Narratives of integration and work in Norway: Rethinking integration, transnational belongings and affective labour

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Utrecht University
Department of Gender Studies

Thesis submitted by
Greta Louise Høvring Troup

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Supervised by: Prof. dr. Berteke Waaldijk (Utrecht University)
Second reader: dr. Anita Røysum (Oslo Metropolitan University)

Universiteit Utrecht

Abstract

There are legitimate concerns about the barriers against immigrant women's integration and their relatively low participation in the Norwegian labour market. However, research from Norway has shown that in public discourses immigrant women's low employment rates are seen as a problem, and national integration policies frame this 'problem' as a matter of the 'backwards' culture and traditions of immigrant women. In a wider European context research has found that integration policies utilise arguments of 'gender equality' to systematically push immigrant women into low-paid and low-status jobs in the reproductive sector. Based on a literature review of a social justice approach to integration, feminist theories of affective labour and Fraser's theory of the politics of need interpretation, this study aims to question labour market participation as defining the successful integration of immigrant women and challenges how arguments of gender equality and work are used in problematic ways. Interviews were conducted with immigrant women and social workers that work with the integration of immigrants in Norway. Through a narrative analysis of the material, the discursive connections between integration and work are interrogated, and alternative and oppositional narratives about integration and work are identified. The narrative analysis details how social workers interpret the needs of their clients and shows how narratives of integration and work are both reinforced and challenged by the social workers. I find that by working closely with their clients, the social workers are capable of interpreting their clients' alternative needs, making them administrable needs. Arguments pushing immigrant women into care and reproductive work are not found in the analysed material. By using a transnational lens to analyse the narratives of the immigrant women, I find alternative understandings of integration that challenge dominant narratives of gender equality, affective labour, and the nation-based approach to integration. Based on these findings I argue how we might rethink integration, work and citizenship in terms of transnationality.

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Finally, it does not go without mentioning how important my mother's engagement in contributing to building a local community for immigrant and Norwegian women has been for influencing my own engagement in feminist research and integration. This research is inspired by the diversity of women and their stories that I have come to know through friendships and acquaintances from this local community of women.

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Introduction

Introduction

Labour market participation has become a central marker defining the successful societal integration of immigrants in Europe. From integration and inclusion policies, to political and public debates, and scientific research, a great deal of this attention has been given to encouraging immigrant women to integrate to the labour market as part of their societal integration. Increasing the labour market integration of immigrants is seen to be positive for both the societies and for the immigrants themselves. For instance, labour market integration is seen as positively contributing to immigrants' overall societal integration, such as language acquisition, increasing their income and their well-being (Ager & Strang 2008). In a larger context, avoiding disparities between the employment rates of population groups is seen to contribute to social cohesion and preventing mistrust and polarisation in the overall population and increased employment is seen to reduce the pressure on publicly funded welfare programmes (Umblijs, 2020, p. 11). The promotion of immigrant women's employment in discourses of gendered integration have been seen to relate to European ideas of gender equality in problematic ways and have contributed to see the non-western immigrant women as 'other'. Some scholars have also traced how both feminist and nationalist discourses have been combined in the promotion of non-western immigrant women's employment (Farris 2017).

This thesis focuses on the integration of immigrant women in Norway as a case study and raises critical questions about the ways that integration and work are understood to be related in different discourses and by different societal actors. Many discourses promoting the increase in immigrant women's employment as a means to achieve integration point to relevant and important concerns about inequality, discrimination and lack of access to opportunities. There are legitimate concerns about the barriers for immigrant women's labour market participation. Research has identified crucial barriers such as immigrant women's level of education, language skills, struggles to balance family and working life, and health issues, as well as discrimination and that the Norwegian labour marked that is segregated by ethnicity and gender (Umblijs, 2020, pp. 28-9). However, these discourses are not unproblematic. The call for increasing immigrant women's labour market participation has been seen to make use of and participate in racializing and gendering notions of immigrant women and their assumed traditional and backwards attitudes to gender roles and work (see e.g. Farris, 2017, Annfelt & Gullikstad, 2013, Bjartnes & Sørensen, 2019). These discourses

reinstate binary divides between the imagined emancipated western woman and the unemancipated othered non-western woman, which overlooks the complex reality of immigrant women's conceptions of gender roles, gender equality and their 'emancipation.' The majority of immigrant women in Norway come from countries where traditional gender roles are more important (Nadim & Fjell, 2019, p. 9). However, research on immigrant women's attitudes towards balancing work and family life has found that both cultural conceptions from home countries (i.e. traditional gender roles) and an adaption to Norwegian norms exist among immigrant women's attitudes, and that there are variations among different countries of origin as well as inter-generationally (Umblijs, 2020). The focus on women's employment as the preferred form of gender equality in this context contributes to the ways that immigrant women are distinguished as successfully integrated or not, based on their 'ability' or 'willingness' to 'adapt' to Norwegian norms and practices of gender. In a wider European context, the use of western notions of gender equality to argue for the immigrant women's integration to the labour market has been criticised for being combined with nationalist, racist and neoliberal agendas (Farris, 2017). Sara Farris has argued that this rhetoric is used to push immigrant women into low-paid, low-status jobs in the sphere of social reproduction, the field which western feminists sought to be emancipated from. Increasing the employment of immigrant women is put forward as a solution to improve several problems ranging from gender equality, civic integration, and economic inequality, such as fighting poverty (Orupabo & Drange, 2019), but gender equality can also be used as a marker of difference between majority and minority in a nation, and as a marker of who belongs to the nation and not (Annfelt & Gullikstad 2013).

Immigrants in Norway

In Norway immigrants[1] make up 15 percent of the population, with an approximately equal number of men and women (Steinkellner, 2020). Immigrants in Norway have come from many parts of the world. Many immigrants have migrated for work or family, and many have come as refugees. Currently, the largest groups of immigrants come from countries such as Poland, Lithuania, Sweden, Syria and Somalia (Nadim & Fjell, 2019). The gendered patterns of employment among certain immigrant groups stand out in relation to the generally high employment rates for both men and women of the majority population in Norway.

[1] The definition for 'immigrant' used by Statistics Norway is persons who have themselves immigrated to Norway, and who are born abroad by foreign-born parents and four foreign-born grandparents (Dzamarija 2019).

Introduction

Unemployment in Norway is generally quite low (3,7%) but is higher for people with an immigrant background as a whole (7,7%) (Steinkellner, 2020). A high level of employment for both men and women is a characteristic that is common for the Nordic welfare state countries. Determining of this situation has been the central role of gender equality in the Norwegian welfare state model, women's integration to work since the 1970s, and the predominant family model for many years has been the dual-earner/dual-carer family which involves the equal sharing of paid and unpaid work and care between men and women (Ellingsæter & Leira, 2006). Employment rates among, especially, non-western immigrant women are significantly lower than both those of majority women and immigrant men from the same country background (Calmfors & Gassen, 2019). The employment rates among women from certain countries, such as Pakistan, Afghanistan and Somalia, stand out as significantly lower than the average, even when the employment rates for men from these countries are closer to the average (Nadim & Fjell, 2019). Statistics from 2017 show that 67 percent of immigrant women were employed, compared to 76 percent of the majority women (Ublijs 2020).

As a group, non-western immigrant women have weak connections to the Norwegian labour market compared to majority women and immigrant men, although the rates of employment vary amongst different groups of immigrant women based on country of origin, reason for immigration, age, education and place of residence (Orupabo & Drange, 2015, p. 5). Comparative research from the Nordic countries points out several factors to this situation. As a group, non-Western immigrant women have less education, poorer Norwegian language skills, and worse health problems than immigrant men (Arendt & Schultz-Nielsen, 2019, p. 160). Furthermore, there seems to be a mismatch between the qualifications and working experiences of many immigrants and the highly professionalised Nordic labour markets, where only 3-6 percent of elementary jobs require low skills (Calmfors & Gassen, 2019). Women as 'childbearers' and their cultural traditions have also been pointed out to contribute to this situation. This situation has led to various societal concerns relating to whether immigrant women are being excluded from participation in the Nordic gender-equal model (Orupabo & Drange, 2015, p. 5), and concerns regarding sustaining the legitimacy of the Nordic welfare model itself. A Norwegian governmental report from 2017 expresses a worry that if the Norwegian society fails to succeed in integrating immigrants from non-European countries, we might see increasing inequalities, increased cultural segregation and ultimately a weakened sense of community, trust and societal legitimacy (Umblijs 2020, p.

11). Such a situation would neither be in favour of the immigrants nor for the society as a whole.

In a recent literature review on the labour market participation of female immigrants in Norway, Janis Umblijs (2020) argues that the goal that immigrant women should achieve the same level of employment as majority women has not been problematized in the research literature. He asks whether a broader understanding of integration beyond labour market integration could be useful to avoid categorising immigrant women who are not active in the labour market, but who actively participate in society in other ways, as unsuccessful. It is of concern that such conceptions may contribute to reinforce negative stereotypes of immigrant women, overlook the forms of work and/or societal participation that immigrant women do, and ultimately that a disproportionally large focus on labour market participation may undermine the integration of some immigrant women. This thesis begins by addressing this gap in the literature by problematising how the discourses and narratives that argue for labour market participation as central to immigrant women's integration favour a particular Norwegian notion of gender equality and women's emancipation. Because this negatively affects the understanding of integration and avoids more nuanced understandings of immigrant women's ideas of gender roles and gender equality, I explore how our conceptualisations can change when we think through other narratives. For instance, the 'national' as a frame and context has had a strong influence in the understanding of integration in contemporary Europe. At the same time, migration entails a transnationality in orientation, and using a transnational approach to analysing narratives of migration and integration can bring to the fore other narratives. How can the binary division between contemporary notions of Norwegian gender equality and traditional gender roles become undone when we take into consideration understandings of gender through a transnational lens? How does our understanding of immigrant women and work change when we not only focus on employment in the Norwegian labour market but also how they relate to the forms of work they do? And since employment is put forward as one of the main factors of integration, it is relevant to ask what role employment plays in immigrant women's integration strategies and what are their experiences of integration through participating in the Norwegian working life. Because integration is a complex process it is important to gain a better understanding through gathering immigrant women's narratives about integration, gender equality, and participation in society and work.

The force of analysing narratives is in the dual discursive function of narratives as social and personal, and the ambiguous slides between these two forms of narratives. Not

only do societal narratives form the hegemonic ways of understanding the world, but people's experiences influence their personal narratives. Seeking the less heard narratives can enable us to find other, oppositional and more inclusive stories about relations in the world. Much research on the position of immigrant women explores either the marginalised voices of the group, or the dominant political and public narratives about them. In my thesis I add another layer of analysis, that I have not often found in other research, by gathering narratives of social workers who work with integration at the local governmental level as 'refugee consultants', some of whom have an immigrant background. By doing this I aim to complexify the power relations among groups and highlight the processes of meaning-making that take place in the nexus where social and personal narratives meet.

Transnational conceptualisations of integration

In this thesis I interrogate how labour market participation as the dominant means to achieve societal integration may overlook other important practices and acts of participation. As a response to this, I propose that a transnational lens (Anthias, Morokvasic-Müller & Kontos 2013) can contribute to enhancing our understanding of migration and integration related issues such as immigrant women's participation in the local labour markets, conceptualisations of gender relations, and conceptualisations of the processes and practices of integration itself. A transnational lens at once acknowledges the transnational lives of immigrants and the role this plays in their practices of integration, as well as challenging a nation-based approach to integration that has been dominant in European political and public discourses. Combining this lens with an attentiveness to the ways people rely on both social and personal narratives when telling stories, has provided original insights. First of all, I trace how transnationality is a central component in the integration strategies of immigrant women. Rather than being a hinder to integration, focusing on transnationality in their lives can shed light on how they maintain complex and contradictory transnational relations. For instance, maintaining relations in and with the home country or with the diasporic community contributes to the creation of a good life in the new country. These relations are not solely positive, as a certain distance is also made towards practices in the home country and to the diasporic community. Combining their home country's culture and Norwegian culture in the upbringing of their children, and grandchildren, points to the transnational character of their social reproductive work.

Transnationality is not only a character trait of their integration strategies but might be seen as an orientation to other aspects of their lives, such as their attitudes towards norms of gender equality, and motivations and aspirations for work. Traditional attitudes towards gender roles and work are seen as a barrier for labour market participation among certain groups of immigrant women. First, I aim to get a better understanding of immigrant women's conceptions of gender roles and how they relate to the Norwegian notion of gender equality. By applying a transnational lens in tracing narratives of gender equality, I find narratives that seek to challenge the binary divisions between gender equality and traditional gender roles, and between women's employment and women as housewives. Dominant narratives of immigrant women operate in a linear manner, whereby women coming from countries with traditional gender roles 'adapt' to Norwegian gender roles and gender equality through their integration to the Norwegian working life. While refugee consultants use this narrative, the narratives of the immigrant women challenge the simplicity of such a narrative of integration. Although coming from countries with traditional gender roles, their own conceptions of gender and their emancipation as women was a motivation to migrate, and thus gender equality is strongly connected to their transnational motivations and orientations, and not simply a part of their integration in Norway.

I am furthermore interested in how their conceptions of gender roles influence their motivations to work, and their conceptions of the various forms of work they do and wish to do. By employing a transnational lens (Anthias et al. 2013) and feminist perspectives of work (Weeks 2007, Oksala 2016), my aim is to understand immigrant women's work beyond the narratives of gender equality and the aims of nation-based integration. This means focusing on the notion of work in a broader sense that includes productive, reproductive and domestic work, and paid and unpaid work, while also avoiding oppositional and exclusionary distinctions between the various forms of work. In the personal narratives of the immigrants their motivations to work are connected to a desire to contribute to society and to help others in a similar situation to themselves, both in Norway and in their countries of origin. The work they do and wish to do have transnational motivations and orientations, and I find a valuation of affective and socially reproductive forms of work.

The processes that are involved in the interplay between dominant social narratives, and marginal and oppositional narratives in the political field are theorised by Nancy Fraser as taking on the form of needs interpretations. Fraser's theory addresses the power relations at stake in defining the dominant narratives, and points out expert narratives as a site where the negotiation between current hegemonic narratives and narratives of social movements and

marginalised groups takes place because of their position to influence politics and policy. As social workers they play a crucial role in managing both the broader aims of the government, such as increasing immigrant women's participation in the labour market, as well as meeting the expectations and needs of the individual clients, in relation to the demands of the labour force. I consider how refugee consultants working with the integration of refugees for local, governmental social welfare offices operate as 'experts' in an in-between space between the state and their clients. I explore how they rely on both social narratives of immigrant women and personal narratives based on experiences with their clients that contribute to resist certain aspects that are less inclusive of immigrants experiences and function to 'other' immigrant women. I argue that in their power as 'expert' interpreters of needs and providers of welfare their position can both contribute to the circulation of more inclusive narratives of immigrant women's integration, and to the reinstating of dominant, negative narratives of immigrant women.

Chapter overview

In "Methodology and ethics" I argue for the relevance and importance of listening to marginalized people's voices and experiences. I discuss the methodological choices and ethical considerations I have made in the research and I critically engage with my own positionality as a researcher and the relations to those I researched. Central terminologies are explained as well as the justifications behind my choice to use the terms, such the terms I use to talk about my participants. Finally, I sketch out how I use Tamboukou's method discursive narrative analysis and its suitability for analysing the empirical material in this research.

"Theories of integration, immigrant women and work" lays out the theoretical framework for this research. I engage with scholarly research on the integration of immigrant women in a wider European context and in Norway. This serves both as a backdrop for understanding current problematics related to gendered integration in Europe today, and to providing theoretical insights for rethinking integration in relation to notions such as citizenship, work and transnationality. I introduce Fraser's theory of the politics of need interpretation to better understand how the understanding of integration contested and part of broader discursive struggles over defining people's needs.

In "Integration and participation and the working life" I analyse the narratives of integration and especially focus on how the discursive relations between integration and work are made in narratives. Narratives of gender equality, the welfare state and the Norwegian

working life as the main social arena in society is used to explain the necessity to work for integration. The social workers both draw on and challenge dominant narratives of integration, for instance an assimilationist understanding of integration is rejected, and integration as a two-way process is emphasised. I analyse how the narratives of the immigrant women's experiences of inclusion and exclusion in the workplace challenge dominant narratives of integration, and how the relation between integration and work is contested.

In the chapter "Gender roles, gender equality and affective labour*" I explore narratives about gender roles and gender equality in relation to integration, and question whether or* not a femonationalist rhetoric is present. The immigrant women's narratives challenge dominant narratives about immigrant women and traditional gender roles, and their 'adaption' to Norwegian practices gender equality through their narratives of migration.

I analyse how social workers, working closely with their clients, interpret their clients' needs as complex needs, as both individual and structural. I connect this to the ambiguous nature of welfare provision and social work as both potentially emancipatory and disciplining. Finally, I analyse and theorise the immigrants' desire to work to 'help others' as transnational affective labour, which is characterized by having transnational orientations and is conditioned by affects such as compassion, solidarity and reciprocity.

In "Discussion and conclusion" I summarise and discuss the main findings of this research and its implications for future research and policy making. I conclude that by listening to the narratives of social workers and immigrant women, and interpreting them through discursive narrative analysis and a transnational lens, I have shown how both actors draw on broader narratives to explain and understand their experiences, but also how they use their own personal experiences and subjectivity to create alternative narratives and interpretations where the dominant narratives are insufficient. I suggest how these alternative narratives and ways of thinking about immigrant women's integration and work can be used to challenge and disrupt some of the old, inefficient and excluding narratives and discourses.

Methodology and ethics

Centring lived experiences of immigrant women

In order to contribute to a more inclusive knowledge production and feminist politics of integration, this research centres the experiences of people at various social locations; immigrant women, social workers and a social worker with an immigrant background. In feminist research an understanding of social reality must be related both to the relations of power that influence specific contexts and to an understanding that "experience is discursively constructed by dominant ideological structures" (Hesse-Biber, 2014, p. 5). Feminist thinkers such as Donna Haraway have been central in arguing for a feminist objectivity of 'situated knowledges' whereby knowledge and truth are seen as partial and inseparable from the lived experiences of those who are researched (2014, p. 5). Therefore, in this research knowledge production is accompanied by an attentiveness to the various social locations of both researcher and participants.

Centring people's experience as 'evidence' in feminist research has been unproblematic. Historian Joan Scott has problematized feminist research for taking experience as "uncontestable evidence" and for not questioning the constructed nature of experience (Scott, 1991, p. 777). However, Feminist political philosopher Johanna Oksala argues for the necessity of understanding people's experiences as discursive without discarding the specific lived and embodied aspects of experience, and that this does not have to mean essentialising people's experiences to the category they belong to through a return to identity politics. Oksala argues that understanding people's experiences as culturally constructed means "recognizing that the particular cultural, economic, and political conditions of a person's development are necessarily shared", which "implies the existence of communal experiences. As long as we recognize that such communal experiences are culturally contingent and politically constituted, and not a manifestation of an essential and neutralized identity, they can function as an important source of critical reflection and societal transformation" (Oksala, 2014, p. 397). Even though people's experiences are constructed through discourse, "these experiences are never wholly derivative of or reducible to them" (2014, p. 396). In this research, the relevance of centring experiences is to explore the ways in which people's experiences deviate from the dominant cultural representations can contribute to articulate critiques as well as the articulation of new discourses which contest the old ones.

Postcolonial and transnational feminist theorist Chandra Mohanty (2003) explains how the particular experiences of individuals has universal significance—which is different from having a 'universal meaning'. She argues that the particular views and experiences of the marginalized lives and the voices of disenfranchised people must be brought to the fore because a "particularized viewing allows for a more concrete and expansive vision of universal justice" (2003, p. 510). Because of their epistemic authority and symbolic power (Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015, p. 88), the views of the privileged community are dominating in the widespread conceptions of integration, gender equality and social justice. Those who are marginalised or oppressed are seen to have an epistemic privilege in understanding power and oppression because their views are influenced both by dominant conceptions as well as their experiences. However, both Mohanty and Oksala cautiously point out that minority voices should not be seen as holding the 'truth' of power and oppression. Oksala argues: "We must listen especially to those whose experiences have been marginalized and where voices have been silenced, not because they are in possession of some authentic truth about reality revealed only through suffering or oppression, but simply because their perspective is different from ours." (Oksala, 2014, p. 400). Minority-majority relations are not only in terms of domination and discrimination but may also differ in terms of cultural values and goals (Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015, p. 84). Including previously heard or less heard voices forms a more inclusive understanding of the conceptions or phenomena we seek to understand because it may reveal contradictions and presuppositions that are not available to the dominant majority (Oksala, 2014, p. 400). Mohanty argues that feminist research that takes the position of critically analysing the experiences of the marginalised voices contributes to make visible the politics of knowledge production and the unequal power relations that are invested in it, in order to "transform the use and abuse of power" (Mohanty, 2003, p. 511).

The relevance of listening to and analysing immigrant women's experiences of integration in Norway can contribute to more inclusive notions of integration, work participation and gender equality. The analysis of immigrant women's experiences as a partial and localized objectivity means that it is "an objectivity that is valid within the specific and local frame and context of the particular research design, but not outside of this" (Lykke, 2010, p. 141). Particular and localized objectivity has a wider societal relevance by contributing to broadening our knowledge and understanding of integration that contests dominant narratives and takes into account alternative interpretations. This is central to creating feminist politics that addresses the unequal relations of power in the production of knowledge about marginalised women's lives.

Nancy Fraser's theory on the interpretation of needs discourses complexifies the power-relations between dominant and marginalized groups by addressing several power locations wherein needs are discursively interpreted (Fraser, 1989). For example, integration policies on increasing work participation of immigrant women are articulated within the realm of politics, but other central actors are involved in interpreting immigrant women's needs, such as those who translate policy into concrete welfare provision. This is why it is also relevant to focus on social workers, refugee consultants and advisors who work with the integration of immigrants based on the government's policies. According to Fraser's schema, social workers in state institutions are amongst the actors in the role of 'expert' needs interpreters (Fraser, 1989, p. 305). The discursive interpretation of needs addresses both the power-dimensions in defining people's needs as well as allowing us to see how different needs are interpreted in different social locations, which can be related to differences in cultural values and goals.

In-depth, digital interviewing

In-depth interviews were identified as a suitable method for accessing a diversity of narratives about immigrant women's integration in Norway with both immigrant women and social workers who work with integration (Bell, 2014). The initial plan was to do interviews in-person, however due to the travel restrictions imposed due to the Coronavirus-pandemic happening at the time of this research, interviews were conducted through videoconference and phone-calls. All interviews were conducted through digital communication. I let the participants decide their preference of digital communication for the interview. Some participants may feel less comfortable showing their face on the screen, while others prefer to see the 'stranger' researcher who is interviewing them. Moreover, access to online communication technology such as a video-device or Wi-Fi-connections varies among population groups (Piela, 2016). The Coronavirus measures restricted some participants from accessing this technology outside of their home, for instance at a café or public library, which meant telephoning was the only option. Videoconference was used to interview three of the social workers, while the interviews with the immigrant women and the social worker with immigrant background was conducted by phone. I only encountered minor challenges when using digital communication for the interviews. This was related to the recording of the 'digital voice' of the interviews, which at times could be unclear because of a bad reception or 'fuzziness'.

Videoconference could be more suitable than phoning for creating rapport with participants. Seeing one another can contribute to create a stronger sense of connection between interviewer and participant, because it facilitates the exchange of visible cues such as affirmative facial expressions and hand gestures between the researcher and the participant. This was a consideration I took into account since the interviews focused on people's personal experiences and stories. However, the participants who did the interviews via telephone were acquaintances and people that I had already established contact with prior to my research through my social networks. They knew who I was, which gave an advantage in building rapport and trust. However, going from acquaintanceships to a researcher-participant relationship is not necessarily without challenges. Rachel Thwaites (2017) argues that building intimate rapport with participants in feminist research with ideals of open and honest sharing require genuine interest and compassion from the researcher (p. 4). This can create situations where the researcher engages in surface acting such as agreeing with participants in order to 'get the data'. This complexifies the honesty or realness of the interview-situation, and requires emotional labour from the researcher, such as guilt about lack of honesty or of reinforcing unequal relations (Thwaites, 2017, p. 5). When conducting the interviews, I experienced balancing between expressing my own ideas about a topic and questioning the stories of the participants. For example, I was not entirely clear about my aim to problematize integration and work. First of all, I did not want my aim to precondition the stories of the participants, and second, it was important for me as a researcher to emphasise the importance of the participants perspectives in the interview-setting. Although some of my questions made connections to my own position, at times, while analysing the material I was left with a feeling of doubt about whether I had been clear enough about my own position. The aim to openly and honestly share experiences in the interview came into conflict with my aim to problematize in the analysis setting. It created an ethical dilemma where certain views or narratives of the participants were problematised in the analysis, which I had not contested during the interview-situation. I sought to make this dilemma work to my advantage; the unease called for more reflection on my part to ensure that the analytical arguments fairly represented the participants narratives with all their nuances and complexities. Thwaites argues that the openness and honesty *ideal* may exactly be that, and that it is necessary for feminist researchers to explicitly reflect upon how this ideal cannot always be realised in practice, in order to clarify the messiness of the feminist research practice (2017, p. 5).

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with all participants. This method is suitable for gathering first-hand information about a person's view and experiences on a

certain topic because it allows for in-depth descriptions and elaborations of their experiences (Hesse-Biber, 2014, p. 115). I also think it is a good method for one-off interviews because of the limited time for building rapport. There is space to allow the participants to go deeper into topics they feel strongly about, and at the same time the structured interview guide helps to ensure that all topics and central questions are covered, albeit in various ways for each interview. I started the interviews by asking the participants about themselves and their work. In some cases, this led naturally into the various topics I wanted to cover, and I asked my questions based on the direction the participants went, while in other interviews I stayed more closely to the interview guide. The time-scope of the interviews was between 45-60 minutes, and within that time I was able to cover all the planned questions. I created separate interview guides for immigrant women and for the social workers. The first three topics and related questions overlapped and were (1) integration and work participation and (2) gender equality and gender roles, and (3) integration strategies beyond work participation. In the interview guide for the social workers the fourth topic was about immigrant women and social reproductive work, whereas for the immigrant women I asked them about their own ideas of the work they perform and want to do. The final topic was related to the provision of social welfare and assistance from the state, where I asked the social workers to reflect upon their role, and I asked the immigrant women about receiving help from the social welfare office and the state in general.

The sample

The research sample consists of three immigrant women and four social workers. One of the social workers is an immigrant, while the rest are non-immigrant Norwegians. I recruited participants with an immigrant background who have lived in Norway for at least five years. It was necessary that they could speak sufficient Norwegian since I did not have access to a translator. Moreover, this criterion meant that the participants had several years of experience of integration in Norway. I did not consider the immigration status as a determining factor in the recruitment because although women who come as refugees or through family reunification are entitled to state funded integration programmes, the policies and public discourses that are about immigrant women do not make this distinction. The category ‘immigrant woman’ is not a unified group so I wanted to treat it with the various distinctions and particularities that exist within it. I recruited the immigrant women through an open call for participants in a closed Facebook-group for the local women’s group in my hometown.

Only one participant was recruited in this way. The other participants were contacted through my network. I approached them explaining the aim of my research and asking if they are interested in participating. All participants have different countries of origin; Balkan region, central Africa, and the African horn. Two have obtained residency as refugees and one as a labour migrant. The family situations vary amongst the immigrant women. One woman is single, one is a young married mother and one married woman with children and grandchildren. Experience with employment was not a requirement for participants, although all participants have experience of employment in Norway. One woman has several jobs next to her studies, one is currently on maternity leave and another one is currently not employed due to her health. The current status of employment also varies among the social workers; two are employed, one is currently unemployed after working on project-basis and is actively seeking work within the field, and one has a partial leave from her position to attend further university education.

Two of the refugee consultants were recruited through my network. I was less successful in snowball-sampling, so I recruited two of the refugee consultants through their professional profiles on LinkedIn. I searched for people with the position titles ‘refugee consultant’ and ‘refugee advisor’ and contacted five people who currently hold this position, out of which two wished to participate. All social workers have worked with the integration of refugees in various state institutions, predominantly at local offices of the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV).

Ethical considerations

I started the interviews by thanking the participants for their time and willingness to contribute to the research. I presented myself and my research project. I ensured that I had their consent to make voice recordings of the interviews and asked if they had any questions about the research, the interview or the consent form. I had sent consent forms to all participants in advance. The consent form included the aims and objectives of the research project, the protection of their anonymity as participants and the question of voice recording of the interview. It was of importance to ensure that the language of this communication was understandable to people who are not familiar with academic research. All interviews were conducted in Norwegian because it is the main common language of both the researcher and participants. All participants were requested to submit pseudonyms to ensure anonymity. Some participants explicitly did not wish to be anonymous and preferred to use their own

first names. I respect their choice and see it as an expression of a wish to be recognized and valued personally for their contributions to the research (Ogden, 2008, p. 693). In addition to using pseudonyms, I only provide estimates of demographic information such as the participants age, the region of their home country and current place of residence, to ensure their anonymity. The interviews were recorded with the permission from the participants. The interviews were transcribed and coded through the qualitative data analysis computer programme NVivo. The material was coded and analysed in Norwegian and translated to English. Emerging themes related to the research questions were identified, and new unexpected themes were identified using the 'query' function to analyse word frequency. For instance, the word-root 'help'[2] came high up on the word frequency analysis, which led to identifying the theme of receiving help and helping others.

Choices of terminologies

As a feminist researcher it is important to make explicit the reflections regarding which terms are used to name the participants in the research and how these are defined. Defining the category of people that participate will always be a categorical construction "with profound intellectual and moral implications" (Bell, 2014, p. 88), and may in some ways go against the broader aims of the research to problematise and move away from rigid categorisations of populations. For example, I categorize my participants in two groups; immigrant women and social workers. These two groups have seemingly different experiences and positions of power, yet I also aimed to avoid creating a binary distinction between the two by including one participant that is both an immigrant and a social worker.

The theoretical literature I have engaged with concerning integration in the English language uses terms such as 'migrants', 'non-western migrants', 'non-western/non-EU migrants' and 'minority populations.' In Norwegian public discourses, terms such as 'immigrant', 'minority' and 'person with immigrant background'[3] are used in discussions and debates.[4] In critical and feminist scholarship, the term 'migrant' is often used rather than 'immigrant' in order to emphasise the non-static or 'completed' status of migration in people's lives. In Norwegian political as well as public discourses, I find that the term immigrant[5] is more widely used as an umbrella term for people who for various reasons have

[2] In Norwegian: «hjelp».
[3] In Norwegian 'person med innvandrerbakgrunn'. This concept refers to persons who are born in Norway to immigrant parents.
[4] In Norwegian: 'innvandrer', 'minoritet' and 'personer med innvandrerbakgrunn'.
[5] In Norwegian: 'innvandrer'

migrated to and settled in Norway. In the Norwegian feminist literature the concepts 'immigrants' and 'immigrant women' are widely used. These are also the terms that my participants use about themselves.[6] Using this term helps me staying closer to the context of the Norwegian society as well as the participants self-categorizations. However, the term 'immigrant' is not straightforward. There are significant differences between groups of immigrants in Norway, ranging from international students to labour migrants and refugees. Furthermore, these categories are too simplistic to account for the complex realities of immigration, such as reasons to immigrate, motivations to stay, and possibilities to return (Eriksen & Sajjad, 2015, p. 26). Norwegian social anthropologists Thomas Hylland Eriksen and Torunn Arntsen Sajjad (2015) argue that although there are differences between labour migrants and refugees, in practice, they meet many of the same problems and challenges related to cultural differences, cultural conflicts and discrimination (p. 27). They use the term 'immigrant' as an umbrella term for labour migrants, refugees, asylum seekers and international students who are from areas outside of Western Europe and North America (2015, p. 28). These people are so-called 'visible minorities', because in many cases one can see that they have immigrated to Norway. I could have used the term 'minority' to categorize my participants. However, there are many people who could be defined as a minority in Norway who are not immigrants, for example the children of immigrants or linguistic minorities and indigenous populations (2015, p. 77). In my sample, the participants could be categorized as belonging to what Eriksen and Sajjad terms 'urban minorities'. Urban minorities are ethnic groups that, in contrast to for example indigenous groups, do not have cultural roots in the territory in which they live; they are often integrated in the capitalist system of production; and most importantly in this context, they constitute a diaspora, a smaller emigrated part of a larger population (2015, p. 78). At the same time, some groups of immigrants living in Norway are more or less perceived as belonging to the majority group, such as immigrants from other Nordic or European countries, who are white and well-educated. These groups are often not perceived as immigrants and do not face as many challenges as non-white immigrants (2015, p. 27). Among my participants there are both labour migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, all of whom come from areas outside of Western Europe and North America. In light of the considerations of the nuances and complexities of terminologies, I find that the term 'immigrant' and 'immigrant women' are

[6] My participants use the term immigrant ('innvandrer') to categorise their own position and experience, in addition they specify the category of immigrant to which they belong, such as refugee ('flyktning') and labour migrant ('arbeidsinnvandrer'). These terms are often used interchangeably in their narratives.

suitable terms to categorize my participants who have immigrated to Norway and are an ethnic minority in Norway. I especially find that using the concept 'immigrant' emphasises the experiences and challenges of immigrant integration, which is at the centre of this research, while also emphasising that this experience is specific to people from the position of an ethnic minority group. When I am referencing or paraphrasing the work of other scholars, I use the terms that they employ, which is why terms such as 'migrants' and 'minority women' are still used.

The second category of participants are people who work with the integration of refugees for the local Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration offices. The title of the positions that my participants held was 'refugee advisor' or 'refugee consultant', and they mostly work with newly arrived refugees, assisting their integration during their first few years in Norway. All participants have higher educational degrees, two have a degree in social work, one has a degree in pedagogical anthropology, and another in social anthropology. As providers of social welfare, I categorise the social location of these participants as 'social workers' for analytical purposes and will refer to them as such. This is related to the power relations involved in providing social welfare as well as their status as 'experts' in interpreting discourses of needs. It is necessary to explain why I interviewed social workers who only work with refugees (and persons who have immigrated through the family unification-procedure). Other groups of immigrants, such as labour migrants, do not have access to specific welfare provision that facilitates overall integration (Umblijs, 2020, p. 31). However, other groups of immigrants may qualify for other social welfare programmes and provisions for job market integration such as the 'Qualification Programme',[7] which is a more mainstreamed approach to facilitate labour market inclusion (see Annfelt & Gullikstad, 2013). Although refugee consultants don't work with all immigrant groups, they work with a wide range of tasks aimed towards facilitating the integration of refugees, such as assisting with housing, facilitating language education, higher education and qualification, and providing them assistance to enter the job market. My aim is not to analyse the specificity of social welfare programmes but gain an understanding of how immigrant women's integration is understood through the narratives of different societal actors. In the context of my aim, I argue that interviewing refugee consultants generates relevant data on narratives of immigrant women's integration, despite the contestable categorizations of immigrants that the government operates with in its social welfare system.

[7] 'Kvalifiseringsprogrammet'

Reflexivity and positionality

I find Aimee Carillo-Rowe's (2008) approach to a feminist account of the researcher's positionality and her investment in the field as useful for my own research practice, because it makes clear how and why the researcher has become personally invested in the topic she chooses to research, and for reflecting upon the relations between researcher and research participants. Carillo-Rowe's approach to reflecting on the positionality of the feminist researcher emphasises the idea of building bridges and relationality. This is part of an attempt to move away from an individualist positioning of researchers vis-à-vis the subjects of research, that often tends to focus on only positioning subjects within specific identity categories. A danger of this is that a subject's positionality can be portrayed as static and may implicitly rely on essentialising notions of identity categories such as gender, race, and religion, and that the experiences of these come to be seen as essential and or 'universal' to those who 'belong' to such a group. My social positionality as a feminist research is still relevant for creating an ethical feminist research practice, but would benefit by being accompanied by a consideration of how and why I became interested in the field I chose to study, and how this field has become part of my own 'becoming' (Carillo-Rowe, 2008, p. 51). This helps to frame positionality as relational and gives power to our participants because they become imagined as subjects and potential allies, rather than objects, she argues. I am a white Norwegian woman in my mid 20's who is currently studying a master's degree in Gender Studies at Utrecht University in the Netherlands. International migration and mobility have been a part of my own life as well as in my close family. In the 1960s my maternal grandmother moved from Sweden to Norway to marry and start a family, and in the 1980s my mother moved to Scotland to study, where she met my Scottish father. I was born in Scotland but was raised and have lived in Norway from an early school age. Two years ago, I moved to study in the Netherlands. These experiences have resulted in an attentiveness to living with cultural differences, feelings of transnational belonging and transnational practices of citizenship in my own life and family. I acknowledge that my experiences of mobility in the northern European context are different from those of immigrant women who are subject to integration policies in Norway. Combined with a feminist awareness, the reflections on my own experiences of mobility and transnational living have in some ways contributed to my critical and intellectual thinking about the aforementioned issues, and I

therefore see it as a relevant part of my becoming as a feminist researcher on migration and integration.

My relations to my research participants are informed by my engagement and participation in a local and culturally diverse women's group in my hometown in Norway, where friendships and acquaintances have been established over several years. I have also volunteered and worked with refugees in different settings and organisations. It is this work and these relationships that have inspired and motivated me to conduct this specific research. Many of my participants were recruited through my personal and professional social networks and they were people I had already established some contact with before this research. I consider my engagement for and experience working with immigrant women as informing my relations to both majority Norwegian social workers and to the immigrant women by establishing a form of common ground. Although the locations and positionalities of myself and my participants differed, a shared engagement for enhancing immigrant women's experiences of belonging in Norway was experienced as a common ground in the interviews with all participants and was a ground for building trust and rapport.

Discursive narrative analysis

People's experiences are shared and talked about through practices of storytelling. This research employs Maria Tamboukou's (2003) method of discursive narrative analysis to examine the gathered material. I find Tamboukou's Foucauldian approach to narrative research especially suited for feminist research because it explores narratives as both social and personal, and as both discursive effects *and* as sites for the production of meaning (2003, p. 116). The relevance of using narrative discursive analysis is that it explicitly questions under which external conditions discursive production of narratives can take place. By understanding power as the production of truth and knowledge, we can investigate which 'narrative modalities of truth production' constitute the participants discursive interpretations of needs. Influenced by genealogy and the archival research that is central to the work of Foucault, the aim of Tamboukou's approach is not to seek for a hidden truth in the narratives, but to uncover layers of distortions/constructions, in order to see how our present has "been constituted in ways that seem natural and indisputable to us, but are only the effects of certain historical, social, cultural, political and economic configurations" (Tamboukou, 2003, p. 102). A fruitful aspect of this method is how it treats narratives as both 'technologies of power' and 'technologies of the self' (2003, p. 107). Focusing on this two-fold function of

narratives allows us to explore how narratives are simultaneously instruments of power, oppression and submission, and procedures through which the narrator becomes a subject, through the practice of telling stories. The latter is a process of objectification, meaning that the narrator becomes categorized and constituted in relation to existing discourses and narratives, but it also allows us to see the narrator as an active agent in the storytelling, and how dominant and oppressive narratives can be appropriated, bent, and resisted by narrators in various social locations.

Of interest is how *narrative modalities* contribute to the construction of a *dispositif*, "a grid of intelligibility wherein power relations, knowledges, discourses and practices cross each other and make connections" (2003, p. 109). In practice this means exploring how connections between different stories, meanings and discourses are made in narratives, and how they establish a certain 'truth'. Uncovering the discursively constructed nature of narratives, allows us to imagine that things could be otherwise (2003, p. 102). In the narrative analysis, this requires distancing oneself from the present, and a certain scepticism of the researcher towards the narratives being investigated. Some 'practical' tools for this analytical work is exploring narrative tropes and counter-narratives and tracing the limits of narratives (2003, pp. 104, 111). This last point is important because this is where the researcher can chart transformations of old narratives and the emergence of new ones (2003, p. 112). Employing a transnational lens (Anthias, Morokvasic-Müller & Kontos, 2013) will play an analytical role in this respect. Combining a transnational lens and narrative analysis can help to find ways of imagining different futures, to rethink the paradigmatic understandings of integration and citizenship, and to question the discursive construction of relations between work, integration and gender equality. In my analysis I trace how gender equality, women's emancipation and the related ideas of independency are central 'narrative modalities of truth production' for constituting the relations between work and integration. By tracing the limits of these narratives, and the places where they are contested, we can begin to see outlines of new discourses, less dominant discourses or discourses of resistance. This approach can also help to highlight the various social and structural locations of knowledge production, which enables us to see glimpses of how personal and social narratives interact in various relations of power. For instance, the location of the social worker is positioned between the state and the client, and is thus both a position of potential domination and disciplining of subjects, but through listening to and working for their clients, there is a potential in this social location for employing new narrative configurations of the interpretations of their clients' needs. The social position of the immigrant women as the subject to integration policies and discourses,

urges us to investigate the ways in which they employ and internalise dominant discourses in their narratives of integration, and also how their narratives are sites of the production of alternative meanings.

Theories of integration, immigrant women and work

Introduction

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework for this thesis by critically engaging with intersectional feminist scholarship that has addressed, analysed and theorised discourses and practices of integration in contemporary Europe. The aim is to map out how integration is understood both in political and mainstream society and how feminist scholarship have critically evaluated present-day discourses and practices of integration in European countries. I bring together scholarship from a broader European context as well as from Norwegian scholars, to show points of convergences and bring attention to aspects which may not have been pointed out or explored in the Norwegian context yet. In this chapter I combine feminist theories of labour with a social justice perspective of integration from Floya Anthias and colleagues to create a theoretical framework for the analysis of my gathered material. Feminist theories of labour and social reproduction theory prove important for addressing and raising critical questions about the various forms of work that immigrant women do and their relations to strategies of integration. I draw extensively on Anthias's scholarly work on integration because I find that its theorisations of current European integration regimes based on empirical research makes it suitable for addressing current problematics. Moreover, this work aims to rethink integration in terms of social justice as well as imagining how integration can be understood in our present-day transnational world, which refuses the essentialisation and universalisation of notions such as citizenship and belonging. This part of Anthias' theorisation of integration makes it a powerful tool for raising new questions and to find alternative perspectives, and ultimately to articulate more inclusive understandings of integration that can be of relevance to policy making. In order to address the contested and conflicting narratives and discourses that exist on various levels of power hierarchies and the relations between them, from integration policies and those who are subject to them, to those who work with translating policy into welfare provision, I sketch out Nancy Fraser's theory on the politics of need interpretation. Her idiom 'needs-talk' which refers to how "political conflict is played out and through which inequalities are symbolically elaborated and challenged" (1989, p. 291), is relevant for problematising *who* is interpreting the needs in question, and the social relations and institutions that contribute to the interpretations of needs.

Defining integration

The concept 'integration' is arguably an ambiguous concept due to its "differential acceptance and understanding by different users" (Anthias, Morokvasic-Müller & Kontos, 2013, p. 1). The Norwegian social anthropologists Thomas Hylland Eriksen and Torunn Arntsen Sajjad (2015) define integration as "participation in the shared social institutions, combined with the maintenance of the group's identity and cultural characteristics" (p. 80, my translation).[8] They understand integration as a type of relation between the majority and minority in a population, with *assimilation* and *segregation* placed at each end of the spectrum. In this relation, the nation state or the majority population will have varying expectations and requirements about the degree to which the minority is required to adapt or is allowed to deviate from the norm, which raises moral questions about the need for sameness and the right to difference in a population (2015, p. 80). In practice, majority-minority relations will consist of various combinations of elements from all ends of this spectrum. Understanding integration as a relation is informed by a class perspective that addresses imbalances in power, discrimination and oppression. This understanding must be supplemented with an attention to the cultural encounters and cultural differences; for instance, how people's values and goals are culturally defined, and that in a multicultural society, people from various groups aim for different goals in life (2015, p. 84). This is an important consideration to keep in mind when considering the meaning and goal of integration from the minority's perspective. In the work of Alistair Ager and Alison Strang (2008) integration is defined as a process which ideally goes two ways. The emphasis on the 'two-way process' highlights integration as "a process of mutual accommodation" (2008, p. 177), where the host state, society and community has a responsibility to create conditions for the participation of the newcomers in 'all aspects of life', and of creating a local community that allows for the creation of social connections between people of different groups. The understanding of integration as a two-way process has been embodied in EU frameworks and policy documents (Anthias et al., 2013). Nevertheless, in current European debates and integration management, an assimilationist approach to integration and citizenship dominates, and migrants are expected to assimilate "to the dominant social and cultural national contexts" (Anthias & Pajnik, 2014, p. 3).

[8] My translation: "Med integrasjon menes deltagelse i samfunnets felles institusjoner, kombinert med opprettholdelse av gruppeidentitet og kulturelt særpreg."

The meaning of integration is increasingly questioned in academic research today, meanwhile within political discourses the concept is often uncontested and taken for granted (Anthia et al., 2013). Certain political and economic developments that arguably have a strong impact on the discourses and practices of integration in European countries today are the effects of neoliberalism on politics and working conditions, shrinking and/or pressured welfare states, and the rise of nationalism, xenophobia, racism, which is specifically related to growing anti-Islam sentiment (Farris, 2017). In public discourses, the concept of integration is currently seen to appear in the context of a "securitization discourse and the management of populations, in particular those whose differences are considered to be disturbing and threatening on the basis of ethnicity, faith or national origin" (Anthias et al., 2013, p. 2). This conceptualisation of integration highlights how integration can be an instrument of power and domination over migrants. At the same time, Anthias et al. argue that integration is a normative concept with contradictory aims, because it also includes concerns with social inclusion. The aim of Anthias and colleagues is to reframe integration in this direction by using "a more intersectional, transnational and democratising discourse" (Anthias et al., 2013, p. 2).

Tropes of integration

According to Anthias (2013), there are two tropes that dominate understandings of integration in the context of diversity and difference. These are accusatory narratives about the 'unwillingness' of migrants to integrate, and the declared 'impossibility' of some undesirable differences to be eliminated. The migrant who is perceived as 'unwilling' to integrate is treated as deviant. Certain cultural and social resources held by the 'unwilling' migrant are considered "deficient for the purposes of participating in society" (Anthias 2013, pp. 16-17), and must be corrected through requirements which will enforce integration and serve as proof of their willingness to integrate, such as completing civic integration tests and participating in the labour market. The second trope relates to the incapability of the 'other' of ever adapting or incorporating the values and practices of the receiving society, thereby holding on to differences which are considered to be a threat to Western values and society. These tropes heavily rely on the idea that the responsibility of integration lies with the migrant. Floya Anthias and Mojca Pajnik (2014) argue that while the structural exclusion of migrants is partially produced through migration policies, in dominant discourses of migration, the exclusion of migrants is more often portrayed as a responsibility of the

individual migrants who "have failed to integrate" (p. 2). This happens through a process of culturalization, whereby specific 'cultural' groups are defined as 'other' by the majority. Culturalizing narratives assume that all members of a group are equally committed to the culture, and that the 'problems' of these groups are seen to be caused by their culture, rather than effects of structural and material conditions (Anthias, 2013). For instance, issues such as domestic violence or unemployment among migrants are often framed as cultural problems, meanwhile these same issues are considered to stem from structural problems for the majority populations (Mulinari & Lundqvist, 2017). Culturalization is therefore an obstacle in articulating an intersectional feminist politics of integration.

The European countries' approaches to integration have been described as a 'European Janus-face', because on the one hand, European countries aim "to provide mechanisms of inclusion and, on the other, reproduces through its policies the very exclusions that it attempts to tackle" (Anthias et al., 2013, p. 2). European countries undoubtedly have "real and valid concerns over how to facilitate the inclusion of migrants, within Europe's increasingly divided cities particularly, and within the complexities which attend multi-ethnicity and growing complex diversities" (Anthias & Pajnik, 2014, p. 3), yet at the same time, integration discourses and practices function as instruments of power and domination over migrants. In political debates and public discourses, the concept of integration is often taken for granted and to a large degree denotes the "adaption of migrants to the 'host' society" in terms of an assimilation to the dominant social and national context (Anthias & Pajnik, 2014, p. 3). One crucial problem with an assimilationist approach to integration of migrants is that it signposts migrants as deficient in some way, and they are thus treated differently than other categories of the population. Moreover, assimilationist approaches rely on universalistic ideas of the values and norms of the national society, which does not take into account the diversity and difference that exists within all social relations (Anthias et al., 2013). For example, the strong reliance on adherence to the Nordic model of equal gender relations, also known as the 'dual-income/dual-carer family' as a criterion for 'successful integration' in heterosexual migrant households, could overlook the various ways this Nordic gender-equal family model is not adhered to, and also challenged by members of the majority population.

In contemporary societies, integration has largely been understood within the boundaries of the nation state, whereby integration refers to becoming part of a nation, based on the nationally specific criteria for cultural belonging and citizenship. This is exemplified through the current practice of many European countries where integration is a condition for

'earning' citizenship (Anthias et al., 2013). Scholars have critiqued the nation-based approach to integration on several grounds. Anthias and Pajnik (2014) argue that this focus of integration marks populations in terms of national and ethnic characteristics, thus creating privileged insiders based on national and ethnic boundaries, a perspective which "is at odds with the nature of modern societies today and the lives of people worldwide" (p. 3). This perspective overlooks both the variation and fluidity of national and/or ethnic characteristics, and the commonalities that exist across or between them, as well as overlooking the increasingly transnational character of modern-day societies and lives. Furthermore, the approaches integration to European societies are in most cases targeted at migrants coming from countries considered non-western and non-European. Migrants from countries that are considered western and developed, such as the United States, Canada and Japan are not targeted by these same approaches to integration, because it is assumed that these migrants are already part of the social fabric, whereas third country migrants, and especially Muslims, are perceived to raise issues of concern about shared values and social cohesion (Anthias, 2013, pp. 15-16). This has influenced the public imaginaries of migrant subject positions. On the one hand there are the 'well-integrated' and 'deserving migrants', and 'undeserving' migrants on the other (Anthias & Pajnik, 2014, p. 2). At a closer look, these different subject positions that migrants can be placed into discursively are also informed by ideas of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, as well as long-held ideas of the 'backwardness' of non-western cultures. These imaginations are furthermore arguably "strongly conditioned by a skills and status-based migration system which determines who can enter and who can stay" (Anthias & Pajnik, 2014, p. 2). Such categories of migrants contribute to ideas of who is deserving or able to be part of a nation (or not). In Norway, longstanding national debates on the integration of immigrants have often centred around contested definitions of culture and questions of what 'Norwegianness' means and the ability of immigrants to 'become' Norwegian. Immigrants and descendants of immigrants, as well as politicians and researchers participate in these debates. Notably, an increasing number of younger women of with an immigrant background have contributed to these debates by voicing their opinion in the media and critically questioning the strict criteria to be seen as part of the imagined nation-community, as well as questioning essentialist ideas of what it means to be Norwegian (Eide 2018).

Integration through work

Activity in the public arena, such as employment and education, are widely acknowledged to be key aspects of integration by various societal stakeholders, and individual's achievements in these areas are suggested as indicators of successful integration (Ager & Strang, 2008). Employment is seen to be a factor that influences many other important aspects of integration such as developing language skills, meeting members of the host-society and promoting economic independence and self-reliance. Employment has increasingly been put forward as the most effective way to deal with the 'problem' of the integration of migrant women in the European overarching strategies for gendered integration and in Norwegian national policy documents (Farris 2017; Bjartnes & Sørensen, 2019). While Ager and Strang (2008) find it appropriate to include activity in the public arena in an operational definition of 'integration,' and encourage integration programmes to keep on working on these areas, they nevertheless, point out that it can be "problematic to see achievement in these areas purely as a 'marker' of integration" (p. 169). Because of the wide variations that exist among the population as a whole in income and employment, and educational experiences, it becomes challenging to define what actually constitutes 'successful integration' in these domains. Ager and Strang instead favour citizenship and rights as a foundation for understanding and measuring integration. This shift in focus brings into attention how the definitions of integration that are adopted by a nation depend upon the nation's sense of identity and its values (2008, pp. 174). The Scandinavian countries have favoured a social democratic citizenship model of citizenship. Birte Siim and Hege Skjeie (2004) argue that in the Scandinavian countries, "the social democratic 'worker paradigm' remained paramount, but within this paradigm a new understanding of gender relations has gradually been established" (p. 162), namely the notion of the dual-breadwinner. In these countries social rights "have been expanded to include the rights of working mothers; motherhood and care-giving have become part of political life; and there is a new emphasis on men as fathers and as parent–citizens" (2004, p. 163). Thus, the institutionalisation of gender equality policies, as well as women's increased participation in different societal arenas can be seen as central to the changed understandings of citizenship, and are thus highly likely to influence national understandings of integration. In the following section I engage with research that has addressed and problematised how discourses of work, citizenship and gender equality have been combined in the understanding of immigrant women's integration.

Femonationalism and the problematic use of 'gender equality' in integration policies

Sociologist Sara R. Farris finds that contemporary civic integration policies in several European countries are influenced by what she calls *femonationalism.* Femonationalism is short for "feminist and femocratic nationalism" (2017, p. 4) and aims to explain the convergences, but not necessarily alliances, between the rhetoric and practices of nationalists, feminists and neoliberals in Europe. Farris argues that European nationalist parties have increasingly exploited feminist themes of gender equality and gender justice as part of anti-Islam and anti-immigration campaigns. At the same time, certain feminists, femocrats[9] and women's movements have explicitly and implicitly contributed to the stigmatization of Muslim and immigrant women and men by participating in discourses that consider these people as belonging to a backward, misogynistic and patriarchal culture which is seen to be at odds with, and a threat to, western values such as gender equality and women's emancipation. Farris locates how in Italy, France and the Netherlands, the goal of integrating migrant women to the labour market has been inextricably related to goals of facilitating their emancipation. She argues that this goal originates in a particular interpretation of gender equality that understands work outside the household as that which 'sets women free', and employment of migrant women is seen as a measure to create equality between men and women in society. The relevance of Farris' concept of femonationalism and her analysis for this research is that it provides a critical lens to address both how the ideologies and the rhetoric of femonationalist politics can contribute to problematic notions of integration in policy and practice, and at the same time addresses how even well-intending, and also important and necessary parts of civic integration programmes are gendered and racialised in problematic ways. Farris argues that the feminist argument of embracing employment as a priority for migrant women "is still justified by concerns for women's economic autonomy and informed by a conception of work as a "right"" (2017, p. 123), however, there arises a problematic paradox when this notion of gender equality converges with the neoliberal notion of work as a "duty" for citizens, and as a requirement for the residence of noncitizens. Farris argues that this constellation has created a situation in these countries where efforts to tackle unemployment among migrant women systematically directs them towards sectors that face labour shortages, such as care work, cleaning and domestic work, rather than to sectors where they have education and/or work experience. In its convergence with neoliberalism, Farris argues, this perspective overlooks other ways of conceiving gender equality, such as in terms

[9] Farris refers to femocrats as "top-ranking bureaucrats in state gender equality agencies" (2017, p. 2).

of access to job opportunities, demands for public and free care services, guaranteed maternity and paternity leave etc.

To my knowledge, the question of whether femonationalism is present in Norway and Norwegian gendered integration policies, and how it operates in this national context, has not been subject of (feminist) scholarly investigation. However, critical feminist analyses of Norwegian gendered integration policies and Norwegian political discourses of integration have identified several problematic discursive moves regarding immigrant women that in certain ways, and to some extent, resemble the argument of Farris. Anita Røysum (2016) argues that the Nordic countries have taken a social citizenship approach to 'integration', whereby minorities should have equal opportunities, rights and duties to participate in common societal arenas as the majority population. Although the rights of minorities are formalized, there remains challenges to the integration and the position of migrant women in society, she argues. In her study of Norwegian policy documents concerning diversity and integration, Røysum finds that employment is seen as a "voluntary" duty for citizens as part of their duty to contribute to a socially just and gender equal society (2016, p. 151). 'Actual' gender equality, as proposed in the Norwegian policy documents, is women's economic independence, which is connected to the ideal of the dual-income/dual-carer welfare-state family model. This discourse of gender equality conceals a specific work discourse where the individual's duty to work in concealed as voluntary and a matter of choice. In this context, the lower participation of immigrant women in the labour market is seen as an 'unwillingness' to work and a sign of a "lower work-ethic" (2016, p. 157). The focus on work as a choice simplifies the perspective and removes from sight structural issues for lower employment rates as well as maintaining culturalized representations of immigrant women. Kristine Sommerset Bjartnes and Siri Øyslebø Sørensen (2019) find that in discourses of integration in the election manifestos of Norwegian political parties, gender equality is seen as not only a right, but also as a duty to participate in the Norwegian society and in the Norwegian working life. Gender equality is generally considered to be one of the most important values in the Norwegian society and it appears to be inextricably linked with participation in the working life. In this way, gender equality has been used as a rhetoric and tool to encourage minority and immigrant women to participate in the working life, but also to frame immigrant women as a problem for gender equality because of their lower activity in the labour market. Such an extensive focus on understanding gender equality in relation to integration becomes a problem because it is to a large extent defined by the majority's perspective, and intersectionality is seen an issue primarily concerning minority women. This

results in a situation where the specific Norwegian form of gender equality – both as value and practice – is a prerequisite for the successful integration of immigrants. Bjartnes and Sørensen argue that this signalizes a lack of cultural recognition and acceptance and equal respect for immigrant women, and that it creates a public discourse without room "for alternative understandings of what gender equality can be understood as in the context of integration" (2019, p. 209, my translation).[10]

Trine Annfelt and Berit Gullikstad (2013) have also criticised the way that gender equality is operationalised in the service of inclusion in Norweigan policitial policies, for overlooking intersectionality and multi-dimensionality, creating "parallel politics" for majority and minority women (p. 316). They find several problematic representations of immigrant women on the theme of work and in the ways that the rhetoric of gender equality has been used to promote the integration of immigrant women. On the one hand, there is an influence of culturalization where the lower labour market participation among non-western women is connected to the group's assumed negative attitudes and values of women's employment, which calls for measures to be taken to include immigrant women in the labour market. On the other hand, immigrant women's integration to work is represented as solutions to other problems, such as reducing poverty, increasing social-economic equality, gender equality and improving women's economic independence, as well as becoming better mothers so that they contribute to the creation of "good citizens" (2013, p. 318). Although language skills and lower levels of education are seen as barriers to women's work integration, Annfelt and Gullikstad argue that there is no doubt that their traditions and culture are perceived as significant barriers. Because of a lack of an intersectional understanding of gender which takes into account the differences that exist between women (and between men), the image of the non-western migrant woman is constituted as the 'other', defined in terms of patriarchy, submission and cultural traditions (Annfelt & Gullikstad, 2003). The problem is that a universal approach to gender categories in political and public discourses, is based on the majority and overlooks the complexities and differences within the categories, and results in the creation of two parallel politics for majority and minority women. Ultimately, this is problematic because a politics of gender equality that assumes 'universal' categories of gender, contributes to maintain problematic stereotypes of immigrant women, and can in fact promote an assimilationist politics and work

10 Original full quote: «Det åpnes imidlertid ikke for alternative forståelser av hva likestilling kan forstås som i kontekst av integrering."

against the inclusion of minority women (Annfelt & Gullikstad, 2003; Bjartnes & Sørensen, 2019).

The perception of gender equality in Norwegian discourses and politics has for a long time been connected to work and education (Røysum, 2013, p. 323). Despite much socialist feminist efforts over the past decades that have addressed the devaluation of housework and reproductive labour at home (Weeks, 2007; Oksala, 2016), it is seemingly still supposed that this kind of work is unproductive and less valuable than paid work outside of the home. Farris is critical of the prominence of this one feminist perspective in influencing European gendered integration. First of all, it contributes to the 'othering' and 'victimizing' of non-western migrant women who need to be saved from the domestic sphere, through "tacitly encourag[ing] them to adopt western feminists' notion of emancipation through productive labour" (2017, p. 139). Second, the logic of this feminist emancipatory notion was created in Fordist times, a time very different from the "increasingly unequal social setting" of post-Fordist neoliberal work society, and she argues that it's use in this context overshadows the needs of other dimensions of gender integration, such as giving attention to the social-economic, the cultural and the political spheres. The notion of emancipation through participation in production is especially problematic when it is used together with neoliberalist arguments "to push migrant women into social reproduction" (2017, p. 131). This brings Farris to how the implementation of gendered civic integration policies is increasingly relegating these women to highly gendered and racialised labour markets, and the sphere of social reproduction, which feminists ultimately sought to leave behind.

Non-western migrant women and social reproductive work

Farris argues that the European strategy for increasing the employment of non-western migrant women has been to direct them towards sectors that face labour shortages; those sectors and jobs which the majority population do not favour; low-skilled jobs; such as housekeeping, cleaning, nursing, and other care work (Farris 2017, p. 128). Despite migrants having higher level of education and work experience, they are "systematically challenged toward the social productive sectors", where wages are low, and the work less valued and/or stigmatized socially. This echoes Anthias and Pajnik's (2014) argument about the European Janus-faced approach to integration, whereby on the one hand attempts are made at 'including' non-western migrant women into the national workforce, yet overall, limiting them to the sphere of social reproduction. Mulinari and Lundqvist (2017) find in their

analysis of Swedish welfare policies that since the early 2000s, migrant women have been increasingly considered well-suited domestic workers (2017, p. 134). In this context it is important to acknowledge, as highlighted by Anthias, Cederberg, Barger and Ayres (2013), that there is a high diversity and variety among the jobs that female migrants do, while structurally, "they are disproportionately represented in sectors of the labour market that display high levels of insecurity and instability and which primarily involve low-paid, low-status jobs" (Anthias et al., 2013, p. 43). In the European labour market this has resulted in the creation of "ethnic niche sectors" that are primarily dominated by non-majority ethnic groups. In respect to the argument of work as integration, Anthias et al. question how this reality affects the opportunities for migrant women to learn and use the majority language at work (Anthias et al. 2013, p. 45). Although the authors maintain that incorporation to and participation in the labour market is an important factor for the social integration of migrants more generally, they problematise the focus on integration through work alone as being "sufficient for enabling social integration" (Anthias et al., 2013, p. 55). The types of work that migrants are incorporated into play a major role in defining how work can improve, encourage and contribute to civic integration. If the work type is characterised by experiences of marginality, insecurity, exploitation and discrimination, they will be less likely promote social integration. For instance, research from Canada (Hopkins, 2017) found that Filipino migrant women working in the domestic sphere who worked alone experienced feelings of isolation and were unsatisfied with their ability to integrate to the dominant society because of their work form and the ethnic homogeneity of the workforce. For these women, participation in faith-based communities served as a more important arena for socialisation and integration than the workplace did. This current situation calls for an examination into the work that immigrant women do, and want to do, and the potentials and limits to their work participation in facilitating integration.

Complexifying work and integration

Women's integration to the labour market has been central to women's emancipation since the second wave feminist movement in the 1970's and 1980's. These feminist interventions played an important role in expanding the conceptions of work to include unpaid reproductive and care work often performed in the domestic sphere, and to redefine the relations between gender and work (Weeks, 2007, p. 235). This notion of gender equality has had a strong influence in the Scandinavian countries, and it has also been accompanied by an

attention to advancing women's social rights and political representation. For instance, in the Scandinavian countries, women's integration to employment was accompanied by an expansion in public childcare provision and by the idea of the dual-breadwinner family (Siim & Skjeie, 2004, p. 162). More recently the dominant family model has been conceptualised as the 'dual-income/dual-carer family' to address the equal role of women and men as breadwinners and caretakers. Kathi Weeks (2007) argues that the elaboration and valuation of reproductive labour has been important for feminist struggles, however, she argues that for articulating a feminist politics that can respond to labour under the current capitalism it is necessary to eradicate the distinctions between between productive and unproductive labor, and material vs. social (re)production. Rather than 'production' and 'reproduction' she proposes to use the concepts of work and life. This implies a move from ideas of separate sites to an understanding of work and life as "thoroughly interpenetrated", though not "indistinguishable" (2007, p. 245). Weeks argues that the concept of life can be more a capacious and expansive category than reproduction, because "it does not risk corralling the practices constitutive of social life into the space of the household or, even more narrowly, equate them with the institution of the family" (2007, p. 245). While Weeks' theory is less explicitly capable of pointing out "the gender hierarchies and divisions of labor within both work and life" (2007, p. 247)—a limitation which she herself acknowledges and has been criticised for by others (Oksala, 2016)—her theory is still relevant for a critical feminist engagement with work in two ways. First, 'work and life' can help us ask questions of the status and organisation of (gendered) work in current societies, such as where the boundaries between work and life go in practices of unwaged care work. This is necessary for problematising the continued gendered division of labour, and for distinguishing between the different forms of affective labour, for example the gendered nature of certain forms of reproductive labour, as argued by Johanna Oksala (2016). Second, Weeks' theory changes our questions about subject formation. Rather than taking gender identity as a basis for identities, we need to move away from asking how identities are produced by the work people do, towards a vision of what subjects could become and focus on the "collectively imagined visions of what we want to be or to do" (Weeks, 2007, p. 248). These shifts can help to question the relations between work and citizenship and enable us to ask questions about immigrants' experiences of integration through work with a special focus on their own desires for the work they want to do. Perhaps this can bring us further towards complexifying the relation between work and integration, to find alternative perceptions. Oksala's argument to examine how affective labour continues to be divided by gender, and Week's argument of

questioning of the relations between work and life and the production of subjectivity, have been formative in my conviction about the relevance of rethinking the way that the central feminist argument of women's employment as emancipation, as the defining marker of gender equality, is deployed, and especially its role in reinforcing exclusive and normative models of gender, when it is deployed in the service of immigrant women's inclusion.

Discourses of needs and needs interpretation

Immigrant women are subject to various discourses, in policies, politics, public debates, and research, to discourses in social movements and among groups that are marginalized in public and politic debate. The question of 'who' is speaking for or about 'whom' is relevant for understanding the ways that immigrant women are understood within different discourses, because the definitional power over definition varies among these discourses. Moreover, the power and prominence of the places wherein these discourses circulate, be it in the public and political domain, or amongst oppositional groups and communities marginalized in public debate. For instance, political documents are powerful in the sense that they are political instruments of control as well as powerful vessels for widespread interpretations of reality (Annfelt & Gullikstad, 2013). As such they have a certain power over the interpretations of reality that exist in society at any time, and also the power to disrupt or enhance certain understandings of reality. While they influence the understandings of others, from politicians to citizens, they are also influenced by other dominating narratives and discourses in society. Fraser's (1989) theory about the interpretation of needs gives insight into the mechanisms of power at play in the politics of people's needs interpretation and how they become object of politics and administration – or regarded as domestic and private matters. Fraser argues that, rather than being given, people's needs are discursive interpretations which can be both emancipatory and repressive (1989, p. 313). 'Needs-talk' has become a dominant "medium for the making and contesting of political claims" (1989, p. 291) and has become institutionalised as a major vocabulary of political discourse in welfare states, co-existing, often uneasily, with discourses about rights and interests. By focusing on the contested discourses in 'needs-talk', we can pay attention to the political nature of defining needs, and the various actors, organisations and discourses involved in the political processes of establishing the political significance of a given need (Fawcett, 2010, p. 29). Focus on 'needs-talk' also brings into focus how the discursive interpretation of needs are always a site of struggle, a struggle to satisfy needs, and which ways needs should be satisfied in the first

place. Various groups interpret and lay claim to the interpretations of needs in order to politicize them and turn them into administrable needs and objects of state interventions. There are also oppositional discourses and "reprivatisation" discourses that aim to de-politicize people's needs and turn them into issues in the realm of the domestic and the personal. The culturalization of immigrant women that happens in policy and political discourses can be seen as an example of this. Fraser identifies various actors that interpret needs in social field. For instance, the various agencies constituting the social state which are "engaged in regulating and/or funding and/or providing for the satisfaction of social needs" (1989, p. 302) participate in both the satisfaction and the interpretation of needs. These are what Fraser terms "experts", and they interpret needs from 'above'. Expert discourses are often restricted to specialized publics, and include bureaucrats, professionals, and also at times members of social movements. The role of expert needs interpretations is to 'solve problems'; their needs interpretations become objects of policy discourses and are "vehicles for translating sufficiently politicized runaway needs into objects of potential state intervention" (1989, p. 306).

According to Fraser, expert needs discourses tend to be administrative, and the translation of politicized needs into administrable needs tends to be depoliticizing. People whose needs are in question become rendered passive, positioned as potential recipients of predefined services rather than as agents involved in interpreting their needs and sharing their life conditions" (1989, p. 307). However, in some cases the expert vocabularies and rhetoric spread to participants of social movements, which at times are able to "co-opt or create critical, oppositional segments of expert discourse publics" (1989, p. 306). Social workers, as professionals, can be seen as part of defining expert discourses. As social workers they may have closer ties with the experiences of the groups of people they work with, but their needs interpretations can, at the same time, also be in favour of the more dominant interpretations. Their position in the discursive field can be understood as "the *bridge* discourses linking loosely organized social movements with the social state" (1989, p. 306).

The interpretation of needs must be understood in relation to the ambiguous nature of welfare provision (Waaldijk, 2007). Feminist historian Berteke Waaldijk argues that while "[s]ocial support for the poor, the sick and the needy has not only helped to emancipate citizens, it has also been used to discipline populations" (2007, p. 15). Welfare provisions have especially functioned to discipline populations in terms of racial and ethnic discrimination, as well as forcing people to conform to specific family patterns and contributed to the stigmatization to those who do not conform, which ultimately plays a role

in constructing "both dependent and free citizens" (2007, p. 15). This situation has meant that, historically, social workers have been in a unique position where they have "often contributed to the dialogue over the needs of the poor and attitudes to those in need." (2007, p. 15). Combining insights from Waaldijk and Fraser can contribute to understand how social workers, as providers of welfare, work in an ambiguous position between the state and their clients, where they must negotiate between the professional expert discourses and alternative interpretations in favour of more inclusive understandings of their clients' needs. The 'expert' need interpretations of social workers can therefore be both potentially disciplining and emancipatory.

Rethinking integration and transnational belongings

Ruth Lister's (2005) work on rethinking citizenship in feminist terms can help perhaps help us to rethink integration. In many instances integration and citizenship are connected, where integration is seen as part of the process towards officially recognized citizenship. I have previously mentioned the hegemonic idea of the citizen as the worker, and women's integration to work as part of their process to gain status as equal citizens. But we might also think about other forms of belonging to a community or a nation through various practices of participation and integration. Lister's rethinking, which focuses on practices and acts as a citizen rather than status of citizenship, can play an important role in challenging the construction of women and especially minority women as passive victims, either of a 'backward' culture, or as victims of discriminatory policies and societies. An important aspect of acting and *participation* as a citizen, is that this is not to be understood as an obligation, as this could potentially create different, but still constraining ideals for which women are measured by, and which many women may not be able to meet, for instance because of their domestic responsibilities, chronical illnesses or disabilities (2005, p. 20). Lister argues: "To act as a citizen involves fulfilling the potential of the status. Those who do not fulfil the potential do not cease to be citizens" (2005, p. 20). Seeing the links between integration and citizenship, in terms of belonging and participation, I would like to borrow and extend this argument to think about ways in which integration can become possible through forms of participation in society—both on the local, global, transnational level as well as working against the private/public distinction—without creating an obligation to work outside of the home in order to become an 'integrated' member of society. What these forms of participation and acts might be, is something that can be traced in the narratives of

immigrant women's and refugee consultants' narratives of integration. The point is not to underemphasise that work outside of the home can be a site where immigrant women achieve integration and experience belonging. It is important to underline that a many immigrant women want to work, or to work more hours than they do today. But in addition to shed light on and critically investigate the ways in which non-western migrant women are encouraged to work, and the motives and ideologies behind it, we must look for the alternative narratives that arise, and trace the acts and practices beyond work that are important for their integration and feelings of citizenship.

Another fruitful way to rethink integration is through employing a transnational lens as a corrective to the nation-based focus on integration (Anthias, Morokvasic-Müller & Kontos, 2013). A transnational lens can enhance our understanding of migrant's experiences beyond issues of exclusion and struggle, by focusing on ways in which migrants live transnational lives, which could be a source of strength and agency. This approach contrasts conventional ideas about integration or assimilation that takes a dualist approach by distinguishing between locations and life before/after migration. The concept of transnational lives refers to how migrants have multiple, transnational belongings and orientations: "towards the society of origin and towards the society or societies of residence as well as to diasporic communities across borders" (Anthias, Morokvasic-Müller & Kontos, 2013, p. 7). This takes into account the ways in which practices of sociality, family life, and economy, span across national borders but also within different segments of one nation, such as between majority society and local diasporic communities. Furthermore, this approach also enables us to have a broader frame relating to power and agency (Anthias 2013, p. 27), wherein we can recognize the multiple class and societal positions that migrants may hold. These can be different both within and across national borders and communities, for example having a job considered low status by the majority population yet holding a higher position within the local diasporic community or in the society in the country of origin. There is a wide-spread assumption that maintaining links and "practicing symbolic of physical 'return' to the country of origin would be an obstacle to the integration of the individual", however Anthias et al. point out that several research projects have found that transnational links can be an advantage to the integration of migrants, as well as serve as a resource for dealing with marginalisation and barriers of social mobility (2013, p. 7-8). For this research, I argue that a transnational lens can be helpful to highlight to what extent the tropes of integration rely on a nation-based or a transnational approach to integration. For example, the creation of the migrant women as 'other' in integration policies, clearly relies on a dualist, nation-based

approach. But perhaps more importantly, this lens can be used to address the ways in which migrant women approach integration, contra these approaches. For example, how do migrant women navigate their transnational locations and belongings, and how do they rely on it for their integration? How are their transnational belongings reflected in their approaches to work? By applying a transnational lens, I am interested in seeing how it can give insight to how perspectives on work, gender-roles and integration are influenced by transnational belongings. For example, how ideas of work change, become influenced by ideas and values from various locationalities and temporalities—not necessarily only in terms of discarding old opinions and views, but in terms of how they draw on different ideas and values to create their own transnational view. This can address in which ways migrant women deal with differing or contradicting ideas of work that exist in their multiple locations, but also the commonalities they experience between cultures of location, and how they form their ideas of integration and work. Thus, in order to not only problematise the use of arguments of gender equality for immigrant women's integration to work, but also move towards bringing alternative interpretations and discourses into view, it is necessary to listen to the perspectives and experiences of immigrant women themselves.

Integration and participation in the working life

Introduction

In the theoretical chapter I discussed how the concept of integration has been understood within the boundaries of the nation state within European discourses (Anthias & Pajnik, 2014). For example, critical scholars have pointed out that in Europe, immigrants' adaption to certain national values and practices have been considered important markers of successful or failed integration, such as the adoption of western notions of gender equality (Farris, 2017). To a large degree, in European national integration policies integration has been seen as the responsibility of the migrant to adapt and, more or less, assimilate to the dominant social and national context (Athnias & Pajnik 2014). Participation in the working life has been understood as the primary way for immigrants, and especially non-western immigrant women, to achieve integration (Farris, 2017; Bjartnes & Sørensen, 2019). Immigrant women's lack of participation in the working life has subsequently been defined as a problem as well as immigrant women as a group have been seen as a problem. In Norwegian policies and political discourse immigrant women's participation in the working life is seen as necessary for achieving overall gender equality in society (Annfelt & Gullikstad, 2013; Bjartnes & Sørensen, 2019) and that the idea of the dual-earner/dual-carer family model is seen as the marker of gender equality that immigrants need to adapt to in order to be accepted as integrated (Røysum, 2016). In the theoretical chapter I referred to scholars that have questioned the ways in which discourses of integration and gender equality couple the need to work with the need to integrate in problematic ways. In this chapter I analyse the narratives in which social workers and immigrant women make connections between participation in the working life and integration, and critically address how they participate in reproducing dominant narratives as well as instances where these narratives are resisted or modified. Fraser argues that needs claims "tend to be nested, connected to one another in ramified chains of "in-order-to" relations" (1989, p. 293). If the discursive relation between employment and integration is understood as a need interpretation (i.e. immigrant women need to be employed in-order-to integrate), analysing this interpretation and contesting need interpretations entails asking how the narratives establish both the 'why' and 'what' of these relations. I find that the relations between integration and work are established both through dominant and non-dominant narratives, and that they are to some extent modified and contested by immigrant women and social workers. I also find that by employing a

transnational lens to the research, it becomes clear how the nation-based understanding of integration is contested through the narratives of the immigrants that I interviewed.

Interpreting integration

In the narratives of the immigrant women I interviewed, integration is interpreted as a central *need* in order to have a satisfactory social life, and to participate in work and society more broadly. The participants who had an immigrant background tended to stress the need to acquire skills and knowledge of Norwegian culture and society, social capital, in order to participate in society. Acquiring knowledge of the Norwegian language is seen as essential to integration for all immigrants who were interviewed, and some consider learning the language alone as sufficient to integrate. One of the study's participants, Nora, who is an immigrant woman in her early 30s and has lived in Norway for a decade, stresses: "I think it is enough, to be integrated, simply that you know the language."[11] For her, language was a key to get to know people and make friends as a means to integrate. The centrality of language for integration is its role as a key to pursue other practices and strategies of integration, such as attending school, finding work and having a social life. In turn, participation in the working life and socialising with Norwegians were seen as ways to further improve their language skills. At the same time, several of them talk about 'other immigrants'—imagined and real—who do not learn the language sufficiently as less integrated.

The social workers that I interviewed also emphasise the need for immigrants to acquire social capital such as language and cultural-specific social skills to integrate. Furthermore, they stress the role and responsibility of the majority society to make an explicit effort to facilitate the integration of immigrants through respecting the differences of others and to accepting them as equals. While this interpretation stays within the nation-based understanding of integration, which is often found in European public discourses, it shifts the responsibility of integration from the immigrants to a shared effort between minority and majority groups. This understanding understands integration as a two-way process that relies on a willingness of both the majority and the minority group to make certain adaptions and understandings of each other, to live together in society.

'Integration' is a word which some of the social workers have an ambivalent relationship to because of the ways it is often used as 'assimilation' in broader societal or

[11] Original quote: "Jeg synes det er nok å være integrert, rett og slett, at du kan språket."

everyday discourses. Anne, who works as a Norwegian social worker, explains that she prefers to use the word interaction,[12] rather than integration in her daily practice, because for her, "integration is a shared effort from everyone. Whether you are from here or from another country, it is a collaboration together with the entire population to ensure that everyone should be fine".[13] Social worker Mari expresses a similar view and emphasises that the dominant society's understanding of integration often fails to take into account the immigrants' feeling of having achieved integration: "Someone can say that another one is integrated, while that other one needs to feel that they are integrated. (…) So, in the end, who has the definition right over who is integrated and not, is a perspective that is often difficult for those with a minority background. It is not always easy to be accepted as integrated, even though they themselves have a feeling of doing well, wanting the country well, and managing well".[14] In this way, the social workers are questioning who has the definitional power over defining integration, and how the dominating interpretations are not necessarily inclusive of neither the immigrant's self-perceptions of their integration nor of the social workers experiences of what integration means. A two-way approach is emphasised as a preferable understanding of integration because it—at least achieves to—take into account the experiences and definitions of integration from more than one group. Their ambivalence towards the concept 'integration' as it is used in certain public and assimilationist discourses is related to their valuation of integration as a two-way process, which involves crucial elements that an assimilationist approach does not take into account. In the quote above we can see how the social worker explicitly takes on the perspective of her clients in order to resist oppressive and exclusive public narratives of immigrants that expect assimilation. Furthermore, in her narrative, the practice of both listening to her clients and to voices from other positions in society, plays a role in constituting her subjectivity as a social worker, situated between representing her clients and the state.

[12] Norwegian: 'samhandling'.
[13] Original quote: «Integrering for meg er jo en felles innsats fra alle, om du er herfra eller om du er fra et annet land, så er det jo et samarbeid i lag med hele befolkningen, for at alle skal ha det greit.»
[14] Original quote: «Noen skal si at noen er integrert og noen skal føle at de er integrert. (...) Så hvem er det til syvende og sist som får defineringsrett over hvem som er integrert og ikke. Det er et perspektiv som møter de med minoritetsbakgrunn at det ikke alltid er så lett å bli akseptert som integrert når du selv gjerne har en forståelse av deg selv som at du selv har gjort det godt, og vil bare landet vel, og klarer deg greit.»

Navigating cultures and norms transnationally

During the interviews the immigrants that I interviewed discussed both integration strategies and strategies for creating their idea of a good life. They separated these two concepts and strategies. While integration was related to learning the language and about culture and society, and building social networks, creating a good life was about and having a good mental and physical health, maintaining social ties locally and transnationally, and participating in society, which can be seen as related to their sense of belonging. Some of the immigrant participants highlighted that both understanding the culture, norms and social codes, and practicing those defines them as integrated. Didier came to Norway as a refugee as a young adult and has chosen to use his experiences to facilitate the integration of other refugees in Norway as a social worker. In his understanding of integration, he emphasises that learning social and cultural codes and practices are necessary to communicate with Norwegians, both in formal and informal settings. The act of making Norwegian friends is perceived as a defining feature of his own integration to Norwegian society. Eva, an immigrant woman who has lived in Norway for over thirty years, explains that following the culture and rules of Norway makes her feel integrated. She finds it important to follow the culture of the country that she now lives in, and only maintain smaller elements of her home country in her daily life. At the same time, she expresses a continuous longing for her home country. The annual, month-long returns to her home country to visit family and friends have been imperative for creating, in her definition, a good life: "My home country, I am very connected to it. Before we only went once a year, and for eleven months I was looking forward to going there for the summer. And now… with this Coronavirus, all the time I think about when it will be over, and if I can't travel this summer… So, it is… yeah… I miss it".[15] Eva's story reflects the argument of Anthias (2013) that maintaining relations with the home country and practicing both physical and symbolic returns to the home country—such as practices that are oriented towards the home country's culture, traditions and diasporic communities—can play an important role in creating a good life in the new country. For example, longing for the next trip home would be a source of motivation to work and save up the money to afford to travel, and she also details an instance of travelling home as part of a strategy to recover from an injury at work. Eva's narrative suggests that living transnational

[15] Original quote: «Hjemlandet mitt, jeg er veldig knyttet til det. Før reiste vi kun en gang i året, om sommeren. Jeg levde elleve måneder med å glede seg til å reise til sommeren. Og så nå det er, helt like dager alle dager med dette Koronaviruset, og har hele tiden den tanken om når det skal bli ferdig, og om jeg aldri klarer å reise til sommeren.. så det er... jeg savner det.»

lives and having transnational belongings is important for immigrants and for their commitment to participate in the different societies that they belong to. This counters the idea that maintaining links with the home country is an obstacle to integration (Anthias, Morokvasic-Müller & Kontos, 2013). While learning and adapting to Norwegian culture is understood as central to integration, the immigrants make use of strategies to combine elements and connections with both countries and cultures in their lives, which is seen as central to the creation of a good life in Norway.

Creating a balance between adopting Norwegian culture and traditions and those of their home country are present in the two other immigrant women's narratives of reproduction. When discussing the upbringing of children, two of the immigrant women employ a 'best of both worlds' narrative and emphasise striving towards having a 50/50 balance of the two cultures and languages. Nora describes how she balances this very concretely between the private and the public sphere: "I don't take any consideration to Norwegian culture when I am at home because it is important that I teach my children my mother tongue, so that they become more confident and stronger, and the women and men that work at kindergarten and school will teach them the important things that Norwegian children have."[16] As work by other scholars has shown, maintaining connections, practices and traditions from the home country, and/or incorporating them together with practices in the host country, is part of integration strategies of migrants living transnational lives. Studies have shown that participation in diasporic communities can play an important role for integration and the creation of a good life in the host country (Hopkins, 2017). Some scholars have pointed out that such participation can sometimes be experienced as constraining, especially for subjects who wish to leave behind certain aspects of their home country's culture or tradition that they experienced as negative (Anthias, Cederberg, Barber & Ayres, 2013). A certain rejection of the home country is present in Hiwet's practice of integration and she keeps a certain distance from the diasporic community. She explains that she has a very busy life and does not have much time to socialise, but she also experiences that certain people in the diasporic community hold on to misogynistic ideas of women, and she disagrees with the political opinions of those who support the political regime of her home country. Nevertheless, she considers it a cultural obligation to participate in the diasporic

[16] Original quote: «Jeg tar ikke noe hensyn til norsk kultur når jeg er hjemme, fordi det er jo viktig at jeg lærer mine barn mitt morsmål, for da blir de mye mer trygge, mye sterkere, og mye mer sånn. Og at damene i barnehagene, og mennene som jobber i barnehagen, eller skolen senere, de lærer dem de viktige tingene som norske barn har.»

community to socially support one another for bigger life events, such as attending weddings, and visiting people who have had a baby, or lost a family member. Maintaining contact with the diasporic community is also important for her to speak and discuss topics in her own language, because here she experiences a shared frame of reference and she feels she can express herself better in her own language. The stories of the immigrant women express how maintaining ties with the home country or with the diasporic community can be central practices for creating a good life in the host country. However, their stories also show how some experience ambivalence and maintain a certain distance towards the home country or the diasporic community, especially with regards to distancing themselves from specific values or traditions, as part of their integration to Norwegian society. This finding suggests the necessity to reflect upon the relevance of listening to personal narratives, because it allows us to see the nuances, diversities and different routes that immigrants take regarding their transnational connections and transnational lives, and the ambivalent meanings of these connections.

Work and integration

In political and policy discourses, work has been put forward as the means for immigrant women to integrate into society not only in Norway, but also generally across Europe. In the chapter "Theories of integration, immigrant women and work" I referred to scholars who have pointed out problematic aspects of this discursive relation between work and integration, such as it being founded in western ideas of women's emancipation through work and the need for immigrant women to work in order to become emancipated and thus integrated (Annfelt & Gullikstad, 2013; Røysum, 2016; Farris, 2017; Bjartnes & Sørensen, 2019). In the Norwegian context, gender equality discourses are prominent in political arguments about the necessity for immigrant women to participate in work. Norwegian scholars have also questioned whether the need to participate in the working life is concealing other motives, such as the need for immigrant women to achieve 'gender equality' (Annfelt & Gullikstad, 2013) and that these arguments conceal an idea that immigrant women have a low work ethic (Røysum, 2016). These discourses contribute to a culturalization and othering of immigrant women as problems because of their assumed traditional gender roles and unwillingness to work. By locating the immigrant woman as the 'problem' they contribute to re-privatize immigrant women's needs to integrate into domestic or individual issues rather than a concern related to, for instance, an absence of intersectional

politics. In this section I will analyse the ways that the 'in-order-to' relations between participation in the working life and immigrant women's integration are narratively constituted.

Narrative I: Work as the binding element between immigrants and the Norwegian society

Participation in the working life is considered a crucial act of participation and integration to Norwegian society by the immigrant women and by the social workers. This necessary relation between work and integration is established first and foremost through a narrative where the workplace is seen as the primary arena of socialization in the Norwegian society, an arena where immigrants can learn about culture and cultural codes, make friends and gain a supportive network. Social worker Mia explains that it is hard to socialise and build a social network with Norwegians in other spheres in the Norwegian society, such as with neighbours or by meeting other parents at children's activities: "I think that getting a network [through the workplace] that can help you is important. You get colleagues that can help you, who can give you a ride somewhere if you need it."[17] Work is in this sense considered important in order to meet the needs of informal social security networks. It especially highlights the need to have *Norwegian* colleagues to integrate. Didier sees work as very important for integration because "[w]ork connects immigrants and the Norwegian society. It helps you to acquire knowledge, get a network and friends, that can further help you to integrate into the Norwegian society and to do things together. And learn cultural codes, or how Norwegians behave, so that they can learn from Norwegians."[18] The immigrant women also draw on this narrative to explain how working satisfies some of their social needs.

Anthias, Cederberg, Barger and Ayres (2013) have argued that work can provide a great social arena for learning the language and creating a social life, however they question how the types of work that immigrants often perform are characterized by elements that are less likely to promote integration, such as highly ethnicized working sectors and experiences of marginality at work. Hopkins (2017) has argued that the specific field of care and reproductive labour is often characterized by these types of work, such as individual work in domestic sphere. The immigrant women slightly modify the narrative about the working life

[17] Original quote: «Sånn at jeg tenker at det å få, på en måte, et nettverk som kan hjelpe deg, som på en måte får kolleger som kan hjelpe med å kjøre hit og dit hvis man trenger det.»
[18] Original quote: «Jobb kobler jo innvandrere og det norske samfunnet. Det hjelper deg for å få kunnskap, og nettverk og venner, som er jo, som kan hjelpe dem med å gjøre dem integrert i det norske samfunnet, og å gjøre noe sammen. Og lærer dem også de kulturelle kodene, for eksempel. Eller hvordan nordmenn oppfører seg, sånn at de også kan lære av nordmenn, da.»

as a social arena to question *how* and *when* it can promote integration. For instance, some experience that not all working conditions are capable of providing socialisation and a social network. Eva tells me about her experience working at factory where the majority of her colleagues were from the same non-Norwegian language group. She experienced feeling socially marginalized, because her colleagues made less of an effort to socialise in Norwegian. She was much more satisfied when working at another factory with a multi-ethnic group where Norwegian was the common language, and she improved her language skills through socialization at work. Similarly, Hiwet tells me that she finds her current work in a multi-ethnic working environment more enjoyable than previous jobs in predominantly Norwegian workplaces, and she feels more included at her current job than when she is among predominantly Norwegian students at school. In their narratives, the conditions of the workplace—here multi-ethnic workplaces—play a role in defining the ability for work to contribute to socialisation, learning the language and building a social network.

In the narrative of working life as the primary arena for socialisation, immigrants who do not work are followingly considered less socially integrated. Social worker Anne explains that, in her experience, those with a stronger affiliation with the Norwegian labour market are more integrated than those who don't, because of the fundamental character of work for socialisation: "I think that our society is built upon work and that all parties shall work. We don't have so much everyday life here with people meeting at the playing grounds or the likes. Our everyday lives are tied to people being at work."[19] This excerpt also shows how the narrative of the workplace is connected to ideas of how the welfare state is structured around the model of the dual-income/dual-carer family. This is not surprising, as Weeks (2011) has argued that the narrative of the welfare state is bound up in the long-held narrative of the working society in Western European countries. In Anne's narrative she is explicit about the role of the Norwegian, gender-equal, welfare state model to explain the importance of participating in the working life for immigrant women: "With regards to women in the working life, I think that the whole Norwegian society is built upon the welfare society where all women and men should work. So, it is about the whole welfare model..."[20] and about participating in the Norwegian working life. The narrative of the welfare state society here implies the values of contributing to the state—and implicitly the society—through work and

[19] Original quote: «Og det tror jeg har veldig mye med at samfunnet vårt er så mye bygget opp på arbeid og at alle parter skal jobbe. Det er jo ikke så mye hverdagsliv her med folk som samles på lekeplassene eller noe sånt. Så mye av vårt hverdagsliv er bundet opp for at folk er på jobb."
[20] Original quote: "I forbindelse med kvinner i arbeidslivet, jeg tenker at hele det norske samfunnet er bygd opp som et velferdssamfunn hvor alle kvinner og menn skal jobbe. Så, det er jo hele den velferdsmodellen.»

taxes, as well as referring to how the gender-equal welfare state relies on the 'dual-worker, dual-carer' family for its existence. Anita Røysum argues that in the Norwegian integration policy discourse, the narrative of the work society is used to argue that not only do immigrant women need to participate in work and gender equality, but it is their 'voluntary duty' to do so. This notion has a moral undertone that sees economic dependence as negative for the social cohesion of the national community (Røysum, 2016, p. 151-152). In the narrative about work used by the social workers, immigrant women's reliance on social and economic benefits instead of participation in paid work could entail seeing them as a threat to the welfare society, although this is not explicitly articulated in the interviews. Through the narrative of the sociality of work, and of the necessity to contribute to the welfare state, the need to work becomes extremely linked with the need to socially integrate. Integration is seen as possible through the route of employment precisely because the working life is considered to be the main field of sociality, where socialization and social life happens.

Narrative II: Immigrant women's need for independence

Another prominent narrative that highlights the relation between work and integration is the narrative that immigrant women need to work to be independent. This narrative is rooted in specific notions of gender equality, the working society, and related narratives of individualism. In her analysis of Norwegian integration policy, Røysum (2016) finds an interpretation that immigrant women need to work in order to become emancipated and equal to men, and thus their need for gender equality. Moreover, this is connected to the idea that they need to become more 'Norwegian' (Røysum, 2016, p. 157). Scholarship that has addressed narrative tropes of integration and the relations between integration and work, which were detailed in the theory chapter, have highlighted the problematic aspects of the connection between immigrant women's employment as necessary for their emancipation, and by extension of this, their integration as equally 'emancipated' to majority women. Immigrant women's need for independence is a recurring narrative in the interviews and it takes on different tropes, such as immigrant women's need for independence from state support and from men, and the individualist notion of self-realisation through work.

When I ask Eva about the importance of employment for her integration, she emphasizes that the most important aspect of her labour market participation has been to give her and her family economic independence through not having to rely on the state for support. In this sense employment is primarily seen to address the need of economic

independence, before the need of social life. Economic independence from the welfare state is highly valued in her narrative, and it also considered as necessary for her integration because it is a sign of her adherence to the norms and ways of living like an 'ideal' Norwegian, such as adhering to the dual-income/dual-earner family model. Hiwet focuses on how her economic independence through work gives her freedom and independence as a woman, which she could not have in her home country. She explains that in her home country she had few opportunities to access education or work due to the political situation, and the lack of opportunities for women outside of the domestic sphere, which was one of several reasons for her to migrate. She sees the opportunity to work in Norway as giving her independence from being under the control of a man. "[In my home country] you are dependent on a man. It means you are subject to him. (…) But if you have a job. (…) It means you have your own thought. You can go to things that you like, and you can buy a lot of things, have many opinions, and make them heard. You have money really."[21] In this narrative economic independence is crucial to Hiwet's independence from men, to be free as an equal, and to enact her fundamental rights. She is furthermore critical to other women from her home country who enact, what she considers, traditional and out-dated gender roles as hindering their integration and independence to participate in society. She explains:

> "Some people have the identity that they look after children and they look after their husband. Just like you had in the olden days in Norway, right? I have been to see the 'A Doll's House' at the theatre. And I have read the book 'A Doll's House' by Ibsen.[22] Some women, they bring these ideas, they use them in Norway, in the exact same way. So, they can't go out, for example, to drink coffee. They can't go out to meet people. Integration for women with husbands and children becomes difficult compared to someone who lives alone."[23]

[21] Original quote: "Du er avhengig av en mann, det betyr sånn, du er under en mann. (...) Men hvis du har jobb. (...) Det betyr, på din egen tanke. Du kan jo gå på noen ting, du kan kjøpe, du kan gjøre masse ting, ha mange meninger, og høre deg. Du har jo penger egentlig.»

[22] A Doll's House is a canonical and iconic play written by the Norwegian playwriter Henrik Ibsen in the late 1870s. The play tells the story of an upper-class Norwegian woman who feels trapped in the mundaneness of her life as a wise and a mother, in the metaphorical 'doll's house'. The play ends with the woman leaving her husband and children, a quite controversial choice at the time. The reference to A Doll's House is used by the participant to demonstrate the traditional gender roles that were dominant in Norwegian society previously.

[23] Original quote: «Noen hadde sånn identitet som at de skal passe på barn, de skal passe på mann. Akkurat som vi hadde på gamletiden. Dere hadde sånn på gamletiden i Norge, ikke sant. Jeg har sett Et Dukkehjem på teater. Jeg har lest den boka også. Et Dukkehjem av Ibsen. Så noen, de har med, de kommer med sånne forhold. Så de bruker i Norge, akkurat samme. Så de kan ikke gå ut, for eksempel, og drikke kaffe. De kan ikke gå ut og treffe folk. For integrering med de som har barn og mann, det blir litt vanskelig. [Kontra] en person som bor alene.»

In this narrative, Hiwet differentiates between immigrant women who enact traditional gender roles as less emancipated and less capable of integrating and participating in society and social life. Women who participate in work are considered economically and thus socially independent, which further enables them to freely participate in society and social life. This narrative draws on the culturalization narrative and the tropes of the 'uncapable' migrant in order to distinguish between 'right' and 'wrong' ways to integrate. While Eva and Hiwet relate the need for independence with their integration in their narratives, Nora explicitly contests the premise of my question "Do you experience that it is important to work in order to integrate in Norway?"

> "It is not really about working to integrate, that is not it. [To work] is to support yourself and your family, and to become independent from others through an income. I believe that it is very important [to work] when there are opportunities for that. And of course it is very important to integrate, but one does not work solely to integrate, one works to contribute to the society one lives in, but of course also to be independent and be able to provide for your children if you have children, or plan to have children."[24]

I interpret Nora's contestation as being directed towards the notion that immigrants should work first and foremost as a means to integrate. In this way she is also resisting or refusing the narrative of creating a different set of needs interpretations for immigrant women than for other people in the population. While employment is related to the need for economic independence and providing for one's family, she rejects the connection to the purpose of integration. Connecting work to the need to 'contribute to the society one lives in' echoes notions of work as social citizenship and a desire to contribute to the social good (Weeks, 2011). Moreover, as a kindergarten teacher, Nora's notion of 'contributing to society' might point towards a conception of work that includes not only e.g. contributing through taxes to the welfare state, but also the valuation of care and social reproductive work, which is present in several points in Nora's narrative about work.

[24] Original quote: «Eh, det er det egentlig ikke, bare det for å jobbe og integrere, det er ikke det. For å sørge seg og sine familie og være uavhengige av andre, inntekten. Da er jo, det er jo veldig viktig når det finnes sånne muligheter, tenker jeg. Og selvfølgelig det er jo kjempeviktig å integrere, men man jobber ikke bare for å integrere, men man jobber for å bidra i samfunnet man bor i, men selvfølgelig å være selvstendig og kunne sørge for sine barn hvis man har barn, eller man planlegger å ha barn.»

In addition to focusing on women's economic independence, the narrative of independence also includes the individualist notion of employment as the means to self-accomplishment, satisfaction and self-realization in life. Social worker Mia emphasises that employment can provide immigrant women with "something for themselves in Norway, and not just through their children or through school, but something they can master and be good at. Something that gives meaning to life for one's self. And that one can be independent and feel a sense of achievement."[25] In this narrative the need for self-realisation is coupled with women's need for independence and emancipation. The notion of self-realisation through employment can be problematic from the point of view of social reproduction theory. The problematic aspect about this narrative is that unpaid domestic reproductive work is disregarded as being capable of providing a greater meaning to life, and it sees women as stagnant in their roles as housewives. In this context realising oneself and one's individual potential is a virtue, and one that must be achieved through employment or other activities outside of the home. The relation between work as self-accomplishment and emancipation for immigrant women does not attend to reality that immigrant women to a larger degree occupy positions within the social reproductive sector. It can therefore be contradictory to some extent if self-realisation or self-satisfaction can only happen through (social reproductive) work performed outside of the family and one's home. Nora's story about the joy she feels from performing reproductive labour both outside her home and at home counters the notion that domestic labour cannot be self-satisfactory. She tells me that, during the week she sends her children to kindergarten eight hours a day so that she can go to work, looking after other people's children, at another kindergarten. But for her, looking after children all day, whether her own children at home, or looking after other people's children at the kindergarten, is just "fantastic" and a dream situation.

Destabilising dominant narratives

The in-order-to relation between work and integration is at times challenged in the narratives of the social workers, by replacing the notion of 'work' with 'activity'. This term arises when talking about women who for various reasons are hindered from participating in paid work, such as due to health problems, or major childcare responsibilities. In this sense, the narrative where work is considered necessary for integration to Norwegian society is slightly altered to

[25] Original quote: «...noe for seg sjøl i Norge og ikke bare gjennom barna eller gjennom skolen, men noe man selv kan mestre og være flink til. Som gir mening til livet for en selv da, og at man kan være litt selvstendig, og kjenner på en mestringsfølelse.»

be less focused on the necessity of employment outside of the home for integration, and rather attention is directed towards other forms of participation in society, outside of the home and the family. The 'activities' that are capable of replacing work to some extent, are social contact with other members of society, both majority society and in the diaspora community, participating in volunteer work, and attending language cafés and craft-clubs. Implicitly, 'activity' is about achieving a feeling of self-accomplishment and contribution to society. However, while this narrative moves away from paid work as necessary for integration, there is still an idea that participation in the labour market is the ideal unless there are any external and less-controllable elements 'hindering' participation. Moreover, the replacement of 'work' with 'activity' maintains the need to participate in society outside the sphere of domesticity and the family. Thus, the need for immigrant women to leave the domestic sphere and enter the public in order to integrate remains intact. However, a more nuanced and 'subjective', yet not individualized, approach to integration arises in this altered narrative. The goal of integration also changes in some ways and is to some extent contested and questioned. The social workers understand the standard of integration as subjective to some extent, which entails that motivations, expectations and wishes to contribute to society can be different among different subjects, and therefore not all strategies of integration apply for all. In this narrative there remains a marginal possibility that the individual immigrant's needs to achieve a sense of integration to society can be met without participation in the public sphere, because integration is modified from a focus on participation in society, to also involve the individual's feeling of being integrated or sense of having "a dignified life".[26] The focus on personal or individual motivation, expectations and wishes for participation and integration leaves a marginal space where immigrants needs are considered on an individual basis by the social workers. According to Fraser (1989), the individualisation of needs can potentially be 'depoliticising', by viewing welfare recipients as individuals rather than part of social groups, and as passive rather than as active agents involved in interpreting their needs. I am not convinced this theoretical argument explains this situation fully. The social workers emphasis on individuality is at a later stage put in connection with the necessity of intersectional politics and attention to intersectionality in welfare programmes, in their critique of how mainstreamed welfare services overlook the complex combinations of individual and structural barriers that immigrant women meet based on their diverse positionalities.

[26] Original expression: «et fullverdig liv» (Mari)

The need for immigrant women to participate in the labour market is on the one hand connected to the foundational narrative that the working life is the primary sphere of social life in Norway, and on the other hand, the need to work is interpreted as addressing immigrant women's need to participate in society (outside of their home) and for their independence and emancipation. This need is established in several narratives: economic independence from the welfare state, women's independence from their husbands, and waged work as self-realisation. These narratives are coherent with the understanding of need interpretations for immigrant women's integration in other discourses, such as policy and public discourse. However, the narratives and needs interpretations that see work as necessary for integration are not stated as absolute truths and are explicitly contested and modified in various ways by the social workers and immigrant women.

Motivations to work and expectations of work

The previous section analysed the various narratives that define the in-order-to relations between work and integration. This section provides an analysis of narratives about immigrant women's motivations to work and their expectations of work. When the social workers talk about their experiences with immigrant women's motivations and expectations to work, they repeatedly underline that immigrant women are a heterogenous group and that there are different categories of immigrant women, many of which manage well in the Norwegian society. Women who 'fold up their sleeves' are seen as self-driven, and others who 'remain in the system' are seen to struggle to enter the working life. The understanding of immigrant women as a group consisting of different categories is also found in Norwegian policy documents (Annfelt & Gullikstad, 2013). When talking about immigrant women's motivations and expectations to work, the social workers tended to explicitly focus on the immigrant women who had low work participation. Among the social workers that I interviewed, I find a recurring narrative that the motivations and expectations of the immigrant women to work, do not match with the needs of the Norwegian working life. An example is that some women expect to have flexibility to combine nursing and caring for their children at home and go to work; When they enter a workplace with set working hours and working conditions the expectations of the two parties don't match. The social workers also experience that immigrant women's motivation to work can vary from 'authentic' and internally driven, to a more superficial form of motivation, and sometimes a 'performed' motivation as part of a 'performance' of being a good immigrant, based on having heard that

employment is important and expected for both men and women in Norway. There is a recurring narrative that the social workers find it difficult to access the motivation to work among some immigrant women and they explain this within a narrative where there is considered to be a gap in the relation between "words and action". Anne puts the main problem like this: "It is often what is said and what is actually done. They can say something, that they want something, but when they are presented with it and can start in a job, it may be in a canteen or in a kindergarten, then it is perhaps not exactly what they wanted after all."[27] Mari's narrative bears resemblance: "It is sometimes difficult to get a grip of what is said and what is nevertheless done when it comes to motivations of individuals. (…) I believe that everyone actually wants to work, but at the same time, it is the case that the Norwegian working life is a stressful working life for many. It is quite a hard working life".[28] These excerpts show how the gap between words and action is related to a discrepancy between immigrant women's motivations to work and expectations towards the Norwegian working life. Throughout the interviews, this discrepancy is explained by the social workers through the notion of 'complex problematics.'[29] This notion is used, both literally and through illustrative examples, to refer to how immigrant women constitute a heterogenous group, and that there are a variety of interrelated factors on both individual and structural levels that are barriers against immigrant women's employment, and to their integration more generally. There is an understanding that the current form of the Norwegian working life is a structural barrier for participation because of high expectations for official qualifications, language skills and social capital that many immigrant women are struggling to meet. Moreover, individual factors such as health problems, large childcare responsibilities or traditional ideas of gender and family organisation are seen as hinders for immigrant women to work or to participate in work as well as job-training programmes provided for by the social welfare offices. The social workers see the issue of the gap between immigrant women's motivation and expectations for employment as a problem, and it is a challenge to identify which factors constitute the 'gap' or discrepancy in each individual case, and to successfully address these and facilitate participation for individuals. Through this narrative, we can also see how the

[27] Original quote: «Det er også ofte ut ifra det som kommer fra munnen deres og hva som egentlig er handling. De kan si noe, at de ønsker noe, men når de får det presentert og kan være i en jobb, enten det er en kantine eller en barnehage, så er det gjerne ikke helt sånn de vil ha det likevel.»
[28] Original quote: «Det er av og til vanskelig å bli klok på hva som sies og hva som allikevel gjøres når det handler om motivasjonen til enkeltpersoner. Det er noen som, sant, alle har egentlig lyst å jobbe, det tror jeg i utgangspunktet, men samtidig er det klart at et norsk arbeidsliv er et stressende arbeidsliv for mange. Det er et ganske hardt arbeidsliv.»
[29] Original expression: «kompleks problematikk».

positionality or subjectivity of the social workers is constituted in a way that distances them from the subjectivities of immigrant women. Although they can listen to their clients' needs and take their clients' perspectives, we can see here how their position is also limited in its capacity to produce knowledge about their clients because of their different locationalities and experiences. This is a crucial insight because, ultimately, it points to the contours of the limits of knowledge production about immigrant women's needs, from the location of social workers.

The narrative that a specific group of immigrant women who do not work is a worry and 'problem', is present in the narratives of the social workers I interviewed. In the social workers' narratives, immigrant women are constituted as having 'complex problematics', and it is worrisome for the social workers that they can't access the immigrant women's motivation to work. In this sense immigrant women are seen as a problem. On the other hand, their participation in the labour market is seen as a solution to their individual economic independence and emancipation. This narrative is also present in Norwegian policy discourses; Annfelt and Gullikstad (2013) argue that in the policy documents, the implicit understanding is that immigrant women are a special group, and that since solutions to the problem are lacking, the key lies with the group itself. However, the social workers challenge this part of the narrative, through framing the responsibility to solve this problem as, not lying with the individual immigrant women, but rather with the governmental system that has not been capable of interpreting and addressing the complex needs of immigrant women sufficiently. This understanding is resisted by the social workers through the argument that the governmental system's homogenised and mainstreamed focus on programmes to facilitate labour market participation excludes immigrant women because it does not cater to the specific needs of this intersectionally diverse group. In this narrative, the social workers hold an oppositional position because they interpret immigrant women's complex needs and come up with their own tailored solutions to initiatives and programmes to address these within their capacity as social workers. The notion of 'complex problematics' and its implications will be explored further in the following chapter.

Conclusion

By analysing the narratives of social workers and immigrant women I have shed light upon the how the relations between work and integration for immigrant women are narratively interpreted by the different actors. When explaining these relations, they both participate in

reproducing dominant narratives and understandings of work and integration, as well as there are several instances where both the social workers and the immigrant women resist or modify theses narratives. An assimilationist approach to integration is explicitly challenged. The social workers modify the narrative of integration by challenging who is responsible for immigrants' integration by emphasising a two-way approach to integration. The immigrant women also challenge the assimilationist ideas that maintaining their culture and transnational connections is a hinder to their integration. By employing a transnational lens to analyse their narratives it becomes clear how transnational connections are important for building a good life in Norway, however, there may also be ambivalence towards maintaining these relations. For all actors, integration is understood as important for social life, learning the language and for participating in society more broadly, an understanding which is reflected in dominant narratives of integration. The social workers establish participation in the working life as necessary for integration through a work-narrative that sees the workplace as the main arena for socialisation in Norway. Moreover, employment is understood as necessary for women's economic independence and self-realisation, and for adhering to the Norwegian dual-income/dual-carer family ideal. Implicitly, the social workers see work or any other activity outside of the home as necessary for integration, which implies a need for immigrant women to leave the sphere of domesticity and the family in order to integrate. The connections between gender equality and integration will be critically explored in the following chapter.

Gender roles, gender equality and affective labour

Transnational orientations and conflicting interpretations of immigrant women's needs

Introduction

Traditional conceptions of gender roles and family patterns has have been understood as a problem and a hinder to immigrant women's integration in different European discourses, as well as in Norway (Røysum, 2016; Mulinari & Lindqvist, 2017; Farris, 2017). These discourses also make use of immigrant women's assumed traditional gender roles to push them into the sphere of social reproduction (Farris, 2017). This chapter addresses the questions related to how traditional gender roles have been pointed out as a hinder to immigrant women's participation in the labour market and aims to find out whether or not a femonationalist rhetoric is used in these discourses, by asking: In what ways do the social workers perceive gender roles and gender equality to inform the motivations of immigrant women to work (or not)? How do social workers negotiate between governmental aims and policies, and client's needs and expectations? How do perceptions of gender roles and gender equality inform the motivations of immigrant women to work? And finally, how do immigrant women conceptualise the various forms of work they perform?

This chapter is divided into two sections, the first section analyses how the notion of gender roles is used in the narratives of integration that the immigrant women and social workers use. I analyse how the social workers argue for the necessity to adapt to Norwegian notions of gender equality, and how they navigate between rejecting 'the immigrant woman' as a problem and also reinforcing dominant notions of immigrant women as a problem. I find that the notion of gender roles in the narratives of the immigrant women tell another story, one where escaping restricting gender roles are part of their narratives of migration, which problematizes the notion of egalitarian gender roles as something that immigrants learn and adapt to after migration. The second section explores whether the argument made by Farris, that in the current neoliberal political economy, immigrant women are pushed into the sphere of social reproduction in the name of gender equality, gives a relevant description of the Norwegian context. I analyse how the social workers are critical to and take a distance from this development in their work. Finally, I employ a transnational lens to explore and theorise the forms of reproductive labour that the immigrants wish to perform.

Transnational conceptions of gender roles and gender equality

Employing a transnational lens (Anthias, Morokvasic-Müller & Kontos, 2013) to analyse the immigrant women's narratives about gender roles sheds light on how they complexify the linearity of the narrative that gender equality is a western idea that immigrants adopt or adapt to after migration and through their integration to western societies. For some of the women, their consciousness about gender inequalities and lack of opportunities for women to access education and work in patriarchal cultures, as well as their resistance to traditional gender ideas, existed before they migrated to Norway. During the interviews the topic of gender roles is used within their narratives of migration, which indicates that conceptions of gender roles can have played a role in some of the immigrant women's decisions to leave their home countries. However, in all the immigrants' narratives, the concept 'gender equality'[30] is understood as a Norwegian ideal and practice and was only first encountered and related to once settled in Norway.

Eva tells me that she and her husband came as labour migrants to Norway in the 1980s because of austerity in their home country. At the time, the rural village where she came from followed traditional gender roles and there were few opportunities for women to access education and employment. Thinking back on her home country at the time she left, she describes how gender roles meant a strict division between who was responsible for reproductive and domestic labour, and who had access to productive labour outside of the home. "[When I moved to Norway] I saw that it was very important to have gender equality, and to go to work, and… well... for families with children. To share, so that it becomes equal… In my home country… we were used to men being in charge and having money. Women worked with housework and stayed with their children and cleaned the house during the day. (…) Much has changed there now, regarding work."[31] When she moved to Norway, both she and her husband had paid jobs and they shared childcare responsibilities and housework. She describes meeting up with other women during the first years in Norway, and learning about the concept gender equality, about the sharing of work and caring responsibilities, and about having an equal say to her husband. In Eva's narrative the lack of access and opportunities to work for her husband and herself were a motivation to migrate to Norway. 'Gender equality' as a concept and practice were first encountered and made sense

[30] In Norwegian: «likestilling»
[31] Original quote: «Jeg så at det var veldig viktig å ha likestilling og gå på jobb og, ja, for barnefamilier. For at det blir likt. (...) [I hjemlandet mitt] var vi vant med det at mannen så var den som styrer og har penger. Damene de jobbet mye dag med hjemmearbeid og barn og vaske og sånn. (...). Mye har endret seg [der], med arbeid»

of through socializing with other women in Norway. Although Eva stresses that the lack of work opportunities for herself as a woman in her home country played a role in their decision to migrate, the issue of gender inequalities is not explicitly related to her narrative of migration.

The two other women demonstrate a stronger and more significant consciousness towards gender inequalities in their narratives of migration. Central to their narratives are the lack of opportunities in education, employment and societal participation for women in their home countries, and how access to this in Norway has been important for their independence as women and their sense of self. Hiwet explains to me: "I come from a very difficult country. There are no opportunities for school and no future there. Especially if you are a woman, they think that women… when they become 18 or 19 years old, they have to get married, or they will just sit at home. It is like, they don't show you that you have a future."[32] She tells me that she did not want to leave her home country, and that she finds it hard not being around her family, but that there were no prospects for her to have, what she consistently refers to as, "a future". She has a quite strong and negative view of the patriarchal gender roles she experienced in her home country and how they constrain women: "You are dependent on a man, which means that you're subject to a man. He can give you money. If he gives you food, you can eat. If he doesn't, you don't eat. You just sit at home and clean and cook and look after the men. Gender equality doesn't play any role there. But if you can have a job, you can do many things. You feel like you can do just the same as him." Both economic independence and the equal sharing of paid and unpaid domestic labour in the family are central in Hiwet's understanding of her emancipation as a woman. She highly values the opportunities to access higher education and employment in Norway and is currently attending education within the health sector. Her goal is to study at university to become a math teacher or to study economics, unless she really enjoys her job in healthcare. She looks forward to having a family and children in the future, so I ask her about how she envisions combining work and family life. "I shall never sit at home! I am going to work until I become a pensioner. Because I have faith in gender equality. Because I am equal to a man. (…) When I have children, am I the only one to care for the children, to help the children, and look after the man as well? No, we work fifty-fifty. (…) If I am going to work, he must do things. I will never be subject to a man in my life. This was my thought from

[32] Original quote: «Men du vet, jeg kommer fra et sånt veldig vanskelig land, så, man har ikke muligheter for skole og man har ikke framtid der. Og så spesielt når du er kvinne. De tror at kvinnene, når de altså blir 18 år eller 19 år, de må bare gifte seg, eller de må bare sitte hjemme. Det er sånn, de viser ikke deg at du har framtid.»

when I was in my country too, not just now. *laughs*".[33] By making it clear that her independence and equality have been part of her opinions and identity before migrating, and also influencing her choice to migrate, through her narrative Hiwet constitutes herself as a transnationally gender-equal orientated subject. This counters the narrative trope that immigrants 'adapt' to gender equality in Norway. When talking, she expresses positive emotions through her tone of voice and laughter, which suggests that she has positive experiences of feeling empowered being able to express herself and her opinions about this topic.

In the narratives about their migration, gender roles and women's opportunities for education and work outside of the home are central. Also related to this is gaining access to fundamental rights such as freedom of expression, freedom from poverty, political instability or authoritative dictatorship regimes. For Nora, opportunities for education and employment as a woman was one of several motivations for her to migrate. She does not experience that her ideas of gender, work and education have changed much since she lived in her home country, but what is different now is that she has the opportunity to access education and other fundamental rights. She finds it hard to define what the concept of gender equality means to her, because of the connection the concept has to women's access to paid work outside the home in the Norwegian interpretation. She explains: "I think that it is very nice that we talk about gender equality, but at the same time we have to think of what kind of culture that exists in the society that people come from. Because when I came here, I heard about gender equality. 'What is gender equality?' It means that everyone, women and men, work. But we work in our home countries! The women work! So, for me it is hard to define."[34] I ask her if she experiences that the definitions of work are different in her home country. "Yes, I think so, I experience it like you say, it is different to work. (…) My sister has so many children. In the morning she goes to work and comes back home at 11 am again to see how the children are, (…) and orders the goods she needs for the next day. That is a job! We're talking about a woman who has 14 children! But maybe here they think about school, that [gender equality means that] women should attend school like men. But where I come

[33] Original quote: «Nei, jeg skal aldri sitte hjemme! Jeg skal jobbe til jeg blir pensjonist. Fordi jeg er mot... jeg forstår, jeg stoler på likestilling. Fordi jeg er helt akkurat lik som en mann. (...) For når jeg får barn, er det bare meg som skal passe på barn, som skal hjelpe barn, bare meg som skal hjelpe lage mat, passe på han mannen også? Nei, vi jobber 50/50. (...) Hvis jeg skal jobbe, han må jo gjøre noen ting. Jeg skal aldri bli under en mann i mitt liv. Det var min tanke fra da jeg var i mitt land òg, ikke bare nå.»

[34] Original quote: «Jeg syns jo det er fint at vi snakker om likestilling, veldig fint, men samtidig må vi tenke hva slags kultur som finnes ute i samfunnet. Her, hvilken kultur de kommer fra, tenker jeg. Fordi når jeg kom hit så hørte jeg om likestilling. 'Hva er det? Likestilling?' 'Alle, kvinner og menn, de jobber.' Men vi jobber jo i hjemlandene våre! Damene jobber jo. For meg er det veldig vanskelig å definere det.»

from, women don't have that opportunity. There is no state that is in control. There are no opportunities. (…) There is no such thing called 'gender equality' there."[35] For Nora, gender equality does not exist in her home country, not because women don't work, but because women don not have access to opportunities for education and work equal to men. While Nora supports the idea of gender equality and especially the aspect of giving women the opportunities to access education, she is critical of the Norwegian definition of gender equality as requiring women's participation in the working life, because she finds that it disregards the unpaid domestic labour performed by women like her sister, and because it overlooks the ways in which different cultures organise labour and family life. When the hegemonic Norwegian notion of gender equality informs narratives of integration, the narrative that employment is necessary for immigrant women's emancipation or integration can result in disregarding and devaluing the other forms of work that many (immigrant) women do, and in this process marks immigrant women who are not employed as unsuccessfully integrated. Nora's story problematizes the narrative of women's employment as necessary for gender equality, by questioning how the specific Norwegian interpretation of gender equality values certain forms of work over others in the goal of women's emancipation.

Adaption to Norwegian gender roles and successful integration

> "[The immigrant women] often have very traditional gender roles. But among some of them, at least those who succeed, they change them so that they create more balance and that the husband will also go home from work if the women gets a shift at work, or if the children are sick, they take turns in staying at home with the children."[36] (Mia)

[35] Original quote: «Ja jeg syns det, jeg opplever det som du sier, det er forskjellige å jobbe. (...) For eksempel søsteren min, hun har så mange barn. Om morgenen går hun og jobber og kommer tilbake til huset klokken 11 på dagen igjen for å se hvordan barna er, og hun sender dem, eller bestiller varene hun trenger til neste dag. Det er jo jobb! Vi snakker om en dame som har 14 barn! Men her kanskje de tenker om skole. Her tenker de skole, at likestilling er at kvinner kan gå på skole lik som mann kanskje. Og der, der jeg kommer fra, der finnes ikke den muligheten. Så det e jo ingen stat som styrer der. Det er ingen mulighet der nå. (...) Det finnes ikke noe som heter 'likestilling'.»

[36] Original quote: «De har jo veldig sånn tradisjonelle kjønnsroller, men en del av dem, som i hvert fall lykkes, de endrer på det sånn at det blir mer balanse og at mannen også går hjem fra jobb hvis de [damene] får en ringevikarvakt så, eller hvis barna blir syke, så bytter de på hvem som er hjemme med barna.»

Gender roles, gender equality and affective labour

There is a general understanding among the social workers that traditional gender roles are not a major problem for integration for the majority of immigrant women that they work with. However, it is made explicit that a certain adaption to Norwegian gender roles is necessary for participation in the Norwegian working life, and that the adoption of western views is positive for women's independence. Anne tells me that an important aim of her work is to provide immigrant women with various means to achieve greater freedom, such as through employment and separate finances, but also by encouraging them to take their drivers licence. In her narrative, this 'taste' of freedom can encourage women to break out of the traditional gender roles and think differently about their role as women. In this narrative integration and gender equality are explicitly linked; the adoption and adherence to Norwegian standards and practices of gender equality are a necessary part of immigrants' integration. This narrative draws upon the narrative trope of the willing and unwilling immigrant to define successful integration as the ability to get paid work and stay in a job. This is furthermore conditioned by their willingness to change their practices of gender roles to match the dual-earner/dual-carer family model. Mia explains that although traditional gender roles are common among immigrant women, she does not see it as a major challenge for their integration, because "[m]ost of them are willing to change [their gender roles]. (…) Those who stay in the system are perhaps those who hold on to those gender roles."[37] Although highlighting the 'positive' narrative tropes, i.e. that many are 'willing', it implicitly keeps in place the binary notions of 'willing'/ 'unwilling' immigrants. This narrative resembles what has been found in Norwegian policy documents, namely that immigrant women's choices that express traditional ideas of gender roles are interpreted as the wrong attitude, as well as being a sign of a low work-ethic (2016, p. 157). According to Anthias and Pajnik (2014) the tropes of the 'willing' and 'unwilling' migrant rely on the idea that the responsibility to integrate lies with the migrant. Furthermore, this trope sees the (un)willingness or inability to integrate as related to cultural rather than structural dimensions, meaning that failure to integrate is caused by the immigrant. In light of these scholarly contributions, we might see how the successful integration is narratively constructed to be dependent immigrant women's individual responsibility to adapt to Norwegian gender roles so that they can participate in the working life.

[37] Original quote: «De fleste er villige til å endre på det. (...) de som blir i systemet, det er jo de som gjerne holder på de kjønnsrollene.»

This narrative does not only circulate in political and expert discourses but is also used in Hiwet's narrative of integration. Hiwet emphasises the need to adopt western gender roles, and she considers traditional gender roles as hindering women from their independence, such as having work and a social life outside of the family. Fraser points out that it is common for subordinate groups to internalize need interpretations that work to their disadvantage (1989, p. 296). I argue that it might also be possible to imagine how the 'internalization' of certain needs interpretations can be used to differentiate within a group, by advantaging the position of some members at the expense of others. In this case, Hiwet uses a social narrative that contributes to portray immigrant women overall in a negative way. But we can also understand this narrative as a personal narrative and a 'technology of the self', in the way that it demonstrates her ideas of gender equality. Through the narrative she situates herself as an emancipated and well-integrated immigrant woman, by distancing herself from other 'less' integrated women who follow traditional gender roles.

Conflicting interpretations of immigrant women's needs

The social workers navigate between rejecting, reinforcing and downplaying the narrative of the immigrant woman as unwilling to give up traditional gender roles. The existence of conflicting needs interpretations that reinforce or reject the same narrative can point towards the existence of competing need interpretations within the same discourse (Fraser, 1989). One way the narrative is reinforced is through the notion that immigrant women have low self-esteem, which is implicitly assumed to be caused by their traditional gender roles. Immigrant women's low self-esteem is considered a barrier to employment, and immigrant women are seen to need help to build more self-confidence in order to work and integrate. Another reinforcement of the narrative of the problem of traditional gender roles is through a narrative shift whereby the problem is seen to be 'more often' with immigrant men. In this modified narrative, immigrant women seen as emancipated and having agency, meanwhile their husbands react negatively to the wives' employment and struggle in their new role as a man in the family and in society. Insofar as this narrative involves a mere shift of the problem from immigrant women to immigrant men, immigrant men are seen as a threat to gender equality. However, the social workers are not only drawing upon potentially problematic societal narratives but sharing their personal work experiences through narratives, and this narrative also expresses legitimate concerns that they have about, for instance, the negative social control of women.

The social workers are at times hesitant to make generalizing claims and are clear that they do not wish to homogenize immigrant women as a group. They also nuance the narrative through phrases that soften their arguments. An example of this is when Mari talks about the discrepancies of expectations between the social welfare system and immigrant women: "I think that… I have to weigh out here, so I neither am too critical or idealising."[38] These cues demonstrate an attentiveness to the power dimensions of their role and the group they are talking about. They carefully negotiate between drawing on alternative representations and need interpretations in favour of their clients—which go against narratives that culturalize the immigrant woman as other—as well as drawing on dominant narratives.

The social workers accept the narrative of traditional gender roles as a barrier to integration insofar that it only covers a minor group of immigrant women who 'fail' to integrate, and they re-orientate the narrative towards their experience that most immigrant women are pleased about gender equality and work opportunities. In an effort to move away from narratives that culturalize the problems of immigrant women, the social workers emphasise structural barriers for integration in the articulation of 'complex needs'.

Social workers interpreting complex needs

As briefly explored in the previous chapter, the social workers develop a narrative about the 'complex problematics' of the immigrant woman. In this narrative the barriers to integration are defined as 'complex problematics', which entails that issues such as language barriers, questions of access and participation in the Norwegian labour market, and immigrant women's health concerns, are seen as interrelated and a result of the combination of individual and cultural aspects, and structural aspects. Complex problems are seen to create complex needs, which the social welfare system 'as a system' fails to see, but which they as social workers can in some instances be able to address in concrete and specific manners. The articulation of the narrative of 'complex problematics' is where the role of the social worker as the 'interpreter' of needs becomes most prominent; the social workers emphasize how they—while also having to follow guidelines and instructions from above—have a certain agency and space wherein they can develop their own programmes and initiatives to address the specific and complex needs a smaller group of immigrant women, or individual immigrant women, that the system otherwise fails to address.

[38] Original quote: «Jeg tror at... nå må jeg vekte så jeg verken blir for kritisk eller for rosemalende».

For example, Mia sees it as part of her job to dig deeper and 'find' the different needs of her clients that the system fails to see and address them within her available means—such as going along with them to the doctor, or driving them to the psychologist— without going beyond her role as a social worker. She carefully articulates immigrant women's need for mental health care as a complex need that is at once individual and structural, yet which has currently failed to be addressed by the system and left as a domestic or personal matter. Another example is that the social welfare system is considered a structural barrier to integration. The education and labour market training offered by the NAV system is considered too 'mainstreamed', for example its programmes do not accommodate people with language skills lower than B1. Consequently, these programmes are not seen to meet the needs of immigrant women, who are seen to need work training programmes on a lower and more tailored language level. This experience is supported by research that finds that these programmes are not created for nor facilitate the needs of immigrant women to enter employment (Annfelt & Gullikstad, 2013). However, social workers have the agency to apply for funds to create their own initiatives to address these needs, which they do. Through the notion of 'complex problematics' and addressing these in tailored programmes and efforts, the social workers translate the newly politicized needs of their clients to administrable needs and objects of state intervention. This aspect of their work is highly cherished by them, but also seen as tiresome; the projects they design are often small and confined to participants within the geographical location of the municipality or within the region. They express meeting institutional barriers because it is challenging to expand good programmes, and to collaborate and share learning experiences with other municipalities and regions.

I will now briefly address they ways in which the articulation of alternative needs through narratives constitutes their subjectivity as social workers. As Tamboukou (2003) argues, narratives are instruments of both power and the production of subjectivities. Through articulation of complex needs in their narratives, i.e. understanding immigrant women's needs both from below and above, from their client's perspective and from the perspective of the welfare state, situates their positionality of social workers in between the clients and the state. However, there are also limitations to their ability to produce knowledge about their clients, which is most explicitly expressed in their struggle to identify an experienced 'gap' between their clients' words and actions. There remains a distance in power and in experience between these two positionalities; Although capable of interpreting needs more inclusively, they will never be their clients. This points to the potential for both emancipation and submission of their roles as providers of welfare, as discussed by Waaldijk

(2007) and the role as 'expert' need interpreters by Fraser (1989). Discussing this situation with Didier, the social worker who came to Norway as a refugee, he expresses how his personal background and African appearance can at times help to build trust with his clients, but he also experiences mistrust by some clients who expect a white 'Norwegian' social worker. This requires him to work even harder to convince his clients to trust his professional knowledge. 'Bridging the gap' with clients of a similar background is thus not straight-forward. It can be both beneficial in establishing deeper relations to clients, and it can be a challenge to establish the subjectivity of the professional social worker in relation to clients.

Waaldijk points out how the social worker-subjectivity plays a role in defining them as citizens. All of the social workers that I interviewed expressed that their work experiences with the integration of immigrants has inspired them to take a stronger interest in local and national politics than they otherwise would have, and has influenced their political participation, for example through voting. This suggests how the role of the social worker is related to a form of "representational citizenship" (Waaldijk, 2007, p. 10), whereby they not only speak on behalf of their clients at work, but also do this in their personal practices of political citizenship. This aspect of social work and the social worker's subjectivity points towards how their professional work plays a role in their personal life, or rather, that the distinctions between life and work become difficult to make in certain respects, such as in their practices of citizenship, because of the affective forms of labour involved, as suggested by Weeks' (2007).

Immigrant women and social reproduction

Research on discourses of gendered integration in various European countries has highlighted how arguments of gender equality and women's emancipation have coincided with a nationalist and neoliberal rhetoric and been used to encourage and 'pushed' immigrant women into social reproductive work by discursively constituting them as especially well-suited domestic workers (Mulinari & Lundqvist 2017, Farris 2017). In practice, this is seen to result in a situation whereby immigrant women perform the work, such as childcare and elderly care, that allows for the emancipation of majority women (Farris 2017). There is a strong use of discourses of gender equality as necessary for the integration of immigrant women in the narratives of social workers. Furthermore, this notion of gender equality does not leave much room for interpretation of ways to achieve gender equality other than through women's employment and activity outside of the home. However, I do not find links between

immigrant women's emancipation and social reproductive work to be present in the narratives, and I see an explicit resistance towards such a development. The political-economic context of the Norwegian, or Scandinavian, welfare state as less neoliberally inclined may be one possible explanation for this. In her analysis of femonationalist rhetoric in the Swedish context, Paula Mulinari argues that the ways in which social reproduction entangles labour markets in Sweden is different from the situations of France, Italy and the Netherlands, from where Farris bases this specific political-economic aspect of her argument of femonationalism (2017, p. 39). For instance, the institutionalisation of state-organised childcare provision and extensive parental leave schemes as measures to increase women's labour market participation means that women need less to rely on domestic help to balance their career and childcare. Siim and Skjeie (2004) argue that in the Scandinavian welfare states, demands for social reproduction at times take precedence over those of production. However, femonationalist rhetoric about immigrant women as well-domestic workers has been identified by feminist researchers in other Scandinavian countries (Mulinari & Lundqvist 2017), so this possible explanation must be taken with caution and analysed in relation to the context-specific valuations and institutionalisations of social reproduction.

The social workers emphasise the fact that immigrant women often end up working in the social reproductive sphere as a problem in need of special attention. This is a topic they are conscious about in their work, and they aim to challenge these ideas and encourage also other forms of work. For instance, Mari experiences that the governmental welfare system she works for explicitly encourages their staff to promote women to work outside the reproductive sector and to break the dominant patterns of directing immigrant women to the paid reproductive sphere. Immigrant women's dominance in social reproductive work is complexified as both an individual and a structural challenge in their narratives. On the one hand, they argue that many women wish to perform reproductive labour and care work, and on the other, the high expectations of the Norwegian labour market are perceived as a hinder for people without formal education to perform 'even simple jobs' outside of the reproductive sector. Jobs within the reproductive sector are more accessible to immigrants with lower language skills or without formal education, because they have lower entry requirements than most other jobs in Norway. The high expectations of the Norwegian labour market are framed as problematic because it is seen to structurally direct immigrant women into social reproduction. They are critical of the high criteria of the Norwegian labour market that leaves marginal space for immigrants' participation other than through low-skilled reproductive work. Mia emphasizes that while these jobs are accessible for many in terms of criteria, it is a

major challenge for some immigrant women to have and to stay in these jobs because of the awkward working hours that make it hard to combine work with the obligations of family life. This is especially seen as a challenge for immigrants who neither have much family or a social network for child-care support in Norway, nor the resources to afford childcare during the evenings or weekends. It is, however, not problematized that public childcare provision is only available to those who work 'regular' working hours during the weeks and daytime. The immigrant women who work in social reproductive sphere's need for (public) childcare provision outside of regular working-hours is a need interpretation which becomes enclaved as a 'domestic' matter and thereby depoliticized.

In their resistance to simplistic arguments about immigrant women's integration, the social workers challenge both dominant narratives and structural barriers. They utilise the certain leeway in their position to organise alternative programmes and measures that function to translate the alternative needs into administrable needs. It is important to keep in mind that social welfare has a two-sided nature, as being at once a disciplining and an emancipating instrument (Waaldijk, 2007). The reliance on the narratives of gender equality as necessary for integration and work participation attests to how social rights and social work has a disciplining function which must not be overlooked. Social workers, albeit working closely with clients, interpret needs from above. This means that they risk disciplining clients and risk formulating needs within discourses that further marginalize their clients, making them dependent on institutional care, yet at the same time, their position within the institutional system means that their interpretations of needs can have direct impact on the administration of needs.

Transnational affective labour and compassionate citizenship

Practices and discourses that encourage and push immigrant women into social reproduction determine immigrant women as 'well-suited' domestic workers, and overlook the wishes, aspirations and ideas that immigrant women have for work, and how they relate to the various forms of work that they do. In this section I analyse how the immigrant participants expressed a wish to perform a specific type of reproductive and affective labour, which I analyse from a transnational lens and within the context of reciprocal social relations. Social reproduction theory has addressed the forms of labour that do not create economic value, yet which are fundamental for the continuation and reproduction of society (Bhattacharya, 2017). Feminists have turned to the notion of reproductive labour and affective labour to explain the

function of this work, as well as its undervaluation in society, and how these forms of labour are often performed by women, ethnic minorities and other disadvantaged groups in society. I use the term reproductive labour to refer to the social and biological reproduction of the population (often performed by women in the domestic sphere), and affective labour to refer to "waged and unwaged labor that does not directly reproduce labor power but instead aims at producing affects", including caring for other people (Oksala, 2016, p. 290). Affective labour includes both reproductive and productive labour, without necessarily making sharp distinctions between the two.

During the interviews, the participants with an immigrant background spoke about the work they performed, and the work they wanted to perform, both waged, unwaged, productive and reproductive. A recurring theme emerged in their narratives about work, wherein the value of reciprocity in relations was central both to their motivations to work and central to the forms of work they wanted to perform. Hiwet, who holds several part-time jobs next to her vocational studies, explains why she also chooses to engage in volunteer work as an interpreter: "I help for free because I like to help people."[39] Her goal is to study at university in the future, either economics or to become a math teacher, a decision she has made because she is good in math, and she wants to help Norwegians who are struggling with math. Her motivation is connected to feelings of compassion and reciprocity, and she expresses joy and laughter when talking about this: "I feel very, like, happy when I help people with math, really. It makes me happy."[40] The focus on 'helping others' is an issue of reciprocity to Hiwet because she relates the value of helping others to her own experiences of receiving help from Norwegians with her language skills and education, and she hopes to make friends at university that will help her advance her own skills. Nora, who is educated within childcare and has worked at a kindergarten, is also planning on studying at the university with the goal of being able to help others. She says: "What I want to do in the future, actually, is that I—if I get the opportunity to it—I want to help those who need help, exactly how I got everything I needed to create a dream, a life and a future, when I came to Norway. So, I am thinking of returning home and helping the girls who want to study, but who don't get those opportunities because of their finances or because of other things. That is why I am thinking of doing a study like political science or law."[41] In her narrative, helping

[39] Original quote: «Jeg hjelper gratis fordi jeg liker å hjelpe folk.»
[40] Original quote: «Jeg føler meg veldig, sånn, glad når jeg hjelper folk med matte, egentlig. Det gleder meg."
[41] Original quote: «Det som jeg har lyst å gjøre i fremtiden faktisk er at jeg, hvis jeg får mulighet til det, at jeg hjelper de som trenger hjelp, akkurat som når jeg kom hit til Norge, fikk jeg alt jeg trengte for å skape en drøm, eller et liv, eller en fremtid. Så tenker jeg kanskje tilbake til hjemlandet og hjelpe jentene som har lyst å studere,

others is explicitly related to her own experience of receiving help and accessing opportunities for education and work in Norway, and she shows solidarity and compassion towards those who are in the same situation as she was in her home country. I suggest that the form of labour that they express a desire to perform can be understood as a form transnational affective labour, in that their desire to perform this work is both invested in their transnational experiences of migration, in addition to their strong affective investment in the desire to perform this work.

Didier highlights his own experiences of being a refugee, receiving help in refugee camps in Africa and the opportunities he got in Norway as his motivation to study social work and to work with the integration of refugees in Norway. He sees his experiences of learning Norwegian and integrating to Norwegian society as a young adult as valuable for helping other newly arrived refugees. His goal is to work with humanitarian aid in the continent that he comes from. He tells me: "I studied social work because of my personal experience from Africa. When we were living in a refugee camp, I saw how difficult people had it there. So, I thought 'I want to help them. If I get the chance to come to Norway, I want to help the people who have had the same problems that we have had.' I saw that many of the people there helping refugees did a fantastic job. They helped people, they gave them advice, they gave them guidance, so that is why I wanted to work with these things in the future."[42]

The notion of transnational affect has been theorized by migration scholars Amanda Wise and Selvaraj Velayutham in order to capture "the conceptual and empirical diversity of 'affects' in shaping the vectors, flows and forms of transnational community" (2006, p. 3) which are part of migrant's lives in multicultural societies. This notion takes into account how affects "structure inter-subjective relationships and modes of reciprocity within transnational social fields" (Wise & Velayutham, 2017, p. 116). However, Wise and Velayutham do not explore transnational affect in the context of immigrants' affective labour. I propose that 'transnational affective labour' could be used to understand the forms of affective labour motivated by affects such as reciprocity and solidarity, which connect people to a transnational community. In the immigrants' expression of their desire to perform this

som får ikke den muligheten til det på grunn av økonomien eller et eller annet. Så derfor tenker jeg egentlig å ta et studie som statsvitenskap eller rettsvitenskap.»

[42] Original quote: «Jeg tok sosialt arbeid på grunn av min erfaring da, min personlige erfaring fra Afrika, at da vi var i flyktningleir, da så jeg hvor vanskelig folk hadde det der nede. Så tenkte jeg å hjelpe dem. Hvis jeg får mulighet til å komme til Norge, så det jeg vil gjøre er å hjelpe andre mennesker som har hatt de samme problemene som vi har hatt. Jeg så at mange som må hjelpe flyktninger der, de gjorde en fantastisk jobb. De snakket med folk, de ga dem råd, og veiledning, og derfor så tenkte jeg å gjøre, at jeg kan jobbe med sånne ting i framtiden.»

kind of labour, there is a sense of belonging and reciprocity to transnational social fields—which include both the home country and the host country.

I think it can be useful to understand transnational affective labour through the concept of the 'moral economy' (Näre, 2011) for a more critical approach. This term was originally used to describe non-economic relations within family and in pre-modern societies, as a 'part economy', but has been adopted in more recent scholarship to understand how "all economic processes are embedded in the social world and cannot be understood separately from the morals and norms of the society" (2011, p. 400). According sociologist Lena Näre, 'moral' refers to exchanges that have other goals than economic profit. The functions of moral economies "vary from social cohesion to the accumulation of social and symbolic capital and to the feelings of injustice that serve as an instigation for social protest" (2011, p. 400). The moral contract in a moral economy "is based on normative notions of good and bad, reciprocity, shared duties and responsibilities" (2011 p. 401). In the narratives of the immigrants, there is an expression of responsibility that is related to the help and opportunities they have received, to help others who are in similarly disadvantaged positions in their transnational fields. In this form of work, their experiences and knowledge, be it their language, math skills, or experience as refugees and personal empowerment, are considered as unique and experientially acquired symbolic capital that brings with it a certain responsibility, compassion, and solidarity to 'give back' and help others in the transnational community. It is important to keep in mind however that reciprocal relations, as with any relations, are not necessarily equal (Näre, 2011). There can be significant inequalities of power in the relations that exist in a moral economy, for instance between the welfare state and state agencies that are involved in providing help to immigrants, but also between immigrants who have attended higher education in European countries who provide help to newly arrived immigrants or people living in their countries of origin – especially if or when such labour is carried out through state agencies or NGOs. Such imbalances in power complexify the relationships involved in moral economies, such as the notion of reciprocity. In political and policy discourses scholars such as Farris (2017) and Røysum (2016) have found that immigrant women's work participation has been understood as a 'voluntary duty' to the state, and as an obligation and an entitlement to citizenship. It is potentially problematic if 'giving back' is perceived as an obligation to perform affective labour as part of an indebtedness to the hospitality of the receiving state. While I do not out rule the existence of such elements in their narratives, I do not interpret the immigrant's narratives as functioning strictly in this way. Because of their emphasis on helping people who they

consider their peers, this narrative rather highlights ways in which immigrants form and maintain transnational moral ties and relationships through performances of—or desires to perform—transnational affective labour.

Considering the role of transnational affective labour in relation to the concepts of *work* and *life* (Weeks 2007) urges us to ask where the boundaries of work and life go in practices of, especially, unwaged forms of transnational affective labour. And how might transnational affective labour be gendered or racialized in its organisation? Perhaps even more relevant in the context of integration is how a focus on work and life urges us to consider the ways that subjectivities are formed, not through identity-based claims, but through the imagination of who they could become, through the visions of what they want to be or do. Here I am thinking about the usefulness of considering how the desire to perform transnational affective labour is valued by the immigrants in relation to their acts of (transnational) citizenship. Transnational affective labour highlights and positively values a certain altruism and dependency on others to survive and thrive. In Anthias, Morokvasic-Müller and Kontos' (2013) rethinking of integration (which is explicitly linked to citizenship), the notion of belonging is extended from belonging as identification with the country of residence to think about other everyday practices and routines that create a sense of belonging, which have "experiential, affective and practical aspects" (p. 6). In addition to learning the language and cultural codes, a commitment to 'giving back', by contributing to society through affective labour can be seen as an everyday practice of enacting belonging and a sense of citizenship which not only has a national focus, but also transnational orientations. If one argues that the desire to perform transnational affective labour can be seen as defining their understanding of citizenship, then we find a slightly different idea of citizenship than that which dominates in the western work ethic, where independence is valued higher than dependency, and where production is valued higher than reproduction. This notion of citizenship centres participation and focuses on the reciprocal relations between people, mediated through the affects of reciprocity, solidarity, compassion and responsibility. Participation as a citizen is not so much, or at least not only, about one's relation to the state (e.g. as rights holder, or as worker and taxpayer), but one's mutual relations to other citizens, also transnationally. This re-imagination of citizenship allows us to take into account how people's belonging to several social fields, is not at the expense of the relations of belonging to another. This urges for broader a reconsideration of the ways that immigrants relate to the work they perform and the modes of citizenship that they employ, which go beyond the boundaries of nation states.

Conclusion

To conclude this chapter, I wish to suggest that elements of transnational affective labour can also be found in the social workers' desires to work. This is a topic that is fruitful for further exploration. It has been my aim throughout this work to avoid reinforcing dichotomous distinctions between immigrants and social workers, and transnationally orientated vs. nation-based lives. In fact, transnationality might be understood as processes that are present in all people's lives in contemporary globalized societies; At least it might be helpful to think with this concept beyond the lives of migrants. For example, when asked about their own personal connections to the field of immigration and integration, all of the social workers who considered themselves as Norwegian natives and non-immigrants, brought in transnational experiences such as living and travelling abroad, and their own 're-integration' upon return, having an immigrant parent, or being able to speak some Arabic, a common language with many clients. Future research might not only examine how these transnational orientations affects the social worker-client relations but should also explore the transnational orientations in their desires to work with integration, and how these desires constitute their subjectivities as social workers engaged in transnational affective labour.

Discussion and conclusions

Could it be that participation in the working life as a marker of successful integration in dominant discourses has made us overlook other understandings and ways of achieving integration do not depend on immigrant women's participation in the labour market? The topic and research questions of this thesis arose from an interest in questioning participation in the Norwegian labour market as a criterion for immigrant women's successful integration to the Norwegian society. Interviewing immigrant women about their experiences of integration and work, and social workers about their experiences with integration of immigrant women in Norway, has given valuable material to analyse not only how the connections between integration and work were made discursively in both personal and social narratives, but also the various ways in which dominant narratives of integration are challenged by different actors. These insights can be helpful for gaining a better understanding of how integration happens at the local level, and in articulating more inclusive and intersectional integration policies and practices. Imagining otherwise has been central to the effort of rethinking integration and work. I have combined Tamboukou's (2008) model of discursive narrative analysis together with Fraser's (1989) theory of the politics of need interpretation to address how understandings of integration are discursively constructed and contested at by actors from various locations. By combining a critical social justice approach to migration and integration that advocates for rethinking integration and citizenship, and feminist scholarship on affective and reproductive labour, I have brought into light alternative narratives of integration that can help us to problematize the discursive relations between work and integration. I argue that this specific and unique combination of theory has proved necessary for accessing these alternative narratives in the first place. By accessing people's alternative narratives of integration, I have been able to develop new theoretical insights for rethinking integration, citizenship and work. This demonstrates the potential for combining theories of transnationality, affective labour and the interpretation of needs for reaching new understandings of, not only integration and immigrants' ideas and desires for work, but also for understanding the role of social work for the integration of immigrants.

Transnational lives

A significant finding of this research is that employing a transnational lens in narrative research on integration can contribute to enhance our understanding of immigrant's experiences by allowing us to notice other narratives. By combining a transnational lens together with feminist theories of affective labour I have been able to recognize the ways in which sociality, family life and work span across national borders, and how aspects such as work, reciprocity and citizenship have multiple and transnational orientations. Theories of affective labour address both paid and unpaid forms of work, as well as work that produces affect or is socially reproductive. This allows us to pay attention to, for instance, the transnational orientations in the affective labour involved in immigrant's upbringing of their children, but moreover it can suggest the centrality of affective labour in the maintenance of transnational ties. I was interested in exploring how immigrant women conceptualise the various forms of work they perform, be it paid, un-paid, productive, reproductive, at home or outside of the home. It was important to move away from the exclusive character of these distinctions while maintaining the analytical capacity in these terms for addressing the various forms of work, their unequal valuation and uneven organisation in society. My research found that through a desire to help others transnationally, the immigrants expressed a wish to engage in affective labour that was centred around affects such as compassion, reciprocity, and solidarity. I theorised this as 'transnational affective labour'. I discussed how the desire to perform this kind of work can be understood as part of a 'moral economy'. This allows us to address the unequal relations of power that may exist in the social field, which future research aiming to explore this form of labour must be attentive to. Thinking about citizenship as belonging through everyday practices and relating to others, transnationally rather than as one's relation to the state, and combined with the insight that subjectivities are formed through people's desires and visions of what they want to do, we can question how a desire for transnational affective labour might point towards other understandings of citizenship and belonging that centre compassion, reciprocity and everyday acts of participation rather than the nation-based and state-centred understanding of citizenship in integration discourses.

The transnational lens has also been fruitful for shedding light on the alternative meanings of 'gender equality' for the immigrant women. In dominant narratives of immigrant women that I found, gender equality is part of the narrative of their integration. Gender equality is both something that immigrant women are thought to adapt to during their

integration in Norway, and a requirement for their successful integration in Norway. Elements of these ideas were present in the narratives used by several of the social workers and one of the immigrant women. However, as discussed, overall the immigrant women challenge the way gender equality is talked about in integration narratives by relating gender equality to their narratives of migration. This challenges the premises that the dominant narratives of gender equality and integration are based on, such as ideas of life before/after migration, and ideas of western countries' emancipation of women and non-western countries holding on to traditional gender roles. I find that the Norwegian notion of 'gender equality' as it is used in the dominant narratives of integration, very much rely on women's equal participation to men in education and the labour market. In one oppositional narrative, the concept itself is critiqued for disregarding the non-paid, domestic labour that women do, as work. These insights point to the constructed and contested nature of the concept 'gender equality,' which has normative and moral implications that are otherwise very much taken for granted in Norwegian discourses. In light of this, we can see clearer how the combination of discourses of gender equality and integration can function beyond its indented way as emancipatory, but also as a disciplining force. As discussed in the chapter "Theories of integration, immigrant women and work", several Norwegian scholars have been critical of the way gender equality is modelled on the majority population and have argued that it is not intersectional. Some of my findings support this argument, especially when it comes to the issue of how employment becomes synonymous with societal participation in discourses of integration. It seems as though the way work is understood in Norwegian discourses of gender equality influence the understanding of 'societal participation' for integration, which may in practice be excluding alternative understandings of both work, societal participation and gender equality from the perspective of immigrant women. The consequences of this is that it might work against the formulation of intersectional integration policies.

The transnational lens has also helped to highlight how integration can be understood as a multitude of transnationally orientated practices. This challenges the understanding of integration that mostly focuses on nationally orientated practices. Transnational engagements such as visits to the home country, or desires to return to the home country in the future, were part of the immigrants' life and motivations for work. The findings of this research might enhance our understanding of what transnationality entails in practice, as the transnational practices appear as elements that are complexly interconnected with local and national practices. For example, transnational practices such as dreaming about travelling home could be a motivation to work in Norway to save up money for the travel. In strategies for the

upbringing of children, there was a desire to pass on 'the best of both' cultures and traditions to their children and ensure their confidence as transnational citizens too. And people's experiences of empowerment and education in Norway were seen in a wider transnational context, with a focus on using their experiences to help others transnationally. These insights suggest ways in which the transnational and the national are interwoven in integration, and thus maintaining ties with the home country and diasporic communities should be understood as practices that can lead to integration, rather than being hinders to it. Transnationality is, however, not necessarily straight-forward. In some of the immigrant women's narratives of their transnational lives, there were also expressions of ambivalence and the creation of distance towards the home country or the diasporic communities in Norway. By focusing on transnationality in the narratives, it becomes clear how they challenge the dichotomies between locations and life before and after migration, and the nation-based understanding of integration. This can complexify our understanding of integration to also include the way people live transnational lives. The implications for these findings for future research and policymaking will be discussed towards the end of the chapter.

Social workers as interpreters of immigrant women's needs

I have addressed how social workers negotiate between governmental aims of integration and their clients' needs and expectations. I analysed how the social workers are influenced by certain dominant narratives and interpretations of needs, and how they also explicitly interpret the needs of their clients through alternative and oppositional narratives that replace or overshadow narratives that see immigrant women's problems in terms of their 'backwards' culture and traditions. The social workers nuance the dominant narratives that contribute to culturalization by focusing on the failures of the welfare system and other structural barriers to integration. Through working so closely with their clients, the social workers interpret alternative needs. Through their interpretations, they shift needs from the "domestic" to the "political", thereby making previously overlooked needs administrable in their work. Working closely with their clients means they are capable of articulating the complex needs of their clients in ways that are more inclusive of their clients' experiences and own interpretations. I have traced moments where their unique positionality as social workers allows them to articulate and address alternative needs, but also where the social workers' narratives reveal the limitations of their ability to produce knowledge about their clients. Although capable of interpreting many of their clients' needs in more inclusive ways, there

nevertheless remains a distance both in power and in experience between social workers and immigrant women. As Tamboukou has emphasised, narratives have a double role as technologies of power, which can be both a source of the oppression and emancipation of others, and they are practices of self-formation. Through procedures of objectification and subjectification the narrator "turns herself into a subject". These practices are not distinguishable in themselves in the narrative practices but happen at the same time. Through the social workers' specific interpretations of needs, both from above and from below, they articulate their subjectivity as social workers. This is of relevance for understanding how need interpretations are challenged at various levels in minority/majority relations. If one would only analyse the narratives of the social workers in terms of 'technologies of power', one would conclude that social workers, as providers of welfare and interpreters of needs, hold a dual role in relation to their client by reinforcing dominant narratives, and creating new, more inclusive and emancipatory narratives. This points to the ambiguous nature of welfare provision. By focusing on the second function of narratives as well, we can also see how their practice of interpreting their clients' needs is part of their subjectification as social workers. This situates them a unique position as 'experts' in Fraser's schema, which is different from e.g. policy makers, who also belong to this category of needs interpreters. Without their subjectification to the role of the social worker, a subject position that aims to see the client with empathy and as citizens, they could not have interpreted the alternative needs of their clients that go against the dominant narratives.

Rethinking integration

Participation in the working life must continue to be central for thinking about strategies of integration. However, we must be attentive to how the relations between employment and integration are complex and contradictory, and that employment alone may not be sufficient for improving integration. The immigrant's sense of *belonging* to the Norwegian society was connected to having friends and knowing the language, as well as understanding cultural codes and norms, and being able to participate in and adapt to the local culture and traditions, to some extent. In some ways, this resembles the alternative narrative of integration that the social workers pointed to as 'activity' in society. As long as not all immigrant women are employed, and not all immigrant women experience their workplaces as facilitating their societal integration, we must acknowledge other routes to belonging and participation in

society beyond the workplace. This may be through transnational networks or simply within one's own family.

Dominant narratives frame integration as a 'problem' which lies with the immigrant women and their cultures. The findings of this research suggest that problems connected to integration must be understood as both individual and structural, with an emphasis on the latter. A continued emphasis on the two-way approach to integration, with an emphasis on the role of the majority society, can contribute to create a society where majority and minorities can live well together. This takes into account the understanding of integration as a process, as well as integration as a relation. As suggested in some of the social workers' narratives, integration is not only a matter of immigrants integrating to the majority society and that the majority society must 'facilitate' their integration, but that also the majority society needs to adapt, or perhaps integrate, to a society where people with different backgrounds and cultures live together. Such an idea of integration is perhaps already more transnational in the sense that it does not focus so much on only one group's integration to the nation in question, and it allows for the maintenance of transnational elements, relations and orientations in people's lives.

The findings of this research suggest ways of thinking about citizenship in terms of everyday practices, acts and relations to others in society, and not only in terms of relations to the nation state. These relations can be expressed through affects such as reciprocity, compassion and solidarity, and constitute a feeling of belonging to several social fields, nationally and transnationally. Through theorising one 'everyday practice' of citizenship through *transnational affective labour*, we can begin to imagine how the strengthening of one's sense of belonging to one social field, does not necessarily mean the weakening to another, but can mean that one's relation to both changes and intensifies in various ways. These are some possible ways to rethink integration and citizenship that allow us to move beyond the nation-centred understandings and distinctions between us and them, and life before and after migration.

Critical questions and suggestions for future research

In the future, social workers, such as refugee consultants, will continue to play a role in the translation of welfare and integration policy and the facilitation of immigrant women's integration in Norway. Fraser's (1989) theory of the politics of needs interpretation allows us to address the multitude relations in the field existing of minority and majority relations and

to address how the actors that are positioned in more ambivalent relations to power interpret people's needs. The findings of this research can provide a window into some of the ways that social work can be disciplining of immigrants, but also emancipating; creating dependency, but also individual's liberation. Continuing to question this dual function might help us to gain better insight into the processes and practices of integration and its facilitation at the local level of integration. These insights are relevant for the study of social work as well as the professional education and training of social workers. It is important that social workers, current and future, are aware of their positionality in relation to their clients, and how this is conditioned, not only, by ethnicity, gender and class, but also by their professional status as providers of welfare. Being aware of the dual role of social workers, as providers of welfare and interpreters of needs, they might more actively take a role in shaping their subjectivities as social workers through the narratives and discourses they rely on. Future research might continue to ask questions about social work on immigration and integration from a transnational perspective and explore more in-depth the different forms of transnational affective labour that people do or wish to do. A variety of critical questions can be raised towards gender and ethnicity in transnational affective labour, for example about the transnational affective labour affects involved in social work that is performed by transnational individuals, such as immigrants. We might also ask if transnational affective labour is a concept that can be used to describe the labour of non-immigrants, when the labour takes on a transnational and affective form. This would raise questions of what the 'transnational' in transnational affective labour means more specifically, and whether it concerns the subjects that perform this labour and the subjectivities that it creates, or whether it is more about the orientation of the labour or the maintenance of transnational relations.

As feminist theorists of affective labour have pointed out, it is necessary to focus on how affective labour continues to be gendered and racialised, which highlights the need to question the gendered and racialised dimensions of transnational affective labour. Furthermore, it can be interesting to raise critical questions about the role of transnational affective labour in social work, not only in the context of integration, but also in international aid, which was a field of work that some of the immigrants highlighted they wished to do. In the expression of the desires for transnational affective labour, there were not made explicit distinctions between paid/unpaid and productive/reproductive forms of affective labour. However, Weeks' (2007) distinction between work and life can be useful in this context, to raise critical questions about the organisation and boundaries of this work, who performs it,

and in which contexts, which may be important for future research on transnational affective labour and social work.

Conclusion

In this thesis I have questioned and challenged the notion that participation in the working life is necessary for successful integration in Norway and have sought to develop new ways for understanding and theorising the work that immigrant women do, and wish to do, and ultimately to rethink integration. I gathered narratives of integration through in-depth interviews with participants who have experienced integrating to Norway, immigrant women, and participants who work with the facilitation of integration, 'refugee consultants' i.e. social workers for the local Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration. I asked how social workers and immigrant women consider work as a necessary or important part of immigrant women's integration to the Norwegian society. Overall, participation in the working life was considered important by all participants. The social workers highlighted the role of the working life as the main social arena in the Norwegian society, and that participation in the working life was important for learning about society and gaining a social network. The narratives show how the strong discursive relations between work and integration are conditioned by the Norwegian understanding of 'gender equality', whereby women's equal participation in work and society is seen as necessary to achieve gender equality. The social workers' narratives also allowed for an interpretation where integration could be possible without participating in the working life, however it must be replaced with another form of social activity, such as volunteering or community work. The immigrant women's narratives of work highlight how participation in the working life has its limits as a means for integration. For example, inclusive and ethnically diverse workplaces were highlighted as helpful for integration, social life and learning the language, meanwhile experiences of exclusion in the workplace did not give the same positive experience of integration. Broader narratives on work and integration should be more attentive to how working conditions impact the ability to integrate through work. Moreover, employment is not only considered a means for integration, but as part of their broader goals in life and for independence.

I engaged with scholarship that has studied integration and discourses of integration in both a wider European context and the specific Norwegian context. There were some overlapping concerns with regards to the conceptions and attitudes towards immigrant women and integration, but also some points of difference. For instance, the concern about a

growing femonationalist rhetoric in discourses of gendered integration had not been studied in the Norwegian context specifically. My findings did identify certain problematic notions of immigrant women and their integration, such as the necessity for them to follow Norwegian ideals of gender equality to become successfully integrated and emancipated. I did not identify any specifically 'femonationalist' rhetoric or narratives that legitimised the gendering and racialization of immigrant women's labour by directing them to social reproductive labour, or the use of tropes of immigrants as suitable domestic workers. Rather, there was a certain resistance against such a development. Moreover, both the reliance on a two-way approach to integration and the articulation of immigrant women's integration as a 'complex problematic'—a complex combination of structural and individual problems—by the social workers, posed as a challenge to both any kind of femonationalist arguments and to the culturalization of immigrant women's problems.

Conducting and analysing empirical material has been foundational for making my broader theoretical arguments. By listening to the narratives of social workers and immigrant women told in in-depth interviews, and interpreting them carefully by using discursive narrative analysis and a transnational lens, I have shown how they draw on broader narratives to explain and understand their experiences, but also how they use their own personal experiences and subjectivity to create alternative narratives and interpretations where the dominant narratives are insufficient. By discovering these alternative narratives and ways of thinking about immigrant women's integration and work, we can find new ways to challenge and disrupt some of the old, inefficient and excluding narratives and discourses.

Recommendations for policymakers

I. Integration policies need to rethink integration by moving beyond relying on locally defined notions of gender equality and employment as markers of successful societal participation, and articulate integration policies in terms of transnational belongings and everyday acts and practices of citizenship. This can help articulate more intersectional integration policies.

II. Integration policies and gender equality policies should be less concerned with individualizing and culturalizing immigrant women's problems to integrate and instead focus on structural barriers for integration. This concerns for instance governmental welfare provision, such as labour market training programmes provided for by the Norwegian Labour and Welfare Administration (NAV) and public childcare services, and continued efforts to diversify the labour market and encourage inclusive workplaces.
    a. The mainstreamed approach to labour market facilitation and training programmes provided for by the state are experienced as a hinder to integration because they do not take into account the needs of immigrant women, such as their language skills and expectations for work.
    b. Public childcare provisions that aim to encourage gender equality in the labour market must have an intersectional approach which acknowledges that the current labour market is divided by gender and race, and that takes into account the childcare needs of immigrant women and men with jobs that have working hours outside the norm.
    c. There is a continued need for the expansion of more inclusive and ethnically diverse workplaces, where immigrants feel welcomed and can participate in the social life at work.

III. The education and training of social workers should address the ambiguous nature of welfare provision and the role of social workers in interpreting their clients' needs.

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