its implementation (Gardner and El Bushra 2004). In a highly provocative move, the Barre regime executed ten Islamic sheikhs after they spoke out against the Family Law of 1975. The act intensified a shift towards Islam as a source of "new" public morality: popular opposition to the oppressive regime was expressed through religiosity, which was symbolized by conservative gender ideology (Kapteijns 2009). Many turned to religion as a safe space to discuss politics, because "even Barre had to respect the sanctity of the mosque" (Akou 2004: 55). The legislation is ultimately viewed to have done more harm than good for Somali women, as "women's empowerment" became associated with the authoritarian regime, and incompatible with Islam (Baadiyow 2010; Ingiriis 2015).

In 1977, Somali troops invaded the Ogaden region of Ethiopia. Somali-allied Soviet Union condemned the invasion, ended its support of Somalia and instead pledged to aid the communist regime in Ethiopia (Southers and Hienz 2015). Barre then declared his allegiance to the United States, and the Americans severed ties with Ethiopia, and switched to support to Somalia. This "violent Cold War proxy battle" destabilized the region and injected massive amounts of weaponry into Somalia (Southers and Hienz 2015: 9). Meanwhile, opposition to the Barre regime grew, as did tensions along clan lines throughout the 1980's. Fighting broke out in northern Somalia in 1988, and when the Cold War ended, so did the financial aid from the West. The Somali government collapsed, Barre fled the country, and in 1991, clan-based conflicts escalated to full civil war across the now- heavily-armed country (Southers and Hienz 2015: 9).

2.2.5 CIVIL WAR

The impact of the civil war on the lives of most, if not all, Somalis is difficult to understate. Thousands of Somalis have died due to violence and famine, and millions of people were displaced internally, and over a million more Somalis escaped into bordering Kenya and Ethiopia, where hundreds of thousands of refugees remain today (UNHCR 2015). The lack of material and physical security has had particularly severe repercussions for women. Regular tasks such as getting food, water, shelter and medicine became nearly impossible at the height of the conflict[19] (Crosby 2008). Many women have been subjected to, or witnessed physical violence and sexual assault, either prior to leaving Somalia, during migration, or in refugee camps (Abdi 2007; Hopkins 2010; Robertson et al. 2006). It would be misleading to claim that Somali women were simply passive victims of war; some took up arms and became combatants themselves, others have since become key actors in peace efforts and have been instrumental in reconstructing their communities (Ingiriis and Hoehne 2013; Kapteijns 2009).

In their research on the impact of the civil war and collapse of the state on the status and lives of women in Somalia, Ingiriis and Hoehne (2013) found that, "paradoxically, the most substantial changes regarding gender relations that led to a considerable empowerment of women in the social, economic and political sphere" (Ingiriis and Hoehne 2013: 314). Now stateless, high unemployment rates among men in urban areas became an impediment to fulfilling their traditional roles as the family breadwinner, and many men were also unwilling to assume responsibility for childcare (Abdi 2007; Gardner and El Bushra 2004). In order to survive, many women became entrepreneurs, and assumed dual roles as breadwinners and caretakers of their children, as well as "their destitute men" (Ingiriis and Hoehne 2013: 315). Somali women, whether located in refugee camps or urban areas, have provided the backbone necessary for survival as economic agents and providers of care.

The northern region, the self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland, has been peaceful since the mid-late 1990's. In southern Somalia the circumstances are somewhat different. A political vacuum persists and ongoing clan sectarianism has been a major obstacle to establishing a viable government, and the rise of militant groups such as al Shabaab have further complicated an already strained situation (Kapteijns 2009).

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[19] While documenting the stories of Somali refugees, Roble and Rutledge (2008): "we even spoke to one woman who was pregnant when the bandits came to her village. When she started running with the others from her village, the movement stimulated her contractions. She had to stop, deliver her child [by herself], and then pick up the baby and start running again" (Roble and Rutledge 2008: 22).

2.2.6 WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN SOMALIA

Until the 1950's, formal education was non-existent for girls in colonial Somalia. Prior to the 1970's, primary school was instructed in Arabic and Italian, and secondary school was in English. The first official written form of Somali was adopted in 1972[20](Bigelow 2010). A nationwide literacy campaign followed, improving women's print literacy rates and access to education (Langellier 2010). Mogadishu was home to two universities, where women enrolled in universities, received scholarships to study abroad, and lived urban, middle-class lives (Kapteijns 2009). The civil war later wreaked havoc on the Somalia's infrastructure; schools were among the early targets of destruction: at least 90% of all educational institutions in Somalia were destroyed (Omar 2009); formally educated Somalis were often targeted and some even destroyed their credentials to ensure their personal safety, others left their credentials behind. Access to formal education has been very limited since 1991, in particular for girls and young women. This is further compounded by the fact that a majority of the population have been, or still are nomads (Green 2003); restricted access in refugee camps; and the purposeful exclusion of girls from educational institutions as a symptom of the rising influence of religious conservatism (Abdi 2007). Refugee camps are often violent environments. In Dadaab refugee camp in Kenya, for example, Abdi (2007) found that just 69 of 675 of the high school students that year were girls. As girls approach a marriageable age, their risk of experiencing sexual violence grows. Many families therefore choose to keep their girls at home (Abdi 2007, as cited in Bigelow 2010: 32). Even when there is access to school, the quality varies, but is generally poor. As a result, many Somalis who have been resettled with very little formal, or continuously interrupted educational backgrounds (Bigelow 2010). That many women (and men for that matter) have traditionally been unable to read, particularly in Arabic, has been a barrier to their personal access of Islam, the Quran and Islamic law. As such, the use of religious references by community leaders to exercise power over women has become more common along with the growth of Islamic fundamentalism in various communities (Abdi 2007; Gardner and El Bushra 2004). The print literacy and school enrollment rates of girls and women in Somalia remain some of the lowest in the world (Brown 2014).

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[20]As the Barre regime had controversially decided, in Roman script (Bigelow 2010: 35).

2.3.1 Religion in the Diaspora

In the framework of globalization and migration of Others, Europeans and Americans have been have been confronted by the necessity to engage with other religious, cultural and social practices. As Ashcroft et al. (2007) argue:

> Religion has re-emerged as one of the key defining features of difference and that the role of religion has become central to the way in which Europeans and Americans think about identity with a force, which it has not had for several centuries (Ashcroft et al. 2007: 189).

Many Muslims emphasize that their faith cannot simply be delimited to a "religious" part of their lives, but is present in all aspects of their lives (Opsal 2005). According to al-Faruqi (1982), this holistic view is the quintessence of Islam, put into practice in an individual's life, their community, personal economy, ethics, family life, and politics; there is no secular space in which religion is irrelevant (al-Faruqi 1982: vii, as cited in Opsal 2005: 52). When this is taken into consideration, it is then clear how, or why Islam influences so many practical matters of life, such as clothing, food and financial services (Opsal 2005: 52). Increased religiosity mention quite frequently in research on the Somali diaspora (Abdi 2007; Brown 2014; Filippi-Franz 2009; Jelle et al. 2006; McMichael and Manderson 2004). Religion is a cohesive force in the Somali community, and "in a world where so much has been taken from them", and is now defined by uncertainty, "Islam provides the single most stable force in their daily lives" (Forman 2001: 37, as cited in Bigelow 2010:41). Women have described their faith as a coping mechanism in the face of discrimination and xenophobia, whether in school or communities at large (Abdi 2007; Guenther et al. 2011; Langellier 2010; Løvgren 2007; McMichael and Manderson 2004).

2.3.2 The Veil

Prior to the late 1970's, women in urban Somalia rarely veiled (Abdi 2007; Boyle and Ali 2009), although women would often wear a *garbasaar* (a shawl) after marriage. In in the aftermath of the Family Law of 1975, numerous Somali students and Islamic scholars fled the Barre regime to work or study in the Middle East, to countries that were the midst of Islamist revivalist movements to resist, or overthrow and replace corrupt secular governments with ones based on

Islamic law[21] (Akou 2004: 55; Baadiyow 2010). As the Barre regime weakened, civil unrest became widespread and physical security diminished, the use of *jilbaab*, *niqab*, and *hijab*, once foreign to Somalia, became increasingly popular. Abdi (2007) utilized the dramatic changes in women's adoption of conservative veiling and clothing as a means of exploring post-civil war gender transformations among Somali women both in Somalia and the diaspora. In an environment with limited options, Abdi (2007) asserts that female conservatism, whether chosen or directly imposed, is "a strategy that permits women to retain some dignity" (Abdi 2007: 200). Modest clothing allows women to present themselves as pious as a means of avoiding attention, and therefore dangerous situations (Abdi 2007). For many Somali women, the veil is a source of respect and security, which are "immeasurable given the chaotic environment of the civil war and refugee camps", where many women have been subjected to physical violence and sexual assault (Abdi 2007: 199).

Al-Huraibi (2009) considers the hijab to be the "most critical factor that makes a Somali woman 'visible' in the mainstream", and therefore enhances her minority position" (Al-Huraibi 2009: 147). As Watson (1994) describes:

> The veil is variously depicted as a tangible symbol of women's oppression, a constraining and constricting form of dress, and a form of social control, religiously sanctioning women's invisibility and subordinate socio-political status (Watson 1994: 141, as cited in Al-Huraibi 2009: 144).

Common perception in the West of the veil as a symbol of oppression. Previous studies have discussed the variety of cultural, personal, political, and religious reasons Muslim women have had for wearing the veil (Abdi 2007; Abu-Lughod 1998; DeVoe 2002; Hoodfar 2003; Langellier 2010; Rugkåsa 2010). One theme that emerged is women who wear the hijab in the West, are seen as a visible symbol of "Muslim immigrants as not belonging" (Al-Huraibi 2009: 147; Anthias 2013). Among Muslim women living in Canada, Hoodfar (2003) found that for some Somali women, felt that veiling helped them feel more at ease as they adjusted to their new lives in Canadian society, especially "in the face of cultural difference, exclusion and racism" (Pedwell 2007: 160). Indeed, many Somalis, the emphasis and participation in the Muslim community was a coping mechanism or resistance strategy (Pedwell 2007: 160-161). The act of veiling can have, and does have material and financial implications for Somali

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[21] Early success of this movement came in the form of the Iranian Revolution of 1979, and throughout the 1980's, activists from Iran traveled throughout the Middle East. They often promoted "the idea that Islamic dress should be worn as a symbol of political and social transformation" (Akou 2004: 55).

women, however. Women who veil in the Europe and North America experience discrimination in the labor market, harassment, social exclusion, verbal abuse, and even physical assault Brown 2014; DeVoe 2002; Hopkins 2010; Moret 2006; Phoenix 2011).

2.3.3 CONCLUSION

In these sections, I have provided brief historical backgrounds for the two cases, Minnesota and Norway. I have also detailed the crucial organizational points of clan and Islam in Somali society. I use the institution of marriage to examine how gender relations and community organizing of pastoral Somali society were transformed because of urban-rural divisions that arose under European colonization. The waning influence of reciprocal kinship rights and duties became increasingly apparent, particularly after British and Italian interventions in one of the major institutions kinship practices operated in: marriage (Kapteijns 2009). Colonial powers invested little in the development of infrastructure in Somalia's interior, which further exacerbated rural and urban divides. The subsequent class divisions within urban Somalia were also decisive in terms of access to positions of power and information. The implications of this can be seen, for instance, in the post-independence establishment of Somali feminist organizations and their inability to extend influence beyond city limits; and eventually

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I will present the theoretical framework of the thesis. This will be done in two main sections: In the first section, I provide a background of postcolonial feminist theory, tracing its origins as a critique of both postcolonial theory and Western[22] feminist theory. Gender influences every aspect of economic and social integration (Tastsoglou and Preston 2005: 52). Gender, Orloff (2009) argues, has been at the core of the reorganizations of families, capitalist economies and welfare states. Major social political issues are directly gendered: mother's employment, provision of childcare, fertility and reproductive rights; gender equality in employment, households and the public (Orloff 2009). I then describe the universalizing nature of Western feminism, its relationship with colonialist thought, and how these construct and essentialize the dominant perceptions of "third-world" women in the West. Critiques directed at migrants, in particular Muslim migrants, such as Somali women, have often centered around debates concerning the oppression of women in "those" societies, to then be judged as "non-assimilable because they are not willing to conform to the supposed universalist principles of Western democracies" (Anthias 2013: 334).

The failure to acknowledge differences among women, spurred the development of new approaches to theorizing difference. The establishment of "third-world" populations in Europe[23] is directly related to colonialism ("we are here because you were there", as the slogan goes), and the phenomenon is therefore considered to be of fundamental importance for postcolonialism (Rajan and Park 2005). Discussions surrounding global movement (i.e., diaspora, borderlands, cosmopolitanism) have flourished in mainstream postcolonial theories (Rajan and Park 2005; Spivak 1988). Nonetheless, it is postcolonial feminists who have tackled issues concerning various forms of state racism or discriminatory immigration policies, and produced among "the most radical critiques of both the liberal democratic welfare state, First World feminisms, liberal as well as socialist, that have failed to take race into account" (Rajan and Park 2005: 59; Bassel 2010; Brah 2005; Keskinen et al. 2009; Muller Myrdahl 2010; Pisani 2013). Postcolonial feminist critiques are not limited to feminist scholarship, but can be applied

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[22] Following Mohanty (1984; 2003), my use of the term "Western feminism" is not to suggest a homogenous set of political interests or goals on behalf of feminists in Western countries, but the "implicit assumption" that the West "in all its complexities and contradictions" remains as "the primary referent in theory and praxis" (Mohanty 1984: 334).
[23] An explanation for why the lack of colonies does not exempt Norway or the United States will be provided in later section. Though, "non-European immigration is also causally connected to United States military imperialism" (Rajan and Park 2005: 59).

to any discourse in which the author(s), or Western subjects are understood to be the referent yardstick to which the Other is compared (Mohanty 1984; Yegenoglu 1998). Gender is "the meaning people give to the biological reality that there are two sexes" (Mahler and Pessar 2006: 29), and a principal factor used to organize human thought and behavior. Whether related to personal identity, or on an ideological level, gender is thus perceived to be a fluid and continuously negotiated process, "not as a set of static structures or roles" (Mahler and Pessar 2006: 29).

For the purpose of this thesis, the term "postcolonial" is not used to signify the end of colonialism in a chronological sense, but instead draws attention to the persistence and continuity of "colonizing" practices and the cultural effects of colonialism (Ashcroft et al. 2007). Geeta Chowdhry and Sheila Nair (2002), consider it "far more useful and constructive" to conceptualize the term as a "reflective engagement with the experience of colonization and its power to shape past and current realities at the local, national, and global level" (Chowdhry and Nair 2002: 12). Postcolonial theory emerged as a critical theory of the hegemonic nature of Western imperialism, and the "unacknowledged and unexamined assumptions at the heart of Western disciplines that are profoundly insensitive to the meaning, values and practices of other cultures" (McEwan 2001: 94).

Now considered to be among the foundational texts in the field, Edward Said's (1978) *Orientalism*, put forth a critique of European imperialism in which he argues that an "ontological and epistemological distinction" (Said 1978: 2) is made between the "West and the Rest". Orientalism, in its broadest sense, is the mode in which the "Rest" is dealt with by "by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it" (Said 1978: 3). Orientalism represents and expresses the ways that the West has constructed the Rest as 'third-world', barbaric, inferior, timeless, and underdeveloped; as opposed to the self-representation of the West as civilized, modern and superior (Ashcroft et al. 2007; Moore-Gilbert 1997; Said 1978; Spivak 1993). This is exemplified, Narayan (2000) argues, in the self-portrait of Western values that hardly resemble the cultural and political reality in the West. This for example, can be seen in the ability to represent *equality* and *liberty* as Western values, simultaneously as nations in the West "engaged in colonization, slavery, and the denial of liberty and equality to large segments of Western subjects, including women" (Narayan 2000: 1083).

3.1 POSTCOLONIAL FEMINIST THEORY

Early postcolonial theoretical developments, despite their focus on the juncture of race and imperialism, gave very little attention to the experience of gender (La Barbera 2012). Parallel to this was a growing discontent with the false universalism of the white, middle-class experiences promoted by Western feminist theory, and its failure to recognize differences among women (Hussain 2000). The initial development of the postcolonial feminist field is often credited to the theoretical contributions of Trin T. Minh-ha (1989), Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1984; 2003), Uma Narayan (1998), and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988; 1993).

The postcolonial component of the theory offers "persistent critiques of Western imperialism and its problematic representations" of Other women (Hussain 2000). Specifically, it contests and complicates hegemonic (Western) feminism, and seeks to uncover and challenge the continued production of gendered colonial narratives. It is feminist inquiry, in its dedication to "probing silences, absences, and distortions in dominant paradigms" (Hawkesworth 2006: 6). Moreover, feminist research intends to "challenge knowledge that excludes, while seeming to include" (Hesse-Biber 2012: 3). This means it involves attempts to unsettle the established ways of knowing, and poses questions that situate "women's lives and those of 'other' marginalized groups at the center of social inquiry" (Hesse-Biber 2012: 3). Stokke (2012) suggests that 'universalist' perspectives are better understood as "attempts by the dominant social group to claim universality for its own perspective", simultaneously as they marginalize "minority perspectives as 'particularistic'" (Stokke 2012: 32).

Rajan and Park (2005) describe postcolonial feminist theory as an exploration of "gender, nation, class, race [...] in the different contexts of women's lives, their subjectivities, work, sexuality, and rights" (Rajan and Park 2005: 53). This involves recognition of the colonial legacies that continue to shape the opportunities and choices available to postcolonial women, whether they are in postcolonial or Western locations (Weedon 2002). Central to its theorization are questions of agency, representation, and subjectivity (Kim 2006: 113), and the task of postcolonial feminists is therefore to "disrupt the power to name, represent and theorize by challenging Western arrogance and ethnocentrism" (McEwan 2001: 100). In addition, it calls on the necessity of turning attention to "fragmented and situated forms of knowledge" (Kim 2006: 113), and places particular emphasis on historical and locational specificity (DeVault and Gross 2014; La Barbera 2012; Mohanty 1984; 2003).

3.1.1 The Average Third-World Woman

Western feminist scholarship has been criticized for knowledge production that has been prone to discursive colonization of the lives and struggles of 'third-world women' through the use of methodologies that falsely universalize and "serve the narrow self-interest of Western feminism" (Mohanty 2003: 501). Western feminist scholarship has been complicit in production of Orientalist depictions of women in or from the Global South, something that has led to the creation of what Chandra T. Mohanty (1984) calls "the average third-world woman", who leads:

> an essentially truncated life based on her feminine gender (read: sexually constrained) and being 'third world' (read: ignorant, poor, uneducated, tradition-bound, domestic, family-oriented, victimized, etc.) This [...] is in contrast to the (implicit) self-representation of Western women as educated, modern, as having control over their own bodies and sexualities, and the freedom to make their own decisions. (Mohanty 1984: 337)

Thus, Western women construct themselves as benchmarks of modernity and implicitly reduce 'third-world women' to a monolithic group whose progress is then measured according to their distance from Western women. This is the distinction Said (1978) referred to: the Rest is identified by what lacks, in relation to the West, and that "the construction of the Other is fundamental to the construction of the Self" (Ashcroft et al. 2007: 156). The presence of Others in Western societies has further strengthened these distinctions (Siim and Skjeie 2008). In the field of international migration, this has also manifested itself in Western feminists speaking *for* migrant women, but dismissing their wishes to maintain cultural ties, while also having access to the equal societal opportunities in the West (La Barbera 2012: 19).

Mohanty (1984) makes a distinction between the 'oppressed woman' (i.e., white, Western), who is constructed through exclusive attention to her gender difference, and the category of the 'oppressed third-world woman', where focus is directed at an additional feature: her 'third-world difference' (Mohanty 1984: 351-352). The 'third-world difference' is created when the category of 'oppressed third-world woman' is located within the economic, familial and religious structures of their 'third-world' society, and regarded as phenomena to be evaluated or judged by Eurocentric standards. Since power relations between the 'first' and 'third worlds' are left unacknowledged, this reinforces the "assumption that people in the third world just have

not evolved to the extent that the West has" (Mohanty 1984: 352). Women are not only located as powerless victims, but their victimhood stems from, and is defined largely by the way specific institutions or systems do or do not affect their lives (Mohanty 1984: 338). When this occurs,'third-world women' as a homogenous group have automatically been defined, but assume a slightly different form, creating:

> a corresponding set of universal images of the 'third world woman', images like
> *the veiled woman, the powerful mother, the chaste virgin, the obedient wife…*
> (Mohanty 1984: 352, emphasis in original)

A detailed analysis of 'third-world women' issues must be attentive to the specific settings and social relations they occur within, so as to allow for more complex images to be located (Weedon 2002: 3). The importance of contextualization and historicization of difference within "deeply specific *national* contexts" (Hussain 2000: 2, emphasis in original) further challenges assumptions that all women who are apart of the same ethnic cultural group, share similar experiences of oppression. This makes visible the differing levels of agency among women, individuality and diversity *within* the ethnic-cultural group (Narayan 1998; 2000). A stated goal of postcolonial feminist theory is therefore to prevent, but also expose hegemonic generalizations that support uniform conceptions of certain groups of women (Weedon 2002). Orientalist imagery is The veiled Muslim woman, according to Yegenoglu (1998) long been the "concrete embodiment of oppressive Islamic traditions" Yegenoglu (1998: 97-98). Women, the female bodies that symbolize cultural difference, may be regarded as a particularly serious threat to a national identity that is regularly expressed with gender equality (Larsen 2012; Yuval-Davis 2006). As Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1993) describe,

> Women are often central in ethnic and national reproduction and transformation, not only as biological reproducers of the members of the group, or central in the transmission of its cultural artefacts, but also as markers of the borders of collectivities. (Anthias and Yuval-Davis 1993: 10)

Uma Narayan (1997) used the example of Western feminist depictions of *sati*[24], which were used as evidence of Indian barbarity, to reproduce what she calls "colonialist stance toward Third World cultures" (Narayan 1997: 43). The depictions support the notion that "Third-

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[24] Sati is an [ancient] Hindu tradition in which a recently widowed woman would immolate herself on her husband's funeral pyre, either her own volition or coercion. The practice was outlawed in 1829 (Narayan 1997).

World contexts are uniform and monolithic spaces with no important internal cultural differentiations, complexities, and variations" (Narayan 1997: 50). Colonialist representations obscure the agency and work of women, as well as legitimize "problematic economic and political interventions" (Narayan 1997: 126), and stifle possibilities of cross-cultural feminist coalitions. If Other Women are understood as not having the capacity to 'empower' themselves, the West may view itself as responsible to assist in their development. The unenlightened Other Women will supposedly be guided out of their 'backward', traditional lives if they learn about gender equality from their civilized, Western counterparts (Annfelt and Gullikstad 2013; Siim and Skjeie 2008). Yegenoglu (1998) considers this a means by which Western women "avoid confronting their own oppression at home" (Yegenoglu 1998: 106). The very idea of such a civilizing mission cements the self-image in which the Western subject as modern and developed, and legitimizes the Western position as the dominant figure. It is this self-representation of benevolence or idea of "the imperialist as savior", that Spivak (1992: 781) considers to be the most frightening element of imperialism, as well as the mechanism that cements and secures its existence.

3.1.2 The Native Informant

Some women, two notable Somalis, such as Ayaan Hirsi Ali or Amal Aden[25] have established successful careers as "defectors", or "native informants" from their backwards, oppressive Other Culture. Since they were once Other Women, they "authenticate a reductive feminist narrative about Muslim women that promotes racism and orientalism through an authoritative voice of Muslim women who have escaped oppression" (Alsultany 2012: 84). The opinions and subjective experiences of a "native informant" are regarded as objectively valid (Tajik 2004). They confirm the stereotypes held by their main audience- the Western majority group, and how they see the Others (Spivak 1988). Spivak (1988) is highly critical of the use of a "native informant", used to legitimize certain agendas in the West, but also as a means to silence the Rest (Spivak 1988: 79). When speaking migrant integration, attention is primarily given to the incoming group's difference, easily overlooking commonalities or structural context. Instead, focus on essentialist segments of the Other Culture is often depicted as ahistorical, with rigid perimeters of difference (Anthias 2013: 324). The fixation on the Other Culture does not account for other relevant divisions, such as class. When a concept such as 'patriarchy' is attributed to the Other Culture, Larsen (2012) asserts it to be "a political act of naming rather

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[25] Ayaan Hirsi Ali is a Somali-born Dutch-American outspoken against Islam and FGC; Amal Aden is a Norwegian-Somali author who has written and spoken extensively about Somali women and integration in Norway (Aden 2011).

than a neutral one of description" (Larsen 2012: 227). When the *veiled woman* appears, Culture is brought to the foreground, and other "axes of difference and inequality" overshadowed (Larsen 2012: 227).

A woman's societal location, whether powerful or marginal, becomes void of historical specificity (Mohanty 1984; Salem 2014). Women are thought of as "placed" into social relations (i.e., households, labor markets, or religious networks) as if they already existed as "sexual-political subjects" (Mohanty 1984: 340). This fails to acknowledge that women (and men) are are *produced* through their cultural and social relations, and intimately involved in their formation, maintenance and negotiation. Furthermore, this presumes that all members of the Other group are equally committed to the Other Culture; a view that creates a perception of a homogenous community (Anthias 2013: 324; Mohanty 1984; Narayan 1998). The cultural is thereby detached from the material and structural, and Others "are endowed with culture seen as a thing which people carry with them" as if it were a rucksack (Anthias 2013: 324; Keskinen 2011). Culture is thus constructed as baggage, weighing down "women's personal freedom" (Salem 2014), in which freedom at an individual level is prioritized, and seen to be obtained directly through "the elimination of cultural practices" (Salem 2014). When a woman's culture is employed in such a manner, it essentializes and isolates culture as a (or *the*) problem that needs to be fixed (Salem 2014). Importantly, this rejects the possibility of using cultural notions as a means to fight oppression (Salem 2014). This denies the Other Women of their ability to act as autonomous individuals (Mohanty 1984; Spivak 1988). Moreover, it disregards any recognition of their achievements in bringing about social changes, especially when grounded in particularistic perspectives, such as their culture (La Barbera 2012).

A similar notion is described by Chanda (2005) as 'empowerment', and refers to aspects of *inner strength*, *self-confidence*, the *ability* of a woman to manage life inside and outside her home. As such, 'empowerment' is inextricably tied to economic equity and sociopolitical power. Empowerment is thus based on an assumption of a "self-contained individual whose social location and context has no effect on her" (Chanda 2005: 498). A woman's 'empowerment' is thus limited to the woman herself, in isolation from the discursive processes and material reality of her life. To illustrate the insufficiency of this understanding, Chanda (2005) utilizes Sen's (1992) concept of the "freedom to achieve", which refers to "the real opportunity to accomplish what we value, reflected in a person's 'capability to function'" (Chanda 2005: 499).

When the Other Woman is expected to suddenly acquire *ability*, *choice*, *control*, and *internal strength* without acknowledgment that her "capability to function" is regulated by her location in a social matrix, it is as if these "substantive internal qualities await only to be awakened and brought to action" (Chanda 2005: 499). An important goal of postcolonial feminism is therefore a reconceptualization of 'empowerment', with "respect to the relative material realities of target group" (Chanda 2005: 498). The intersections an individual is located, particularly those in more marginalized locations, clearly affect her 'empowerment':

> The "real" opportunity that a woman will create or seize, will always be related to a material context, her negotiation with this context in order to identify, produce, or act upon this opportunity as well as her ability to tackle the effects of the change these actions will bring about in her location within a socioeconomic context. (Chanda 2005: 499)

It is therefore important to advance an understanding and appreciation of the role institutions play in ability to exercise individual agency (Smooth 2013). Failure to attend to this re-conceptualization renders a woman's 'empowerment' partially effective, and may actually prove "detrimental to the interests and material conditions of those very groups it seeks to 'empower'" (Chanda 2005: 498). Accordingly, in a comparison of Somali women in Minnesota and Norway, it is essential to identify their intersectional locations, and how these are related to the respective institutional and material contexts of their integration processes.

Western, or 'first-world' feminists are urged to acknowledge the need for historical specificity, to recognize differences to discard careless ethnocentrism (Rajan and Park 2005:54) and reproductions of orientalist thought. Rajan and Park (2005) caution however, that previously-held colonialist positions cannot simply be replaced by attitudes of "easy benevolence towards Third World women as-victims", nor through "the celebration of pluralism" (Rajan and Park 2005: 54). After all, difference is never *just* difference (Mohanty 1989). Beyond mere acknowledgement of difference, the more pressing issue "concerns the kind of difference that is acknowledged and engaged" (Mohanty 1989: 181). When difference is viewed as "benign variation (diversity)" instead of, say, disruptive or a source conflict, it obscures both history and power relations, as if to "suggest a harmonious, empty pluralism" (Mohanty 1989: 181). Be that as it may, if difference is established as "asymmetrical and incommensurate cultural spheres" located within "hierarchies of domination and resistance" (Mohanty 1989: 181), it cannot be embraced within a "discourse of 'harmony in diversity'".

Narayan (1998), for instance, demonstrates how the replacement of "all women"- universal essentialism, ushered in a cultural essentialism of totalizing categories, such as "Muslim women". While Western feminists have become more aware of the problematic imposition of "Sameness on Other women", many still "fail to register that certain scripts of Difference can be no less problematic" (Narayan 2000: 1083). In their celebration, or fetishization of difference, harmful generalizations continue to be made. Due to "historical and positional differences", it is important that to recognize that a commonality of gender experience across "race and national lines" does not exist (Mohanty 1990: 180; DeVault and Gross 2014: 37). Women lead complex and varied lives, with different experiences *as women*. To assume otherwise, to promote the idea that *all* women share a common experience, ignores and even violates these differences (DeVault and Gross 2014; Mohanty 2003). In recognition of the need to reconceptualization of 'empowerment', with "respect to the relative material realities of target group" (Chanda 2005: 498) it is essential to identify the intersectional locations of Somali women in Minnesota and Norway, and their relation to the respective institutional and material contexts of integration. These differences can play a large role in shaping the everyday lived experience, but are furthermore based on cultural and historical power relations and social structures. In recognition of the danger of setting gender, race or ethnicity as fixed categories: they are fluid, especially when used as analytical tools. Categories of Somali, Norwegian, and American are not natural, static units. To the contrary, such categories are "powerful discursive constructions, which are employed in meaning-making (and administrative) processes with real effects" (Kleist 2007: 160). First, they enable a researcher to expose and challenge the hegemonic structures and practices of receiving societies that define the lives of many Somali women in the diaspora (Bassel 2010; Brown 2014). Second, a corrective lens to these dominant forces provides specific context to the voices, beliefs, and actions of Somali women. The application of postcolonial feminist theory in a study of integration processes and challenge dominant discourses within the two societies. And the "paternalistic attitude toward women in the Third World" (Mohanty 2003: 40).

3.2 INTERSECTIONALITY

In this section, I will present the concept of *intersectionality*, which will serve as the analytical framework for this thesis. Intersectionality is allows a researcher to account for and examine the ways various social divisions (e.g., race, gender, socioeconomic status) impact the locations and lives of individuals. I will explain and justify the rationale for use of the following social divisions in this analysis: race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and religion; and

describe how these intersections, within different structural conditions influence the integration processes of Somali women in Norway and Minnesota. The origins of intersectionality lie in black feminist scholarship, and the term 'intersectionality' was first coined by legal scholar and critical race theorist Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989. Intersectionality can be conceptualized as:

> The problem that attempts to capture both the structural and dynamic consequences of the interaction between two or more axes of subordination. It specifically addresses the manner in which racism, patriarchy, class oppression and other discriminatory systems create background inequalities that structure the relative positions of women, races, ethnicities, classes, and the like. Moreover, it addresses the way that specific acts and policies create burdens that flow along these axes constituting the dynamic or active aspects of disempowerment. (Crenshaw 2000)

Intersectionality has provided an important corrective to the exclusionary and assumed universality of contemporary Western feminism through openly recognizing that differences among women exist (Davis 2008: 70). Race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender and religion represent important social divisions, which "structure the material conditions which produce economic, social and political inequality in women's real lived lives" (Mirza 2013: 6).

An intersectional approach has the potential to expose the different types of disadvantage and discrimination that individuals experience based on their specific combination of identities (Bowleg 2012). Each "category of difference" that is meaningful in a specific time or location (e.g., *refugee woman* or *Black Muslim refugee woman*) contains even smaller categories, within which "there are even further elements that produce distinct experiences and divisions" (Morris and Bunjun 2007: 5-6). hooks (1981) asserts that (white) feminist movements have not shown much concern to the fact that discrimination may vary in its degree, and "not all women are equally oppressed because some women are able to use their class, race and educational privilege to effectively resist sexist oppression" (hooks 1981: 145). A white, middle-class woman for instance, may experience oppression because of her gender, but empowerment due to her race and socioeconomic status (Laponce and Safran 1996: 72).

Similar to postcolonial feminist theory's insistence upon attention to context and specific location (Mohanty 2003; Rajan and Park 2005), intersectional requires social inequalities to be conceptualized and analyzed in multidimensional ways. As such, it provides a "useful strategy for linking the grounds of discrimination (e.g., race, gender) to the social, economic, political

and legal environment that contributes to discrimination and structures experiences of oppression and privilege" (AWID 2004: 5). The identification and visualization of these intersections assists in our comprehension and ability to assess the impact multiple identities, has on access to rights or opportunities, as well as how policies and programs, shape those experiences. Intersectionality has been central to theorization of gender and migration (Anthias 2012; 2013; 2014; Yuval-Davis 2006) and is considered a particularly valuable approach to studying integration processes, since it encourages consideration of:

> the ways in which a range of social categories and locations, particularly those of gender, ethnicity, racialisation and class, intersect, thereby leading to the destabilisation of the migrant or ethnic markers which are at the heart of integration discourse and practice. (Anthias et al. 2013: 8-9)

Furthermore, it allows a "move away from the nation-, ethnic- and migrant-based focus" which has dominated integration discourse and "disabled broader societal concerns with access, participation, parity and belonging for all societal members" (Anthias et al. 2013: 8-9). The resettlement and integration of Somali migrants in Minnesota and Norway can be analyzed at various intersecting levels: individual, the Somali community, the nation, or transnational structures.

Mügge and De Jong (2013) support the use of an intersectional approach for "analyses of core political issues such as policy-making, integration, and citizenship regimes" as they often produce "unexpected insights" otherwise overlooked (Mügge and De Jong 2013: 380).

Hancock (2007) suggests researchers using intersectionality take a "content specialization" approach, an interpretation that posits that the focus point of intersectionality should depart from groups that are multiply marginalized, or historically oppressed. This is similar to what McCall (2005) has labelled an "intracategorical" approach, which attends to "differences of experience for subgroups within a category" (Choo and Ferree 2010: 133). This in turn, has sparked discussions over priorities given to certain intersectional locations, that is, the social divisions they stem from. Although its origins specifically attend to groups marginalized by multiple social divisions (Bowleg 2012), some scholars assert that intersectionality is should be applicable to all groups, or social locations, marginalized or otherwise (Choo and Ferree 2010; McCall 2005; Yuval-Davis 2006). The strong methodological emphasis place on inclusion may actually fetishize "studies of difference", while failing to give "sufficient attention to its relation to unmarked categories" (Choo and Ferree 2010: 133) and their position as normative standards.

Recognized as the three major social divisions, the triad of "race, class and gender" have been the mainstay categories of analysis (Bilge 2013) (Yuval-Davis 2006: 201). Theorists have added other dimensions, such as ability, age, immigration status, nationality, etc. The list may be limitless: Lutz (2002), for example included 14 "lines of difference[26]" (Lutz 2002, as cited in Yuval-Davis 2006: 202). Smooth (2013) posits, "The relevant axes of power for investigation are determined by the situation and site under study" (Smooth 2013: 24). When writing that people belong to a certain race, class, or religion, "we are talking about people's social and economic locations, which at each historical moment would tend to carry with them particular weights in the grids of power relations operating in their society" (Yuval-Davis 2011: 12). To be a man or a woman, to be black or white, a Christian or a Muslim. These categories or positions are fluid and vary across time and place. Furthermore, such categories carry different political and social meanings in Minnesota and Norway (Yuval-Davis 2006). Hence, the importance of attending to specificity "we cannot evaluate oppression and marginalization without a sense of history as well as the social, political, and economic opportunities available to various groups across history" (Smooth 2013: 22-23).

As a means to broaden the conceptualization of intersectionality, Anthias (2012; 2014) encourages a shift away from merely focusing on the "interplay of people's group identities" of racialization, gender, and so forth, and rather see intersectionality as a process. To do so, a researcher must first, "locate the discussion in terms of *structures* on the one hand" (Anthias 2012: 107, my emphasis), such as "broader economic and political institutional frameworks" and "*processes* on the other hand", meaning "broader social relations in all their complexity including discourses and representations" (Anthias 2012: 107, my emphasis). This analytical framework enables an interrogation of the "differential effects that different political projects of belonging have on different members" (Yuval-Davis 2011: 2) of communities who are "differentially located" economically, politically and socially (Yuval-Davis 2011: 2).

Yuval-Davis (2006) makes a distinction between "belonging" and the "politics of belonging". The former (*belonging*) is regarded as emotional attachment, feeling safe and at home. The latter, (*politics of belonging*) concerns "specific political projects" that construct belonging in certain ways to certain collectives that are, "at the same time, themselves being constructed by these projects in very particular ways" (Yuval-Davis 2006: 197). This also involves the

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[26] Lutz (2002) included: "gender; sexuality; 'race'/skin-colour; ethnicity; nation/state; class; culture; ability; age; sedentariness/origin; wealth; North-South; religion; stage of social development" (Lutz 2002, as cited in Yuval-Davis 2006: 202).

determination of what it means to be a member of a community, or involved in belonging, and encompasses issues that relate to entitlements or status that accompany such membership, in addition to those in relation "the participatory dimension of citizenship" (Yuval-Davis 2011: 20).

3.2.1 Race

Race refers to the social and political constructs that have been used to exclude, exploit, discrimination and justify unequal distribution of power and resources (Gunaratnam 2003; PBS 2003). Although there are race and ethnicity are closely related categories, the general conceptual distinction made between them is that race refers to biological[27] markers, while ethnicity refers to a "process, negotiated out of language, religion, culture, appearance, ancestry, and region" (Nagel 1994, as cited in Shandy and Fennelly 2006: 29). Ethnicity is often viewed as a more "neutral" term, particularly in Europe (McEachrane 2014). Indeed, the term ethnicity carries "similar baggage of hierarchization" and is "a powerful tool of (symbolic, political and social) exclusion" (Lutz et al. 2011: 10, as cited in Lutz 2014: 7). Hall (2000) argues that although biological racism has utilized markers such as skin color, those same markers are also used to imply cultural differences. The "biological referent is therefore never wholly absent from discourses of ethnicity[28]" (Hall, 2000: 223, as cited in Gunaratnam 2003: 4). Ethnicity is thereby hardly a "neutral" descriptor, but produced in specific historical and social contexts that are "heavy with political meaning" (Gilroy 2014; Gunaratnam 2003: 11; McEachrane 2014; Yegenoglu 1998).

Recognition that race and ethnicity overlap is not unproblematic, because a researcher needs to "be able to address and to account for the *specific* relationships between our analytic categories and subjective, social and material relations" (Gunaratnam 2003: 5, emphasis in original). Race and ethnicity are not fixed, uniform or "objective", as they are produced and maintained in complicated processes of social relations and experiences. Care must therefore be given to not reduce or reify the varied and interrelated meanings of the two (Gunaratnam 2003: 8). The so-called "reintroduction of race" into European scholarship has produced lively debate (Lewis 2013; Lutz 2104). Sirma Bilge (2013) argues the status of race in an intersectional analysis is "non-negotiable" and its inclusion particularly vital in a European context where race has been declared "an irrelevant category" (Bilge 2013: 414). This reflects a broader continental trend in

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[27] This is does *not* refer to biological racism, that is, the notion that there exists a biological or scientific basis for describing certain races as superior or inferior.
[28] One need look no further than how the term "ethnic Norwegian" is used in Norwegian public discourse (Helland 2014; Muller Myrdahl 2010).

post-World War II Europe, where race has widely come to be seen as a politically invalid, outdated biological category (McEachrane 2014). The rejection of race as a salient term, however, has "mostly served to obscure it" (McEachrane 2014: 97), often replaced with culture, religion, and ethnicity. As such, I adopt Bilge's (2013) stance, and view race an essential component of an intersectional approach. Furthermore, when speaking of race, Ruth Frankenberg (1993) argues for the necessity of accounting for "whiteness" because,

> White people tend to look at racism as an issue that people of color face, but not as an issue that generally involves or implicates us [...] racism can, in short, be conceived as something external to us rather than as a system that shapes our daily experiences and sense of self. (Frankenberg 1993: 6)

To name whiteness, removes it from the unnamed and unmarked status "that is itself an effect of dominance" (Frankenberg 1993: 6) that generally renders it invisible. This way, everyone is assigned a location in the structures of racism making it hard to claim one has "no relationship or relevance[29] to the lives of white people" (Frankenberg 1993:6). Other scholars have cautioned the differential meanings of "class" in American and European contexts (Lutz 2014). I have therefore decided to replace "class" with socioeconomic status as a more accurate reflection of the material access it is associated with.

3.3 METHODOLOGICAL CHALLENGES

The open-ended and ambiguous nature that has enabled intersectionality to be "drawn upon in nearly any context of inquiry" (Davis 2008: 77), is also the source of several, interrelated limitations (some of which double as strengths). First, while intersectionality is sometimes referred to as a theory (Davis 2008; Choo and Ferree 2010), others have (Bowleg 2012) contested this description as "it is not the kind of theory with which most social scientists are familiar" (Bowleg 2012: 1268), in part because it lacks the core variables that can be operationalized and tested empirically. It is therefore suggested that the term "theoretical framework" be used, as a way to denote intersectionality as more of an analytical paradigm (Bowleg 2012). Second, there is an absence of a distinct methodological approach, and the specifics of what an intersectional analysis entails are unclear (Choo and Ferree 2010: 129).

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[29] In addition "it may be more difficult for white people to say "Whiteness has nothing to do with me- I am not white" than to say "Race has nothing to do with me- I'm not a racist"" (Frankenberg 1993: 6).

Third, Laponce and Safran (1996) argue that intersectionality has complicated the conceptualization of multiple identities, as each additional "layer of identity", translates into a completely different set of power relations with the surrounding world:

> Moving from considering single categories-women/men, black/white or even liberal feminism/socialist feminism/radical feminism-- to reflecting on the intersections of even two equally important categories and, more importantly, three or four equally important categories, is a quantum step in complexity. (Laponce and Safran 1996: 68)

A long list of social divisions may present a bigger analytical challenge. A unitary (e.g., gender-only) approach to, for example, an analysis of the integration of refugee women, is simply unable to account for relevant differences and inequalities *among* women (Hancock 2007). This is perhaps particularly relevant when the study is focused on a marginalized group (Bowleg 2012). The importance of attending to difference is so great that any scholar who "neglects difference runs the risk of having her work viewed as theoretically misguided, politically irrelevant, or simply fantastical" (Davis 2008: 68).

3.4 CONCLUSION

In conducting a comparative intersectional analysis in Minnesota and Norway with the aim of addressing the ways in which social divisions and resulting socioeconomic status, patriarchy, racism and religious difference intersect with each other and structure the integration process of Somali women. The aim is to reveal important distinctions, as well as similarities, *not* to illustrate Somali women as being "more oppressed". Nor to document the extent they deviate from the American or Norwegian "norm". The identification and visualization of these intersections assists in our comprehension and ability to assess the impact multiple identities, have on access to rights or opportunities, as well as how policies and programs.

4. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I will provide an overview and summary of the methods utilized in this research, and the rationale behind the various methodological decisions that have been made. I have chosen to use a qualitative, case-based, comparative cross-national study. I will then present the rationale and reasons for the selection of Minnesota and Norway as cases. An intersectional approach, grounded in a postcolonial feminist epistemology will guide the analysis of the two cases. As feminist research is dedicated to challenging power relations by changing, disrupting or shedding light on dominant understandings (Hinterberger 2007: 75).

Qualitative research involves,

> the studied use and collection of a variety of empirical materials—case study, personal experience, introspection, life story, interview, artifacts, and cultural texts and productions, along with observational, historical, interactional, and visual texts—that describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives (Denzin and Lincoln 2011:4).

I have conducted a multivocal[30] literature review, a form of review that supports the inclusion a wide range of sources, and expands the scope and possibilities of relevant information retrieval (Ogawa and Malen 1991). Informed by postcolonial feminist theory, intersectionality is applied as an analytical framework to analyze *how*, or in *what ways* race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender and religion intersect within the specific contexts. This includes not only the role these social divisions have in influencing policies, but how these social divisions are manifested in the receiving society and impact the integration processes and "outcomes" of Somali women in Minnesota and Norway respectively. Moreover, a multivocal literature review accommodates a broader range of literature, and therefore, a broader range of voices (Ogawa and Malen 1991). As this thesis is rooted in a theoretical framework that places emphasis on "giving voice" to women in marginalized locations, a multivocal literature review decenters the hegemonic understanding of what literature is to include otherwise sources otherwise excluded by narrow definitions of literature (e.g., strictly peer-reviewed publications).

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4.1 METHODS

Øyen (1990) describes the vocabulary used to distinguish various types of international comparative work to be "redundant and not very precise" (Øyen 1990: 7), although they do often denote specific types[31] of comparisons. Although I have chosen to describe this thesis as a "cross-national" comparison, it is with full awareness that cultural, ethnic or social boundaries do not adhere to national boundaries (Øyen 1990). A cross-national comparative approach has the potential to identify what is distinct about the immigrant integration experience of each country, Reitz (2002) contends, "often raise significant issues not identified as prominent in debate within any given country" (Reitz 2002:1007). Furthermore, this approach takes interest in examining social phenomenon across two or more nations, identifying and developing sound explanations for apparent similarities or differences, and attempting to provide an assessment of their significance (Hantrais 1999: 93). Contextualization is an important component of cross-national comparative research, as is a thorough understanding of the political, economic and socio-cultural contexts "in which social phenomenon develop is a precondition" for such research to be successful (Hantrais 1999: 94). This lays the groundwork for a "contextualized comparative account" (Gottfried and Reese 2003: 7) which is sensitive to history and culture, and makes it possible to identify "the way different institutional arrangements create different sets of rigidities and flexibilities" (Locke and Thelen 1995, as cited in Gottfried and Reese 2003:7). Although the risk of reifying (sub-) national institutions is present, a contextualized comparison allows detail to be given to "factors that lead to divergent pathways and convergent policy directions" (Gottfried and Reese 2003:8). This thesis does not necessarily seek to classify Minnesota and Norway as better or worse, but rather identify and compare how integration is approached, both in theory and in practice. This enables identification of what is "comparatively good and bad", in a particular country's political approach to integration (Favell 2001: 389).

Locke and Thelen (1998) warn of comparisons which give an impression of comparing "apples with apples", due to "differences in starting points" and the "varying degrees of valence" that issues such as integration "possess in different national contexts, they are often in practice comparing substantially different phenomena" (Locke and Thelen 1998: 11). The failure to confront the "issue of equivalence" in comparisons may disregard crucial variations in important starting points that potentially explain dissimilar outcomes. Øyen (1990) warns that

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[31] This includes "cross-country, cross-national, cross-societal, cross-cultural, cross-systemic, cross-institutional, as well as trans-national, trans-societal, trans-cultural" (Øyen 1990: 7).

these problems can be compounded when the "something" up for comparison is as ambiguous, as "integration". The danger of comparisons of apparently similar phenomenon and attributing the varying outcomes to "different national institutional arrangements" (Locke and Thelen 1998: 11), as misleading. First and foremost, perhaps, the United States does not have an explicit immigrant integration policy, nor does the country have a comprehensive social safety net, such as in Norway. Another instance, albeit on a different scale, can be found in specific data used in this comparison. For instance, labor force participation statistics provided by the United States Census Bureau include ages 16 to 64 (USCB 2013), while Statistics Norway encompass the ages of 15 to 74 (Statistics Norway 2015b). Hence, it is important to make note of this…

4.2 SELECTION OF CASES

Prior to attempting a comparison of integration processes, it is necessary to examine the country-specific social and economic contexts in which integration takes place, and how the policies Have been formed, implemented and operate (Reitz 2002). Although integration policies, or lack thereof, are indisputably products of their environment (Bevelander and Spång 2014), an analysis confined to policy would be partial contextual impact upon actors so I intend to focus accordingly to policies would be. To map out policies and analyze their objectives. This included policies specific to migrants and their integration, such as the availability of language courses or eventual attribution of citizenship; and general public policies such as anti-discrimination or social services (e.g., parental leave or unemployment benefits). A point I wish to emphasize is that this is not a comparison of traditional integration "models", or theories of assimilation, integration or multiculturalism (Favell 2001). Minnesota and Norway have are distinctly different histories as immigrant destinations; however, certain elements of their demographic trajectories have been strikingly similar. Minnesota and Norway are roughly the same size population-wise, with slightly over five million[32] residents each (Statistics Norway 2016; USCB 2015), have been relatively homogenous[33] and have, over the course of the past four decades, experienced rapid change in their racial, social and cultural landscapes (AHR 2014; Østby 2013). In addition, a significant portion of migrants in Minnesota and Norway have been refugees, thousands of whom have been Somali (MSDC 2016; Singer and Wilson 2006; Østby 2015).

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[32] The July 2015 Minnesota population estimate was 5,489,594 (USCB 2015); the January 1st, 2016 population estimate in Norway was 5,214,900 (Statistics Norway 2016)

[33] Both have indigenous populations and (histories of oppressing them) (Arnold 2015; Muller Myrdahl 2010).

According to Hantrais (1999), nation states are well suited for comparative studies since they have "clearly defined territorial borders", as well as individual "characteristic administrative and legal structures" (Hantrais 1999: 98). The United States has a much larger and heterogeneous population than Norway, and the pronounced cultural variations *within* the country would make it quite difficult to generate a meaningful comparison with Norway. de Vaus (2008) points out that "nation and culture are not synonymous", and likewise cultural boundaries do not necessarily follow national boundaries. While all 50 American states adhere to federal legislation and policy frameworks, they are also considered (shared) sovereign entities[34]. Each state has its own individual constitution by which the government is arranged (Minnesota State Legislature 2016). States are responsible for the provision of most public services: specific policies, and their outcomes, can vary widely. Therefore, although Minnesota is a state within the larger federal United States, I would argue it is the more appropriate unit of analysis for this particular comparative study.

While I have argued that the two societies are similar enough to make a comparison feasible, it was equally, if not more, important to confirm the same could be said about their respective Somali populations. Dramatic differences that appear in the integration processes could after all be explained by differences (e.g., levels of education, year of arrival, age distribution) in the composition of the respective groups (Blom and Henriksen 2009). To the extent possible, I have therefore included several group characteristics commonly cited as having the most overall importance for integration process: age demographics, education levels and literacy rates, arrival as refugees or immigrants, and length of residence (Capps et al. 2015: Henriksen 2013; MSDC 2016; Østby 2013). Other factors include the incidence of single-household providers as this is gender-specific, but also has a significant economic impact (Orloff 2009). The resettlement of thousands of Somali refugees began at approximately the same time, since the mid-1990's, and their arrivals marked by several fluctuations (MDH 2015; Statistics Norway 2015). Many of those who came prior to, or with the first smaller cohorts in the mid-late 1990's were from Somalia's educated, urban, middle-class (Engebrigtsen and Farstad 2004; Fangen 2006b; Kutty 2010). A majority of Somalis in both Minnesota and Norway have reported being from the capital Mogadishu, or surrounding area (Hadjiyanni 2007; OSF 2013). Meanwhile, subsequent cohorts have consisted largely of individuals from poor, rural backgrounds (Boyle and Ali 2009, Fangen 2007b; Kutty 2010). The largest Somali cohorts in both societies arrived in the mid-2000's (Blom and Henriksen 2009; Kutty 2010; Minnesota Compass 2016b; MDH

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[34] Sovereignty is shared with the United States federal government (Minnesota State Legislature 2016)

2015; Statistics Norway 2016). I did note that there were slight gender imbalances in both societies: there are more Somali men than women in Norway and slightly more Somali women than men in Minnesota (see Appendix 1). The composition of African migrants in Minnesota appears to be strikingly similar: Somalis are by far the largest group, though 61% of Minnesota's African population and their descendants are from the Horn (Gambino et al. 2014).

4.3 MULTIVOCAL LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Rodney T. Ogawa and Betty Malen (1991), multivocal literatures are:

> Comprised of all accessible writings on a common, often contemporary topic. The writings embody the views or voices of diverse sets of authors (academics, practitioners, journalists, policy centers, state offices [...] independent research and development firms, and others). The writings appear in a variety of forms. They reflect different purposes, perspectives, and information bases. They address different aspects of the topic and incorporate different research or nonresearch logics. (Ogawa and Malen 1991: 265)

The literature on Somali women, integration, intersectionality and social divisions, and the topics within each of these, are multivocal. Furthermore, they "characterized by an abundance of diverse documents" (Ogawa and Malen 1991: 266). Although much of literature consists of peer-reviewed articles or book, it also includes a range of grey literature. Ogawa and Malen (1991) write of prominent topics in education, "the salience of these topics generates interest in, and requests for, reviews of the available information" (Ogawa and Malen 1991: 266). This is applicable to integration, and arguably even more so to comparative, cross-national studies of gender, migration, and integration (AID 2009; Fangen 2008; Frideres and Biles 2012). A multivocal literature review can thus be seen as an extension of the postcolonial feminist and intersectional commitments to "giving voice" to marginalized locations, or sources of literature commonly excluded from strictly peer-reviewed literature inclusion criteria (Ogawa and Malen 1991; O'Mahony and Donnelly 2010). In an attempt to document and assemble a general overview of what is known about Somali women in Minnesota and Norway. Throughout the process of data collection, I will continue to be guided by these theoretical commitments, recognizing that:

Academic, media, state, and other social institutions [...] as well as the materials produced within them (including [...] research studies, surveys, and textbooks) play a powerful role in the (re)production of knowledge and systems of inequality by "identifying which ideas are valuable, which are not, and which should not be heard at all. In this way, the ideas of groups that are privileged within race, class, and gender relations are routinely heard, whereas the ideas of groups who are disadvantaged are silenced". (Anderson and Hill Collins 2001e, 223, as cited in Urban 2008: 6)

As with reviews of empirical literature, multivocal literature reviews can be seen as a form of original research (Ogawa and Malen 1991). Reviewer bias is considered to pose a particular problem in literature reviews, because a researcher may for example, "simply exclude studies on the basis of rather personal, subjective judgments of methodological adequacy" (Ogawa and Malen 1991: 268). This may selectively accidentally overlook or ignore information, or even "intentionally conceal bias and error" due to lack of specificity in their description of the collection procedure (Ogawa and Malen 1991: 269). It is therefore important to provide a detailed description of how studies were collected, the inclusion criteria and how they were then approached (Ogawa and Malen 1991: 269).

These potential problems can be avoided or remedied, however, if a review is conducted in a rigorous manner. Onwuegbuzie et al. (2012) note that "rigorous" is a contested term, and in order for a review to be rigorous, they assert that it has to be "warranted, transparent, and comprehensive" (Onwuegbuzie et al. 2012: 4). The first two terms, *warranted* and *transparent*, are consistent with two established principles[35] used for reporting on empirical research in social science (Onwuegbuzie et al. 2012: 4). Specifically, a report should first, be *warranted*, meaning it should provide adequate evidence to "to justify the results and conclusions" (AERA 2006: 33, as cited in Onwuegbuzie et al. 2012: 4). A report should be *transparent*, meaning that

Reporting should make explicit the logic of inquiry and activities that led from the development of the initial interest, topic, problem, or research question; through the definition, collection, and analysis of data or empirical evidence; to

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[35] This refers to the "seminal document developed by the Task Force on Reporting of Research Methods in American Educational Research Association (AERA) Publications" (Onwuegbuzie et al. 2012: 4).

the articulated outcomes of the study. (AERA 2006: 33, as cited in Onwuegbuzie et al. 2012: 4)

Finally, a report should be *comprehensive,* meaning a researcher should thus "provide as comprehensive a picture as possible of what the problem is about and how it has been approached" (AERA 2006: 34, as cited in Onwuegbuzie et al. 2012: 4).

4.4 DATA COLLECTION

In order to focus the analysis on literature that was relevant to the research question, I drafted inclusion criteria as a means of locating sources. Sources were included if:

1. the written source was specifically about Somali women living in Minnesota or Norway, and was related to migration or integration in some form (i.e., belonging, employment, housing, language, networks, or other specific sub-indicators mentioned);
2. the written source was related to migration or integration in Minnesota or Norway, included information regarding Somali women; but was not necessarily Somali-specific;
3. The written source was in English or Norwegian;
4. Access to the full-text of the written source was available

The first criteria is that the written source was to in some way pertain to Somali women in Minnesota and Norway, specifically. This included, for example, a study on the establishment of a Somali doula program at a Minnesota hospital (Dundek 2006). However, as I began to conduct searches, I found it necessary to expand the inclusion criteria. The second criteria included literature on various integration indicators (i.e., belonging, employment, housing, language, networks) in Minnesota and Norway, and included information about Somali women, but was not Somali specific. An example of a result from this criteria, includes a report on discrimination in the Norwegian rental market (Søholt and Astrup 2009). Third, I have included both English and Norwegian language sources. Exclusion of literature in the Norwegian language would have omitted key government documents, policy reports, articles, theses and dissertations (AID 2009; Fangen 2006a; Friberg and Elgvin 2016). Fourth, I have included sources that I had full-text access. While conducting searches in the various databases, access to potentially relevant literature was at times limited to abstracts- only. In these instances, an additional search of the author and title of the source were conducted using Google. If the material was not accessible, the potential source was then discarded. I elected not to set a specific time-cutoff for "earlier" materials. Prior to the outbreak of the Somali civil war (1988/

1991) and the large-scale resettlement of Somali refugees that began in the mid- 1990's, Somalis had little presence in either Minnesota or Norway. With this in mind, data available as of October 2016 has been included.

Searches for relevant literature were conducted using Google Scholar, Oria, and ProQuest databases, peer-reviewed online academic journal articles; physical books from the University of Tromsø library, digital books from the online library services provided by Project MUSE and World Cat. I used the snowball method by extending the review to reference lists for additional sources. Authors that appeared with frequency or specific articles that were particularly informative or relevant to the subject matter were also noted for use. Further citation searches were then conducted by entering marked references into Google Scholar.

Official public census data, census reports, population surveys, and policy documents, policy evaluations, working group reports, conference papers, were retrieved from the online resources provided by the Minnesota state government (e.g., Minnesota Demographic Center), the federal government of the United States (e.g., American Community Survey 2010); as were reports from foundations or community groups contracted by the American government (e.g., Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota). Similar sources were retrieved from online resources made available by the Norwegian government (e.g., Statistics Norway; Department of Immigration and Integration) The website, *Evalueringsportalen.no* (The Evaluation Portal), which gathers evaluations commissioned by ministries and other government agencies in Norway was particularly helpful. The Norwegian research foundation, Fafo.no, was also a valuable resource for various in-depth reports on the many dimensions of immigration and integration in Norway. In addition, I regularly checked the websites or online versions of daily newspapers, magazines, news stations for news on Somalis in Minnesota and Norway (e.g., *Aftenposten*, *The Star Tribune*), and listened to audio podcasts (e.g., Yusuf 2013).

4.4.1 Grey Literature

In other forms of literature reviews, such as systematic literature reviews, the exclusion of data is often based on methodological soundness, and often eliminate grey literature (O'Brien and McGuckin 2015; Owaga and Malen 1991). In general, published studies are considered to be of higher quality due to the peer-review process (O'Brien and McGuckin 2015). To minimize publication bias against un- or non-published research, I relied on so-called "grey literature", which includes working papers, reports from non-governmental organizations or foundations; numerous theses and dissertations (postgraduate and doctoral level). As much of the

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"integration work" in Minnesota is not done by the state, but by organizations that produce grey literature, these documents. (Onwuegbuzie et al.2012)

4.5 ETHICS

Initially, I intended to conduct interviews with Somali women in Minnesota and Norway, and structure this thesis around the findings. Postcolonial feminist and intersectional research emphasize the need to "give voice" to the experiences or perspectives of marginalized groups (Choo and Ferree 2010; McCall 2005). Moreover, the process of integration ultimately takes place on a local and individual-level (Ireland 2007). The variety of practical challenges involved in conducting interviews in multiple sites, however, soon became apparent. Given the cross-national format of this thesis, this would necessarily require interviews to be conducted in both sites. First, I am based as a student in Tromsø, which is located in northern Norway. The total population of Tromsø is about 73,000, and includes a Somali community of roughly 400 people (Tromsø Kommune 2016); access to a similar town in Minnesota was not an option, and a comparison of Tromsø with the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area would be ill-suited. Although I have not specified an urban or rural focus, for the purposes of this project, Oslo would have likely been the more suitable location informants because it is Norway's largest city, and home to the largest Somali community in the country. This however, would require financial resources and more importantly, time..

4.5.1 ETHICAL IMPLICATIONS OF FEMINIST GROUNDWORK

Although I was able to make a brief trip to Minnesota in December 2015, I became acutely aware that my few days there would be far from sufficient in terms of gathering evidence. It takes time to build a relationship with informants, for "necessary relationship building and follow-up", as well as "managing communication in situations of linguistic complexity" (DeVault and Gross 2014: 24). My networks within Somali communities in Minnesota and Norway are relatively small. I do not speak Somali, nor am I Muslim, and in either location, understood to be a member of the white majority. The Somali communities in Minnesota and Norway have been under heavy surveillance by authorities, received continuous negative media attention, and sometimes-vocal intolerance from the majority population has understandably made many Somalis weary of a nonmember (Fangen 2008; Kutty 2010; Løvgren 2007; OSF 2013; Preston 2013). Reporters and researchers have often frequented areas with many Somalis, and conducted studies or reports on sensitive topics, such as radicalization, without "giving back" to the community in a meaningful way. Southers and Hienz (2015) reported that one of

the most frequent criticisms they heard from within the Somali community in Minnesota was that "the community feels like an experiment under observation, like 'lab rats'" (Southers and Hienz 2015: 35). That is to say, in general, an outsider conducting research on *any* community cannot (or should not) expect to merely "show up" and be met with open arms (Crosby 2008).

I would argue that this is especially pertinent when utilizing a postcolonial feminist and, or intersectional approach have been directed at the propensity of "well-meaning feminist researchers" to engage in projects that involve other women "without a thorough and grounded knowledge of their contexts and the histories that have produced those contexts" (DeVault and Gross 2014: 32). It is imperative that feminist researchers carefully consider the purpose of interviews, and their study prior to engaging in such work with other women. This concern is heightened to the point that (DeVault and Gross 2014) even suggest feminist researchers should avoid interviews "as a way to learn things that could be gleaned from available sources [...] especially with women in vulnerable or marginalized social locations" (DeVault and Gross 2014: 32). With the limited time and financial resources, not only would the quality of the work be compromised, but the ethical foundations as well.

When conducting feminist research or theorization one is "implicated in both the process of speaking for and representing others" (Hinterberger 2007: 74). As Hinterberger (2007) asserts, "these practices of representation are directly tied to the production of knowledge and power and are thus ethical and political" (Hinterberger 2007: 74). A specific example of this within the Somali community concerns issues surrounding clan. In Minneapolis-St. Paul, Southers and Hienz (2015) found that allegiances according to clan and sub-clans are still relevant, and they remain "a factor in developing relationships and capturing an accurate, comprehensive picture of the community" (Southers and Hienz 2015: 37). Existing research involving Somali informants may refer to the (diminished) significance of clan (Fangen 2007a; Shandy and Fennelly 2006), but it does not make explicit the importance of having a representative cross-section of the community (see Moret 2006; Moret et al. 2006 for exceptions). Informants from Southers and Hienz's (2015) study voiced concern, saying that future research with Somalis must purposefully engage[36] a more diverse group of clans, otherwise "segments of the community will assume that [researchers] are advocates of specific groups, rather than objective researchers interested in the entire community" (Southers and Hienz 2015: 37).

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[36] Yet, researchers must exercise caution, as inquires about clan affiliation from an outsider are generally considered inappropriate (Southers and Hienz 2015).

Interviews would have been useful to corroborate arguments in the existing literature. While it was not feasible to include interviews in this project, it provides a potential foundation for future studies that would. nor would it be within the limits of this project. I was able however to visit "Little Mogadishu", the Cedar-Riverside neighborhood in Minneapolis, and Karmel Square, and meet with Somali-American entrepreneurs.

4.5.2 Reflexivity and Researcher Positionality

Reflexivity is "a process by which [the researcher] recognize, examine, and understand how their social background, location, and assumptions can influence the research" (Hesse-Biber 2014: 3). As Stuart Hall (1990) argues,

> We all write and speak from a particular place and time, from a history and a culture which is specific. What we say is always 'in context,' *positioned*" (Hall 1990: 223, emphasis in original).

The position I write and speak from is that of a white, cisgender woman with a middle-class background; and as a dual citizen of Norway and the United States, who spent several formative years in a third country. I have relationships to these cultures, but do not have full ownership in any, and thus assume a simultaneous insider/outsider perspective. This position has then unquestionably been formed by multiple experiences of entering and leaving these societies at various stages of my education or employment. Hantrais (1999) writes that it is useful, or perhaps even a prerequisite for researchers to "have intimate knowledge of more than one society, their languages, their cultures" (Hantrais 1999: 101) when they wish to embark on cross-national research (Hantrais 1999; Øyen 1990). Bilge (2013) posits that scholars who fail to acknowledge themselves as racially privileged, or accountable as beneficiaries of such privilege, "in fact, perpetuate it" (Bilge 2013: 416). Is it appropriate; is it even ethical for someone in my position to write about Other women? Postcolonial feminists have voiced concern about the perils of representations across differences of race, ethnicity, class, gender, or religion (Hinterberger 2007: 74; Minh-Ha 1989; Mohanty 2003; Spivak 1988). Other theorists have called into question the appropriateness of conducting such an inquiry (Alcoff 1995; Choo and Ferree 2010; Hinterberger 2007; McEwan 2001; Spivak 1988). Alcoff (1995) considers "both speaking *about* and speaking *for* others" to be problematic, because they both involve "the act of representing others" (Alcoff 1995: 100, as cited in Hinterberger 2007: 74). Choo and Ferree (2010) include "giving voice to the oppressed" as among the defining aspects of intersectionality, but also identify how such commitments may even harm**.** However, to go

forward with the assumption that "it might be ethical to speak for others so long as it is empowering" (Hinterberger 2007: 75) would be a hasty conclusion to draw. Hinterberger (2007) further argues that this presupposition of the notion that "one might have unmediated knowledge of who "oppressed people" are and what is in their interests" (Hinterberger 2007: 75), is a risky endeavor. Assuming an 'obviousness' of oppression easily slides into the essentialist categories Mohanty (1984) and Narayan (1998) have warned about. As Duncan and Sharp (1993) argue:

> It is much more than a question of being culturally sensitive or 'politically correct' . . . it requires a continual and radical undermining of the ground upon which one has chosen to stand, including, at times, the questioning of one's own political stance. (Duncan and Sharp 1993, as cited in McEwan 2001: 101)

Similarly, Spivak (1990) "to refuse to represent a cultural Other is salving your conscience and allowing you not to do any homework" (Spivak 1990: 62-63). This can be seen as challenge to researchers; that one cannot use a privileged position, and the structures of power they are located in to disregard those individuals or groups whom are not. Spivak (1990) argues that Western feminists must not only acknowledge their positionality, but to actively pursue "unlearning one's privileges as one's loss" (Spivak 1990, as cited in McEwan 2001: 101). This entails a double recognition: first, that one's privileges (i.e., race, gender, and so on) may have prevented the acquisition of certain knowledges.

> This is not simply information that we have not yet received, but the knowledge that we are simply not able to comprehend by reason of our social and cultural positions. (McEwan 2001: 101)

For these privileges to be unlearned, Western feminists must work hard in order to gain knowledge of others who are located in the positions most closed off to their view. The second task of unlearning privilege is recognition of the importance in any attempt at speaking to those others, should be in a way that "they might take us seriously and, most importantly, be able to answer back" (McEwan 2001: 101). It is in this manner that postcolonial feminism allows for disparate and competing voices, as opposed to the reproduction of colonialist power relations, in which "white, middle-class women have the power to speak for their 'silenced sisters' in the South" (McEwan 2001: 101).

4.6 LIMITATIONS

The challenges of conducting cross-national research and the problems of equivalence that are met when comparing subnational and national units. Gender-specific data for certain indicators, such as homeownership rates, proved difficult to obtain. Due to the potential insight data for such indicators have still been included, and been marked as such. As mentioned in the Data Collection section (4.6), during the search for literature on Somali women, I found items that appeared to be relevant for this thesis, but unfortunately did not have access to. In addition, a multivocal literature review has a considerable amount of grey literature. However, Onwuegbuzie et al. (2012) and Owaga and Malen (1991) consider "rigour" and reliability can be strengthened however, if the research process is made transparent through careful, detailed description of the research strategies and analytical **approach, which I have presented in the chapter above.** As a means of succinctly illustrating the scale and scope in each country- civic participation, education levels, employment, entrepreneurship, labor-market participation, language acquisition, homeownership, and unemployment levels.

5. CASE ONE: MINNESOTA

In this chapter, I will present the first case, the state of Minnesota. I will present the large-scale resettlement program; the local voluntary agencies that provide the services, as well as the role of refugee organizations, in resettling newer refugees, and brief overview of demographics of the Somali community in the state. I then review what is known overall about various "integration indicators", among others: English language level skills, socioeconomic status, housing situations , as well as participation in the various other domains of life.

5.1 REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT

The refugee resettlement program in the United States is administered at a federal level, with funds provided by the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM), working with the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) of the Department of Health and Human Services, and the Citizenship and Immigration Services of the Department of Homeland Security (AHR 2014). In the United States, millions of migrants have historically entered and settled in "gateway" port cities (e.g., New York City, San Francisco). Prior to 1980, refugee groups from certain countries, (e.g., Vietnam), were resettled under special circumstances, but there was no systematic admissions program in place. The Refugee Act of 1980 standardized the refugee resettlement process, and dispersed resettlement to cities throughout the United States, easing the burden on the services in traditional "gateway" cities. The ORR prioritizes urban resettlement, and in the past three decades, nearly all refugees have initially been resettled[37] in cities and suburbs of metropolitan areas with large foreign-born populations (Singer and Wilson 2006). The 30 metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) with the largest refugee populations represent 73% of the total refugee resettlement in the United States (Singer and Wilson 2006). The composition of refugee-source countries within each of the 30 MSAs however, are quite distinct. National origin is an important factor in resettlement, and a substantial number of individuals from the same national or ethnic group tend to be resettled in the same designated MSAs (Singer and Wilson 2006). This aids efforts to reunite refugees with their relatives or others in their social networks (Yusuf 2013). Some refugee groups have become associated with different MSAs and evolved into hubs for certain diasporas[38], facilitating the development

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[37] Between 1983 and 2004, 95 % of all refugees in the United States were first resettled in metropolitan areas, only 2 % were resettled in non-metropolitan areas (Singer and Wilson 2006). This refers to initial resettlement location, not necessarily current residence.

[38] In addition to the Minneapolis-St. Paul MSA, thousands of Somalis were resettled in Columbus, Ohio; and San Diego, California (Al-Huraibi 2009; Yusuf 2013). Other notable examples include: Detroit, where thousands of

of specialized reception infrastructure and services (Roble and Rutledge 2008). Throughout the 1970's and 1980's, the Minnesota resettled thousands of Hmong, Oromo and Vietnamese refugees, and over several decades built a robust network of institutions that provided resettlement services (Kutty 2010). By the early 1990's these resettlement networks, which are voluntary agencies (hereafter VOLAGs) were well-established, and the state had a strong economy, comprehensive social services, high demand for unskilled workers and an educational system that ranked among the best in the country (Akou 2004; Green 2003; Remington 2008; Yusuf 2013). (Kutty 2010; Roble 2008). The federal government selected Minneapolis-Saint Paul as one of central MSAs for Somali refugees after the United States began issuing visas to the group in 1992. The state has a significantly higher percentage of immigrants who are refugees[39] than the rest of the United States (LSS 2016; Shandy and Fennelly 2006). Minnesota's health system has become highly specialized in refugee health, and the American Refugee Committee and the Center for Victims of Torture are also located in the state (Dundek 2006; LSS 2016).

5.1.1 Somalis in Minnesota

Although there were a number of Somalis that came to the United States as economic migrants or students prior to the civil war, the Somali community in Minnesota is composed largely of refugees (Harinen et al. 2014). The early cohorts of refugees in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul area were often highly educated professionals (Harinen et al. 2014; Kutty 2010), most of whom reported coming from the capital Mogadishu, in southeastern Somalia (Hadjiyanni 2007; Horst 2007). Assisted by the first cohorts of refugees, the resettlement institutions developed Somali-specialized services, leading the federal government to designate greater numbers of Somali refugees to the state. In addition, the extensive unskilled employment opportunities soon drew Somalis who had been resettled elsewhere in the country. Minnesota is now home to largest Somali community in the United States (AHR 2014; Minnesota Compass 2016b). The official census numbers place the population at 46,000; but these are disputed[40] and exact demographics are unknown, though other estimates range from 60,000 to upwards of 80,000 people (Kutty

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Lebanese and Iraqi refugees have relocated, and Los Angeles, or "Tehrangeles", where close to half of Iranian refugees in the United States were resettled in the early 1980's (Singer and Wilson 2006).

[39] Once the initial resettlement of Somali refugees began in the 1990's, the percentage of refugees fluctuated between 24-46 %, compared with the national figure of 6-16 % (Shandy and Fennelly 2006).

[40] Percentages used for indicators such as citizenship statistics are from the 2014 American Community Survey (Minnesota Compass 2016b). Somalis may not be "picked up" in the census, ethnic and racial categorization (Green 2003: 81). Many Somalis live in rental properties, and may only report the number of residents allowed on the lease, not how many the actually live there. Third, some move frequently (Green 2003; Minnesota Compass 2016b).

2010; Minnesota Compass 2016b). The largest cohort of Somalis arrived in Minnesota between 2004 and 2007 (MDH 2015). These cohorts consisted largely of Somalia's rural poor (Boyle and Ali 2009), most of whom did not have any formal education and limited exposure to urban environments and Western culture; many had never been to Mogadishu (Harinen et al. 2014; Kutty 2010). Roughly 80% of the Somali community in the state lives in the Minneapolis-St. Paul metropolitan area (Minnesota Compass 2016b), and is one of the leading destinations for secondary migration of Somalis from other regions in the United States (LSS of Minnesota 2016; Yusuf 2013). Unlike the Somalis refugees who moved to Minnesota in the 1990's after being resettled elsewhere in the country, the current draw for Somalis is "less about employment opportunity and social services than it is about a cultural and familial infrastructure built over years of immigration" (Southers and Hienz 2015: 7).

Refugee resettlement services are provided by local voluntary agencies (VOLAGs), which are usually religious or community-based organizations[41] contracted by the federal government (Kutty 2010). The primary goal of the American approach to integration is for refugees to achieve economic self-sufficiency as soon as possible: resettlement services last no longer than 90 days (Capps et al. 2015; Kutty 2010). Each family is assigned a caseworker who welcomes them at the airport, provides assistance in finding long-term housing, signing up for English classes and public benefits, school registration, employment counselors, and health care (AHR 2014; Koumpilova 2016). VOLAGS also provide orientation classes where new arrivals learn how to write checks and pay bills, ride public transportation, how to interact with the police, and put together a résumé (Koumpilova 2016). The Refugee Act of 1980 implemented a 36-month limit for refugees to become economically self-sufficient. This deadline has since been scaled back in increments[42], as federal funding designated for refugee resettlement programs has experienced a notable decrease. (Kutty 2010). Until recently, refugees who had been selected for resettlement in the United States received cultural orientation and even months of intensive language courses prior to their arrival (AHR 2014). These services no longer exist and the current 90-day timeframe for resettlement services has strained the quality and quantity of those offered post-arrival, and the wellbeing of the refugees themselves (AHR 2014; Koumpilova 2016; Kutty 2010).

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[41] The VOLAGs currently based in Minnesota are Arrive Ministries, Catholic Charities, the International Institute of Minnesota, Lutheran Social Services, and the Minnesota Council of Churches (LSS 2016).
[42] A reduction to 18 months in 1986; to 12 months in 1988; to 8 months in 1992; down to the current 3 months in 2005 (Kutty 2010: 153).

In addition to VOLAGS, community-based organizations established by refugees, or Mutual Assistance Associations (MAAs) have assumed an important role in the resettlement process in Minnesota. Their involvement in the resettlement began in the mid 2000's after the refugees from the later cohorts (i.e., individuals from rural areas, with little or no formal education) had incredible difficulties adjusting to life in Minnesota. The state government and nonprofit organizations consulted with and requested input from the broader Somali community as to how the resettlement or integration process could be improved. They expanded the role of MAAs, thereby incorporating the refugee organizations into the decision-making processes of resettlement policy. Furthermore, they were also included as providers in the resettlement services, and formed "a key part in the government's strategy to address the cultural and linguistic deficiencies in the existing social service delivery system" (Kutty 2010: 156). There are, for example, 35 nonprofit organizations located in state that provide Somali-specific services and of those, 23 serve the Minneapolis-St. Paul area (Southers and Hienz 2015: 25). The federal government provides capacity-building, financial and technical support to organizations "created and led by more established former refugee members of the ethnic community to aid newcomers" (Ali 2011: 89).

The MAAs in Minnesota have been central actors in providing resources and tools for migrant and refugee entrepreneurs (Carlson 2007; Golden et al. 2010; Kutty 2010; Otteson et al. 2010). Golden et al. (2010) highlight the higher-than-average federal support received by "public and private nonprofit resettlement agencies" in Minnesota (Golden et al. 2010: 49). The "discretionary grants for refugee community resettlement" administered in Minnesota by the ORR in 2007 amounted to more than U.S $2.5 million (Golden et al. 2010: 49). This funding was then distributed to 15 organizations that provide services to the state's different refugee communities[43] (such as the Hmong and Karen), including the Confederation of Somali Community in Minnesota and the Minnesota African Women's Association (Golden et al. 2010: 49). The well-funded MAAs in Minnesota have been central actors in providing resources and tools for migrant and refugee entrepreneurs (Carlson 2007; Golden et al. 2010; Kutty 2010; Otteson et al. 2010).

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[43] In comparison, Ohio, home to the country's second-largest Somali community, received less than U.S $600,000 in similar grants that year, which were distributed among three or four organizations (Golden et al. 2010: 49).

5.2 EDUCATION

Individuals with higher educational attainment, such as a college degree, have better economic outcomes than those with lower levels of education. This includes higher earnings and employment stability (both immediate and overall lifetime) and lower levels of unemployment (AHR 2014; MSDC 2016: 24; Otteson et al. 2010). The primary objective placed on employing refugees as soon as possible is challenging for any new arrival, but perhaps exceptionally so for many Somali women, who have a greater likelihood of arriving in the United States without basic literacy skills or formal education than Somali men. Nearly 50% of Somali refugee women who lived in the United States in 2009-2011 did not have a high school education, and their levels of print literacy were among the lowest of all refugee groups (Capps et al 2015).

In focus group interviews with migrants and refugees in Minnesota, many reported feeling pressure to find a "good job without having the requisite knowledge and skills for an effective job search" (Otteson et al. 2010: 17). Research has shown that although it may be initially easier for women to find low-income, entry-level jobs once they are employed they face greater challenges than men in advancing in the labor market, even those without any formal education or training (Abdi 2014; Boyle and Ali 2009; Capps et al. 2015; Harlan 2016; Kutty 2010). In addition, the credentials or qualifications women obtained in Somalia have often not been recognized by employers, even if they have documentation. (Capps et al. 2015; Crosby 2008; Leitner 2008). A survey of Somalis[44] in Minnesota found that while 73% of respondents wanted to obtain a higher level of formal education, only 4% were enrolled at the time of the study (Wilder Research 2015a). Nearly all Somalis indicated that financial challenges presented "a significant barrier to paying for, getting in, and being successful in college" (Wilder Research 2015a: 11).

The United States does not have an official language on a federal level, nor is there one on the state level in Minnesota (AHR 2014). English is the *de facto* official language that is used in public documents, and spoken by a majority of the population. Knowledge of the receiving society's language is often considered to be a primary indicator of integration, as it underlies an individual's ability to participate in a variety of other social domains (Capps et al. 2015; Waters and Pineau 2015). In the United States, the English language has long held symbolic importance as a unifying force and defining marker of membership in American society (AHR 2014; Fennelly 2008).

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[44] Gender unspecified, though 55% of Somali respondents in the survey were female (Wilder Research 2015a).

Federal law[45] mandates that state or private agencies that receive federal funding are required to have access to language services, or access to services provided in their language (AHR 2014: 218). State law provides additional requirements for employment of bilingual employees at select state agencies, translated materials that detail agency services (AHR 2014: 218). It has been noted that because the Somali population is large and well established in Minnesota, the community has among the best access to language services in this regard (AHR 2014). Although the situation has likely changed with the larger presence of Somalis in rural cities, Leitner (2008) reported a complete lack of interpreters in one rural Minnesota town, a situation that made interactions with non-Somalis in settings such as government offices, hospital and schools exceedingly difficult and prone to misunderstandings.

Limited knowledge of English is also a barrier to interaction between non-Somalis and restricts the range of job opportunities available to an individual, as well as the access to services (Leitner 2008). Resettlement programs offer language courses or referrals to course providers, as most communities provide free English language classes, though available spaces filled beyond capacity, an issue related to a lack of funding (Kutty 2010). The ability to participate in language classes are determined by factors such as childcare responsibilities, the time and location of the class, and access to transportation. Studies have shown that these are barriers that impact women's access to the language courses in receiving society (AHR 2014; Otteson et al. 2010; Tastsoglou and Preston 2005). Many Somali women in the later cohorts, for instance, have not been print literate in their native languages, which presents an additional barrier to learning English (Bigelow 2010; Kutty 2010). Depending on the course, English-language classes sometimes require a basic level of literacy in order to enroll. Women with just a few years of formal education are further disadvantaged because mainstream work-training programs often require at least eight years of formal education due to their format design (Capps et al. 2015: 15). Among Kutty's (2010) informants in Minneapolis-St. Paul and a small rural town in Minnesota, when asked what could be improved in current resettlement system, the response was unanimous: "Help to learn the language" (Kutty 2010: 115).

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[45] Title VI of the Civil Rights Act states that "no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance" (AHR 2014: 217-218).

5.3 SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

The official employment rate of Somali women in Minnesota was 47.3% in 2013 (ACS 2013), though the actual rate is thought to be quite a bit higher (Abdi 2014; Koumpilova 2015b). Their total labor force participation rate was 62.5%, and after 10 years in the United States, 71% of Somali women are in the labor force (Kallick and Mathema 2016). Full-time employment generally translates into higher salaries or wages, and increases the likelihood of "access to benefits such as paid sick leave, health insurance, and retirement plans" (MSDC 2016: 36). Among the largest cultural groups in Minnesota, Somalis were the most likely to be working part-time[46], with 45% of women doing so (MSDC 2016). In Minnesota, many Somali women have spoken of employment in the labor market as something done out of necessity for the survival of their family (Abdi 2014; Boyle and Ali 2009; Leitner 2008). Industries such as meatpacking and poultry-processing plants offer low-wage, unskilled employment that do not require English (Yusuf 2013). These jobs have long hours, are physically demanding and have high rates of injuries (Green 2003; Harlan 2016; Leitner 2008). Until recently, Hispanics, many of whom were undocumented migrants, predominantly held meatpacking jobs. Law enforcement raids on plants and strict border control have provided an opening for Somalis, "who have the dual advantage for employers of being legal and relatively cheap" (Harlan 2016). For many of the Somali women in a rural Minnesota town in Leitner's (2008) study, working outside the home was neither easy nor rewarding. Women "longed for the greater freedom they had in their everyday lives in Somalia" (Leitner 2008: 51). They were exhausted after eight-hour shifts at the meatpacking plant and when "combined with family responsibilities, this left them little time for socializing and community life" (Leitner 2008: 51). They felt deeply disconnected from the town and strongly disliked that American life revolved around money and work rather than concern for the people around them (Leitner 2008: 51).

5.3.1 The Alternative Financing Program (AFP)

The entrepreneurial skills of Somalis have been a topic of interest for many scholars, and there are over 400 Somali-owned businesses in the state (Abdi 2007; Al-Sharmani 2006; Belz 2015; Carlson 2007; Helskog 2008). Cindy Horst (2007) describes a semi- parallel economy that has emerged in Minnesota, which has enabled people to do things "the Somali way", whether it be hairdressing, pharmacies, NGOs, schools, and mosques (Horst 2007: 280). Roble (2008)

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[46] Unfortunately, it does not specify whether those working part-time (less than 35 hours a week) did so by choice, or if more hours would be preferable (MSDC 2016).

suggests several factors that make it "easier to start businesses in Minneapolis than in any other place in America" (Roble 2008: 138). First, the large Somali population is conducive to a large economic base. Second, in cooperation with the state or city government, Somalis in the Minneapolis-Saint Paul area have founded several organizations that offer services for Somali entrepreneurs (Fernández Campbell 2014).

In focus-group interviews held within various refugee communities in Minnesota in the late 1990's and early 2000's, Somalis had consistently voiced strong preference for independent self-employment, but cited a lack of resources, both financial and practical as barriers to doing so (Copeland-Carson 2016; Fernández Campbell 2014; Kutty 2010). Community-listening sessions, and consultations with various community and religious[47] leaders identified the need for culturally sensitive alternatives to the mainstream financial instruments (Copeland-Carson 2016). In 2001, the St. Paul-based nonprofit Neighborhood Development Center (NDC) introduced the first nonprofit interest-free financing program in the United States (Fernández Campbell 2014). In light of its success, and in cooperation with the city of Minneapolis, the nonprofit African Development Center (ADC) established the Alternative Financing Program (AFP)[48] in 2006, and started offering interest-free, sharia- compliant financing (Kutty 2010). Over U.S $1.2 million were loaned to business owners between 2006 and 2014 (Fernández Campbell 2014), and Minneapolis remains the only city in the United States to offer Islamic-friendly financing services of its kind (Anderson 2014).

In a survey of Somali entrepreneurs in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Golden et al. (2010) had initially intended to examine and compare the role of Islam in business practices among highly religious Somalis, with those among less religious Somalis. This was not possible however, as they found no variation in religiosity among their sample: all but one of the 95 individuals surveyed considered their religious beliefs "extremely important" (Golden et al. 2010: 46). A vast majority of individuals in their sample felt "very uncomfortable" or "uncomfortable" lending capital with interest (Golden et al. 2010: 47). The availability of alternative financing options had been essential in facilitating Somali entrepreneurship; most said they would not otherwise have viewed it as an option. In addition, praise was given to the financial literacy courses

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[47] Desire for interest-free financing options in Minneapolis-St. Paul was voiced not only by Muslims, but Orthodox Jewish and several Christian communities as well (Copeland-Carson 2016).
[48] How it works: "A barber who needs new chairs for his shop goes to the African Development Center or another nonprofit lender that has partnered with the city. The lending partner buys the chairs, splitting the cost with the city, and then resells the chairs to the barber at a 2% profit. The barber pays it off in monthly installments. This is called a Murabaha sale" (Fernández Campbell 2014).

assisting potential entrepreneurs in navigating the process of starting or expanding a business (Carlson 2007; Fernández Campbell 2014; Golden et al. 2010; Roble 2008).

The first individual to participate in the AFP was a 50-year old Somali woman from Mogadishu, looking to expand her business selling caftans and scarves (Fernández Campbell 2014). Her shop is in one of the several Somali shopping malls in the state, which are also known as *suuqs*. Located in Minneapolis, Karmel Square is the largest of these *suuqs*, and in 2015 women owned 150 of the mall's 175 businesses (Belz 2015). Karmel Square is not an anomaly either[49], indeed, Somali women "preside over a micro-economy at the core of the Twin Cities [Minneapolis-St. Paul]' Somali community" (Belz 2015). Although women have established themselves as skilled entrepreneurs, it may not be sufficient to escape poverty. Horst (2007) mentions that some individuals ran a business in addition to working another "regular" job. Women-owned businesses tended to have lower levels of income than those owned by men (Golden et al. 2010: 46). Specifically, 66.7% of businesses owned by Somali women made U.S $20,000 or less[50] (Golden et al. 2010: 47). Women were less likely than men to have a separate business bank account or a written business plan, in fact, "two-thirds of female Somali entrepreneurs had neither a business plan nor business bank accounts", and generally had fewer employees than businesses owned by men (Golden et al. 2010: 50). The authors found, however, that "Somali women were not more likely than men to report their business as having been in danger of failing in recent years" (Golden et al. 2010: 50), but more commonly operated using a different, less formal business model than men.

5.3.2 Motherhood and Employment

The United States is the only industrialized country in the world that does not have legislation mandating any form of paid parental leave, and few policies that address the childcare needs of employed mothers (Orloff 2009). With large households to support and the high percentage of female-headed households, many Somali women have no choice but to find paid work (Crosby 2008; MSDC 2016). Many Somali families consider it very important that their children maintain and continue learning about Somali culture and language, and finding suitable childcare has been a major concern (Schmidt 2013; Shandy and Fennelly 2006). Somali informants in Shandy and Fennelly's (2006) study were often skeptical of childcare centers, as

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[49] At another nearby Somali mall, 36 of 47 businesses were owned by women (Belz 2015).
[50] Businesses owned by Somali women: 27.3% made U.S $20,001 to U.S $100,000; and 6.1% made U.S $100,001 to U.S $500,000" (Golden et al. 2010: 47). These findings are from 2010, and I have not adjusted for them inflation, the 2016 federal poverty line for a family of four in Minnesota is U.S $24,300 (Webster 2016).

they were deemed culturally inappropriate (Shandy and Fennelly 2006). Existing literature suggests that this is one of the reasons that Somali women prefer and have tended to use "family, friend and neighbor" home child care[51], when they have to work out of economic necessity (Al-Huraibi 2009; Crosby 2008; Koumpilova 2015b; Schmidt 2013). In addition, Minnesota has the least affordable center-based childcare in the United States and is prohibitively expensive[52] for low-income families (Child Care Aware 2015: 25).

In response, Somali women began establishing their own licensed childcare centers, and in 2015, there were 58 licensed in-home day cares and 65 licensed childcare centers in Minnesota who reported that either the owner or other key employees spoke Somali (Koumpilova 2015b). Nonprofit organizations and public funding have provided resources to train women and raise the quality of services, and Somali childcare providers now participate in Minnesota's Parent Aware quality-ratings system at much higher rates[53] than non-Somali providers do (Koumpilova 2015b). Women have also used the AFP to secure financing for renovations or expansions of their care centers (Fernández Campbell 2014). While these centers are already the top choices among Somali families, the high-quality Parent Aware ratings have caught the attention of those outside the community, and Somali child care centers serve increasing numbers of non-Somali families as well (Koumpilova 2015b; Schmidt 2013).

Somalis have established educational institutions, after-school programs and charter schools that provide an American education, with Somali. Women have consistently voiced concern their children and their education; the distress it has caused them by not being able to stay at home or having no choice but to place their children in a daycare they found inappropriate (Leet-Otley 2012; Roble 2008; Shandy and Fennelly; Southers and Hienz 2015). The growth of Somali care centers not only provide culturally sensitive care options, they provide women with employment opportunities as well (Koumpilova 2015b). The ratings system has raised the visibility of their centers, so they not only serve Somalis, but the broader community.

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[51]State law stipulates that one can provide home day care to relatives and one unrelated individual without a license (Koumpilova 2015b).

[52] The cost of having one infant and one four year old in Minnesota childcare is U.S $25,485 per year (Child Care Aware 2015). Based on median Somali household income of U.S $18,400 that is 138.5% of annual income, and 155.2% of single-female householder income of U.S $16, 415 (ACS 2013).

[53] While 16% of licensed providers in Minnesota participate in Parent Aware rating system, over 50% of Somali-speaking providers received ratings (Child Care Aware of Minnesota, as cited in Koumpilova 2016).

5.3.3 Public Assistance

Refugees, unlike other non-citizens in the United States, have access to several federally funded and state-run welfare programs. Refugees who are pregnant or have children qualify for the same welfare programs tailored for other eligible low-income families, such as the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP), which provides with financial and food assistance (AHR 2014). MFIP participants receive access to social services, job training, money and potential work-placement; but there is also a 60-month lifetime limit (AHR 2014). Refugees without children are entitled to Refugee Cash Assistance (RCA) and Refugee Medical Assistance (RMA) for the first eight months after resettlement (LSS 2016). Refugees receive a loan to cover their travel expenses to the United States. As they are required to pay it back within three years, this means they effectively enter the United States in debt (LSS 2016). Accessing public benefits in Minnesota is a complicated and time-consuming process for "someone who speaks the language, let alone for someone who doesn't speak the language and doesn't understand or is new to the system" (AHR 2014: 216). Furthermore, current public assistance (MFIP) rates were set in 1986, and have not increased since. This means that while the cost of living has risen steadily, the assistance rates have remained "frozen" in an economic reality[54] of 30 years ago (Webster 2016). As a result, MFIP recipients often live well below the federal poverty level guidelines (AHR 2014). Roughly 55% of all Somali households accessed food benefits and 23.5% of households received public assistance income in 2013 (ACS 2013).

In Minnesota, people living in poverty are more likely to experience chronic stress, food insecurity, to be in poor health, and to "live in unsafe and under-resourced neighborhoods, experience substandard housing and more frequent moves" (MSDC 2016: 48). Refugee and migrant groups in the state tend to have higher levels of poverty in Minnesota, but Somalis had the lowest median household income, at roughly U.S $18,400 (MSDC 2016: 45). Around 57% of Somalis in Minnesota live in poverty, and an additional 26% lived in near-poverty, the highest rates of all the surveyed cultural or ethnic groups in the state (MSDC 2016). This should be considered alongside the predominant household types: about 55% of Somali households had a single-earner (compared to 37% of all Minnesota households); and 34.6% of Somali households were female-headed, with no spouse present (ACS 2013; MSDC 2016). Both of these household types tend to have higher rates of poverty than dual-earner, parent households

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[54] The current MFIP cash assistance carries only 46% of the buying power compared to the 1986 level of assistance. In 1986, the financial level of assistance for a family of four was set at U.S $621. When adjusted for inflation, it is the equivalent of U.S $1,353 of goods and services in 2016 (Webster 2016).

(MSDC 2016; Orloff 2009). Perhaps more alarming is that although minority girls and boys in Minnesota "have similar poverty rates in childhood, minority girls are more likely to be poor in adulthood" (Gulati-Partee and Ranghelli 2009: 10). "Also interesting is that the gender wage gap is often considerably smaller within these refugee groups than for U.S.-born workers. Indeed, the gender gap is sometimes reversed. Somali and Burmese women with college degrees earn more than their male counterparts" (Kallick and Mathema 2016:4).

In a 2003 study conducted by Wilder Research, Somali informants "expressed a strong and consistent desire to work more and depend less on welfare" (as cited in Otteson et al. 2010: 17). A 2010 report from the Minneapolis Foundation found that the frequent use of public benefits among Somali and Hmong refugee families was not due to an inability or unwillingness to work (as many were employed) but "simply because they have difficulty finding living-wage employment that can support their relatively large families" (Otteson et al. 2010: 17). Among high school graduates, a Somali woman earn 51 cents of every U.S$ 1 a U.S.-born white man[55] earns, and 25 cents less than a white woman (Kallick and Mathema 2016). This means that a Somali woman has to work for more than 22 months to earn what a man earned in 12 months.

These statistics are troubling, but do not necessarily tell the whole story. Abdi (2014) suggests that the true rate of poverty may actually lower be than the official census reports, as many in the Somali community supplement their public benefits through self-employment through services such as babysitting, driving taxis, or janitorial work (Abdi 2014: 460). Among her informants in Minneapolis, Abdi (2014) found that Somali women tend to combine several sources of income (e.g., charity, *hagbad* financial pooling, paid work, and public assistance) in order to cover their household needs as well as *hawala*-obligations. (Abdi 2014). Among a small sample of Somali women in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, Hadjiyanni (2007) found that because most of them regularly sent money to Somalia, it meant that they "spent more than the recommended 30% of their remaining income on living accommodations" (Hadjiyanni 2007: 14). Among business owners surveyed in Minnesota, Golden et al. (2010) found remittance sending to be nearly universal. The percentage of monthly income remitted varied from 1% to 95% of a respondent's monthly earnings, with a mean of 24% (Golden et al. 2010: 45).

Prior to the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA), commonly known as welfare reform, "legal permanent residents (including refugees) were eligible for the same welfare benefits as citizens" (Ali 2011: 85). The next year,

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[55] The highest income group in the United States (Kallick and Mathema 2016

the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1997 (IIRIRA) was passed, requiring non-refugee migrants to "demonstrate that they are not likely to become public charges by submitting a legally binding affidavit of support from a sponsor" (AHR 2014: 205). Sponsorship is the formal assistance provided by an organization over a limited period of time, usually church congregations, but also "anchoring" families (Kutty 2010). Church groups or congregations may act as sponsors, and provide support for a family throughout their resettlement, sometimes for several years (Kutty 2010). Citizens, employers, or permanent-resident family members who sponsor someone must forfeit their access to public assistance for the first five years and assume full financial responsibility for the sponsored individual (Ali 2011). Given the importance of family members in the context of migration, these two pieces of legislation have ultimately excluded many lower-income migrants from access to public benefits. Moreover, the 60-month time limit on welfare benefits have made many migrants either shorten English or professional (re-) qualification courses, so that they could work instead to support their large households and send remittances to relatives (Ali 2011: 100). Sponsors do not merely provide financial support, but assist with transportation, housing, food and clothing. Congregations can tap into their networks and help with English classes and the search for employment (Grigoleit 2006). Family sponsors often find themselves in difficult financial situations, nor can they offer the large network of resources found in a religious congregation[56]. Sponsorship is a random process, and available sponsors are matched upon a family's arrival (Kutty 2010; LSS 2016). Refugees sponsored by congregations tended to have better employment outcomes, stronger language skills and social support, and close friendships than refugees sponsored by family members or others (Kutty 2010; Shandy and Fennelly). With this in mind, "it is not surprising that assistance of this type is seen as equivalent to winning the lottery" (Kutty 2010: 135).

5.4 HOUSING

A tangible, physical home is a prerequisite to laying the foundation for a true sense of belonging (AHR 2014; Ali 2011). Refugees receive temporary housing for the first 90 days they are in the United States. This became a source of serious tension between refugees and other low-income groups, who are disproportionately black Americans. As the resettlement process and rental finance officially end after 90 days, and then Somalis too face the same barriers to safe and

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[56] For instance, Kutty (2010) describes a Russian refugee family sponsored by a wealthy suburban church congregation for about five years. They lived in rent-free housing in a nice neighborhood, good schools, and help finding jobs. After five years "the sponsored family was able to buy their own house because of the money they had saved" (Kutty 2010: 135).

affordable housing (Ali 2011). Cuts to the federal budget have had negative impact on the availability of affordable public housing in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area (Ali 2011). Discrimination by realtors, property owners and neighbors based on their language, race, religion and national origin (AHR 2014: 27; Leitner). Other barriers present themselves due to cultural misunderstandings, or a lack of rental history. Affordable housing that accommodates large families is a major obstacle facing many Somalis in Minnesota (Ali 2011; Hadjiyanni 2007; Robillos 2001). As refugees are likely to have a lower socioeconomic status, they may have no choice but to live in "high density, low-cost housing projects" (Ali 2011: 102). Approximately 8% of Somalis households in Minnesota were homeowners, the lowest homeownership rates of the largest ethnic groups[57] in Minnesota (MSDC 2016). Home ownership is therefore not a viable option for many Somalis, who are thereby confined to the rental housing market, which limits the choices they have (Hadjiyanni 2007). Families commonly end up in housing units that are far too small to accommodate their typically large households (Ali 2011). These may be in violation of occupancy laws, which limit the number of people who can live in a dwelling. This has been a source of conflict with landlords been noted frequently in the literature (AHR 2014; Ali 2011; Hadjiyanni 2007; Robillos 2001; Shandy and Fennelly 2006). Units are simply not large enough. This is true of both public and privately owned housing. Families sometimes have to split up, or rent two apartments right next to each other, a major expense for those already economic disadvantaged (AHR 2014).

Housing discrimination is the driving force of residential segregation, which in turn affects most other areas of life, whether it be access to economic activity, educational opportunities, health, and security (AHR 2014). Residential segregation has been further exacerbated by the bureaucratic decision of where affordable or public housing is built. This often results in the segregation into isolated pockets of immigrant communities in disadvantaged neighborhoods (AHR 2014). Furthermore, these issues compound due to the distance from economic centers and employment opportunities, in addition to complications due to lack of transportation (AHR 2014; Capps et al. 2015). For many in Minneapolis-St. Paul, they have no viable transportation alternative to driving. Public transportation may not service the hours, or reach the major employers. Meat-processing plants many Somalis work at are often located on the city limits, far from public transportation (AHR 2014).

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[57] Black Americans were the next lowest group of homeowners, at 25%, illustrating the striking racial disparities compared to, for example, 72% of all Minnesota households and 77% of all white households (MSDC 2016: 57).

5.5 HEALTH

The circumstances under which migrants leave their country of origin may be among the most crucial factors influencing their eventual integration process in a new society, and there are several factors that distinguish refugees from voluntary migrants (Boyle and Ali 2009; Martikainen 2006; Robertson et al. 2006). Forced migration (i.e., asylum seekers and refugees) often takes place under violent conditions (Martikainen 2006; Mohamed 1999). Conflict and political unrest often expose civilians to violence, but target them as well, accelerating "the loss of social and cultural foundations that provide stability and connectedness" (Robertson et al. 2006: 578). The high incidence of female-headed households, both in Somalia and in the diaspora is often noted by researchers. Thousands of Somali men were maimed or killed during fighting, other men fled and left their families behind (Abdi 2007; Gardner and El Bushra 2004; Kiil 2008; Kleist 2010; Moret 2006; Phoenix 2011). The men's departure coincided with the formation of clan militias, which further divided and solidified clan loyalties. In Mogadishu, a place once known for clan heterogeneity and tolerance, scores of women in inter-clan marriages, along with their children, were disowned by both their marital and paternal clans, abandoned and unprotected (Lewis 1994). As described to Fadiman (1997):

> Many have feelings of guilt […] when the soldiers fire, you do not think about your family, just yourself only. When you are on the other side, you will not be like what you were before you get through […] on the other side you cannot say to your wife, I love you more than my life. She saw! You cannot say that anymore! And when you try to re-stick this thing together it is like putting glue on broken glass. (Fadiman 1997: 164-165, as cited in Boyle and Ali 2009: 58)

The psychological and physical tolls associated with these experiences can be immense. In areas experiencing conflict, women often experience the highest burdens; evidence suggests that Somali women have greater and more extensive trauma histories because of the high incidence of sexual violence from war itself and later within refugee camps (Connor et al. 2016; Crosby 2008; Robertson et al. 2006: 578). Somali refugees in the diaspora have been found to suffer from high rates of anxiety, depression, and post-traumatic stress disorder, even relative to other refugees (Ellis et al. 2008; Halcón et al. 2004;; Robertson et al. 2006). In a study of several hundred Somali women in Minnesota, 89% of the women with large families "reported that they had had to do things to survive that still troubled them" (Robertson et al. 2006: 583).

5.6 SOCIETY

5.6.1 Citizenship

An individual is eligible to apply for citizenship through naturalization once they have been a legal permanent resident for at least five years. In addition, requirements stipulate that an individual must pass an interview in English, pass a test that demonstrates the ability to read and write Basic English; pass a civics test; undergo a background check, and take an oath of allegiance (USCIS 2016). Naturalized citizens hold the same rights and privileges as *jus soli* citizens, with one exception: they may not become president of the United States (AHR 2014). Naturalization is an expensive[58] affair and cost prohibitive for many. The process of becoming a naturalized American citizen may present multiple challenges to individuals who have communication problems in English or are illiterate (Ali 2011; Filippi-Franz 2009; O'Connor 2015). Furthermore, due to the limitations of access to language courses….[**finish**]

Non-citizen legal permanent residents in the United States have fewer rights, and are barred access to numerous federal benefits or social assistance (Ali 2011). Hence, citizenship is in many ways necessary to fully participate in American society (Harinen et al. 2014; Martiniello 2013). In Minnesota, 58% of foreign-born Somali women had naturalized (ACS 2013), and 42% of foreign-born Somali men.

In the United States, voting is restricted to citizens, even for offices at a local level (i.e., school board) something which initially impedes voices from immigrant communities. Low voter turnout, a lack of public officials with migrant backgrounds, may foster a perception that officials are sensitive to needs of certain communities. As a report from The Advocates for Human Rights (2014) asserts: "when people are not part of the voting population, their values are not heard and valued. For 15 years, Somalis weren't heard, but now [that they are voting], attention is being paid to them" (AHR 2014: 249).

Over 67% of Somalis eligible to vote did so in the 2012 American election, and in 2015, 73% reported they had registered to vote, the second highest level of voter registration among surveyed migrant and refugee groups in Minnesota (Wilder Research 2015). These numbers are likely to continue to grow: the most common reason Somalis gave for not voting was being ineligible due to their citizenship status (Wilder Research 2015). Across the different groups of migrants and refugees, close to 63% of the respondents reported *not* being affiliated with a specific political party. That is, except for the Somalis, of whom 77% reported affiliation with

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[58] As of January 2016, the naturalization fee was U.S $680 (USCIS 2016).

the Democratic Party (Wilder Research 2015). The organizing power and political future of the community was truly put on display in November 2016, when Ilhan Omar was elected to the Minnesota state House of Representatives, District 60B and became the country's first Somali-American, Muslim woman legislator to hold an office at that level (Samuelson 2016).

The word "fear" is one that appears frequently when Somalis, or other Muslim Americans describe their lives in the United States after 9/11 (Arnold 2015; Guenther et al. 2011; Kutty 2010). In the immediate aftermath, federal agencies launched investigations into several Somali businesses and money-transfer *hawala* centers based on suspected ties with Al-Qaeda (Guenther et al. 2011). The subsequent media attention established a connection of Somalis to terrorism, at least in public perception, that was devastating to many, and may have resulted in physical assaults on a several Somalis in Minneapolis (Arnold 2015; Connor et al. 2016; Guenther et al. 2011; Leet-Otley 2012; Preston 2013). In the past decade, at least two dozen young Somali-American men have left Minnesota to join Al-Qaeda affiliate, al Shabaab in Somalia. More recently, over a dozen Somali-Americans have left or tried to leave to fight in the self-declared Islamic State in Syria (Shane 2015; Southers and Hienz 2015).

In an analysis of Somalis in Minnesota media, Preston (2013) found that Somali men were represented in media reports much more frequently than women[59] and that among Somali-related articles, terrorism and terrorist activities (and men) superseded every other topic, both in quantity and prominence (Preston 2013: 66). Somali women appeared in a range of personal and professional actor types in media about "community events, entertainment...and social issues such as bullying and racism" (Preston 2013: 63), though rarely, if at all, appeared in the topics of business, politics and terrorism. On the topic "public moral problems", which included "difficulties regarding immigration and integration", media portrayals of Somali were found to be quite diverse; not limited to individual men and women, but informal groups and institutions as well (Preston 2013: 67). More interestingly, Preston (2013) found that contrary to previous media analyses, which found Somali women were commonly portrayed as helpless and oppressed victims or an unwilling to assimilate. Preston (2013) concluded that those findings were not represented in the Minnesota media analysis.

However, on my own brief review, recent events and articles Somali women have featured prominently in leadership roles as community activists, entrepreneurs, politicians and

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[59] This trend was seen in news of non-Somali men as well (Preston 2013).

professors (Belz 2015; Du 2016; Fernández Campbell 2014; Koumpilova 2015a; 2015b; 2016; Samuelson 2016). Indeed, these articles explicitly challenge public perceptions about what it means to be a Somali woman, including sensitive issues such as FGC (Koumpilova 2015a),

Based on Preston's (2013) quantitative analysis of Minnesota media, much of the negative media attention directed at Somalis in Minnesota has focused on one, men and two, Somali issues beyond Minnesota (Preston 2013). Terrorism, radicalization, investigations and trials of

Beyond official sponsorship of refugee families, religious institutions (i.e., mosques) have become vital in assisting migrants to ensure their basic needs are met, or establishing connections to the community (Shandy and Fennelly 2006: 39; Southers and Hienz 2015). Unlike other immigrant groups (e.g., Haitians or Mexicans), many Somali refugees do not have large extended family or kin networks in the United States (Kutty 2010). In their study of the integration experiences of Sudanese and Somali refugees in a rural Minnesota town, Shandy and Fennelly (2006) found that religious beliefs had important implications. Their Somali and Sudanese informants had much in common: they had fled civil war; had similar levels of formal education and employment; and black in a town with a predominantly white population. While all of Shandy and Fennelly's (2006) Somali informants were Sunni Muslims, most of the Sudanese informants were Christians, that "religious differences have important implications for their resettlement and integration" (Shandy and Fennelly 2006: 38). Shared religion with the native-born population played a critical role in integration of the Sudanese community into the mainstream community. Many Sudanese belonged to a local Lutheran church, which facilitated regular interactions with Americans and access to church-provided resources, such as childcare (Shandy and Fennelly 2006).

In the overwhelmingly Christian community, Islamic faith became a source of cohesion within the *Somali* community. Limited opportunities for interaction between native-born Americans and Somalis and the lack of a mosque strengthened feelings of detachment from the larger community (Shandy and Fennelly 2006: 39). Their differences were, furthermore "strongly reinforced" by some of the native-born Christian residents who saw Muslims to be, as a rural pastor worded it, "unchurched" (Shandy and Fennelly 2006: 40). Religion was therefore "not an integrative force, but a barrier to acceptance by their Christian European-origin neighbors" (Shandy and Fennelly 2006: 41).

Somali teenagers and adults face significant levels of discrimination in the United States (Bigelow 2010; Guenther et al. 2011; Leet-Otley 2012; Shandy and Fennelly 2006). A report from the Advocates for Human Rights (2014) found that although migrant and refugee organizations have reported general complaints of differential treatment, "organizations assisting Somali and Muslim workers reported higher numbers of specific incidents of discrimination." (AHR 2014: 117). A large portion of the complaints came from organizations located in greater Minnesota (i.e., outside of the Minneapolis- St. Paul area). The report details the overt discrimination against migrants and refugees, most notably and repeatedly against Somali, Muslim women wearing hijabs (AHR 2014). These included cases of women fired for wearing hijabs and lengthy disputes over dress codes. While some employers were very accommodating or somewhat willing to negotiate, it should be clear that several employers "were open to making changes to accommodate the workers when confronted by outside agencies" about their discrimination against Muslim women (AHR 2014: 117).

Interestingly, although Somali women those who are most "visibly Muslim", Guenther et al. (2011) found that Somali men expressed greater fear about the safety of women, while the women themselves did not seem as concerned. Leet-Otley (2012) argues, "We must not underestimate the extent of the religious, sexist, and xenophobic harassment that hijab wearing Somali girls and women endure in schools and communities" (Leet-Otley 2012:118). Somali women have reported experiences of being verbally abused, threatened, spat on, and physically assaulted in public (Connor et al. 2016; Du 2016; Guenther 2011; Leet-Otley 2012; Xaykaothao 2016). Leitner (2008) found that among white informants in a rural Minnesota town, they used discourses that "conflate American identity with whiteness" (Leitner 2008: 60) and when translated into real-life interactions, such as in the housing market, they "impact immigrants' lived experiences in profound and debilitating ways" (Leitner 2008: 60). Difficulties for Somalis have been the tensions among particularly working-class white Americans, who have voiced feelings of having their economic livelihood being, displaced (Fennelly 2008). Anti-Muslim, anti-refugee rhetoric has grown louder throughout the past year, encouraged by politicians on a local, state and national level. Minnesota was one of the nine states that saw a large increase[60] of anti-Muslim hate crimes between 2014 and 2015 (Ferner and Scheller 2016). Several authors have mentioned a general animosity between Somalis and black Americans, something that has surprised many non-black individuals (Ali 2011; Bigelow 2010; Langellier 2010). In a discussion of these tensions, Leet-Otley (2012) argues that Somalis did not have

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[60] Hate crimes against Muslims in Minnesota increased by 37.5% in 2015 (Ferner and Scheller 2016).

preconceived notions that Somalis and black Americans should get along, simply "because they were the same color" (Leet-Otley 2012: 55), which for most Americans, "so accustomed to thinking racially, this is hard to fathom" (Leet-Otley 2012: 55). For black migrants in the United States, a black American identity has numerous educational, social, financial, and political implications.

Leet-Otley (2012) asserts that some Somalis have attempted to distance themselves from black Americans, by highlighting their ethnicity as "light-skinned Arab and North African Blacks, or 'honorary Whites'" (Leet-Otley 2012: 57). In doing this however, the white hegemonic ideal goes unchallenged, but reinforced.[61] In their study on the racial and ethnic formations of East African migrants in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, Guenther et al. (2011) found that informants placed heavier emphasis on their ethnic identities as a means of resistance to being seen as black Americans. For many Somalis, their Muslim identity became an important form of capital to distinguish themselves from black Americans. Guenther et al. (2011) considered that "tricky business", because a Muslim identity represents also marginalized in the United States. Men and women in the sample reported that white Minnesotans had little desire to learn about historical differences between black Americans and East Africans. A Somali woman in her twenties commented: "If you are black, you're black. They [white Americans] don't care whether you came to America six years ago or six hundred years ago" (Guenther et al. 2011: 109).

In research conducted among the largest migrant and refugee groups in Minnesota, respondents considered Minnesota to be a welcoming place, especially relative to other places, but many it to be a shallow welcome, as described by one person: "people try to help you, but they try not to be your friend" (AHR 2014: 276). Outright hostility was not necessarily common but there was an "absence of deeper relationships between immigrant communities and long-term resident groups" (AHR 2014: 277). Among Kutty's (2010) informants, Somali women did not necessarily feel American, but they saw it possible to incorporate "Somali identity into what it meant to be American" (Kutty 2010: 123) and conveyed "a general feeling that if normalcy could be achieved, it would be here" (Kutty 2010: 121).

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[61] Brown 2014; Langellier 2010; Leet-Otley 2012; Mollenkopf and Hochschild 2010).

5.7 CONCLUSION

The resettlement programs in Minnesota have undergone a shift from a holistic approach that included several years of integration services with flexible time limits, to the current 90 days in which the objective rests primarily on employment and economic self-sufficiency as soon as possible (Abdi 2014; Ali 2011; AHR 2014; Kutty 2010). Some refugees received cultural orientation and even months of intensive language courses prior to their arrival in the United States. These programs no longer exist, and have placed a heavier burden on VOLAGS, but even more so on the refugees themselves (AHR 2014; Koumpilova 2016; Kutty 2010). Upon arrival, most Somali women have limited English proficiency; many have low levels of formal education and large families. With this in mind, the federal refugee resettlement process is considered inadequate in both duration and scope (AHR 2014: 29; Ali 2011; Kutty 2010).

Connor et al. (2016) found that many Somali women in their Minnesota sample felt considerable strain in their attempt to fill various household roles (e.g., daughter, mother, wage earner, wives and more). Moreover, Connor et al. (2016) underscore the importance of recognizing the numerous challenges many Somali women face. This includes the trauma of war, life in a refugee camp, in addition to the enormous stress that accompanies learning a new language and social norms: "one must understand the multitude of roles the Somali woman plays before encouraging change" (Connor et al. 2016: 21-22).

The religious communities, extensive resources and services that are available for refugees in the Minneapolis-St. Paul, are not always accessible in rural areas, meaning Somali women in smaller cities and rural areas of Minnesota face additional economic and social challenges (Hassan 2011; Kutty 2010; Leitner 2008[62]).

Segregation is a significant problem in Minnesota, evidenced racial and ethnic inequities that have grown over the course of the past two decades (Gulati-Partee and Ranghelli 2009; Metropolitan Council 2016). In addition, historical circumstances have played a dramatic role in the experiences of Muslim immigrants in the United States. Some women have described their overall reception as limited to superficial surface-level interactions, rather than full acceptance (AHR 2014; Kutty 2010; Leet-Otley 2012). Incidents of anti-Muslim assault, discrimination, harassment, racist violence and vandalism are well-documented in the existing

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[62]AHR 2014; Du 2016; Fennelly 2008; Green 2003; Kutty 2010; Leitner 2008; Shandy and Fennelly 2006; Otteson et al. 2010

literature (AHR 2014; Du 2016; Fennelly 2008; Kutty 2010; Leitner 2008; Shandy and Fennelly 2006; Otteson et al. 2010).

Previous research has indicated that even though many Somali women do hold jobs, their wages may not be high enough to escape poverty (AHR 2014). Female-headed households are common and large families   Low levels of education. The complicated and interrelated nature of welfare and immigration policies contribute to precarious financial situations many women are already in.

With limited access to benefits, low-wage, low-skilled jobs and high rates of poverty, life in Minnesota is not easy for many Somali women. However, the willingness of the Minnesota government and civil society to collaborate with the Somali community has yielded promising results.

Self-employment opportunities have allowed Somali women in Minnesota to overcome many of the hurdles they otherwise face in the labor market. This includes widespread discrimination, disputes related to wearing the hijab, over prayer breaks or other religious observances (AHR 2014; Akou 2004; Ali 2011; Connor et al. 2016; Guenther et al. 2011; Leet-Otley 2012). Furthermore, self-employment can be a source of empowerment for women, not only through their economic independence, but also as an investment in the local community and meaningful participation in society at large (AHR 2014; Brown 2014; Raheim and Bolden 1995). The rise in Somali day care providers and their culturally sensitive educational options for working parents, both Somali and non-Somali, are a testament to this.

6. CASE TWO: NORWAY

In this chapter, I will present the second case, Norway. I give an overview of administrative that oversee integration in Norway, followed by a brief overview of the Somali community in Norway. The various programs that have been implemented under the Norwegian integration policy.

6.1 INTEGRATION

6.1.1 Somalis in Norway

There are around 40,000 Somalis living in Norway, making them the largest refugee group and third-largest migrant group in the country (Statistics Norway 2015a). There were no more than a few dozen Somalis in Norway prior to 1987 and the first substantial cohort of refugees arrived in 1988, when the conflict in the Northern Somalia began in earnest (Fangen 2006b). Between 1988 and 1991, Somali arrivals were primarily from the Issaq clan; among refugees who arrived between 1991 and 2000, most indicated they belonged to the Hawiye clan (AID 2009). As was the case in other receiving countries, the earlier Somali arrivals were often from middle-class backgrounds and highly educated (Engebrigtsen and Farstad 2004). Seven out of ten Somalis in Norway reported coming from urban areas, either around Mogadishu or other southern coastal areas (OSF 2013). Available survey data on educational levels suggests that a large percentage have limited or no formal educational background (OSF 2013: 49). As a group, they are among the most recent arrivals; and overall very young: 80% of Somalis in Norway in 2012 were under 40 years old (OSF 2013). Oslo is the capital and largest city in Norway by far and home to over 40% of the Somali community in Norway (OSF 2013; Statistics Norway 2015). A slight gender imbalance exists: 47% of the Somali population are women (Statistics Norway 2016b).

The Directorate of Immigration (UDI) operates under the Ministry of Justice and Public Security (JD) to oversee Norwegian migration and asylum issues. The Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion is responsible for matters of citizenship and coordination of integration policies, the latter of which are the responsibility of the Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi). The Introductory Act of 2003 is the cornerstone of Norwegian integration policy and consists of two parts: Norwegian Language Training and Social Studies and the Introduction Program launched in 2004. Newly arrived refugees between the ages 18-55 have a right and a duty to participate in the Introduction Program. (IMDi 2014a). Individuals aged

55-67 have a right to access, but are not obligated to participate. Family members of refugees who have come to Norway through family reunification also have a right and duty to participate (IMDi 2014a). The purpose of the Introduction Program is to "strengthen newly arrived immigrants ability to participate in working and social life, and their financial independence" (IMDi 2014a). This includes learning basic Norwegian language skills, learning about Norwegian culture, and preparation for positions in the Norwegian labor market. Program participants have a right to individualized plans, both in terms of content and practical matters, and municipalities can in theory tailor the qualification and training to better suit a participant's needs. In addition, each participant receives individual guidance and comprehensive and systematic follow-up from contact program coordinator (JD 2016a).

The program is run on a municipal level, and all municipalities that accept migrants are required to provide access to the Introduction Program. Active participants in the Introduction Program receive compensation that resembles a salary, called the Introduction Benefit, which is twice the basic annual amount issued by the National Insurance Scheme (*folketrygdens grunnbeløp*). Participants under the age of 25, receive two-thirds of the benefit. This is a form of public assistance, and appears as such in official income statistics registered by Statistics Norway (Blom 2014). Norwegian language training and social studies are intended for newly arrived refugees (White Paper 16 2015–2016) as a means to prepare them for employment or formal education in Norway. The Norwegian Agency for Lifelong Learning, known as Vox (*voksenopplæring*), is responsible for creating and maintaining the curriculum used in the program. Participants must complete 600 hours of Norwegian language course, 50 of which are designated for social studies that can be instructed in a language the participant feels most comfortable. Individuals are entitled to receive up to 3,000 hours of language training if need be (Thorud et al. 2015). If completed within three years, the mandatory portion of the language and social studies training is free; the additional hours of language instruction must be completed within five years. Since 2014, program participants have had to take a mandatory test[63] after their completion of the 50 hours of social studies (Thorud et al. 2015). Approximately 60% of Somali women over the age of 18 did not have any formal education when they entered Norway (Henriksen 2010). Two of ten women had completed basic formal education, and about two out of ten had completed several years of higher education (Henriksen 2010).

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[63] In whatever language they feel most comfortable in (Thorud et al. 2015).

The qualification programs partner with a various employers and participants may be appointed to apprenticeships and vocational training programs. The Qualification Program (KVP-*kvalifiseringsprogrammet*), for example, combines work-placement with a vocational Norwegian course (*arbeidsrettet norskopplæring*). This generally consists of a working-trial period of about two weeks that includes close supervision and feedback. Some participants are offered short- or long-term temporary positions; others are placed on stand-by calling lists. Some have secured permanent positions, though often after long periods of temporary work (Rugkåsa 2010). The use of these programs is widespread, even though they have a "very moderate effect" on employment levels, and actually "increase the chances of being exploited by employers" (Linløkken et al. 2015: 78). Additionally, there is considerable evidence that the work training that many women *do* receive is solitary often in nature and not conducive to interaction with others (Djuve et al. 2011; Mathisen 2010; Orupabo and Drange 2015; Rugkåsa 2010). Furthermore, the work activation and qualification measures aimed at women have been found to be less intensive and less work-oriented than the corresponding measures directed at men (Djuve et al. 2011; Hagelund and Kavli 2009; Rugkåsa 2010).

Previous studies have documented Somali women that have been in work qualification programs for months on end without being employed, but told to cycle through another course or program (Friberg and Elgvin 2016; Holm 2011; Kiil 2008; Rugkåsa 2010; Stokke 2012). When women do obtain employment, they are usually confined to unskilled positions as cleaners, kindergarten workers or cafeteria employees. These jobs are often part-time or temporary positions, with low autonomy, low wages and difficult working conditions (Henriksen 2010; Orupabo and Drange 2015; Rugkåsa 2010). Many Somali women are in their peak-childbearing years, have very young children, and assume the majority of caretaking responsibilities. This is certainly true for single mothers, which Somali women are more likely to be (Dzamarija 2016). The confluence of more childcare responsibilities. Furthermore, Djuve et al. (2011) found that Somali women with low levels or no formal education, who had extensive familial responsibilities face were limited in the extent they were able to utilize their right to measures that improve their chances of entering the labor market (Djuve et al. 2011; Orupabo and Drange 2015). Somali women,

6.1.2 Introduction Program Outcomes

One year after completion of the Introduction Program, women are overall less likely to study or become employed; 33% of Somali women were in either education or employment, compared to 65% of Somali men (Statistics Norway 2015 d). Meanwhile, 11% of Somali women were unemployed, and a sizeable 56% had "other or unknown[64] status", which Statistics Norway suggests is due to enrollment in other adult education or familial responsibilities (Statistics Norway 2015d). Although some of the highest gender disparities in Introduction Program outcomes were among Somali participants[65], they were not alone. One year after completion, a 25 percentage point-difference was found between men and women's employment and education rates, and similar gaps were present in the "other or unknown statuses" among *all* participants ages 25-39 (Statistics Norway 2015d). In addition, women have also had higher Introduction Program dropout rates than men have (Hagelund and Kavli 2009; Kavli et al. 2011).

Pregnancy is another factor that interrupts and prevents women's program completion (Kavli et al 2010; Linløkken et al 2015). Women in this age group (25-39) are at a stage in their lives in which many choose to have children, and many Somali women have arrived in Norway in their 20's and 30's (Henriksen 2010). On average, Somali women in Norway tend to have more children and have higher rates of single mothers than other groups (Dzamarija 2016; Henriksen 2010). Certain restrictions, such as the three-year completion deadline of the Introduction Program, and lack of flexibility within it disproportionately exclude women from participation and contribute to disparities in outcomes (Linløkken et al. 2015:11; Rugkåsa 2010). Measures to address these differences, for example, have focused on women maintaining their new language skills during maternity leave (Kavli et al. 2011). Some municipalities offer several options, such as "open kindergartens" or "mother and children-groups" (Rugkåsa 2010). Not all municipalities provide these services though, in which case, women on maternity leave are at a higher risk of dropping out (Djuve et al. 2011). Furthermore, Introduction Program outcomes vary considerably between different municipalities (White Paper 30: 2015-2016).

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[64] The terms used to describe the 'weakest degree of labor force attachment'. '*Other*' status includes people who receive social assistance, cash benefits for children, or are on long-term sick leave. '*Unknown*' status designates people who are not registered in any of the data sources available for reporting status attachment to the labor market (Statistics Norway 2015d).

[65] The unemployment rate of Somali men was 14% and 21% had 'other or unknown' status (Statistics Norway 2015d).

The full-time education design of the program is often especially difficult for newly arrived families, with many children, in the midst of settling down (Djuve et al. 2011).

6.1.3 Public Assistance

The Labour and Welfare Service (*Arbeids- og velferdsetaten*), more commonly referred to as NAV[66], encompasses the Norwegian welfare system in its entirety. This includes the provision of universal services such as child support or pensions, to the more specific, such as rehabilitation or unemployment benefits. Nearly all Norwegian residents use a service provided by NAV at some point in their lives (Friberg and Elgvin 2016). Roughly, 44% of municipalities have designated NAV to implement the Introduction Program[67] (IMDi 2015). A lack of formal qualifications is one of the biggest challenges facing Somali women and their ability to participate in the Norwegian labor market (Friberg and Elgvin 2016; Kavli et al. 2011). In a study of Somali experiences with NAV qualification programs, women in Friberg and Elgvin's (2016) sample voiced a strong desire for language courses and more varied formal qualification measures. The policy instruments at their disposal however, are poorly adapted for users who without basic formal education, and the qualification measures currently offered do not meet the needs of many Somali participants. As a NAV employee described the situation:

> NAV does not offer basic education. That has to be through an adult education course provided by the municipality. The issue arises when such a course involves money, because the municipality will say, "no, you won't get welfare benefits to attend primary school." They want you out in a cleaning job. But how long can you last in that job? Primary school is an essential foundation, but the municipality refuses. NAV also has to say no to primary-school oriented Norwegian, because it is not "work-oriented." This just shows that it is difficult to gain acceptance for provision of basic education […] is something which should and must be done. (Friberg and Elgvin 2016: 274)

These women have no other realistic options and "clearly expressed that the activation regime most of them are (or have been) subject to, perceived as pure coercion" (Friberg and Elgvin 2016: 271).

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[66] NAV is an acronym for *Ny Arbeids- og velferdsetaten* (the New Labour and Welfare Service). The word "new" has since been dropped from the name, but NAV remains the most common designation

[67] In most municipalities, the Introduction Programs is held at a designated "Refugee Office", and a small portion are held at adult education centers (IMDi 2015).

6.1.4 Civil Society

Although, the government sees volunteer organizations and civil society as important resources, the same cannot be said about minority organizations. For example, the White Paper on integration, there is no mention of any such collaboration (White Paper 30: 2015-2016). Minority organizations have more often than not been ignored, or not consulted to begin with, even on general issues (Bråten and Elgvin 2014; Linløkken et al. 2015; Siim and Skjeie 2008; Teigen and Langvasbråten 2009). As Kiil (2008) describes, "the Somali women are not even participants in discussions about the content of these rights and therefore alienated and stigmatized when they choose other strategies to organize their lives" (Kiil 2008: 66). There were 150 registered Somali organizations in Norway in 2008-2009, most of which focused on the status or issues within the Somali community (OSF 2013: 133).

In a study of four Somali women's organizations in Oslo, Haase (2010) found that had been established to gather women, as a potential means of solving problems and in the face of adjustment to life in Norway, discrimination, lack of networks, poverty, racism, segregation and social stigma. These organizations were an important resource for Somali women, and an important component of their work was focused on "preparing members for successful integration into the Norwegian community so that they can contribute fully to national activities (Haase 2010: iv) Prepared workshops or lessons on for example, Norwegian food, health care, lifestyle, laws, public benefits. Other courses offered included cooking or sports. Furthermore, these organizations taught women about their rights as individuals in Norway, detailed information on raising children and Norway. These are measures and activities that Somali women in other studies have expressed a need for, or considered helpful in adjusting to Norwegian society (Alseth et al. 2014; ECRI 2015; Holm 2011; Jabang 2015; Kiil 2008; OSF 2013). The organizations faced several challenges. None had more than a handful of staff, most of whom had little relevant training in management positions; there were few collaborative projects between organizations; and a lack of financial resources posed a significant barrier to growth (Haase 2010). Overall, the "organizational pattern of the Somali females in Norway and the diaspora is characterized rather by partition, isolation, non-awareness and even the fact that no umbrella organization exists that could serve as a lobby to the Norwegian authorities" (Haase 2010: 34).

6.2 Language

6.2.1 Language and Employment

Rugkåsa (2010) found that while educators, employers, policy makers and migrant women themselves all emphasized the importance of learning the Norwegian language and saw it as fundamental to their participation in society, there was no consensus as to what level of Norwegian was sufficient for work (Rugkåsa 2010: 111). Many women wanted to improve their ability to write and speak Norwegian, because they felt as though poor language skills were one of the biggest hurdles they faced in seeking employment. Rugkåsa (2010) identifies a contradiction here, as at the end of temporary work placements, many women are not hired. According to a caseworker, employers commonly give "insufficient language skills" as "an excuse to cover other problematic conditions, such as misconduct or problems with the way the women are dressed" (Rugkåsa 2010: 112). It is much harder to formulate an argument against inadequate language skills (Rugkåsa 2010: 112).

A study on literacy events among Somali women in Oslo found significant variation in the civic literacy needs of women with children and those without (Mathiesen 2010). Women with children tended to spend more time reading and writing in Norwegian, often because of the various applications for childcare and public benefits, and were one of their main sources of motivation for learning how to speak Norwegian (Mathiesen 2010).

A report on the use of interpreters in the health care sector in southeast Oslo found that Somali was the most requested language service (Helse Sør-Øst 2012, as cited in OSF 2013: 99). Worryingly, the report also found that "88% of interpreting services carried out by interpreters without formal qualifications, as opposed to 3% for UDI" (OSF 2013: 99). The Ministry of Health and Care Services recognized the challenges and importance of access to interpretation and translation in order to provide fair and equal care services. Nonetheless, they "underlined that Norwegian-language education is crucial for improving communication" (OSF 2013: 99). Language skills undoubtedly strengthen an individual's ability to communicate; however, by focusing on a woman's language skills, the Ministry deflects responsibility for perpetuation of inequality, and place the onus on the individual woman to ensure she receives proper care. Glavin and Sæteren (2016) voiced similar sentiments in their study on Somali women's experiences as new mothers in the Norwegian health care system. In their findings, the authors were more preoccupied with the deficient language skills of their "poorly integrated" informants and how "very different" Somali and Norwegian culture than discussing women's fear of cesarean section births (Glavin and Sæteren 2016).

6.3 SOCIOECONOMIC STATUS

6.3.1 Labor Force Participation

Employment is an important part of an individual's integration in society. It furthers their social, economic and social well-being. In Norway, employment is regarded as both a right and an duty, because high employment rates are necessary for economic growth/stability and the sustainability of the Norwegian welfare system (see Rugkåsa 2010). In 2015, Somali women in Norway had an employment rate of 21% and 7.3% participation rate in job-activation measures (Statistics Norway 2015). In 2013, the average income of a Somali household in Norway was NOK 166,000[68] (Dzamarija 2016). Rugkåsa (2010) argues, "Paid work has almost become a measure of moral credibility, and a moral action where the individual pays their dues to community" (Rugkåsa 2010: 89). The Norwegian welfare state has "active labor market policies", in which the government spends activating various groups. One of the most targeted groups in this sense, are women, as their participation in the labor market thought of as essential to the development of the Nordic welfare state (Midtbøen and Teigen 2014; Rugkåsa 2010). The Norwegian labor market is among the most gender-segregated in Europe (Midtbøen and Teigen 2014; Statistics Norway 2016a).

Norway is among the countries that have the fewest jobs available for people with low levels of formal education (OECD 2015). The Norwegian labor market is characterized as "knowledge-intensive", meaning formal qualifications and documentation are often requested, even in careers that do not necessarily require higher education (Friberg and Elgvin 2016; Henriksen 2010). This makes a difficult situation for women with little or no formal education, or qualifications. Five out of ten Somali women surveyed reported that they did not have an occupation in Somalia (Henriksen 2010). Among women who had been employed in Somalia, most reported that they had been self-employed (Henriksen 2010). Locating information on the self-employment rates of Somalis was surprisingly difficult, as most of the sources available were from almost a decade ago. However, although the employment rate of Somalis is lower in Oslo than many other areas of the country, it is home to the largest number of self-employed Somalis[69] (3%) in Norway (Pettersen 2009). It is interesting to note that the higher level of education among Somali women who arrived in the earlier cohorts has manifested itself in the

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[68] Approximately U.S$ 19, 420 (Dzamarija 2016).
[69] Gender unspecified.

labor market. In an analysis of employment trends (1993-2000) among different immigrant groups in Norway Blom (2014) found that the only cohort of Somali women to have an employment rate over 40% reached a cyclical peak in the 1990's (Blom 2014: 104). In Norway, several policies have enabled the high participation of women in the labor market by facilitating a reconciliation of work and familial responsibilities. Midtbøen and Teigen (2014) identify three policies as being significant: first, the paid parental leave that entitles working parents to paid parental leave[70]; second, children are legally entitled to a spot at public daycare centers (*barnehager*); third, a cash benefit for childcare[71] for that elect not to enroll their child in a public daycare (Midtbøen and Teigen 2014: 271). Somali women have received a considerable amount of scrutiny for keeping their young children at home instead of sending them to daycare, something that thought to prevent both mother and child from learning Norwegian (Holm 2011; for policy analysis, see Midtbøen and Teigen 2014).

6.3.2 Discrimination in Employment

The AID (2009) report notes that previous studies have found that even *well-educated* Somalis who are *fluent* in Norwegian also struggle to find employment (Engebrigtsen and Farstad 2004; Fangen 2008). The report does not problematize that fact, but rather immediately directs focus to the anger and resignation many Somalis feel "the experience of rejection, due to, for example, poor Norwegian skills or because they wish to wear headgear at work, can contribute to a lack of motivation among those who want to work" (AID 2009: 11). Inconsistencies concerning education and language skills when personal shortcomings cannot explain their unemployment, then their personal choices can Discrimination is mentioned of the general perception among public employees that it is difficult to find work for Somalis due to *skeptical employers* (ADI 2009). This skepticism is then attributed to "bad experiences with Somalis, others times it is based on rumors and negative media coverage or general prejudices against hiring immigrants" (ADI 2009: 13). This is the last mention the report makes of majority Norwegians, nor does it engage with the dominant role majority Norwegian employers actually play in terms of Somali employment. Rugkåsa (2010) describes women's choice of clothing as being "constantly discussed in various contexts" (Rugkåsa 2010: 149). Practices and traditions Somali women have brought with them are compared to Norway the *old days*, or *another time*, wearing hijab

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[70] Leave options include, "59 weeks with 80% wage compensation, or 49 weeks with 100% compensation in connection with child-birth" (Midtbøen and Teigen 2014: 271)

[71] For children aged between 12 and 36 months Midtbøen and Teigen 2014: 271) **CHECK AGES**

is openly contrasted and seen as incompatible with a "modern" and "Norwegian" life (Fangen 2006a; 2007a; Fangen and Thun 2007).

Many Somali women in Norway send remittances to relatives in Somalia, or even elsewhere in the diaspora (Alseth et al. 2014). Although it is not difficult to understand why Somalis want to send money to relatives. In addition, transnational networks have been found to provide strength and emotional well-being (Alseth et al. 2014). On the other hand, sending remittances limits their ability to participate in "culture and leisure options" of the receiving society (Alseth et al. 2014). In a study of Somali households in Oslo suburbs, all of Gabowduale's (2010) informants sent monthly remittances to family members, a practice that usually had a negative impact on household finances that were in a precarious state to begin with. In addition, decisions concerning, for example, whose side of the family would receive the remittances become a source of marital and inter-familial conflict (Gabowduale 2010).

In the 2009 government report on Somalis, the high divorce rate "has been explained by the fact that exile might strain marriages" (AID 2009: 12). It goes on to say, "However, it has also been found that divorce can be a strategy to improve family finances, as it increases family income, which means send more money to relatives in their homeland" (AID 2009: 12). This is on the basis that "some" of Engebrigtsen og Farstad's (2004) informants suggested increased income could, "along with other factors" explain the high rate of divorce among Somalis (AID 2009: 12). The topic is also addressed by Holm (2011), who claims that NAV had registered over 100 Somali women who had continued to have children with the man they had divorced[72] (Holm 2011: 44-45). While welfare fraud most likely does occur among both the majority population and Somalis, it is intriguing that an official government report promotes this notion based on information from a few informants in a single study (AID 2009). It would be far less questionable, if not for a wealth of evidence[73] demonstrating the disruptive effects migration has on marriage and interpersonal relationships, particularly for refugees, and especially Somalis[74]. This includes lingering trauma due to the forced nature of the migration, the loss of extended networks of family and subsequent redistribution of childcare responsibilities. Furthermore, these often entail the renegotiation of gender roles, women receiving their own

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[72] Although Holm (2011) notes that, such actions are not against the law, she still implies this to be "a risk factor when potential fraud cases examined" (Holm 2011: 45).
[73] All studies listed are Somali specific studies, though see Flippen 2014 or Tastsoglou and Preston 2005 f
[74] Some estimates place the divorce rates during the pre-civil war period in Somalia, to have been as high as 59% (Connor et al. 2016: 18). Among Abdi's (2014) informants, she writes, "a common Somali proverb used by a few elderly women states, "it is better to divorce thirty times than to live in misery with one man" (Abdi 2014: 477).

income and men's loss of status as the breadwinner of the family. Household financial disagreements and increased income have indeed been found to be an underlying *reason for* divorce, not a *result of* fraudulent intentions (Abdi 2014; Assal 2004; Boyle and Ali 2009; Connor et al. 2016; Crosby 2008; Fangen 2006; 2007b; Kiil 2008; Kleist 2010; Moret et al. 2006; Schrock 2008).

Moreover, claims of welfare fraud among single mothers, in particular minority women, are widespread in other countries too. In the United States, talk of (implicitly black) "welfare queens" manipulating the system were a political tool to bolster support for a massive overhaul of the American welfare system in 1996 (Gilliam 1999; Pisani 2013). Kavli et al. (2011) argue that the action of committing fraud is something quite different from a person receiving a benefit to which they are legally entitled. Furthermore, condemnation of the widespread utilization of public benefit arrangements among Somali women, and threats to bar their access are irresponsible. Particularly in light of the fact that many of these women have few viable options to make a living for themselves in the Norwegian labor market. Unless a comprehensive educational program (or for some, an extended qualification program) are developed and implemented. To the extent that such programs already exist, their quality and availability vary considerably (Kavli et al. 2011; Kiil 2008; Orupabo and Drange 2015; Rugkåsa 2010).

6.4 HOUSING

As of 2009, Somalis lived in 238 of Norway's 430 municipalities (Pettersen 2009). Refugees who depend on government assistance for housing and basic needs must settle in the municipality that has allocated spaces for them. This has a dual-function, as it is meant to guarantee that everyone has access to the Introduction Program and other resources, as well as spread the settlement out[75] "than if they were to choose themselves" (Pettersen 2009: 249). The municipality is given a fixed sum grant for a five-year period, per refugee that is resettled[76] (Thorud et al. 2015). Half of Somalis in Norway live in a household with five or more people (OSF 2013), and the rate of female-headed households was 36.2% (Dzamarija 2016).

As their time in Norway increases, Somalis tend to move frequently within the country, something that some scholars have readily attributed to their nomadic origins (Engebrigtsen

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[75] Decentralization of the Norwegian population (*spredt bosetting* as political rhetoric has it), is highly valued in the society, as seen as being typically Norwegian (Eriksen 1993).

[76] In 2015, the total sum per person for a five-year period was NOK 746, 200 (about U.S $87, 847) (Thorud et al. 2015).

2005; Opsal 2005). This is somewhat divergent from other research, which suggests that high residential mobility is a symptom of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, overcrowded and substandard housing (AHR 2014; Beatty and Sommervoll 2012; Søholt and Astrup 2009; Søholt and Lynnebakke 2015). It has been found that unlike other migrant groups in Norway, Somali networks have much less provide less capital to individuals in the form of finding work or housing (Engebrigtsen 2004: Løvgren 2007: 56). In a study of Somali housing market strategies in Oslo, Søholt (2007) found that people often lived together because they were unable to get their own housing. This was the situation for 20% of families (108 units), who did not have their own place to live (Søholt 2007: 107, as cited in Søholt and Astrup 2009: 179). It is noted that these studies are several years old so it is uncertain as to whether the situation remains the same.

Public debates in Norway have centered on migrant-dense neighborhoods and subsequent school segregation, and portrayed them as an expression of their unwillingness to integrate. For migrants in general and Somalis in particular, their "own preferences are assumed to be the main force behind segregation" (Søholt and Lynnebakke 2015: 2322). In 2011, Somalis[77] in Oslo had a homeownership rate of 26%. Of the other 84% in the rental market, 44% rented from the municipality[78] (Søholt and Lynnebakke 2015). Many of the private rental residences and public housing options are highly concentrated in the city center (Søholt and Lynnebakke 2015: 2321). Additionally, surveys have also found that 12% of Norwegians would *strongly dislike* having a Muslim neighbor, and nearly 20% would dislike having *Somali* neighbors (ECRI 2015:16). Somali women have frequently expressed their desire to have Norwegian neighbors to talk and connect with, and considered interaction with neighbors to be a good way to learn about the culture[79], because informal contact with Norwegians was otherwise quite rare. Nearly all reported their attempts at making contact being rejected or met with obvious skepticism (Alseth et al. 2014; Holm 2011; Jabang 2015; Kiil 2008; Søholt and Astrup 2009; Søholt and Lynnebakke 2015).

A 2009 report on discrimination in the Norwegian rental market found that even when factors such as income, regular employment, Norwegian language skills and number of children were

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[77] Gender unspecified.
[78] Compared with 70% of all Oslo homeowners (Søholt and Lynnebakke 2015).
[79] Inexplicably, the authors considered "their valuing of socialization" as something that "might promote segregation", but fails to question or problematize the role of majority Norwegian attitudes or skepticism in this (Søholt and Lynnebakke 2015: 2331).

taken into consideration, Somali individuals experienced a greater degree of exclusion[80] in the rental market than other immigrants (Søholt and Astrup 2009: 158). A later report indicates that not only do foreign-born individuals pay an average of 8% more in rent than Norwegians, but that tenants of "African origin" pay the highest premium, at upwards of 14% more (Beatty and Sommervoll 2012). Additionally, and just as concerning is that their Norwegian-born children pay a "virtually identical" rental premium (Beatty and Sommervoll 2012: 127). Previous studies have found that the reason many Somalis preferred living in public housing was to avoid the sudden evictions and rent increases in the private rental market (Søholt 2007, as cited in Søholt and Astrup 2009). Somalis "color", ethnicity, and their large families that were "undesirable" (Søholt and Astrup 2009: 142). Regardless of class, background or individual resources faced severe penalties. Perceived lack of competence in Norwegian culture (*norsk bokultur*) Discrimination in the housing market leads to an absence of friends and relationships with neighbors because of frequent moves. This also prevents Somali women from developing a sense of belonging to a neighborhood, all of which matter for successful integration (Ali 2011; Capps et al. 2015; Kiil 2008; Søholt and Astrup 2009).

Relative to other African and Asian migrant groups in the country, Somalis have had relatively high emigration rates from Norway[81] (OSF 2013). Certain countries in North Africa and the Middle East are popular destinations (Al-Sharmani 2006), but the large Somali community in the United Kingdom has been mentioned as major pull factor for Somalis resettled in other European countries (Fangen 2006b; Kleist 2010; Moret 2006; Pettersen 2009). Bang Nielsen (2004) found that it was not uncommon for Somalis to leave their initial European receiving country after acquiring citizenship, and relocate in the United Kingdom. The highest documented rates of these moves were from the Scandinavian countries and the Netherlands (Bang Nielsen 2004, as cited in Moret 2006). Somalis have reported feeling it was a more tolerant and multicultural society, more open to different ways of life, the freedom to start their own businesses, and the ability to have their credentials and qualifications from Somalia recognized[82] (Moret 2006: 92).

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[80]In a 2013 experiment, a Somali woman sent out housing applications with her real name, Nafissa Osman, and received a 12% response rate. Identical applications signed 'Nina-Simona' had a response rate of 78% (Olsen 2013).

[81] It is not known where one-third of Somalis migrated to; 15% moved to the UK; 15% to Kenya; and 42% elsewhere in Africa and the Middle East" (OSF 2013: 28).

[82] As a former colonizer, the Somali presence in the United Kingdom First, there has been steady Somali migration since the 1960's, and it should also be noted that these migrants were mainly men. Second, Somalis in the United

6.5 HEALTH

In general, knowledge about refugee or migrant health in Norway is quite fragmented. A majority of the health-related studies involving Somali women have been related to their reproductive health, more specifically FGC or their attitudes and experiences surrounding childbirth (Bråten and Elgvin 2014; Fangen and Thun 2007; Glavin and Sæteren 2016).   There are some exceptions. In a study on the mental health of newly arrived refugees in Norway, Jakobsen et al. (2007) found that 74% of Somalis had experienced eight or more traumatic events. Three in four had experienced near-death situations, and nearly 70% of those surveyed had experienced or witnessed the unnatural death of a friend or family member (Jakobsen et al. 2007: 49).   Among different refugee groups, Somalis were more likely than other refugee groups to report, "nervous symptoms" and over 54% of Somalis in Norway reported feeling lonely (AID 2009; Fangen 2006b; OSF 2013). In self- assessments, Somalis reported the best health of any refugee group[83] in 2005 (AID 2009). In Oslo. Gele and Mbalilaki (2013) found that the longer Somali women were in Norway, the stronger the likelihood they had of being overweight or obese. Women had received very limited or no counseling from their healthcare providers about dietary concerns or physical activities, especially in an unfamiliar colder climate. In addition, a combination of their lower socioeconomic status[84] and lack of culturally sensitive spaces for them to exercise physical activity (Gele and Mbalilaki 2013).

6.5.1 Female Genital Cutting

The Norwegian health care system and authorities the major health concern for Somali women has been FGC (Bråten and Elgvin 2014; OSF 2013).   Women who have undergone the procedure are, for example, at a higher risk of complications under childbirth (Dundek 2006). As will be further detailed in the Media section (**insert number**), at the beginning of the 2000's, a documentary was aired on Norwegian television, and featured an imam advising a young Somali woman (with a hidden camera) to undergo the FGC procedure (Bråten and Elgvin 2014). To say the least, public outrage demanded political action. In an analysis of the debates surrounding FGC, Teigen and Langvasbråten (2009) found the dominant voices to come exclusively from majority Norwegians; Somali women were almost completely denied a voice

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Kingdom are not only refugees, but students, labor migrants, and migrants from other countries in the European Union (Phoenix 2011).

[83] This could be attributed to the group being very young overall; gender unspecified (AID 2009).
[84] The monthly expense of membership at a training center, for example.

in matters that, more than anyone else, would affect them. Furthermore, the government did not consult any of the minority women organizations while drafting FGC legislation, or before its implementation (Bråten and Elgvin 2014).

In 2007, a documentary featuring a woman in Somalia claiming she had cut 185 Somali-Norwegian girls prompted even more outcry and far-reaching political action. Norwegian police were granted rights to confiscate the passports of families suspected of leaving the country for FGC; Somali families were detained at airports; and the introduction of "voluntary" gynecological exams for suspected FGC cases (Linløkken et al. 2015). The government stated that all of these measures "may be perceived negatively by the target group", but that this attention was ultimately positive due to the awareness that had been raised (Bråten and Elgvin 2014: 118).

Studies in Norway indicate that attitudes towards FGC among migrants change post-migration (Bråten and Elgvin 2014; Fangen and Thun 2007). In fact, in a comprehensive review of existing research on FGC in Norway, Bråten and Elgvin (2014) found that no empirical evidence has ever indicated that FGC was or is an extensive phenomenon in the country. Nonetheless, in 2016 the Norwegian government announced a new action plan against "forced marriages and female genital mutilation" for 2017-2020 (White Paper 30: 2015-2016). The latest White Paper on integration (White Paper 30: 2015-2016) states:

> Research shows that the targeted efforts over many years to prevent female
> genital mutilation have produced good results. Almost no girls born in Norway
> are subjected to this (White Paper 30: 2015-2016).

It is unclear how they have reached the first conclusion. The Norwegian government has received heavy criticism from the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (UNCERD 2013); the European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI 2009; 2015); and numerous other organizations, for the excessive focus on FGC in politics, policy and media (Bråten and Elgvin 2014; Linløkken et al. 2015; OSF 2013). These complaints have specifically cited the stigmatization and blatant racial profiling of women and girls from "certain minority groups" who have undergone the procedure. Several Somali families have permanently left Norway because of the constant attention. One of them were involved in a prominent incident with Norwegian Child Welfare Services (*Barnevernet*), whom

subjected a young girl in the family to a forced gynecological examination[85] (Linløkken et al. 2015). A recurring theme in previous literature concerns the low degree of trust the Somali community has towards Norwegian public institutions (Engebrigtsen and Farstad 2004; Fangen 2006b; Friberg and Elgvin 2016; Kiil 2008; OSF 2013). Somalis have described feeling extremely humiliated, stigmatized and rejected from Norwegian society because of the issue. Some women have told stories of majority Norwegian strangers approaching them in public to ask if they have been cut, and others who have lectured or tried to "save" them (Bråten and Elgvin 2014; Fangen and Thun 2007; Kiil 2008; Linløkken et al. 2015; Løvgren 2007; Ngunjiri 2013; Stokke 2012). Over a decade of "comprehensive action plans" and more than NOK 500 million have been spent on combating FGC - without any empirical evidence of it being a widespread problem in Norway (Linløkken et al. 2015).

6.6 SOCIETY

In Norway, non-citizen permanent residents have nearly all of the same civil and political rights, and are eligible to vote in local elections (Bevelander and Spång 2014). Norwegian citizenship grants an individual the right to vote[86] in parliamentary elections, run for political office at a parliamentary level. Norway adheres to the principle of *jus sanguinis*; a child born within national territories is granted Norwegian citizenship if at least one parent is a Norwegian citizen (Midtbøen 2015). Non-citizen individuals with permanent residence permits in Norway can apply for citizenship through naturalization. The person in question must also: be able to document their identity, pay a processing fee[87], have lived in Norway for seven of the past ten years, not be convicted of any crimes, renounce their original citizenship[88] and provide documented completion of 300 hours of Norwegian language classes or knowledge of the Norwegian language (Midtbøen 2015). Those who have had an obligation to participate in the Introduction Program must complete 600 hours of Norwegian classes and 50 hours of civic studies in order to apply for citizenship (BLD 2016). While a large number of Somalis have not been in Norway long enough to meet all of the necessary requirements for citizenship, the naturalization rates among those who have resided in Norway for at least seven years are very

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[85] The family took the case to court, where they won; the court ruled that racial profiling had occurred, as the examination was conducted based on the girl's Somali origin alone (Linløkken et al. 2015).

[86] Voting rights were extended to permanent residents who have lived in Norway for at least three years, as of 1983 (Bevelander and Spång 2014).
[87] As of January 2015, this fee was NOK 4,200; or approximately U.S. $510 (Lovdata 2016).

[88] Dual citizenship is prohibited, exceptions to this rule exist and are tolerated, but not necessarily encouraged (UDI 2016).

high (Pettersen 2012). A survey of naturalization rates between 1977 and 2011 found that Somalis have the second highest absolute number of naturalizations, placing them behind the Pakistanis, a group that has a longer, well-established migration history in Norway (OSF 2013: 29). New amendments to the citizenship law will go into effect as of January 2017, and require applicants between the ages of 18-67 to pass an A2 level[89] Norwegian test as well as a social studies test, in Norwegian (BLD 2016). There is little, if any research, that indicates language and social-knowledge citizenship tests promote integration processes (ILN 2015); to the contrary, such tests have been found to impede integration and thereby have an exclusionary effect (see Shohamy 2009, as cited in ILN 2015; Joppke 2010). These new requirements will almost certainly have a negative effect on some groups, particularly women, because they often tend to have overall lower levels of literacy and formal education (ILN 2015). Considering adult Somali women are among the groups with the lowest documented literacy and education rates upon their arrival in Norway (Steinkellner 2015; Østby 2013), one can speculate that this legislation will disproportionately affect them.

Individuals from politically unstable regions or conflict zones are more likely to acquire Norwegian citizenship (Pettersen 2012). Refugees have often lost the protection of their government and in turn, many of their rights as citizens, including access to proper travel documents (OSF 2013). Norwegian immigration police have reported that under 2% of all Somali asylum-seekers have valid travel documents upon their arrival in Norway (Politiets utlendingsenhet 2012). Government institutions to issue identity documents are nonexistent in Somalia. In addition, Somali women were less likely to have held positions that gave them access to identity documents such as passports or driver's licenses, and are therefore less likely to have documents confirming their identity (Bassel 2010: 165).

Somali women in Norway have among the highest voter turnout rates among migrant groups. In 2013, 66% of Somali-Norwegian women eligible to vote in the parliamentary election did so.[90] Their turnout was well above the 55% of all women with migrant backgrounds who voted, and represented one of the largest gender gaps in voter turnout, as only 51% of eligible Somali men voted (Statistics Norway 2014b). Until just last year, there were three Somali-Norwegians

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[89] A2 written exam: ability to "write short, simple messages and announcements related to work and everyday life. One can render experiences and events with simple phrases and sentences" A2 oral exam: "one can understand and use simple everyday language and talk about topics related to their own person and family. One can participate in simple conversations about familiar topics if the caller is supportive and speaks slowly and distinctly, but it will often be necessary to ask about repetition and clarification to avoid misunderstandings".

[90] Around 80% of all women in Norway voted in the 2013 general election, women with a basic level of education had a participation rate of 67.7% (Statistics Norway 2014a).

on the Oslo City Council, two women - Fatima Ali Madar and Ubah A. Aden- and one man, Bashe Musse (OSF 2013: 152).

According to the 2013-2014 Integration Barometer (*Integreringsbarometeret*), a research initiative tracking Norwegian attitudes towards immigration and integration, nearly nine out of ten Norwegians believed that problems concerning integration were partly or largely due to "inadequate efforts by the immigrants" (IMDi 2014c: 29). At the same time, 74% also placed blame on the insufficient efforts of the authorities, and 67% said the general population were responsible for integration problems (IMDi 2014c: 29).

Dominant themes across the literature generally revolved around the negative media image of Somalis, the hijab, and the difficulty of making Norwegian friends. Many Somali women have described feelings of loneliness and isolation (Glavin and Sæteren 2016; Holm 2011; Jabang 2015) and the attempts they had made to try to get to know their neighbors, or others they met in various situations (Alseth et al. 2014; Gabowduale 2010; Søholt and Lynnebakke 2015). Nearly all mentioned wished that they had Norwegian friends, and some felt deep sadness that they did not (Alseth et al. 2014; Kiil 2008). They felt it would be a good opportunity to learn how to speak Norwegian, and perhaps do things like cook with each other (Jabang 2015; Kiil 2008; Ngunjiri 2013). Most majority Norwegians, however, did not seem to reciprocate this interest. Somali women reported Norwegians did not want to speak with them, or start a new friendship. All of the following told reports indicated similar stories (Alseth et al. 2014; Assal 2004; ECRI 2015; Fangen 2006b; 2007a; 2007b; Glavin and Sæteren 2016; Holm 2011; Jabang 2015; Kiil 2008; Løvgren 2007; Muller Myrdahl 2010; Ngunjiri 2013; OSF 2013; Rugkåsa 2010; Søholt and Lynnebakke 2015). There were exceptions to this, but they were rare (Kiil 2008).

Somali stories of discrimination have often been met with an air of skepticism. Some scholars have even described Somali women's stories of discrimination as an *urban legend*, because numerous informants shared similar stories[91] (Sandberg and Pedersen 2006, as cited in Løvgren 2007). Phelps et al. (2013) found that majority Norwegians grew more positive with working on immigrant integration when they "perceive them to have positive intentions (akin to

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[91] One of Løvgren's (2007) informants told this story: "A friend of mine applied for a job, first in their own name and then afterwards with a Norwegian name. The same experience, certificates, and everything. Two hours after the woman had received the mail; she called and said she wanted to talk to my friend. My friend asked us and we said she should go. She went there and woman say 'Oh sorry, sorry, I thought you were Norwegian. It says Kristine here. Unfortunately, I thought you were a different person. The position is filled'" (Løvgren 2007: 40).

perceived warmth) and as having the ability to integrate in Norway (akin to perceived competence)" (Phelps et al. 2013, as cited in Bye et al. 2014: 475). In a study of Norwegian stereotypes, Bye et al. (2014) found that with the exception of the Roma, Somalis were rated the least "warm" and having the lowest "perceived competence" among ethnic groups or nationalities in Norway. Bye et al. (2014) argue that their findings substantiate previous research that has indicated, "Experiences of discrimination are generally more prevalent among Somali than Pakistani and Iraqi immigrants" across social spheres such as employment and housing (Bye et al. 2014: 475).

6.6.1 Media

The European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance (ECRI 2009; 2015) has repeatedly criticized the Norwegian media for being sensationalist, overdramatic and overly focused on conflict and crime when covering issues surrounding migration and integration. In particular, concern centered on continued xenophobic and racist discourse within political parties and the media (ECRI 2009; 2015). The "fascination" of the Other demonstrated by Norwegian journalism has created "a problematic image for migrants and have negative effects on their integration" (ECRI 2015: 16). A survey of Norwegian journalists and their attitudes towards migrants, one in four journalists disclosed, "other colleagues had racist attitudes". Of the 1163 journalists surveyed, half worked in the national media (IMDi 2009: 69). In the early 2000's, newspapers and television news covered stories of certain practices that such as forced marriages, honor killings and FGC, and handful of young minority women "went public" with their experiences, among them young Somali women (Stokke 2012). When researchers from the Open Society Foundations (2013) asked Norwegian-Somalis about how they felt were portrayed in the media, similar themes appeared welfare abuse or fraud, poor educational outcomes, unemployed, violent, khat-chewing and mutilated genitals. A young woman described it as being "represented as uncivilized, unintegrated and not taking part in society. We are also given the impression that we are the cause of the fact that we are not part of the society" (OSF 2013:143). The survey of journalists also found that individuals with migrant backgrounds rarely appeared as actors or sources in topics that were not directly related to migration or integration (IMDi 2009: 69). Furthermore, migrants are underrepresented in the issues that affect them directly. Lindstad and Fjeldstad (2005) found that white majority Norwegians often spoke on behalf of migrants, men at a higher frequency than women (Lindstad and Fjeldstad 2005). A 2010 analysis of Norwegian media (i.e., electronic, newspapers, radio and television) found that Somalis are the most discussed group, by far

(Falkenberg and Nilsen 2010, as cited in OSF 2013: 142). Engebrigtsen and Fuglerud 2009 (OSF 2013: 143) A analysis found the media (1999-2008) covered remittance sending among Somalis, was usually discussed in terms of "crime, cultural practices and lack of integration" (Engebrigtsen and Fuglerud 2009, as cited in OSF 2013: 143).   Somali women have often used to depict the "failures of integration policies"; media commentary on the Somali community was three times that of the Polish community in Norway, which is over twice as large (ECRI 2015:16). Eide and Simonsen (2007) found that even when a media discussion focused on entirely different groups or individuals, Somalis were used as a means of illustrating that a situation was particularly dire. Additionally, some have made a connection is made between the ethnic or national groups who receive the largest amount of negative media coverage are the same groups that report the highest incidences of discrimination (ECRI 2015: 16; Søholt and Astrup 2009).

6.7 CONCLUSION

In this section, I have presented the second case, Norway. Along with other women from countries outside of Europe, Somali women have clear differences in participation rates in the labor market, compared to Norwegian women in the general population. This is a topic that has been received a considerable amount of attention in academia, the media, and political spheres (Djuve et al. 2011; Hagelund and Kavli 2009; Kavli and Nadim 2009; Rugkåsa 2010).

Women individual factors have different education, language skills, household or family situation, or attitudes towards family life, also external factors such as the qualification measures that are offered, the attitudes towards these women, discriminatory practices among program managers, employers and landlords (Djuve et al. 2011; Orupabo and Drange 2015; Søholt and Astrup 2009). The current work-activation policy in Norway is distinguished by its emphasis on the qualification and activation of individuals. The bureaucratic distinction that exists between basic education opportunities and work-activation measures fails to address the specific needs of Somali women, many of whom have little formal education (Friberg and Elgvin 2016: 279).

Many Somali women lack formal qualifications and often have larger caregiving responsibilities that affect their ability to get work. Norway is among the states with the most official institutions in the world and Fangen (2006) suggests that this major contrast with Somalia may be an important reason, "why the interaction between Somali refugees and Norwegian institutions often tends to be marked by distrust and miscommunication" (Fangen

2006: 77). Other evidence suggests that Somalis feel as if their personal lives are under surveillance, have their privacy violated, and the target of unnecessary interventions by various authorities (Assal 2004; Friberg and Elgvin 2016; Linløkken et al. 2015; OSF 2013).

Gender equality is presented as something that has already been achieved among the white majority population, and is now used as a means of distinguishing 'us' from 'them': the oppressed and patriarchal outsiders (Siim and Skjeie 2008). Labor market participation is perhaps the most prominent symbol of integration. Integration policies aimed towards minority women are premised on the idea that it will increase their gender equality, help them learn Norwegian, better integration of their children and reduce poverty (Rugkåsa 2010; Siim and Skjeie 2008). Hence, the low level of labor market participation of Somali women is viewed as an indicator of inadequate integration and therefore, and "integration problem" (Rugkåsa 2010: 98).

7. ANALYSIS

The policies and programs in the Minnesota and Norway have little input from refugees themselves. Somali women face economic and social marginalization that places limits on their ability to participate in either society (Friberg and Elgvin 2016; Guenther et al. 2011; Kutty 2010; Rugkåsa 2010). The complex analytical resources postcolonial feminism and intersectionality provide for the investigation of hierarchies of difference, (race, socioeconomic status) are thought to generate "the most incisive and inclusive analyses of power, privilege and political economy available at this juncture" (Spike Peterson 2005: 503).

Language courses are simply not prioritzed in the current refugee resettlement program in Minnesota and the United States at large. This influences women's long-term economic outlook and social mobility (Kutty 2010; MSDC 2016). The common assumption underlying this logic is that individuals will simply learn English through interaction with English speakers in the workplace, or taking classes after work. Somali women tend to have extensive caretaking responsibilities that in turn limit their opportunities to participate in these courses (AHR 2014; Otteson et al. 2010). There is wide agreement that language training is desperately needed. Many cited that as the most important improvement that could be made. The lack of paid parental leave in the United States. Among refugee women in Norway, Rugkåsa (2010) found that employment and self-sufficiency did not lead to more or better contact with the majority population. In fact, there was little correlation with employment and Norwegian language skills, and no correlation in terms of minority women's participation in the labor market and their integration into other areas of the larger Norwegian society (Rugkåsa 2010: 251). Similar findings were reported among Somali women in a rural Minnesota town, whose jobs at a meatpacking plant were exhausting, and left little time to take care of family responsibilities, let alone socialize.

In light of the considerable number of trauma studies on Somali women in Minnesota (Connor et al. 2016; Fawcett 2014; Halcón et al. 2004; Nilsson et al. 2008; Pavlish et al. 2010 Robertson et al. 2006). There are no Somali women-specific trauma studies in Norway. In the one trauma study that I was able to locate, researchers either had unqualified or *no* interpreters (Jakobsen et al. 2007). Glavin and Sæteren's (2016) on Somali women's childbirth and health service experiences did not use any interpreters at all. This is problematic for several reasons; when used in tandem with ill-suited approaches (e.g., a project based on written information when a majority of a sample of persons are illiterate) and an incessant focus on Norwegian language skills, only to then interpret their findings as individual deficiencies or lack of motivation

(Glavin and Sæteren 2016; Jakobsen et al. 2007). This detracts attention from the actual matters at hand. First, this limits the ability of Somali women to properly communicate and identify their health concerns and needs on a general basis. This suggests that these have been incorporated into the *knowledge production* surrounding Somali women. This, along with findings from health services in Oslo have shown that Somali language interpreters are in high demand (OSF 2013). There is a clear need for qualified interpreters. This would first, be an important step towards ensuring Somali women receive the care they are entitled to. Second, Somali women expressed a strong preference for female physicians or midwives when giving birth (Dundek 2006; Fawcett 2014; Pavlish et al. 2010). The introduction of a Somali doula program at a hospital in Minnesota was found to improve birthing outcomes and more positive experiences, for both the woman giving birth *and* non-Somali staff (Dundek 2006; Holden 2015).

It appears that Somali women have a more prominent role in Minnesota scholarship, and hence have voice to control their own narratives to a larger degree (Abdi 2007; 2014; Ali 2011; Boyle and Ali 2009; Hirsi 2015; Ibrahim 2015), but actively incorporated in the process as interpreters as well.

The excessive attention and resources that have been devoted to campaigns against FGC have proven harmful, stigmatizing, and disproportionately targeted Somali women. FGC is not considered a top health priority by Somali women themselves (Assal 2004; Bråten and Elgvin 2014; Løvgren 2007). Studies have consistently shown that attitudes towards the practice change considerably after migration, as ideas of what is "normal" are often questioned (Bråten and Elgvin 2014; Essén and Johnsdotter 2004). Change has largely been motivated by and taken place within the Somali community, where Somali women have been active for several decades several, though laws prohibiting FGC in receiving societies and fear of child protection services are powerful deterrents as well (Essén and Johnsdotter 2004; Fangen and Thun 2007; Kiil 2008). The FGC exposé pieces in Norwegian media ignited political firestorms in the mid-2000's featured Somali women, and with few exceptions, the body of existing literature on FGC in Norway is based exclusively on Somali informants (for full overview see Bråten and Elgvin 2014; Fangen and Thun 2007; Linløkken et al. 2015). As of this writing, there have been no documented cases of FGC having been performed in Norway, nor has anyone been prosecuted for the crime (Linløkken et al. 2015). In addition, there is no empirical evidence to suggest that FGC is, or ever has been, a widespread problem in Norway (Bråten and Elgvin 2014). The

current policies[92] on FGC in Norway were founded upon unsubstantiated claims yellow journalism have been and will continue to be on the political agenda for the foreseeable future (see White Paper 30: 2015-2016).

The physical and sexual violence many Somali women had experienced during the war, and the intense trauma was often compounded by the adjustment and challenges and involved in entering a new society (Mohamed 1999). Women were concerned about family members still living in a conflict zone or refugee camps; preoccupied with finding appropriate employment and housing, and confronting xenophobic attitudes (Mohamed 1999). Their day-to-day survival in a new country, there are more urgent matters that have a larger impact on their lives, and FGC is not on a list of priority (Mohamed 1999; Pisani 2013).

The overwhelming focus of FGC in Norway has overshadowed the daily struggles that many Somali women face. This has limited the conversation to topics that do not address their most pressing needs. This has been compounded by heir voices have been silenced from political discussions and policy development (Bråten and Elgvin 2014; Kiil 2008; Teigen and Langvasbråten 2009), and in the form of stigmatization, exclusion, and violation of their bodily autonomy. As a coordinator from a human rights organization told Mohamed (1999): "*Somalis cannot comprehend the focus on this issue when their entire country has fallen apart*" (Mohamed 1999: 54, my emphasis).

Higher education, even public institutions, is prohibitively expensive in the United States. Somali women were among the cultural groups in Minnesota that were the most interested in going to school and obtaining a higher level of formal education, they were also they least likely to be in school (Wilder Research 2015a). Most respondents cited financial constraints. Kutty (2010) specifically mentions that Somali women in Minnesota, "the sense of despondency regarding genuine integration opportunities" that their family members or friends in Europe felt (Kutty 2010: 148). Furthermore, the restrictive American family reunification policies prevent women from accessing welfare funds. Given the importance of large families in Somali culture and their fragmentation in the wake of the war and, many individuals because they may become a "public charge", many refugees in the United States (AHR 2014). This means that "low-income families struggle with reunification because they must wait until they are financially able to support their family members before they can be together" (AHR 2014:227). The labor

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[92] I do not refer to the law prohibiting FGC, but rather those permitting gynecological exams to be performed on minors without parental consent, the confiscation of passports on the basis of suspected "FGC vacations"

market in Norway is highly gendered, and the qualification options or employment options Somali women are presented with are those "traditional" for women, like working at kindergartens. Programs for men, for instance, often include forklift driver certification (Djuve et al. 2011; Rugkåsa 2010). This is not an objection to the gendered divisions themselves; but rather that these jobs are given, the notion of women being deficient or lacking qualifications,

> has consequences for the way they are treated, and the positions they get offered. That they in some situations, get treated in ways reminiscent of a child, what they learn and the type of jobs they learn about in the work qualification programs, and which ones are available, enables opportunity in certain positions and restricts them from others. (Rugkåsa 2010: 141)

I propose a training program designed specifically for Somali women, for qualification to assume positions as doulas and interpreters in Norwegian health care centers. Such a program would likely benefit all actors involved. First, this would address the need for culturally sensitive care options for Somali women; second, this would likely increase the cultural competence of hospital staff and their ability to care for Somali women. Third, given the current emphasis on labor-activation in Norway, a Somali women-oriented doula or interpreter program has the potential to utilize otherwise untapped resources. This would then create *meaningful* employment opportunities for Somali women in a labor market that, has been shown to otherwise be largely inaccessible to many of them (Dzamarija 2016; Friberg and Elgvin 2016; Kavli et al. 2011). Furthermore, this would provide a work environment in which they could apply and improve their Norwegian language skills, something that many of their current employment opportunities do not (Mathisen 2010; Rugkåsa 2010). In addition, considering the early retirement age of Somali women in Norway (Østby 2014), this has the potential to active older groups of Somali women as well.

Gullestad (2006) argues that internationally, "the threat of Muslim terrorism became a major issue after 9/11 2001, while Norwegian debate focused more on violence and oppression of women within Muslim minority communities and Islam was held responsible for female circumcision, forced marriages and honor killings" (Gullestad 2006b: 50, as cited in Stokke 2012: 55). Furthermore, in Norway, unlike in Minnesota, "a number of young minority women joined public debate as 'native informants'... The negative media portrayal has played an outsized role in contributing to prejudice (Stokke 2012). Diverse voices could provide different perspectives, though the ones representing Somali women have been Kadra Yusuf and Amal Aden, who confirm majority stereotypes and do not change the narrative. "This function of public debate is perhaps more important than law and policy" (Stokke 2012: 254). When stories of successful Somali women do appear in the news, they are often depicted as unique, or implicitly understood, but explicitly stated that these women are some of the few exceptions. They have embraced the Norwegian way of life[93]. There are few nuances.   (see Husøy 2013; Thorenfeldt 2016; Tjernshaugen 2016[94]).

Orientalist depictions of Somalis are not uncommon in Minnesota media; however, it seems that they are almost exclusively focused on young Somali men; the only "cluster" of fighters in the United States has been in Minnesota (Shane 2015). A handful of men were caught attempting to travel to Syria; high profile court cases ensured their presence in the news, local and beyond (Preston 2013; Shane 2015; Southers and Hienz 2015). These young men are what Spivak (1988) described as the barbaric, violent "brown men" that "brown women" need saving from. Guenther et al. (2011) found that men, more so than women, were more preoccupied with anti-Islamic attitudes, a discrepancy the authors attributed to dominant perceptions Americans have of Muslim women and men (Guenther et al. 2011). This narrative represents Muslim men as potential terrorists and therefore something to be feared; women, on the other hand, are understood to be helpless victims (Spivak 1988). One Somali woman informant described being approached by an American man at a bus stop, shortly after the United States invaded Iraq, and told that "she should thank him for freeing her" (Guenther et al. 2011: 113).

On the other hand, positive, varied stories about Somali women in the Minnesota media are the rule, more than the exception. The differences in media depictions of Somali women in

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[93] "I have a message for Somali mothers: 'Get out and work!'" (Thorenfeldt 2016)
[94] «Fembarnsmor fra Somalia er Sylvi Listhaugs Drømmeinnvandrer»; «Nabo-Mas Fikk Somaliske Hoodo Ut i Jobb»

Minnesota and Norway were dramatic. Monolith depictions of Somali women in a range of roles: different successful businesses ventures child care centers (Belz 2015; Fernández Campbell 2014; Koumpilova 2015b) women are community organizers fighting against discrimination in rural Minnesota (Du 2016; Xaykaothao 2016); the media features the voices of Somali women fighting against FGC, without disparaging their community (Holden 2015; Koumpilova 2015a). Somali women are burkini-wearing beauty queens, candidates in the Somali presidential election (Sperber 2016), and winning historic public office in Minnesota (Samuelson 2016). I was unable to identify a "native informant".

As Connor et al. (2016) argue, calls for a woman to embrace what is assumed to be "newfound freedoms and increased power" (Connor et al. 2016: 20), may not be seen as such by the woman herself. Instead, these could be seen as betrayal to her cultural identities as a Somali Muslim and detrimental to maintaining a sense of stability, both personally and for the community.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACS   American Community Survey

ADC   African Development Center

AERA   American Education Research Association

AHR   Advocates for Human Rights

AID   Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs
                                (*Arbeids- og inkluderingsdepartementet*)

ACLU   American Civil Liberties Union

CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIS	United States Citizenship and Immigration Services
CMFC	Civil Military Fusion Centre
ECRI	European Commission Against Racism and Intolerance
FGC	Female Genital Cutting
IIRIRA	Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1997
ILN	Department of Linguistics and Scandinavian Studies (*Institutt for lingvistiske og nordiske studier*)
IMDi	Directorate of Integration and Diversity (*Integrerings- og mangfoldsdirektoratet*)
JD	Ministry of Justice and Public Security (*Justis- og beredskapsdepartementet*)
KVP	Norwegian Qualification Program (*Kvalifiseringsprogrammet*)
LDO	Gender Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud (*Likestillings- og diskrimineringsombudet*)
LSS	Lutheran Social Services of Minnesota
MDHR	Minnesota Department of Human Rights
MFIP	Minnesota Family Investment Program

MAA	Mutual Assistance Associations
MSA	Metropolitan Statistical Area
MSDC	Minnesota State Demographic Center
NAV	Labour and Welfare Administration ([*Ny*] *Arbeids- og Velferdsforvaltning*)
NOK	Norwegian Kroner
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
ORR	Office of Refugee Resettlement
OSF	Open Society Foundation
PBS	American Public Broadcasting Service
PRM	Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration
PRWORA	Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996
RCA	Refugee Cash Assistance
RMA	Refugee Medical Assistance
SWDO	Somali Women's Democratic Organisation
UDI	Directorate of Immigration (*Utlendingsdirektoratet*)
UNCERD	United Nations Committee on the

	Elimination of Racial Discrimination
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
USCB	United States Census Bureau
VOLAG	Refugee Resettlement Voluntary Agencies

APPENDIX 1.

Table 1. *Somali Demographics, Minnesota and Norway*

INDICATOR	MINNESOTA	NORWAY
Population estimate	46,000-60,000	40,100
Percentage of population, women	**52.5%**	**47.4%**
Percentage of population, men	47.5%	52.8%
Foreign-born, total percentage	62%	70.5%
Native-born to foreign born parent(s), total percentage of population	37%	29.4%
Naturalization rate, women	58%	55%

INDICATOR	MINNESOTA	NORWAY
Naturalization rate, men	42%	53.4%
Labor force participation rate, women	62.5%	
Employment rate, women	47.3%	21.7%
Employment rate, men	51.6%	36.4%
Self-employment rate, total	5%	
Percentage working part-time, women	45%	N/A
Unemployment rate, women	15.2%	5.4%
Unemployed, but enrolled in a job activation program	N/A	7.3%
Female-headed households	34.6%	36.2%
Average family size, **Number of persons**	4.4	5.7
Fertility rate, **average number of children**		3.5

INDICATOR	MINNESOTA	NORWAY
Median household income	U.S $ 18,400	
Median income, Single-parent household	U.S $ 16,415	NOK 167,300
Poverty rate/Low income		67%
Poverty rate, households with children 0-17		74.3%
Households receiving public assistance income, percentage	23.5%	
Received food assistance	55.1%	
Owner-occupied housing unit	7.4%	
Renter-occupied housing unit	92.2%	

TABLE 2. Foreign-born Somalis in Minnesota, by year of entry in United States, Percentage

Before 2000	2000-2009	2010-2013
39.5%	52%	8.5%

Source*:* MSDC 2016

TABLE 3. Foreign-born Somalis, by year of entry in Norway, Percentage

Before 1992	1993-2002	2003-2007	2008-2010	2011-2013
6%	24%	27%	16%	27%

Source: Østby 2014