

RAISING CHILDREN IN A NEW CULTURE

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## Chapter 1. Introduction

### My interest in the topic

Living and studying in Norway has given me a lot of opportunities to observe lifestyle, traditions and culture that are different from my own. From the childhood, I was always fascinated by how different and diverse our world is, and I was always happy to learn more about how different nations organize their ways of living, what they believe in, what makes them happy, what they think is right and wrong. That is why I decided to get an education and be involved professionally in the areas that deal with intercultural issues. Living in Norway as a foreigner, and observing life of both Norwegians and foreigners, gave me a lot to think about.

Personally, I have observed how people raised in traditional families and who had “inherited” traditional views (for example, about religion or race), changed their worldview after having travelled, worked abroad or become close friends with people from other countries. What is interesting for me to observe and study, is how adults, who willingly choose to live in another country with different culture, change their views (or not change them), and especially how they experience raising their children in different culture: their challenges, benefits, priorities, values. I am also curious of how the host country and society act towards them, and what they do to include immigrants and their children into society.

For me, being Russian, it is important during my studies to learn more about Norwegian practices of integrating foreign children into the society. In Russia nowadays, we have a lot of immigrant families with different cultural background who are moving to Russia for different reasons. Children of those parents need to be taught and integrated. Using Norwegian as an examples, can give me some ideas and possible techniques that can be used in my own country. I want to contribute to the academic research in this area, and possibly help different institutions to meet the modern society’s demands in Russia. The results and findings may also be used by Norwegians institutions or foreign families living in Norway.

### Relevance, background of the problem and research question

Europe has become a part of a large migration processes since the second half of 20<sup>th</sup> century. People are moving into the continent for different reasons. Many are fleeing from war, others are reuniting with their families and some are pursuing a better life. The development of new communication technologies and increased global exchange in trade and markets, have opened the road for easier access to knowledge and information about foreign countries, their cultures and possibilities in these countries. Globalization has intensified the rate of migration

and influenced cultures and international connections. “Globalization is the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring miles away and vice versa” (Giddens 1990, 64). Globalization has shifted our perception of time and space, and made wide ‘cultural exchange’ possible. According to Schirato and Webb (2003), globalization can be understood as a set of technologies, institutions and networks operating within, and at the same time transforming, contemporary social, cultural, political and economic spheres of activity.

Adults who have immigrated to European countries have brought along their children or given birth to children, which they have to raise inside a new and different culture. According to Statistics Norway, per 1st of January 2017, 16.8 percent of the children were born by immigrants and Norwegian-born immigrant (in per cent of total population) (Statistics Norway 2017).

Norway is a very attractive country to immigrate to. It has one of the highest standards of living in the world and appealing social benefits systems greatly designed for the family life. In 2017 Norway was officially declared by United Nations as the happiest country in the world<sup>1</sup>. Free higher education available in English, has attracted a lot of international students to Norway, despite the general high prices compared to other countries. The oil and gas industry has made the country extra attractive. The last forty years Norway has become part of a global labour market and received oil and gas experts and professional workers from all over the world.

One group of labour immigrants who has come to work in the of oil and gas industry, are professionals from Nigeria. They often had relevant experience from the oil and gas industry in their home country. In addition Norway has received students from Nigeria, who came to get higher education. Some of those students got permanent work in Norway, settled down and had families and children.

The purpose of this study is to increase the understanding of raising children in a foreign country and to find out how this influence their cultural identity. My research questions is: *How do immigrants from Nigeria raise their children in the Norwegian society?*” The study will additionally look at cultural identity in order to find out *how does having children in Norway influence the immigrants’ cultural identity.*

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<sup>1</sup> *The World Happiness Report 2017, which ranks 155 countries by their happiness levels, was released in March 2017 at the United Nations, at an event celebrating International Day of Happiness.*

The Norwegian system and principles for bringing up children are unique and special for many foreigners. Many foreigners can find the Norwegian norms, laws and regulation difficult to understand. Our core beliefs, attitudes and ways we look at this world and perceive it, rise initially from the family and the environment we live in, especially at our young age. As a consequence of this, attention should be payed to how we raise our children – the next generation that will lead this world. Raising a child in a new society and culture may come with certain difficulties, and this gives extra responsibility and challenges to the parents. This study will also look into how parents can benefit from learning different approaches and ways of living in new culture.

## Chapter 2. Parenting in a context

Below I will describe life conditions for children in Norway and Nigeria.

### Growing up in Nigeria

Nigeria is a very culturally diverse and Africa's most populous country. It has approximately 520 languages and over 250 ethnic groups. The population of Nigeria is 178 517 000, of which 87 992 000 are children under age 18 (UNICEF 2017). The official language is English and it was established by the British Empire during the colonial times in order to keep and sustain cultural and linguistic unity of the country. Even though some people can speak their native languages at home, English is used at educational and government institutions, and for doing business and for all the official purposes. The two main religions are Christianity and Islam who 'share' followers approximately in the same proportions.

Religious and traditional systems have established the roles of family members. The father is supposed to be provider of the family, and the mother is carer of the family and the one to take care of the house. The children are supposed to obey and respect their parents. In some regions traditionalists (people who are proponents of spiritual beliefs, and who are neither Christian nor Muslim) and Muslims practise polygamy. They usually have large households. In general Nigerian families generally endorse a patriarchal system (Heaton and Hirschil 1999). In modern days, however, such practices are changing, and the mother can also be the bread winners and fathers can contribute more to household duties.

All ethnic groups in Nigeria abide to a patri-lineal kinship relationship (Ekong 1986). Kinship is extended, and family do not only mean mother, father and children, but also cousins, grandparents, uncles, aunts and in-laws. It is expected that the extended family members are behaving and caring for each other as if they were a nuclear family. (Alber, Haberlein, and Martin 2010). There is a traditional practice of raising children from some of the extended family members as one's own, and this is the most common form of a child fosterage (Bledsoe and Sow 2011).

Nigerian children are expected to behave with respect to elders, which is demonstrated among other things through greetings. It is considered to be very rude to interrupt or contradict an adult (Ohuche 1986). The needs of the family should usually go first, before the children's needs. The children are supposed to help the family and are assigned responsibilities for example for family business, caring for younger siblings or running household errands. They are also expected to represent the family by displaying respectful, and culturally appropriate

behaviour and by this, not to bring shame to the family (Bledsoe and Sow 2011; Ekong 1986; Okoli and Cree 2012).

According to UNICEF, over half of the population in Nigeria lives in poverty (UNICEF 2017). There are major regional disparities. 90 per cent of the poorest people live in the north of the country. The proportion of children enrolled in pre-primary early childhood care centres still remains low at approximately 2.3 million children (UNICEF 2017). This represents about 21 per cent of the population of children in this age group. Primary school enrolment and attendance are improving, but there are wide disparities, with the lowest attendance in the North, in rural areas and among the poorest. Nigeria has 10.5 million out-of-school children - the world's highest number. Girls' primary school attendance has been improved, but this has not been the case for girls from the poorest households (UNICEF 2017).

Many children of primary school age continue to experience physical and psychological violence both in schools and within the family environment. Child labour continues to be a real source of concern depriving many children of the opportunities for schooling and development. 91 per cent of the children aged 2 to 14 years experienced violent discipline (psychological aggression and/or physical punishment) in the past month. It is culturally expected that Nigerian families are large and extended. On average, a Nigerian woman is expected to have 5 children during her childbearing years (UNICEF 2013).

#### The life conditions of children in Norway<sup>2</sup>

In UNICEF's comparison of 29 country in the rich part of the world, Norway was number two. Norwegian children have some challenges and a lot of opportunities.

Three of four children in Norway live with their parents and fewer die because of illness than before. However, every 20<sup>th</sup> child has be victim of serious physical violence from their parents. One out of six children has overweight (or obesity) when they are about nine years of age.

Three of four children live with both of their parents. After divorce 25 per cent of the parents are sharing the care for the children, but most children in this situation stay with the mother. The parents are more involved and use more time with the children now than earlier. 80% of

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<sup>2</sup> The source of the information for this part about the Norwegian living conditions is Norsk Helseinformatikk AS (nhi.no) and "oppvekststatus" from Barne-, ungdoms- og familiedirektoratet (The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs) published March 2015 and updated March 2017.



the children are very satisfied or satisfied with the parents. 33 per cent of the children see at least one of the grandparents once a week.

However, one of four Norwegian children have one or two of the parents with mental illness or alcohol misuse. 'Barnevernet' has an increase in messages from persons that are worried and has more actions towards families and children than ever before, most of them in the children's home.

Four out of ten Norwegian girls being 15-16 years old have symptoms of depression, and one out of ten of the boys.

The numbers of poverty among families with children have increased since 1996. In 2014 9.4 per cent of the children under 18 years old lived in families that for a long time had had a low income. Many of these families are one-parent families. Immigrant families are over-represented in this group. Children from these families are more socially isolated and lonelier than other children, and they have poorer health and less activities in their leisure time. In 2013, 13.4 per cent of all children under 18 had a high risk for poverty or social exclusion. Half of these children had immigrant background.

Norway has become a more pluralistic society. In 2013 almost 15000 children moved to Norway. In the same year 14 per cent of the population between 0 and 17 year were children under 18 that were immigrants or children born in Norway with immigrant parents.

In Norway nine of ten children in the age 1-5 attend kindergartens. Most Norwegian fathers and mothers have paid work. 11 per cent of the children in the 10<sup>th</sup> class level have extra teaching resources. Nine out of ten children are satisfied with the school's everyday life. About 4 per cent of the children are bullied at the school two times every month or more often.

### [Norwegian laws and regulation](#)

Bringing up children in Norway, it is important to know some of the formal principles, laws and regulations. The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (2017) underlines: "It is the responsibility of the parents to provide care and protection for their child or children. If however the parents are experiencing problems or difficulties, the Child Welfare Service is obliged to provide whatever help is necessary to ensure that children and adolescents receive the care they need. The Child Welfare Service's duty is to ensure that children and adolescents who are living in situations or conditions that represent a risk to their health and/or

development receive any help necessary at the time it is needed and to contribute to that children and adolescents grow up in safe, secure and caring circumstances” (Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs 2017). Barnevernet has a set of recommendations and information for parents, and they offer help to resolve conflicts within the family. Family counselling is a free, low-threshold service available nationwide to couples, families and individuals’ (Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs 2017).

Norway has also ratified the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child. The Convention specifies that everyone who is under the age of 18 are children, and that they are encompassed under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child such as:

- the child is protected against all forms of discrimination or punishment on the basis of the status, activities, expressed opinions, or beliefs of the child's parents, legal guardians, or family members
- the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration the right of the child to preserve his or her identity, including nationality, name and family relations
- a child shall not be separated from his or her parents against their will, except when competent authorities subject to judicial review determine
- the child shall have the right to freedom of expression; this right shall include freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media of the child's choice
- respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation, including sexual abuse, while in the care of parent(s), legal guardian(s) or any other person who has the care of the child
- such protective measures should, as appropriate, include effective procedures for the establishment of social programmes to provide necessary support for the child and for those who have the care of the child, as well as for other forms of prevention and for identification, reporting, referral, investigation, treatment and follow-up of instances of child maltreatment described heretofore, and, as appropriate, for judicial involvement

- the right of the child to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health and to facilities for the treatment of illness and rehabilitation of health
- the right of the child to education, and with a view to achieving this right progressively and on the basis of equal opportunity (Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989).

## Chapter 3. Methodology

### Research design

The choice of the method depend on the research question and on the aim of the study. In social sciences there are two main type of research: qualitative and quantitative research.

Quantitative research is less ‘personal’ and usually involves a big volume of participants in order to gather information or get answers which would represent certain group of people’s views, choices or priorities. Quantitative research is formalised, structured and impersonalised. It usually generalises the findings and aims to be objective, and it can answer types of question such as - how much, how many, to what extent and how often (Black 1999; Hammersley and Atkinson 2007).

When the researchers need to find out about people’s encounters, their life stories and worldviews, their subjective vision or evaluation of some events or problems, then qualitative research is the best way (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). Qualitative research is not formalized and in most cases it requires that the researcher have great interpersonal skills in order to establish trusted relationship and construct productive dialogue with the participants. Qualitative research gives great opportunities to collect ‘deep’ data and later analyse it by using existing theories or develop new theories. It is about finding out about someone else’s reality and interpretation of reality which can be presented through language, actions, symbols, non-verbal signs etc. (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007). In qualitative research the aim is to find about particular cases, stories, personal experiences and views. It is not about generalising, formalizing and representativeness, but about discovering someone’s truth and sharing the story.

The nature of this study implies collecting personal data and personal experiences. To answer my research question I have chosen a qualitative research method. Qualitative research provides the necessary tool and techniques to find out detailed and personalized information about the people whose experience can provide sufficient materials and answers for description and discussion. This study aims at exploring, describing and understanding Nigerian immigrant parents in Norway and how they experience being parent in a culture different from the culture they are used to.

Whereas a narrative study reports the stories of a single individual or several individuals, I have chosen a phenomenological study that describes the common meaning of several individuals of their lived experiences related to a concept or a phenomenon (Chreswell 2013). This kind

of study focus on describing what all participants have in common as they experience the phenomenon. The phenomenon in my study is Nigerian parents' experiences of bringing up children in Norway. The basic purpose of phenomenology is to reduce individual experiences with a phenomenon to a description of the universal essence. In my study this will be the essence of foreigners bringing up children in Norway. After having chosen the phenomenon the researcher collects data from persons who have experienced the phenomenon and develops a description of the essence of the experience for all of the individuals.

There are several features that are typically included in all phenomenological studies. Using Moustakas (1994) and van Manen (1990), my study complies with the following:

- An emphasis on the phenomenon, in my case how culture influences Nigerian parents' upbringing of children in Norway
- The exploration of the phenomenon with a group of individuals that have experienced the phenomenon, in my case seven families that have moved from Nigeria to Norway
- A data collection procedure that typically involves interviewing individuals who have experienced the phenomenon, and other sources of data like observations and documents, in my case interviews
- Data analysis that can follow systematic procedures that move from the narrow units of analysis, for example significant statements, in my case following Gioia, Corley and Hamilton (2013) on data analysis procedures, and using quotes as first order codes.
- A phenomenology ends with a descriptive passage that discusses the essence of the experience, what they have experienced and how. In my case this will be in the final chapter (discussion).

### Selection of participants

Since the focus of this study is on immigrant families and their experiences and perspectives, the major part of the fieldwork data was collected from the primary source – well-educated immigrant families from Nigeria with children aged 2 to 16 years old. According to Hammersley and Atkinson, the best way to get quality data is to give a good thinking and limit your participants group: "Participants selected for this study represent the small group of people in the definite settings. Such selection, when focus of research are on the few cases and when it is small-scale, allows to achieve in-depth study" (Hammersley and Atkinson 2007, 3).

The selection of participants for this study has been done as followed.

- Parents in 7 families, where mother and father are both not Norwegian, but have been living in Norway for minimum three and maximum six years.
- Parents that spent their childhood and partly adulthood outside of Norway (in my case in Nigeria, and they have come to Norway from Nigeria, but not from any other country).
- Families that have children at the age of eligibility of attending kindergarten (from at least 2 years old) or school.
- Families with children who are attending Norwegian school or kindergarten (i.e. do not take international education)
- Consider themselves Christian or were born and raised in Christian families.

At least one of the parents has education on college or university level (bachelor or master) When choosing families, it was important to select participants that are still relatively new in the Norwegian culture and who represent first generation immigrants. Three to six years period of living in Norway may be enough for the participants to have received or acquired a certain level of knowledge to understand the host country's culture and traditions, but at the same time still carry the worldview and sense of belonging to Nigerian culture. The selected participants are not completely 'guests' in the host culture, but still they are people who look at the Norwegian culture as foreign and do not take traditions and customs for granted. Three to five years seem to be like a good time to become acquainted to the Norwegian culture and way of living, and to be able to make certain judgements that would be of interest for a researcher. It was important to choose participants who migrated to Norway directly from Nigeria, and who did not have long-term experience of living in another country, so that they would only have two main culture and worldview to compare and adjust to.

Children in the elected families should not attend international schools or kindergartens. They should attend Norwegian educational institutions which gives all the children the education and treatment. This selection allows the presence only of two main cultures both in parents and their children's life.

Nigeria's population is mainly divided between the two big religious groups – those who follow Christianity and those who follow Islam. Choosing participants with Christian background was necessary for me in order to limit participant's group and later present clearer results while analysing my findings. Families with other religions could have given answers coming from

different angles, so in order to achieve 'purer' comparative results, only one religious group was chosen.

Most of the participants in s study were found using the snowball principle. Through one person who was suitable for this research, I was able to find others. I also established some contacts in international churches where I knew potential informants could be found.

After choosing participants that were in accordance with all the criteria set for this study, the next target was to choose the right settings for the interview.

### Data collection

In this study I use primary data collected by field work that was conducted in parallel with working on theories and studying relevant literature. The field work consisted of semi-structured interviews with open questions. Such interviews ensure that participants can express themselves fully and it is possible to avoid misunderstanding. According to Atkinson, interviewing is one of the most popular data collection method employed by qualitative researchers because of its ability to capture contextual and pragmatic views of the world (Atkinson 2005).

The interview make it possible for the researcher to improvise when the informants answer in an unexpected way or do not want to answer the questions. This kind of improvisation might, however reduce the standardization of the interview situation. In high standardized interviews all the informants are having the same and identical questions presented the same way and in the same order. In low standardized interviews the researcher is more free and flexible and can follow the informants' way of thinking and order of arguments. In this study I used a standardized questionnaire with open questions as a starting point, but felt free to improvise when it was needed.

The interviews were made face to face with all the participants, except one, who after the meeting with me and answering several questions, said that he/she would prefer to give the answers in writing, which made them more comfortable and relaxed.

### Interview guide

The interview guide contained a majority of open questions. The purpose was to open a road for broad answers. Sometimes during interviews I tried to reformulate some of the questions in order to ensure that informants understood the question.

The interview guide for the families was divided into seven parts and it covered the following topics:

1. Background questions (such as age, education etc.).
2. Values (such as “What do you emphasize in raising your children?” or “What qualities do you value in people most?” or “What would make you be proud of you children?”).
3. Situations (asked to describe how would informant act in offered situation such as “Your daughter refuses to speak English at home”, “Your children are arguing against going to church every Sunday”).
4. Methods/parenting styles (questions like “How do you get the children to listen to you? What do you do, when they do not do what you expect or tell them to do?” or “In Norway it is very important to make every decision together with child. What do you think about that?”).
5. Role of parents.
6. Socialization and adaptation (questions like “Do you have Norwegian friends that you regularly meet? In what way do you discuss raising children with them?”)
7. Other general questions (“What are the benefits or disadvantages of raising children in Norway?” and “By now you have been living in Norway for some time. In what way living in Norway changed your ideas on parenting?”).

### Data analysis

After the data collection was carried out, the interviews were transcribed. The data analysis was then done in line with Gioia, Corley and Hamilton (2013) and Hammersley and Atkinson (2007). This technique is used to secure a “qualitative rigor” in the study. Studying social construction processes implies that we focus more on the means by which members of a group go about constructing and understanding their experience and less on the number and frequency of measureable occurrences. In my analysis, I wanted to capture concepts relevant to human experience in terms that are adequate at the level of meaning to people living that experience and adequate for scientific theorizing about experience.

First, I used open coding where each single interview were coded based on words and expressions used by the informants. I were seeking similarities and differences among the many categories. The codes are called first order codes, and in the findings chapter, some of them are found in the left column of the tables. When all the interviews were coded in first order codes, the similarities and differences in the codes were studied. First order codes that expressed the



same things, were added to define first order categories, but were the language and expressions from the informants were maintained. Afterwards, first order categories were organized in theoretical categories or second order themes. This was done to explain the data theoretical. The second order themes were then aggregated to dimensions in line with the chosen theoretical perspectives.

### Ethics

Qualitative research implies gathering a lot of personal information. It has therefore to be carried out in a very delicate manner. As a researcher I have to guarantee confidentiality to all the participants so that they can share their personal experience freely and without any fear. Before I conducted the research all informants needed to be informed about the aim and description of the project, and they signed consent and confidentiality forms.

The research description of this study was approved by my school (supervisor). When approaching the informants, I explained the purpose of the project and how their anonymity would be secured in the final thesis. Consent to participate were given when the informants accepted location and time for the interview. In the data collection part, I emphasized building trust by discussing the purpose of the study and how the data would be used. I have tried to communicate the project in a clear straightforward language.

While collecting and working with the data, I had to assure that all the data and information would be treated with absolute anonymity and that their personal identity would never be disclosed. For this purpose, I have created and made all the participants sign Informed Consent Form, where I explained the aim of the research and gave a non-disclosure agreement. Part of the form was “Confidentiality: Your name and identifying information will not be associated with any part of the written report of the research. During interviews, voice recording devices will be used. All of your information and interview responses will be kept confidential. The researcher will not share your individual responses with anyone other than the research supervisor”. The date for finishing the project is 01.07.2017, and all the data will be anonymized and all the recordings will be deleted no later than 01.07.2017).

The research was made in correspondence with recommendations from NESH - Guidelines for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences, Law and the Humanities.

While doing qualitative research, all the researchers should keep in mind the possible influence that the study can have after it is published. Most of the research that are done has public and social relevance. It means that conclusions and findings can contribute to shaping public

opinion on certain topic or affect and influence inter-relationships between individuals and groups of people or within the society. This gives a lot of responsibility to the researcher and requires full attention and concentration in choosing the right approaches and methods.

Not only the researchers should treat the informants and participants with respect, but the same should be done in relation to other researchers and their findings. It means both by choosing the language when referring to others' works or findings, and also to use correct references when using theories and earlier research.

Since the topic this study is personal and sensitive, I tried my best to establish free, respectful and trustful relationship with every informant, so that the informants could speak their mind and give me sincere and good answers to my questions.

### My role as a researcher

Hans Georg Gadamer's (1989) research and his concepts prejudices, hermeneutic circle and fusions of horizons are important concepts for those who does research on cultures. Every researcher (or reader) starts the interpretation with fore-conceptions and projects a certain meaning of context or subject of research. During the process of investigating the subject, the initial fore-conceptions can be replaced by the more appropriate ones. He states that things need to be understood in a historical and cultural perspective, and that understanding can be fully reached only when the fore-meanings that it begins with are not arbitrary. According to Gadamer, we need to be conscious of our own horizons and prejudices, and in the process of interaction between two cultures (or two persons, or text and reader), the fusion of horizons may take place (Gadamer 1989).

When I did my data collection and analysis, I tried to take into consideration this text by Gadamer. It helped me to try not to be subjective and biased against others' cultures and to know that the truth can only be found in authentic dialogue when questions are constantly asked and pre-knowledge corrected.

I am a white Russian student without children, and this fact may have had an impact of the informants. I share the fact of being a foreigner with the informants, but my skin colour and native culture is different from theirs.

### Reliability and validity

Qualitative research uses a naturalistic approach that seeks to understand phenomena in

context-specific settings, such as "real world setting where the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest" (Patton 2002, 39). Since reliability and validity are rooted in positivist perspective then they should be redefined for their use in a naturalistic approach. Patton (2002) states that validity and reliability are two factors which any qualitative researcher should be concerned about while designing a study, analyzing results and judging the quality of the study. Healy and Perry (2000) assert that the quality of a study in each paradigm should be judged by its own paradigm's terms. For example, while the terms Reliability and Validity are essential criterion for quality in quantitative paradigms, in qualitative paradigms the terms credibility, neutrality or confirmability, consistency or dependability and applicability or transferability are to be the essential criteria for quality (Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

Collecting data by interviews can create biases. There are several sources of biases, for example the context, the interviewer and the informants. With the context is meant the surroundings of the interviews. Most of my interviews were carried out in the informants' home. This situation can create feeling of being intruded or 'looked into' in a not wanted way, and create the need to color the answers. When both parents were present, they may also have put restrictions on themselves and not been so open that they could have been if they were interviews separately. The social distance between interviewer and informants may also create a bias. My sample consisted of informant with high education, so the socio-economic distance was not big, except for the race issue. The interview is more vulnerable to biases on this kind, than is surveys and other data collection techniques.

The respondents can contribute to biases or mistakes in the interview by not remembering details or periods in their lives, or by lack of knowledge or motivation. Systematic biases as the "yes-effect" on what is social wish fullness (for example a career for the children), by be present. It is also common that informants speak with a "broad pencil" to make his or her story better, or that psychological mechanisms like displacement creates biases.

The reliability of qualitative research can be increased by different methods. In line with recommendation by Creswell (2013) I have taken detailed field notes, used tape recording and later transcribed the tape.

I have tried to clarify my position as a researcher from the outset of the study (see Introduction, My interest in the topic, page 1) to avoid biases in questions and the interpretations.

In all cases, both parents were invited to participate in the interviews and answer the questions. Both mother and father were interviewed together, except for the three mothers, that couldn't be present on the interview due to other personal appointments. So, three interviews were conducted with fathers, and four interviews with both father and mother. Six of the interviews were made in the informant's houses, and one – in a public place (coffee place).

To increase the validity of my study, I have emphasized building trust with the participants. I had beforehand learnt to know the culture. After the interviews, I also checked for misunderstandings. A possible problem in the interviewing, was that sometimes the mothers let their husbands do the talking, and sometimes they even went to a different room. All interviews were conducted in English.

## Chapter 4. Theoretical framework

In this chapter, I will first explain the socialization concept and theories on socialization. Next, I define migration and explain how migration influence upbringing for many children in the world today. I also present theories of culture, both a descriptive theory and a dynamic theory. In the last parts of the chapter, I will shortly elaborate on identity, and I will review some of the literature on children upbringing in a culture that is foreign to their parents.

### Socialization

Socialization is normally understood as a process when an individual receives a set of skills which are necessary for obtaining quality in life and in the society, shapes his identity, and develops the individual system of values and social norms that are accepted in his society and culture (Hoem 1978; Harvey and Evans 1994; Rogoff 2003; Corsaro 1997). The first source of socialization for a human being is family (or its equivalent substitute). Most of the socialization process is normally done in the childhood or person's young age through various socialization institutions like families, kindergartens, schools, leisure organizations and churches, , and through language and peer groups. Nevertheless, there can be situations when adults are forced to go through the process of socialization again, for example, when they migrate to another society with different social regulations. Socialization during childhood may depend on the parenting styles chosen by the family. Parenting is believed to be shaped by culture and it is transmitted from generation to generation (Glenn 1994; Phoenix and Woollett 1991; Quinn 2005). Carlos E. Sluzki states that "families, in their function as main socializing agents, convey not only the norms and mores of their culture at large, but also the specific styles, modes, values, and myths that constitute an ad hoc, family specific view of the world and of their own history" (Sluzki 1979, 385).

According to Thomas and Anderson, socialization is understood as a process through which an individual forms a relationship to other individuals, commonly of the same species. (Thomas and Anderson 2013). In their book, the authors discuss the theories, processes and impacts of socialization. They compare middle class American families and other cultures. Their concepts can be useful for this research. Thomas and Anderson elaborate on parenting and family socialization within a cultural context. Socialization is defined as a process of social interaction through which children become functional members of a society. In every society the socio-cultural context is important to define what it means to be a functional member. Parents and caregivers play very important roles in the socialization process. Thomas and Anderson note that "much of the psychological research concerning parents' contribution to their children's

functioning is conducted with white middle-class families in the United States and other Western societies, and little is known about parenting and socialization approaches in non-Western regions where a majority of the world's population resides". Thomas and Anderson discuss the relevance of the cultural context in understanding parenting and socialization. There is evidence that socialization goals and practices vary among people from different cultural groups, so it is important to know those differences when doing research in the area of intercultural communication (Thomas and Anderson 2013).

Based on previous research in the area, Thomas and Anderson developed a conceptual model which helps to understand the influence of culture on parenting and socialization (Figure 1). According to them, broad cultural models concerning autonomy, relatedness, autonomous-relatedness and religious worldviews influence parenting ethno theories which in turn influence parents' socialization goals and practices. Demographic factors such as socioeconomic status, immigration status, and rural or urban dwelling also impact parents' socialization goals and practices. Child outcomes are most closely associated with parents' socialization goals and practices, and child characteristics such as temperament, gender, and their perceptions of the parenting they receive, can impact the parents' socialization goals and child outcomes directly (Thomas and Anderson 2013, 60).

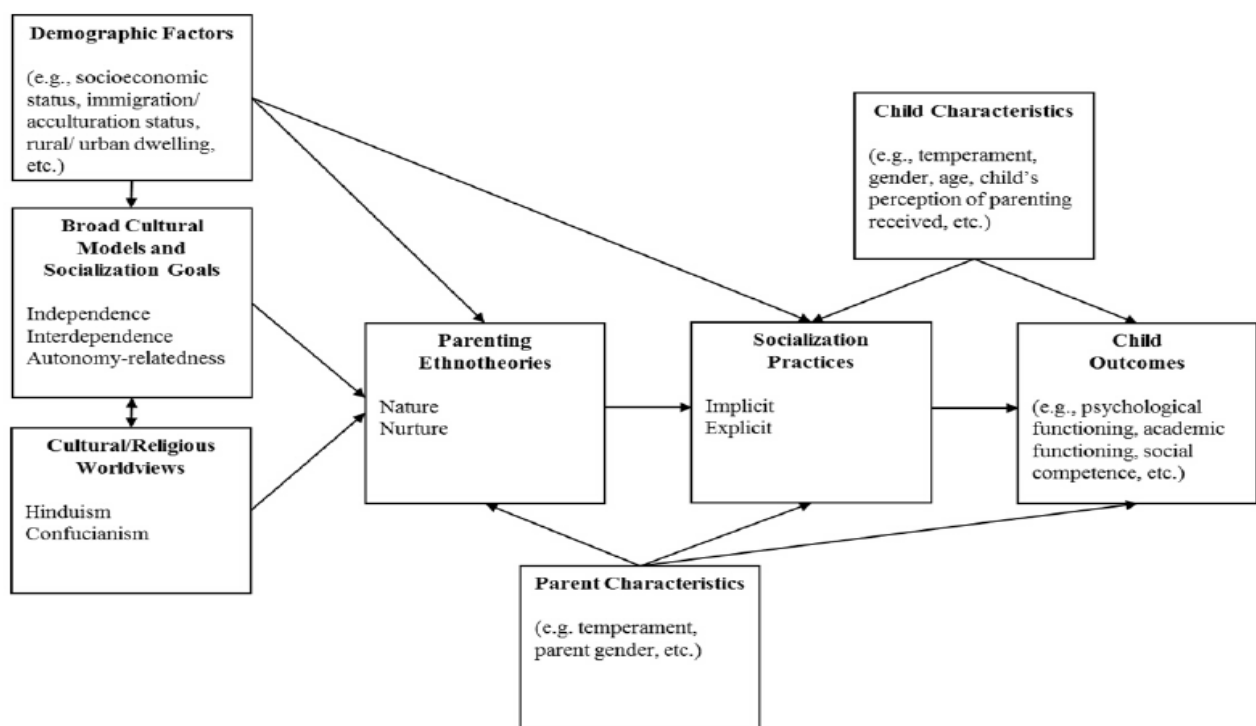


Figure 1. Conceptual model by Thomas and Anderson to understand the influence of culture on parenting and socialization.

When we situate parenting into a cultural context, it can provide explanations for why parents choose a particular style of parenting and why they act the way they do. It also deepens the understanding of different cultures and helps to prevent the common prejudices against parenting of diverse cultural groups (Thomas and Anderson 2013, 72).

### Migration

Migration makes knowledge about culture significant. Migration itself has a long history. Throughout millions years of our planet's existence human beings migrated for different reasons. People have not stopped moving, and nowadays, due to development of technologies and relatively easy access to information, it is easier to move than ever before. UNESCO (2017) gives the following definition of migration:

“Turning to the concept of migration, it is the crossing of the boundary of a political or administrative unit for a certain minimum period of time. It includes the movement of refugees, displaced persons, uprooted people as well as economic migrants. Internal migration refers to a move from one area (a province, district or municipality) to another within one country. International migration is a territorial relocation of people between nation-states” (UNESCO, Migrant/Migration, 2017).

According to the official statistics from the International Organization for Migration (2015), the year 2015 became the year with the highest recorded number of international migrants worldwide, ever, having reached 244 million people, compared to about 214 million people in 2010, and 150 million in 2000 (International Organization for Migration, 2015).

Migration means that people move into a new society. The immigrants themselves, policy makers and people in the new society can choose between three main approaches to adapt to their new situation: assimilation, integration and segregation. Berry (1992) presents four acculturation strategies: integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalization. According to him, integration happens when the new culture is adopted and at the same time the heritage culture is maintained. Assimilation means the full acceptance of a host culture and rejecting people's heritage culture. Separation occurs when the new culture is discarded and only the heritage culture is maintained. Lastly, marginalization happens when both host and heritage cultures are rejected.

Behavioural acculturation occurs when immigrants in the new society adopt visible traits of the host culture, such as greeting styles, language and ways of dressing. When the internalization of host culture values and an emotional attachment take place, we can talk about psychological acculturation (Berry 1992). Parents' willingness and ability to blend in with a new culture may depend on how different the new culture is from their own. The bigger the

difference between the host and heritage groups (e.g., parenting/socialization values, dietary congruence or language), the more difficult the acculturation process is (Berry 2007). Cultural distance illustrates the difference in cultural models between the new and the home country.

Migration influences societies regardless of the migration rate. There are always members of a society who ‘makes the change’ by moving in or out, and as a result changing or affecting both.

### What is culture?

Culture is a main concept in this study. Coming from Nigeria and meeting the Norwegian society, both the parents and the children will see and experience differences. Culture is a concept used to describe and understand these differences. There are many definitions of the term ‘culture’. In general, many authors agree that culture is associated with context, with groups of people doing something together, creating their own meanings and values, having certain worldviews and behaviour (Hofstede 2001; Eriksen 2001; Dahl 2016; Monaghan and Just 2000).

The meaning of the term ‘culture’ comes from Latin word *cultura*, which means cultivation of the land, and *cultus*, which is associated with cultivation of the gods. In this way culture represent human activity, both processing nature and the activity of the mind (Dahl 2016; Monaghan and Just 2000).

In science, there are different perspectives on culture. A main difference is to look at culture as *something you have* versus culture as *something you do*. Dahl 2016 labels the first one as a descriptive concept of culture and the last as a dynamic one. The different perspectives serve different purposes in the analyses of culture, and in my analysis of upbringing children by Nigerian parents in Norway, I will use both. I start out with explaining the descriptive concept of culture.

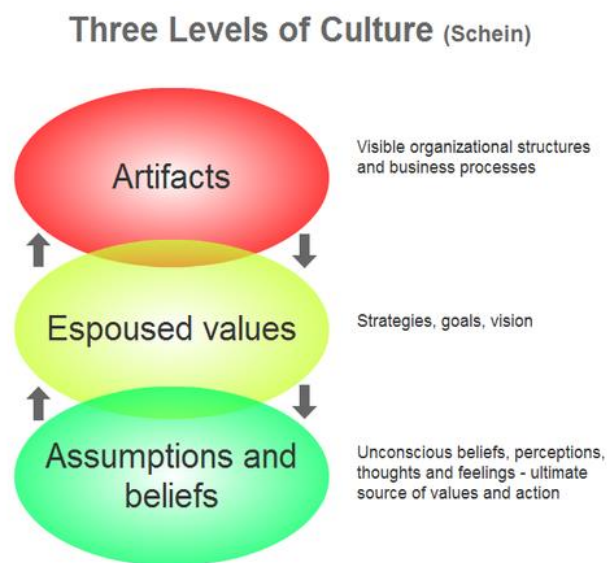
The Norwegian anthropologist Hylland Eriksen defines culture as “abilities, notions and forms of behaviour (Eriksen 2001, 3). By this definition he emphasized that culture is historically anchored and you learn culture by living in and being part of a society. What we learn is becoming part of how we think, and how we interpret the surroundings - almost like conscious or unconscious codes. Later I will come back to this and discuss how it is possible to have and be able to cope with different sets of codes depending on the context and situation.

Paul G. Hiebert’s defines culture as “the more or less integrated systems of ideas, feelings and values and their associated patterns of behaviour and products shared by a group of people who



organize and regulate what they think, feel and do” (Hiebert 2008). Culture is in everything that we do and see, and many things that happen in this world should be looked or analysed by a cultural perspective.

Edgar Schein (2010) is most famous for his work on organizational culture, but his main concepts - assumptions and beliefs, espoused values and artifacts – can also be used in a more generic way (see figure 2).



*Figure 2: Schein's three levels of culture*

The most important part of Schein's research may be that he emphasizes that culture has both visible and invisible parts, and both conscious and unconscious parts. He differentiates between three levels of culture. The first level represents the artifacts which account for visible signs that are easy to discern. They can be seen, heard and felt. It can be language, clothing, products, rituals and myths. This level is easy to observe but hard to decipher: one can see such artifacts, but we may not be able to interpret them without deeply understanding the culture they represent. The meanings of the artefacts can become clearer if the researcher or observer studies and lives inside the observed culture for a long period (Schein 2010, 25). For studying children's upbringing in a foreign culture, the artefact concept can be useful in interpreting the visible signs of the foreign culture and the parents understanding of the host country's members.

The next level of culture according to Schein, is espoused beliefs and values. It is represented by ideas, aspirations, shared values and shared assumptions, goals and philosophies. They may or may not be congruent with the behaviour and other artefacts. When discussing this level, it is important to mention the concept of social validation, which means that certain beliefs and values are confirmed only by the shared social experience of the group. Schein gives the example that any given culture cannot prove that their religious belief are superior to the belief of another culture, but if the members reinforce each other's beliefs and values, then they can be taken for granted. Later those beliefs and values can be embodied into the ideology or philosophy, which serves as a guide when dealing with uncertainty or difficult events (Schein 2010, 26-27). Studying children's upbringing abroad, this concept of espoused beliefs and values can be used in analysing what stays behind the visible signs, how parents may explain or justify their behaviour and attitude towards the unknown, and also find the correlation between their statements and actions.

The third level of culture is basic underlying assumptions. When a certain solution to a problem works repeatedly, people tend to take it for granted. What once were a suggestion or hypothesis, gradually comes to be treated as reality. Such basic assumptions tends to be non-confrontable and non-debatable, and hence extremely hard to change. To learn something new requires people to reconsider and re-examine the most stable parts of cognitive structure, which is sometimes called 'frame breaking'. Such re-examination can often be accompanied by anxiety and destabilization of one's internal world. Rather than tolerate such anxiety people tend to communicate or associate more with other people with the same set of basic assumptions, who understand the world and events in more or less the same way. Culture at this level provides people with a sense of identity, tells people who they are, how to behave and how to feel good about themselves. The power of culture is that shared assumptions are mutually reinforced and given great influence by this reinforcement. Basic underlying assumptions deal with the "fundamental aspects of life - the nature of time and space, the nature and human activities. It also deals with the nature of truth and how we discover it, the correct way for the individual and the group to relate to each other. It includes the relative importance of work, family, and self-development and the proper role of men and women; and the nature of the family" (Schein 2010, 27-32; 32). Using Schein's culture perspective can thus, in this study, contribute to a deeper understanding of the essence of the participants' culture. It may help to discover what lies behind their statements and provide a way to understand why they actually behave the way they do.

Schein, when discussing the importance of knowing the cultures for the leaders of different organizations, states that “the bottom line for leaders is that if they do not become conscious of the cultures in which they are embedded, those cultures will manage them. Cultural understanding is desirable for all of us, but it is essential to leaders if they are to lead” (Schein 2010, 22). This citation can probably be used in relation to parents, as they are to lead their children and they are the one who are in the process of embedding into the new culture.

### A descriptive concept of culture

Within the descriptive concept of culture, Hofstede is one of the most famous researchers. Hofstede defines culture as ‘‘collective programming of the mind (...) that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from another (...) it manifests itself, not only in values, but in more superficial ways: in symbols, heroes and rituals’’ (Hofstede 2001, 1; 9). Hofstede identified four, later five dimensions that could be used to describe differences between national culture (and also organizational culture and management cultures) in these countries. In this study, I will use these dimensions to investigate if they are useful to describe and understand how Nigerian parents think of upbringing children in Norway and how they describe the differences between Nigeria and Norway. The dimensions are (Hofstede 2001):

- Individualism and collectivism
- Femininity versus masculinity
- Power distance
- Uncertainty avoidance
- Long term orientation
- Indulgence versus restraint

The individualism and collectivism dimensions are measured by the extent to which people in the society are integrated into groups. It indicates whether members of the society or institutions prioritise themselves and their immediate families versus extended family or public/social group interests. It is about caring more about the “I” or “we”. Collectivistic society implies that its members have high loyalty to the interests of the social group they belong to. “Individualism stands for a society in which the ties between individuals are loose: everyone is expected to look after him/herself and his/her immediate family only (...) Collectivism, however, stands for a society in which people from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people’s lifetime continue to protect them

in exchange for unquestioning loyalty” (Hofstede 2001). On this dimension Norway scores relatively high level, meanwhile and Nigeria scores relatively low level.

The femininity versus masculinity dimension is associated with a situation where the society gives more value to ‘masculine’ attributes such as assertiveness, material things, achievements and material rewards for success. Its opposite accounts for care, modesty, care for the weak and quality of life. Women and men more or less equally share attributes like caring and modesty. On the contrary, in more masculine societies, there is a big distance between the role of a women and that of a man. In the analysis of my findings, this dimension can possibly point out the priorities of the families and different attitudes towards raising children by different genders. Masculinity is extremely low in the Nordic countries and comparatively high in African countries, including Nigeria.

The power distance dimension shows the extent to which members of an organization or a social institution with less power accept the fact that power is distributed unequally. A high level on this dimension indicates that the members of the society follows established order and hierarchy without much doubts Low level on this dimension means that the members of the society question the existing order and power distribution. The power distance dimension very high scores for African countries and much lower for northern European countries. This dimension can possibly help identify and analyse power relations inside the family and show who has the authority in important decision making.

The next dimension, uncertainty avoidance, shows the extent to which society tolerate ambiguity, and what its members feel towards something unknown or unexpected. It can also include acceptance of deviant ideas and behaviour. Societies with high level of uncertainty avoidance tend to have and follow strict rules and regulations, whereas societies with low levels are more open minded towards anything unusual and can have fewer regulations. This may be useful when analysing the ability to accept and adjust to new things in the host societies and the readiness to accept or change to new norms inside the family. On uncertainty avoidance Norway and Nigeria score almost the same

The long-term orientation dimension suggests a strong connection between past and future actions. Societies with low levels on this dimension tend strictly to follow traditions and customs when making decisions. Societies with high levels on long-term orientation are more pragmatic and flexible. Nigeria scores very low on this dimension, which means that its culture is normative, and not pragmatic. Norway has a bit higher.

Indulgence versus restraint was not among the original Hofstede's dimensions, but added later in new projects. This dimension measures the extent to which members of the society value happiness, and to which extent they allow free gratification of basic and natural human desires related to enjoying life. The societies with low scores control gratification of need and control it with strict regulations. On indulgence Nigeria scores higher than Norway.

Like Hofstede, Richard D. Lewis (2006) also has a descriptive perspective on culture. He categorises three types of cultures: Linear-active (LA), Multi Active (MA) and Reactive (RA) (see Figure 3). In short, LA cultures are task-oriented, factual, structured, efficient and cool. Under this category we find countries as Britain, Switzerland, Germany and Norway. MA cultures have scores higher on interpersonal skills, they are more talkative, warm, and emotional, and they can improvise quickly. Latin America, Portugal and Nigeria are falling into this category. RA cultures are described as polite, introverted, but attentive listeners that also are accommodative. We find countries like Japan, Korea, and Vietnam in this category. In general, Lewis argues that most countries are situated somewhere in between these three angles.

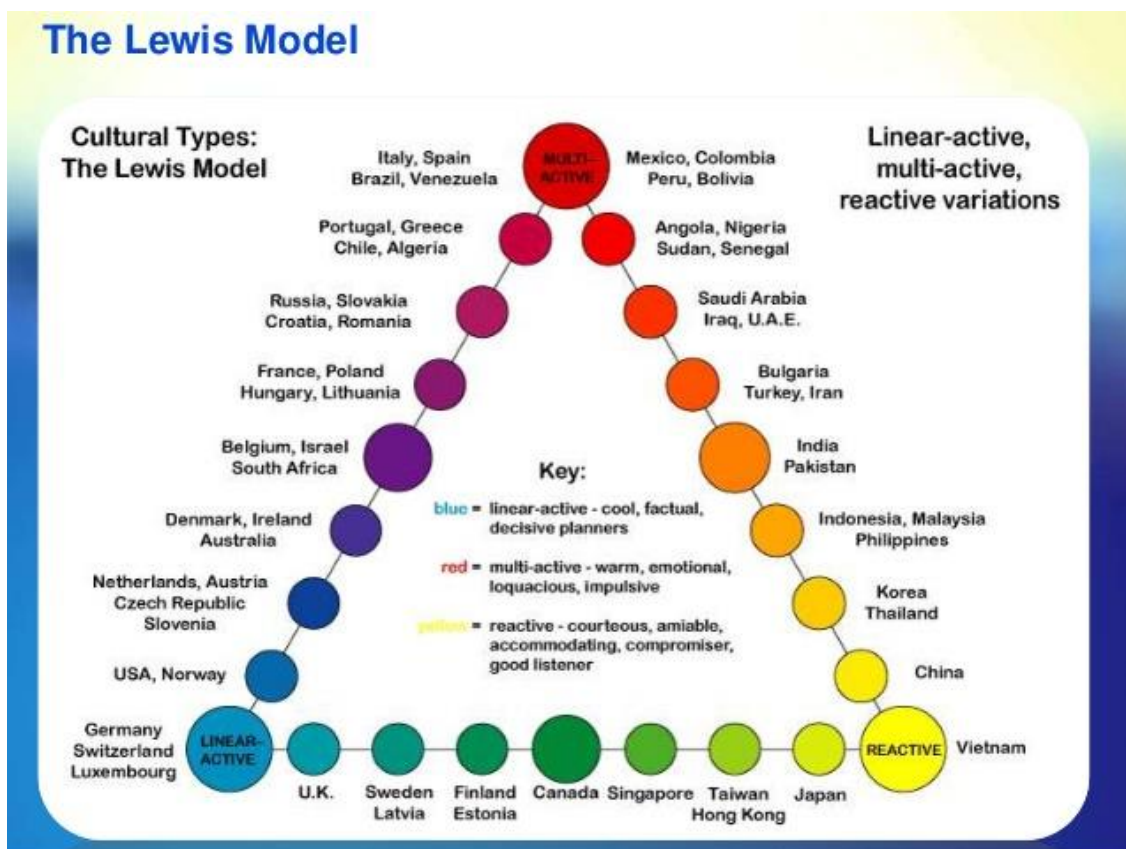


Figure 3: Lewis's LMR-triangle

### Towards a dynamic concept of culture

Hofstede's understanding of culture is a static one. It describes what actually exists, whether you like it or not. According to Dahl (2016), we need this descriptive essentialist approach to culture when we are searching for traits that are common to people with similar cultural background, when we try to explain people's behaviour and acts in terms of their culture, when we want to compare cultures and when we describe cultural differences (Dahl 2016, 34). However, when people move from one culture to a new one, we might be interested to get to know if something new are created when people try to learn and adapt to the new context and situation. It can be possible, when parents and children communicate with parents, children, teachers and kindergarten employees, that something different will develop that are not completely like the Norwegian nor the Nigerian culture. People have also different gender, age, education and power that can influence established ways of doing things. In these cases, we need a more dynamic constructivist approach to culture (Dahl 2016). Is culture is something embodied and static? Is it something that we do?

In the functionalistic perspective on culture, where Schein is the most famous author, all human behaviour have a function to maintain a particular culture (Demers 2007). Everyone in the same group belonged to the same culture but with different roles. Culture is here something you have, like all other characteristics. Although it is difficult, the culture is here something you can change by taking decisions and change attitudes and behaviours.

Dahl argues that "an essentialist culture has an essence, a core that expresses homogeneity and particularity in a certain culture, for example, skills, behaviours and conceptions that are seen as characteristic of this particular culture" (Dahl 2016, 38). He further argues that this description of essence is not necessarily objective and value neutral and that one cannot assume that all people of a certain culture share values, rules and norms (the so-called essence). Using functionalist and descriptive definitions of culture, for example Hofstede - "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishing the members of one human groups form another" (Hofstede 2001), it makes sense to talk about cultural differences, and even cultural collisions as Lewis do (Lewis 2006). Dahl's argument is that by using these kind of definitions you are thinking of culture as something you have and that something you belong to. However, people for example, may move to another country, or study intercultural communication, or have friends from different parts of the world etc., and thus they can observe and choose for themselves to behave differently or to value things different from their own culture, and so we might need a more dynamic perspective on culture.

### A dynamic concept of culture

The dynamic approach to culture is in opposition to the static and functionalistic one (Dahl 2016). When Dahl builds up his arguments that culture is a dynamic concept, he first sites Hylland Eriksen: “culture or cultures, if one prefers, are not indivisible packages of etiquette that one either has or does not have. People are cultural hybrid” (Eriksen 1994, 14 in Dahl 2016). Second, Dahl emphasizes the work of Fredrik Barth that talked about culture as something distributed within a population. Each element is the common property of some people, but not others. Therefore, it is interesting to study how different cultural elements are distributed among individuals who share a particular cultural background. As Barth puts it, “no account of the natives’ point of view can have general validity” (Barth 1994, 120 in Dahl 2016). Third, Dahl quotes Iben Jensen and her modern perspective on culture: “Culture is multiple practices that are performed and negotiated in different social relations” (Dahl 2016). Using this perspective, it is possible to think that Nigerian mothers, fathers and children in Norway share some elements of their culture, but also that children that are meeting other Norwegian and foreign children share and develop other elements. In the same way fathers that have paid work and meet colleagues, will develop other cognitive maps than their wives if they do not have paid work outside the family.

In line with this, Marita Svane states that culture must be understood and interpreted as something the individual is and does. In her phenomenological approach, culture becomes a form of interpretation that is linked to each individual. The individual creates his or her interpretation based on this frame of interpretation and acts accordingly (Svane 2004, 380 in Dahl 2016). Using this to understand Nigerian families in Norway, we will not only expect differences between families, but also differences within each family.

### Identity

The word ‘identity’ originates from Latin word *idem*, which means ‘the same’. By identity we understand characteristic of a person, group or culture that are more or less invariable over time (Williams 1989; Hall and Du Gay 1996; Haslam et al. 2014; Fearon 1999). In everyday life, identity refers to two main meanings. First, it is when we want to identify the person in a ‘formal’ way in order to distinguish him/her from other people – for example, by asking for an identification card. The second meaning is what a person, or a group of people, thinks about himself/themselves and their belongings. This second use of the word ‘identity’ refers to an area of psychology that deals with aspects like behaviour, thought and reactions (Dahl 2016, 193).

While growing up, a person goes through a stage where he or she is searching for his or her own personal identity. Cultural identity begins to form in the family during childhood, later through educational institutes and in encounters with other people. This process may be never ending as the person goes through life and gets new experience of different kinds. We can say that cultural identity is a form of social identity that is constructed through relationships with other people in a given time period (Jensen et al. 2011).

A core or ego is developed during upbringing that can determine how he or she is different from others. Over some years a more or less constant self-perception is established. An individual has an ego, but also usually a family, and a residence, and live in a region in a nation. These different spheres are sometimes called concentric circles (Dahl 2016, 193). According to main psychological theories, personal identity cannot be established without interacting with others. By means of interaction with others, a person can also change identity or activate different parts of his or her identity depending on the context and the situations. Much of a personal identity can be relatively stable, it can also be reconstructed and partly changed during the lifetime of the individual.

Since most people in this world grow up in a family, are attending kindergartens and schools, it is meaningful to speak of a cultural identity. Cultural identity refers to belonging to a certain group or culture, and how persons activate their cultural belonging when interacting with people from other social groups (Dahl 2016). There are two main approaches to cultural identity corresponding to the two main perspectives on culture.

The descriptive concept of culture is used by some researches when they discuss cultural identity (Dahl 2016). When using this approach, cultural identity is characterized by some particular attributes of one nation in a way that all members of selected society can be described by that attribute (such as drinking habits, leisure preferences etc.). The problem with this approach is that it can be unreliable. It suggests that all the members of a particular culture have 'typical' attributes, which can be proven not correct by simple statistical methods.

This brings us to a wider and more complicated approach towards understanding cultural identity. Dynamic cultural identity implies that all of us act differently in different situations and adopt multiple identities. Humans create identity in human encounters, and demonstrate the identity through for example behaviour, gestures and clothing, depending on the environment and the aim of a particular contact or encounter.



There are many dimensions of identity – such as language, religion, profession, education and family (Dahl 2016, 195). Those dimensions can be overlapped or activated depending on its relevance in a particular situation. For example, we can probably expect that foreigners will activate different dimensions of their identity in different situation in the new country. When we can activate different parts of our identity, it might also be possible to change the identity (Dahl 2016). On this background we could expect that Nigerian family members living in Norway might change their identity or activate different parts of their identity in different situations.

In our globalised world, with a lot of possibilities to connect with other people with different background from all over the world, it is easy to identify yourself with many groups or sometimes even cultures. During a lifetime or in different contexts and situations, a person can belong to various groups. As a result, she or he can develop multiple identities. It is even possible to have contradictory identities, or the person can be identified in various ways by different groups of other people. Factors and attributes of identities as gender or skin colour, for example, can be overlooked or negotiated depending of the settings where the communication takes place. By applying a dynamic cultural approach to identity, we can say that identity to a certain extent, can be *negotiated*. It is not something that a person has, but it is what he or she makes relevant under certain circumstances (Dahl 2016).

In a situation where a person identifies himself with his homeland culture, but he or she is living in another culture, some conflict and contradictions can arise based on the identity and wish for belonging. For example, it could be expected that a person from a foreign country who resides in Norway, can get problems in his extended family for any type of behaviour that is not associated with their own culture. In social encounter with Norwegians, any unusual behaviour or thinking may be treated as foreign, weird or sometimes even unacceptable.

Children, who are growing up in immigrant families, are always exposed to different cultures and norms. They see one way outside, in schools, kindergartens and streets), and they see another way of doing things inside their families. Such children are often referred to as a *third-culture kids* – kids, which do not have a sense of belonging to any culture in particular (neither their parents' culture, nor the host country's culture), but who can feel the same with other who grew up in between cultures. Drs. Ruth and John Hill Useem came up with the third-culture kids term when they were studying children of Americans living in India, and they gave this definition:

“A third-culture kids (TCK) is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her the developmental years outside the parents’ culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK’s life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background” (Pollock et al. 2010, 19).

Parents of such children may not to the same extent as their children, have been influenced by the new culture. Parents may tend to preserve their own culture at least at home – within their immediate family, but the children might already have experienced and learnt several cultures simultaneously. The values of such children may be significantly different from their parents’ values (Dahl 2016, 204), and transmission of values from parents to children can be difficult or can cause conflicts.

Not to have a sense of belonging to any culture may cause what it is called loss of identity, and can trigger depression or cause other negative experiences. It is, however, possible that the flexibility it develops in the children, may open a way for parents to be or feel more included into the society they live in.

#### Previous research in the area

There are much research culture, identity, socialization and child upbringing in new cultures.. To my knowledge, no qualitative or quantitative research have been done on Nigerian parenting in Norway.

Lisa Salo-Lee (2006) has investigated different perspectives on intercultural competence and how mutual learning is required in today’s globalised and multicultural world. She emphasizes intercultural competence studies in general are often culturally biased and based mainly on Western views. Salo-Lee also points out the importance of professional expertise and cultural knowledge, and concludes that ‘orientation to others, listening, understanding, empathy, and contextual sensitivity are increasingly needed in changing circumstances’ (Salo-Lee 2006, 138).

The study by Murray Last (2000) can give some perspectives on Nigerian ways of parenting and their attitudes to punishment. The researcher describes two contrasting childhoods within the Nigerian society, and provides some explanations from a cultural perspective on why some areas of Nigeria have a so called ‘cultures of punishment’. He concludes that culture of punishment, including corporal punishment, arises out of specific historical conditions. Punishment was at a time associated with a specific notion of ‘modernity’, referring to the colonial times. Christian and Muslims missionaries came to the region and opened their

schools, and in these institutions punishment was part of the system. From those times, Last argues that strict norms on punishment have been dominant in some regions or communities in Nigeria. The violence experienced in schools has influenced the community at large, and greater tolerance of violence-as-punishment has developed. Last further argues that that the “cultural tolerance of the beating of children is significant if only as a surrogate indicator of other processes at work in society” (Last 2000, 387). On the other hand, Last reports that there are other regions where punishment were and is rejected and unacceptable, due to economic as well as political reasons. For example, in farmer communities, children were considered as a blessing and helping hands in the fields, so they were always treated with tenderness and were given the best of treatment (Last, 2000).

Some of the findings of Onwujuba, Marks and Nesteruk (2015) can be used in relation to this study. Onwujuba, Marks and Nesteruk have done research about Nigerian educated immigrants living in USA, and the changes in their parenting attitudes and practices. Their study has contributed to the limited literature on African immigrants in the United States. The research had a qualitative, phenomenological approach. They found that families who immigrated to a new culture, normally faced realignment of beliefs, practices and role as a parent, which resulted in a sense of conflict. Each of the Nigerian families that participated in the study, had a process where two value systems were integrated – their own and the new American. Each family chose cultural balance as their goal. Parents held on to some pre-migration styles and expectations for children’s behavior, but they were probably not the crucial factors that influence their decision making in parenting. Finally, Onwujuba, Marks and Nesteruk report that parents have a big responsibility of not only inhabiting two worlds and two cultures, but the responsibility of guiding their children through those two worlds. (Onwujuba et.al, 2015).

Esther F. Akinsola (2013) studied the cultural variations in parenting styles of Nigerian and Cameroonian parents. She is referring to Baumrind (1971) that categorized parenting strategies into three types of parenting style namely authoritarian, authoritative, and permissive parenting styles. The authoritarian parenting style is restrictive and punitive, placing firm limit and control on children with little or no verbal exchange. It is argued that it is to be associated with social incompetence and poor communication skills. Authoritative parents put some limits and controls on their children’s actions, but they allow verbal dialogue which promotes parental responsive- ness, encourages independence, social and cognitive competence, self-reliance and social responsibility in the children. In permissive parenting few or no rules and little or no controls are exerted over the children. The children under this parenting style are given

complete freedom to make their life decisions and behave autonomously and independently. This type of parenting style is also presumed to be associated with social incompetence and lack of self-control. In Nigeria, parenting strategies embrace all the three single parenting styles that has been described, with emphasis on obedience to authority and compliance with parental instructions (Akinsola 2013, 81).

Akinsola (2013) found that Nigerian parents value obedience to authority figures and following parenting instructions. They also emphasize cooperation and helpfulness within and outside extended family, communal living and good interpersonal relationship. They practice dominantly authoritative parenting style. She concludes that “parenting style as a global construct reflects the quality of parent-child relationships which varies from one cultural context to another and which is driven by the cultural beliefs, values, and practices of the particular culture” (Akinsola 2013, 93). She then suggests that when parenting behaviour is consistent with cultural values, children in that culture accept it. “The countries or societies in which authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parenting styles bring about positive child outcomes, parental behaviors must have been consistent with the cultural values of such countries” (Akinsola 2013, 93).

In her research, Naomi Quinn described, what she argued were four universal features of child rearing that together explain how child rearing everywhere so effectively turns children into valued adults (Quinn 2005). These features are: constancy, emotional arousal, evaluation and pre-dispositional priming. Quinn says that those universalities can vary in different cultures, but they are closely related to each other and form the core framework around which the process of socialization is achieved. Constancy deals with the regularities and repetitions of what children are learning. The universality of emotional arousal is associated with infused modes of emotional responses to different stimulus under different circumstances. The feature of evaluation explains the process when adults regulate children’s attitudes and behaviours, which are considered ideal for parents. This process can be intensified by emotionally arousing techniques such as beating, frightening, teasing, shaming, or praising. Choice of these techniques is made depending on the situation. They shall show the child when his or her behaviour is approved or disapproved, so that the child can learn norms that are accepted in his or her society and culture (Quinn 2005).

Hollekim, Anderssen, and Daniel (2016) in an article focus on the contemporary discourses on children and parenting in Norway and about encounters between Norwegian Child Welfare

Services and immigrant families. The authors identified four main discourses on children and parenting in Norway. These are:

- 1) No tolerance for parenting practices implying violence and force
- 2) Every child is a subject of individual – and equal – rights
- 3) Good parenting is child-focused and dialogue based
- 4) Norwegian Child Welfare Services is authoritative as well as contentious in family matters.

Hollekim, Anderssen, and Daniel indicate that Norwegian way of parenting “implies that children are given a superior moral status and are to enjoy human dignity and values, such as individuality, equality and justice, and individual rights and an obligation for the state to oversee and ensure this position also for the child” (Hollekim et al. 2016, 59). The authors point out that in increasingly multicultural society, attention is given to the power and contextual aspects of children's position and the importance of children's cultural rights. They suggest a potential conflict when the children's democratic rights in Norway that have been established over decades, are challenged by diverse adult interests. The authors highlight that it is the parents' responsibility to be the guarantors for the development of children's proper skills. In multicultural societies with laws based on the host society's traditions, a standardization and homogenization of parenting can develop. As a result some groups of parents can be positioned as deficient. Such situation brings the need for professionals to explore “alternative pathways that are strength-based, affirmative, and that follow more curious and dialogue-based approaches” (Hollekim et al., 2016).

In her doctoral thesis, Ragnhild Hollekim (2016), discusses the possible consequences of beliefs about parenting in Norway and discourses of children's and parents' positions and possibilities in society. Children in Norway have individual rights and to enjoy fundamental welfare state ideals such as for example humanitarianism, autonomy and justice. She argues that there is a need for keeping a careful watch on children's position as subject of own individual rights. Hollekim emphasizes the need for parents to acquire certain skills in order to appear child-centred and to be competent. At the same time she emphasize that the Norwegian child welfare services' meeting with immigrant families, should be based on and secure the Norwegian values, and that immigrant families should be assisted to be able to live up to these through good information and parent education, training and societal supervision. Lack of trust

on both sides may lead to unproductiveness and withdrawal strategies from the involved parents (Hollekim 2016).

A master thesis by Jones Marshalee (2015) explores the experience of parenting in the Norwegian context from the perspective of migrant mothers. She reports that informants varied in their degree of integration into the Norwegian society. Lack of integration could be partly explained by their length of stay in the country. However, at a closer look, it turned out that even in seemingly well-integrated families, the culture of origin dominated the family's practices at home. Another conclusion in this thesis is that there is a high level of unawareness in both the immigrant and host groups. Many families feel that they are not understood by the wider society. Marshalee suggests that one way to increase mutual understanding is to negotiate with immigrant parents: "If we propose a culture of negotiation when addressing children, isn't this logic also transferrable to the migrant population?" (Marshalee 2015, 62).

## Chapter 5. Findings

In this chapter, I will first describe the families who I interviewed to collect the data. Next, I will report my findings.

Table 5.1 *Description of the families*

Family representative	Age		Children*	Education**		Occupation		Years in Norway***	Knowledge of Norwegian language****
	Father	Mother		Father	Mother	Father	Mother		
David	33	30	4	Master degree, Norway	Master degree, Norway	Engineer	Currently at maternity leave	6, 6	Doesn't speak, Intermediate
John	35	32	3, 4m.	Master degree, Norway	Bachelor degree, Nigeria	Engineer	Doesn't work	5, 4	A2, A2
Alexander	42	37	11, 6, 6m.	Master degree, Norway	Bachelor degree, Nigeria	Engineer	Worker at the factory	7, 5	A2, A2
Maria, Peter	40	36	11, 7	PhD, Norway	Bachelor degree, Nigeria	Engineer, part-time lecturer	Self-employed	6, 6	Fluent, intermediate
Maria, Michael	38	30	4	Master degree, Norway	Bachelor degree, Nigeria	Currently unemployed	Currently unemployed	5, 3	A1, almost doesn't speak any
Catherine, Andrew	34	31	7, 2	Master degree, Norway	Bachelor degree, Nigeria	Currently unemployed	Currently unemployed	7, 6	A1, B1
Helena, Raymond	40	38	11, 5, 3, 1	Master degree, Norway	Secondary School graduate, Nigeria	Engineer	Currently unemployed	7, 5	A1, A1

\*Number indicates the age of the children; m. = month

\*\* Level of education and country where education was obtained.

\*\*\*First number indicates father's years living in Norway, the second number - mother's years in Norway

\*\*\*\* As estimated by participants themselves; first level indicates father's knowledge of Norwegian language, the second level - mother's knowledge of Norwegian language

Table 5.1 shows the information about the seven families that were interviewed for this study. The age of the parents was between 30 and 42, and all participant families have stayed in Norway between three and seven years. There were children in all families, and the age of the children was between four month and eleven years.

All the participants were highly educated, except for one mother who was secondary school graduate. Six fathers participating in this study had a master degree and one had a PhD. All of them obtained their bachelor degree in Nigeria, and the master or PhD degree in Norway. The majority of the mothers were educated until bachelor degree, which they got in Nigeria. Only one of the mothers obtained her master degree in Norway. All the fathers had or have had engineering jobs. Two fathers were currently unemployed because they were laid off. Four out of seven mothers were unemployed, because they could not find the job, and one was on maternity leave. One of the two woman that worked, were self-employed, and the other one worked part time.

Only one of the participants (a father) speaks the Norwegian language fluently. Three participants (mothers) spoke the Norwegian language at intermediate level (or B1), and the rest of participants spoke the language on beginner, pre-intermediate (A2) level or did not speak Norwegian at all. The knowledge of the Norwegian language were estimated by participants themselves. In all the participants' families, English was spoken at home as the main language. Some families also spoke their tribal language in addition to English; the aim of this was to teach their children the language.



Table 5.2: *Family norms and individualism and collectivism*

1 <sup>st</sup> Order concept (Quote)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Order concept	Aggregate dimension
<p>“Compared to our culture, the Norwegian culture is more individualistic and independent” (<i>John, father, 35</i>)</p> <p>“Norwegians are not family people and they divorce often. They value standing on their own and independency” (<i>Anna, mother, 30</i>)</p> <p>“In Norway kids get away with everything and have their way always. Parents almost have no say and children are free to question their authority” (<i>Raymond, father, 40</i>)</p>	The individual in the centre	Individualism
<p>“Norwegians like to live alone and many of them may not care for their elders. They grow to be too independent and they don’t care for others much” (<i>Maria, mother, 36</i>)</p>	The wellbeing of the individual more important than the wellbeing of the group	
<p>“Here in Norway you can’t just drop the child with your mother or sister whenever you want – you need to agree on time/date and go through a certain process like you are getting an appointment with a governor” (<i>Alexander, father, 42</i>)</p>	Respect for personal space and individual’s borders	
<p>“Norwegians are less interactive with foreigners” (<i>John, father, 35</i>)</p> <p>“I do not have any close friends who are Norwegians. We feel Norwegians avoid getting too close with us, we barely discuss anything...” (<i>Peter, father, 40</i>)</p>	People prefer loose network and prefer themselves and their closest family	
<p>“We teach children to keep their pride and follow our culture... we teach them what it means to be man and woman, about what is Godly behaviour” (<i>Helena, mother, 38</i>)</p>	Identity defined by the group	
<p>“It is normal for older sibling to take care for younger siblings like if they are your children. ... If my cousin is in need he can come and live with us, and it is very common that man, if they are in good position, can pay for the education for their nieces and nephews, and sometimes other family members. If someone in a family in a position to help, he will take care of all the family” (<i>Michael, father, 38</i>)</p>	Prefer a tight network and social relations	
<p>“In Nigeria we do not differentiate between our children and others’ children when it comes to discipline and also care. We are always ready to help watch other’s kids when needed and there is always someone to help watch the child”. (<i>Alexander, father, 42</i>)</p> <p>“We are ready to help children no matter their age. We believe in caring and nurturing children as long as possible. In Norway to our views, the relationship between children and parents are more distanced. In Nigeria it is a normal thing for family members to come and stay in our house when need to help with a child. In Norway parents are on their own. Even sisters and brothers sometimes act like strangers to each other but not family. In our culture children are responsibility of the whole community and it is normal to discipline others’ children” (<i>Anna, mother, 30</i>)</p> <p>“We would want for our kids to have a good heart to help others who are in need in our family” (<i>Helena, mother, 38</i>)</p>	Expect the group/friends to take care of each other	
<p>“These rules (<i>about Norwegian rules of punishment of children</i>) are nonsense. You can’t raise a strong nation with such rules” (<i>Alexander, father, 42</i>)</p> <p>“We are ready to do everything and make sacrifices for the best of our children” (<i>Anna, mother, 30</i>)</p>	Wellbeing of the group is more important than the individual	

Table 5.2 shows that Nigerians think that Norwegians compared to them, have a very individualistic culture where family does not come first, that Norwegians are reserved and avoid getting close contact with foreigners. One father says: “Norwegians are very hard to establish friendship with. From our experience, they can be nice to you or help you, but they won’t let you into their life, they won’t be friends with you. So it’s mostly Nigerians and other foreigners we are friends with. It’s easier to understand each other as foreigners for us” (Raymond, father, 40).

Most parents agree that in the Nigerian culture the identity is mostly defined by the group they belong to. For example, there are rules and norms on what it means to be women and what it means to be a man, and people should act accordingly: “I involve my son more in manly duties, and want him to grow as a man, what we understand by that. He needs to learn how to be responsible for the family and to be a provider and protector. And it is good when a daughter knows womanly things and know how to be a good wife” (Alexander, father, 42).

To parents from Nigeria, the group is important. For the Nigerian the family is not only mother, father and children, but also the extended family. Everyone in this extended family are supposed to care and support each other or everyone who is in need. Raising children is not only the parents’ responsibility, but the responsibility of the whole community. Normally, any adult has the right to discipline a child in the extended family. “Back home or when we are at the gathering only with other Nigerians, if a child misbehaves or is doing something wrong, anyone can just approach the child and correct him, it is a normal thing. But when for example, Norwegian a child misbehaves, we can’t say anything and see that that other do the same – they just wait until the parents of the child react or correct him. Other parents have no say in it” (Anna, mother, 30).

The children are expected to value the interests of the family and act in accordance to that. One mother says: “Obeying parents without talking back – is a rule for a child, no matter their age” (Helena, mother, 38). At the same time the parents should put the interest of their children and family in general as priority one and be ready to make sacrifices for the best of the family.

Table 5.3: Family norms and attitudes of power distance

1 <sup>st</sup> Order concept (Quote)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Order concept	Aggregate dimension
<p>“My children, until they are 18, they must go to church every Sunday”. (<i>John, father, 35</i>)</p> <p>“We tell them right from wrong by talking, but if we fail, there can be punishment. I mean corporal punishment” (<i>John, father, 35</i>)</p> <p>“If my son goes out playing football, without doing his homework, I would lock the door and he wouldn’t go out until homework is done” (<i>Michael, father, 38</i>)</p> <p>“In Norway children have excessive freedom, and they feel that they rule over parents. Here most parents are afraid of the children because if they don’t like something, they can easily complain to social services and be taken away. So in a way this put parents under the children, which is opposite in our culture” (<i>Catherine, mother, 31</i>)</p>	Power distributed unequally	
<p>“I know what is best for my kids” (<i>John, father, 35</i>)</p> <p>“We are stricter with parenting in Nigeria, your kid is not your friend” (<i>John, father, 35</i>)</p> <p>“We have rules in the house which everyone needs to follow. I am explaining for kids that these are the rules and while you are under my roof you need to follow them, and I explain that those rules are created for their best and why it is important to follow them” (<i>Maria, mother, 36</i>)</p> <p>“I like when children ask questions – it is the way they learn about this world... but when it comes to discipline and order, it is important when they listen. There is always only one captain in each ship, and children need to realize that. If the crew do not following captain’s directions, ship may sink. The same with the family – there should be a captain and a crew. Good captain never does anything bad for his people and considers their wishes too” (<i>Peter, father, 40</i>)</p>	Clear hierarchy established without reasoning	Power distance
<p>“In Norway negotiating and asking questions is a norm” (<i>Catherine, mother, 31</i>)</p> <p>“If I disagree with nursery about my child, I will first do my best to convince them, then I will consult my friends about how their kindergarten deals with this, and if know that what I ask of can done or is done in other places I will officially complain or change kindergarten” (<i>Raymond, father, 40</i>)</p>	People question the authority of some people	
<p>“When I disagree with my child, I would listen, tell why I disagree and why my opinion is better because as a parent I know better to a certain degree” (<i>John, father, 35</i>)</p> <p>“To get my children to listen to me, I sometimes use some scaring tactics, like raise my voice, or ignore him or her” (<i>John, father, 35</i>)</p> <p>“I can shout at children if they don’t listen or warn them about possible punishment if they won’t do I tell them to do” (<i>Helena, mother, 38</i>)</p> <p>“Child often cannot know what is better for him” (<i>Raymond, father, 40</i>)</p>	Accept unequal power and status	
<p>“We emphasize discipline and being respectful in raising our children” (<i>John, father, 35</i>)</p> <p>“Children are expected to listen to us and do what they are told to. They can present their arguments, but they must do it with respect and being careful, only then it can be discussed. But final word is for us parents always” (<i>Alexander, father, 42</i>)</p> <p>“Children know that they will be in trouble is they show disrespect to adults or to us parents” (<i>Maria, mother, 36</i>)</p>	Accept that the leader/parent have power over wife/children	
<p>“We think in Norway no one punishes kids” (<i>Catherine, mother, 31</i>)</p> <p>“In Norway child can disrespect parents or talk back freely and get away with it. In Nigeria such is unthinkable” (<i>Alexander, father, 42</i>)</p>	Accept that people are treated more as equal	
<p>“I think Norwegians believe in talking with a child as if he is an adult” (<i>Maria, mother, 36</i>)</p> <p>“We do not impose religion on our kids, it’s a free will” (<i>Andrew, father, 34</i>)</p> <p>“If we and child have different opinion about something it is fine, we cannot agree on everything. We always explain why we prohibit something or why we think things are bad” (<i>Andrew, father, 34</i>)</p>	Accept that children have a voice	

Power distance describes attitudes to equality and the distribution of power and status. With high score on power distance, you accept and expect that there are large differences between people and that some people have more power than others. Table 5.3 shows that Nigerian parents expect power to be distributed unequally and that their decisions as parents are expected without children's reasoning about it. One mother says: "Children must go to church with us while they are living with us. I can't imagine that they are not coming. They can decide for themselves when they grow up, but for now, they must go when we go" (Maria, mother, 36). When it comes to parents negotiating the authority of other people or institutions, the majority of the family tends to question the authority and take their own decision: "If I disagree with nursery about sleeping hours of my child, I would probably change the nursery" (John, father, 35).

Most Nigerian parents accept an unequal power and status between parents and child. If that the decisions of the parents are opposed to by children, punishment can be used. For example one father says: "If it my children do something that they are not supposed to do after I warned them several times, some sort of punishment will follow – like we can take away phone or prohibit playing computer games for a while. This is what we can do to teach kids a lesson" (Raymond, father, 40).

However, the parents are also emphasizing that they listen to the children and try to understand and explain before executing their power. Only one informant was easily ready to accept that his child may have opinions different from the parents' own and had the right to say his opinion freely. This informant said: "If we and the child have different opinion about something, it is fine. We cannot agree on everything. We always explain why we prohibit something or why we think things are bad" (Andrew, father, 34). The informants described the Norwegian culture as one with equal rights for both parents and children where children can easily question parents' authority. Some informants mentioned that it seemed like Norwegian children even have more rights than the parents: "The majority of the children in Norway can get away with almost with everything. Sometimes I think that in Norway parent act like they are servants to their children, they do anything that the children want and they do not teach them discipline (Maria, mother, 36).

Table 5.4: Family norms on femininity and masculinity

1 <sup>st</sup> Order concept (Quote)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Order concept	Aggregate dimension
<p>“Social life is boring for us in Norway” (<i>John, father, 35</i>)</p> <p>“When raising our children, we emphasize love for child and care for him”,</p> <p>“When you love someone, you get love in return” (<i>Anna, mother, 30</i>)</p> <p>“It’s important to be with child while he is infant and toddler to connect with the child and give him love...” (<i>Anna, mother, 30</i>)</p>	High values on caring and social relations	
<p>“In Norway you never know. Sometimes it’s even hard to tell who is in front of you – woman or man... Here roles (of man and women) are like a salad – everything is mixed together (<i>Alexander, father, 42</i>)</p> <p>“In Norway men and women do almost everything 50/50, except child bearing or pregnancy” (<i>David, father, 33</i>).</p> <p>“In Norway we observe that there is no separation in duties.... I know a family where husband and wife have schedule for cleaning the house and throwing the garbage” (<i>Peter, father, 40</i>)</p>	Men and woman are equals	
<p>“I wish for my children to be tolerant” (<i>John, father, 35</i>)</p> <p>“Both parents should have wellbeing of the child as priority, and it means that someone has to work, and someone has to be with children when they are small. But when they grow up enough to start kindergarten, both parents should work. We believe in contributing to society by work when you are able to work” (<i>Catherine, mother, 31</i>)</p>	All people are equal	Feminism
<p>“As a father I prioritize work, but the end aim of this work is my family” (<i>Michael, father, 38</i>)</p> <p>“It’s important to be with child while he is infant and toddler to connect with the child and give him love... But when child grows to the level of kindergarten, it is important for me to work” (<i>Anna, mother, 30</i>)</p>	Balance between family and work	
<p>“In Norway it is usual thing when father takes paternity leave and stay at home with child, you can often see on the streets father walking with child during working hours” (<i>Anna, mother, 30</i>)</p> <p>“If my child wants to discuss the topic that I am sure I have different opinion about, I would ask my husband talk to him first” (<i>Anna, mother, 30</i>)</p>	Both father and mother are involved in both emotional and practical aspects of child upbringing	
<p>“In Norway people do not like when someone is too talented, they do not train competitiveness with children. It is good that everyone is treated the same, but sometimes competition is a way to success” (<i>Alexander, father, 42</i>)</p> <p>“Children in Norway are too soft and they cannot withstand difficulties. We look at Norwegian way of parenting like overprotective which makes kids weak... we see kids on the streets who get hysterical over smallest things like if they lose a toy, or if they are not able to climb the tree they liked... they gave up easily and not ready for any difficulties. We discuss it and we do not want this for our children. It may sound cruel, but child needs to learn to take some pain and go through challenges, or else he will not be ready for an adult life” (<i>Andrew, father, 34</i>)</p>	Competitive culture	
<p>“We believe in education and believe that key to a success for this life is an academic success. We raise children to be smart and always aim at best. We want them to be successful in life and to achieve more than I did” (<i>Peter, father, 40</i>)</p>	High value on self-confidence	Masculinity
<p>“I want my kids to have good education and jobs like doctors, engineers and bankers” (<i>John, father, 35</i>)</p>	Values material rewards	
<p>“I will delegate my wife to deal with it (<i>to solve the disagreement with nursery about sleeping hours</i>). She would know better” (<i>Alexander, father, 42</i>)</p>	There is a division between who is responsible for emotional and practical aspects of child upbringing	

<p>“But in majority of Norwegian families we have observed that women play the main role in deciding and taking care of family” (<i>Anna, mother, 30</i>)</p> <p>“Women has more rights in Norway and in the name of feminism they can get everything they want, we think that man are sometimes are oppressed here in Norway. Women rule everything” (<i>Raymond, father, 40</i>)</p>	<p>Man and women are not equal</p>	
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Table 5.4 shows the informants’ value on caring and social relations. It is important to have the strong ties with the family and have an active social life. Most respondents mention that in Norway people are not tightly connected socially: “I don’t really have Norwegian friends, just work friends who are Norwegians and we don’t really hangout if it’s not official meetings” (John, father, 35).

The Norwegian culture is described as being equal for men and women. Some participants even mentioned that women here have more power: “Norway is a feminist country, women are higher in many spheres than men, except in some very physical work environment. Here men can stay home and woman work. Which is almost impossible in Nigeria” (John, father, 35).

The informants value material rewards and look at the children as an investment for the future, where they can get good jobs that would reward the parents’ investments. One mother says: “it is important for the children to do well at school so that they later can enter a good university which would a road for bright career and well paid jobs” (Catherine, mother, 32).

Most parents agreed that the children in their culture are “loved to death”, but at the same time they needed to be taught to withstand difficulties and be able to cope with pain, in order to be well prepared for the future. The participants describe their own culture as competitive. They report that they support the competitiveness in their children. The parents encourage their children to have a high academic carrier and success and develop self-confidence. They teach them to always be the best in the group. The informants like that the Norwegian culture teaches to treat everyone equally, but at the same time they criticize the Norwegian culture because it does not stimulate the development of talents and competitiveness enough. One father says: “It is not right to teach the children that it is bad to be better than the others and to discourage the child’s wish to try to do better... Life is competition, and children should learn it or else it will be hard to have success in life” (David, father, 33).

Table 5.5: Attitude to uncertainty avoidance

1 <sup>st</sup> Order concept (Quote)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Order concept	Aggregate dimension
“Last two years we are always in stress because I lost my job and my wife is not working. It is hard to be unemployed when having children and living in foreign country. We always have to think of what we can do to improve the situation because we are not citizens here and we don’t feel protected. It is highly uncomfortable” ( <i>Michael, father, 38</i> )	Not confident with high degree of uncertainty in situations	High uncertainty avoidance
“We know many families that had to pack their bags over night and travel home, I mean go for good (because they had issues or misunderstanding with social services). ( <i>Helena, mother, 38</i> )	Not well in situations that can be interpreted in different ways	
“If my child refuse to speak English at home, it will upset me. But I will make him speak English. I will travel to Nigeria or US with him for the whole summer so he will not have the chance not to speak English” ( <i>Michael, father, 38</i> )	Uncertainty is perceived as a threat that one need to fight with	
“We like life here for now. But we want to go back home and live in Nigeria in the future, because Nigeria is our home and we understand how things work there” ( <i>Alexander, father, 42</i> ) “Our home is here (in Norway), though we are thinking of returning back to Nigeria, but maybe when we are old” ( <i>Andrew, father, 34</i> )	The need for clarity and familiar settings	Low uncertainty avoidance
“If I lose my job, and there is no engineering job that I can find in Norway, I am thinking of moving to another country if I get an offer” ( <i>Raymond, father, 40</i> ) “We both do not have a job, so we are looking for a job anywhere. If I get a job in any other country in Europe, we all are ready to move there” ( <i>Maria, mother, 38</i> )	Are comfortable with new jobs and circumstances	
“Some of the local rules seemed shocking in the beginning. But now I think we are getting used to them. For example can be walking with the pram with my child here alone, or do some things that I would have done in Nigeria, I wouldn’t even thought of it. But such is life. We believe that only change is constant in this life, so as long as you live you learn something new” ( <i>Michael, father, 38</i> ) “I value in people when they are smart - fast thinking and fast learners. I also learned to value flexibility and adjustability – in contemporary world it is important” ( <i>Catherine, mother, 31</i> )	Anything new treated with curiosity	

Table 5.5 shows that most of the informants are not comfortable with uncertain situations and the majority feel safer when the future seems stable. At the same time they demonstrate and value flexibility and are ready to adjust their attitudes and behaviour to a certain extend when it is needed. They demonstrate the preparedness for changing settings completely, like moving to another country.

In the long term, however, the perspective the Nigerian parents have is that they prefer to be in familiar settings and in situation where everything is clear. For example, some have plans to move back to Nigeria when they are old, or when the children are grown up to be independent. For example, one father says: “I like life in Norway. It is safe and comfortable. Of course there are many things that were strange or new to us when we just arrived, but this is normal thing

to happen, I think. Now we have adjusted and accepted most of the things here as a norm. We try to benefit from two cultures – accept what we believe is good in Norway and of course not to forget where we came from. Like everywhere else, life here has advantages and disadvantages. I like living a comfortable life here with access to recourses, but sometimes I wish to live like a first class citizen and feel completely free, like at home. I think this is s only possible at your home country, especially for people of my color” (Peter, father, 40).



Table 5.6: Long-term or short-term orientation

1 <sup>st</sup> Order concept (Quote)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Order concept	Aggregate dimension
“It’s good to live here ( <i>in Norway</i> ) now, it’s good for our kids’ future” ( <i>Alexander, father, 42</i> )	Preoccupied by the future	Long term orientation
“There are some people who are not made for studies. I don’t share mad race for education which is so popular among other Nigerians here. I may agree that if you are in Nigeria, without education it is very hard to succeed, due to demographic and economy situation. But it is different here, one can be happy without higher education, so it became fine by me after moving here as well....” ( <i>Andrew, father, 34</i> )	Can adapt traditions to changing situations	
“I wish a bright carrier for them so they be professional in their field. I invest in them now so those investments can bring the rewards in the future” ( <i>Peter, father, 40</i> )	Invest and save money	
“I think that in the family husband must work, for woman it’s better to stay with kids. But nowadays especially in Norway situation is hard, and if husband loses job, and wife has a chance to world and provide for family, she should do so” ( <i>Raymond, father, 40</i> )	Truth is dependent on situation, context and time	
“First years of my staying here it was shocking for me to see such, but after a while I got used it to it and now many things do not seem strange or outrageous as before. I learned to be more tolerant now” ( <i>Maria, mother, 36</i> ) “I like the part about the prohibition of any physical abuse, I wish these rules would be at least partly in my country. Nothing can be solved with violence, violence only causes violence in return. So I am following those rules” ( <i>Peter, father, 40</i> ) “Before, spanking for me and my wife didn’t look like something bad, but living here I have adjusted and actually now I see that many things can be negotiated with children without using any physical form of punishment” ( <i>Peter, father, 40</i> )	It is acceptable to learn new from other cultures	
“We want children to grow up and preserve our culture” ( <i>Alexander, father, 42</i> )	Traditions are very important and should not be changed	Short term orientation
“I never accept my children calling adults by their name or not greeting someone in a proper way. It is not in our culture” ( <i>Catherine, mother, 31</i> )	Normative in thinking	
“We are Christians and we teach our kids that this is the way for happiness and salvation. Yes, we practice religion here.... We go to church and we do our best in accordance with what Bible teaches us. We want to share God’s love and knowledge of him with our children, so they can be saved too. For us it is not a topic for discussion – if to follow religion or not” ( <i>Peter, father, 40</i> ) “We teach children our religion and that one can be saved through Jesus only” ( <i>Helena, mother, 38</i> ) “I learned to believe that it is a good thing, but there is should be limit to it” ( <i>Maria, mother, 36</i> ) ( <i>about making every decision together with child</i> ) “We follow the Norwegian rules about punishment of children, but we do not believe that this is the right way ... some of the rules here and their application is unbelievable” ( <i>Michael, father, 38</i> )	Belief in absolutes about good and bad	
“Our children is our pride, and they represent our future” ( <i>Andrew, father, 34</i> )	Proud for own family/nation/culture	

Table 5.6 reports on the participant's long-term and short-term orientation. The participants have a long-term orientation in bringing up children in Norway when they speak about the future and their wish for the children. They demonstrate readiness to sacrifice today in order to get a better future for their children. The majority of the participants see their children as their future and as an investment for money and resources. They therefore expect their children to succeed academically and get well paid jobs when they grow up.

Still, the participants claimed that for them their culture and following their traditions is very important and they are willing to keep it and want to transfer it to their children. There are some things and norms that they cannot imagine changing. The informants were proud to be part of their culture, and they see their children and their success as their pride.

At the same time the Nigerian parents demonstrated flexibility and ability to bend their views on certain things if it is demanded by the context and surroundings. For example, one mother says: "In our family we try to find a balance between how we were raised and taught and what is acceptable here. We won't do anything that it is not allowed here, but when it is needed to be done, I will go to the borderline of what is acceptable to achieve what I need from the child" (Catherine, mother, 31).

Most of the participants practice their religion and teach it to their children. They considered their faith to be an absolute truth that could not be doubted or questioned. Only two families said that religion was a free will for their children.

Table 5.7: Parents upbringing of children in Norway with a dynamic perspective on culture

1 <sup>st</sup> Order concept (Quote)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Order concept	Aggregate dimension
<p>“At work we do not discuss anything personal, or things like if someone struggles or do not really understand something... Colleagues just talk about things like weather and smile to you” (Raymond, father, 40)</p> <p>“If you train your children well and they go to normal schools their behaviour will be universal” (John, father, 35)</p> <p>“We go to Nigerian church in Stavanger”</p> <p>“From what I observed while living in Norway, they also value honesty, and other universal things like kindness, being friendly...” (Alexander, father, 42)</p> <p>“Sometimes the way <i>Norwegians</i> speak to each other or approach others seems very rude to us. But turned out it’s just the way they are doing things here and their directness can be misinterpreted as rudeness, if you are not familiar with the culture” (Catherine, mother, 31)</p> <p>“I don’t like that children are learning about sexual behavior early in Norway. I am strongly against it. I don’t discuss such topic yet with my kid. But when times come there is nothing I can do if she learns it at school. I will just talk to her about it at home from Christian perspective” (John, father, 35)</p> <p>“Children must have many friends and must learn how to communicate with others to get a sense of belonging” (Catherine, mother, 31)</p> <p>“To belong to a community, extra curriculum activities are important to us, sport is important. Both for health and for socializing – with extra activities come extra friends” (Andrew, father, 34)</p> <p>“We moved to Norway to guarantee the better future for us and our children, and sacrificed living close to our family” (Michael, father, 38)</p> <p>“The importance of making every decision together with child exaggerated in Norway. It is important to teach child to take decisions and be responsible for it, but how it is done here seems too extreme for all of us” (Catherine, mother, 31)</p> <p>“In Norway we had to adjust to reasoning standard. After moving here we had to face new and at that time strange mentality and behaviour. I was not easy at first, because it felt like you can’t do that easily the things you used to do before... something that seemed easy at home here we had to think how to go about it. It’s like we were children again that are learning what is good and what is bad. How do people celebrate birthday? Who should we invite? How much we should spend on the gifts? Shall we dance at the parties or make speeches?” (Andrew, father, 34)</p> <p>“We eat mostly Nigerian food and bring ingredients to cook it from Nigeria” (Anna, mother, 30)</p> <p>“In kindergartens all the kids eat bread all the day, but we prefer our own food, real food”(Anna, mother, 30)</p>	<p>Go to work Raise children Have leisure time Practice the religion Have sex Take care of family Make and take care of friends Travel Take decisions Do sports Eat</p>	<p>Culture is something one does</p>
<p>“ We see what other parents are doing” (John, father, 35)</p> <p>“Most have problem with social service that is checking on them for various silly reasons” (John, father, 35)</p> <p>“My kids are born in Norway and they behave like every other kid, irrespective of their country or race” (John, father, 35)</p> <p>“The best is to teach them what you know and be a good example. You cannot force children to be clean if you are not clean yourself. You can’t teach them that to gossip is wrong if you are gossiping in their presence” (Catherine, mother, 31)</p>	<p>Get friends with Norwegian Work place interactions Communicate Playing with other children</p>	<p>Culture is created in open interaction</p>

<p>“Yes, we have a couple of Norwegian friends, that we can discuss about our children or challenges we go through. We can discuss about almost everything, they understand us and sometimes they even ask us for advice because they see things in our house that they like...” (Andrew, father, 34)</p>		
<p>“Barnevernet visited my home one day to check on my kid. The neighbours had hear the child crying during night. But the child had a growing tooth. The lady started to ask useless and humiliating questions, like do you feed your child” (John, father, 35)</p> <p>“Long ago with our first child we had a case with Barnevernet. Ones we had a flight and we needed to go to airport. We put our baggage to car and for us it was only left to get inside the car and drive. But my son didn’t want to travel with us, he was upset from the morning, because we didn’t let him eat too much chocolate that day - we know that can be nauseated in the plane if he eat sweets. So, that’s why he was upset with us and didn’t want to get in car. So we almost forced him into the car, and he was crying and was angry with us, but we didn’t have the choice because if we delay we will be late for the flight.... I think our neighbors saw it and they called social services. So after our trip he first day in school they took two of our older children - they didn’t come home from the school and they were question without our presence. It was terrifying experience. Thank God, kids didn’t say anything bad about us and later children were returned home. But we stayed subject of Barnevernet attention for several years until they closed the case. It was scary and unpleasant, and it a point we were ready to kids and move back home, because we were afraid they would take kids. But thank god it all settled down.. We know many families that had to pack their bags over night and travel home, I mean go for good. Because children are most dear thing in our lives and we give up everything but not kids. (Helena, mother, 38)</p>	<p>Interacting with the authorities</p>	

Table 5.7 shows examples of what the Nigerian parents are doing or not doing in upbringing of their children. We see that they, for example, choose a church where approximately 90% of the congregation are Nigerians, we also see that they make their own food and bring it to their gatherings. At the same time they are taking their children to Norwegian kindergartens and they or their children try to make friends with Norwegians. They are aware of how Norwegian communicate to their children about sex, but they object to do it themselves.

Several of the Nigerian parents report that there are tensions, conflicts or misunderstandings between them and representatives of the Norwegian authorities, most often – Barnevernet. They describe the contact with the authorities as insulting and based on misunderstandings.

Table 5.8: Values and negotiating culture based on dynamic perspective on culture

1 <sup>st</sup> Order concept (Quote)	2 <sup>nd</sup> Order concept	Aggregate dimension
<p>“For me being a man, work is priority” (<i>Alexander, father, 42</i>)</p> <p>“A boy cannot faint or start crying because you raised your voice at him – this is not raising a man...” (<i>Alexander, father, 42</i>)</p> <p>“Father should work more and provide for the family and mother’s prerogative is to be children especially while they are small. But if she wants to work, she can do it but it shouldn’t affect children’s well-being” (<i>Peter, father, 40</i>)</p> <p>“It makes me happy to take care of my kids, so for me my family is priority” (<i>Maria, mother, 36</i>)</p> <p>“I teach them that man and women have different roles but it doesn’t make any gender weaker or stronger. We all have the purpose and certain responsibility. Man is to be strong and provide and protect his family, and woman is to keep the house together, to sustain kind and happy atmosphere at home” (<i>Maria, mother, 36</i>)</p>	<p>Man Woman Old children (over 18) Young children Boy child Girl child</p>	<p>Different values for different members</p>
<p>“When we get together with other parents from Nigeria, we discuss the ways to discipline kids in Norway without punishment” (<i>Michael, father, 38</i>)</p> <p>“It is good that in Norway they teach children early about sexual behaviors. That’s why Norway is not overpopulated and there are enough resources for everyone. It’s very important to learn about family planning or how to avoid unwanted pregnancy. It’s good to be aware and no need to lie. Though we don’t approve early beginning of sexual life and even sex before the marriage, it is better to know that to be ignorant of what sex is” (<i>Andrew, father, 34</i>)</p>	<p>Discussing different methods of child upbringing depending on context</p>	<p>People negotiate culture</p>
<p>“I have noticed when I go to Nigeria with kids, I am looked at like a stranger sometimes, which means that I have changed my ways but I didn’t even notice it” (<i>Maria, mother, 36</i>)</p> <p>“We cannot beat our kids here, but for me light spanking is acceptable if I were back home” (<i>Michael, father, 38</i>)</p> <p>“In Norway we feel like ordinary citizens, here everyone is more or less the same, you can’t see easily who is rich and who is not. But when we come to Nigeria for holidays, others treat us like kings, like we came from paradise. Sometimes things like this enters our kids’ minds and they start to act snobbish there” (<i>Michael, father, 38</i>)</p> <p>“We observe some older children of our friends, and it is so interesting to see sometimes that how they are different when they are with us and how they can speak and act differently when they are with other Norwegians” (<i>Anna, mother, 30</i>)</p>	<p>Behaviour depends on where the person is at the moment (like different country)</p>	<p>Other factors (status, context, power etc.) can explain why people act as they do</p>
<p>“When my husband lost job, I had to go to work when I had chance, even though our baby was still very small. We didn’t tell it to our family back home, they wouldn’t understand us. We just kept saying that everything is fine and Michel is still working” (<i>Marie, mother, 30</i>).</p>		<p>People’s actions cannot be predicted</p>

Table 5.8 shows that in this group of parents, they still believe in different values for different members. However, they always show that they can use different set of values when the context

is changing. They also report that different parts of their social network look at them in different ways. One example of that can be when they are travelling: "... from time to time my extended family members think that I have become too soft after I moved to Europe" (Peter, father, 40).

The Nigerian parents expect their children to adapt to other Norwegian children's behaviour and encourage their socializing: "we always encourage children to be socially active. We made some friends with Norwegian families through our children, because our children are friends with their children. It is good to be active and make friends, it's the best way to become part of the new culture and do not feel like a stranger or feel lonely" (Catherine, mother, 31). Another woman also says: "However my own kids are born in Norway and they behave like every other normal kid out there, irrespective of their country or race" (John, father, 35).

We also see that those informants who has Norwegian friends, discuss their challenges with them. Some values and culture are negotiated by Nigerian parents that moved to Norway.

Table 5.9: A summary of Nigerian upbringing of children out of two different perspectives on culture

Descriptive (static) essentialist culture	Dynamic constructivist culture
<p><i>Culture is something one has</i></p> <p>“You can always find differences between the Norwegian and Nigerian cultural upbringing”.</p>	<p><i>Culture is something one does</i></p> <p>“We moved to Norway to improve living”.</p> <p>“We choose Nigerian church and Nigerian friends”.</p> <p>“We do not speak about sex”.</p>
<p><i>Culture is fixed and can be delimited (boundaries can be defined)</i></p> <p>Norms on extended family Parents has the final say Competitive Masculine Restrained</p>	<p><i>Culture is created in open interaction</i></p> <p>“Nigerian parents are learning from Norwegian parents and from what they observe and experience with friends”</p>
<p><i>Common values for everyone in the group</i></p> <p>“All Nigerians share the same values “ .</p>	<p><i>Different values for different members</i></p> <p>“Different groups of Nigerians may have different values”.</p>
<p><i>People are governed by culture</i></p> <p>“Looking back, we can understand why people took certain decisions”.</p>	<p><i>People negotiate culture</i></p> <p>“Nigerian parents are adapting to Norwegian regulations”.</p>
<p><i>Culture (values, rules, norms etc.) can explain why people act as they do</i></p> <p>“Knowing the nationality of the person we can predict what they will do in the future”.</p>	<p><i>Other factors (status, context, power etc.) can explain why people act as they do</i></p> <p>“Under the influence of different circumstances people can act differently”.</p>
<p><i>People’s actions can be predicted</i></p> <p>“In some circumstances people still act according to their cultural norms”.</p>	<p><i>People’s actions cannot be predicted</i></p> <p>“Due to the influence of many cultures we cannot predict what people will do in the future”.</p>

Table 5.9 summarises the main findings of this study from the two different perspectives on culture. A summary of the main findings of the study is presented at the start of the next chapter.

## Chapter 6. Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate and increase the understanding of raising children in a foreign country and new culture. The study describes Nigerian immigrant parents' experience of parenting in Norway, and how they deal with the new cultural and social environment. I chose to study well-educated Nigerian families that had moved to Norway between 3 to 7 years ago. The main findings is that Nigerian families want to identify with the Nigerian culture and try to maintain it when they are in Norway. When evaluating the host country's culture and norms, they use their own perspective and ideas of what is right and what is wrong and how things should be done. Most of the informants follow their own culture and traditions, and prefer to keep it as good as they can and for how long as it is possible. For example, they keep close contact with other Nigerian families, most of them choose a church where the majority of congregation are Nigerians and cook their national food. Their closest friends are other Nigerians or other foreigners in Norway. The Nigerian parents discuss their challenges of living in Norway mostly with these friends and less with Norwegians. They explicitly have the goal of transmitting their culture to their children. An important norm is to teach the children to have respect for the elders, to be obedient and be academically successful. However, when they are raising their children, they emphasize both following their traditions, and at the same time adapting to the Norwegian culture. They are observing other Norwegian families and send their children to Norwegian schools and kindergartens and wish for their children to socialize with other children there or at after-school activities. The parents try to learn and follow Norwegian rules and regulations, but find some norms of parenting strange and difficult to understand. To a different degree, all the informants adjusted their attitudes and behaviour to the host country's norms, and reflected critically on Nigerian norms and traditions. Below I will discuss these results, first by using Hofstede's dimension, and next, my other theoretical perspectives.

### The parents and Hofstede's dimension

The way the informants describe their culture, is to a high degree in line with how the Nigerian culture is described by Hofstede's cultural dimensions for Nigeria. The culture they told about can be described by high power distance where the authority of the parents could not be questioned. They told about strong collective norms regulating what was acceptable for parent to do or not do. However, while earlier studies describe the Nigerian culture with low scores on long-term orientation, many families in this study told about their efforts to secure the future for their children. This might be an example of cultural negotiation. When using a descriptive perspective on culture, it is argued that all members of that culture share the same values. This



assumption that you find in essentialist perspectives on culture (Hofstede 2001; Lewis 2006; Dahl 2016) is empirical testable. This study demonstrates that not all families only have a short-time perspective on what they are doing. Norway scores higher on long term orientation than Nigeria, so it is possible that Nigerians are influenced by some of the Norwegian norms and long term planning for their children and family. As for the norms on getting higher education, almost all the informants prioritized getting higher education for their children as a guarantee for success in life. Norwegian norms on this aspect is perceived by participants as being quite different. Almost all of them think that Norwegians do not give as high significant priority to higher education, as they do. The reason for this, they argue, is the fact that the Norwegian government takes good care of all the citizens regardless of the level of education. One father stated that he, after having moved to Norway, had changed his values on high academic success. He said that in Norway one may have as good quality life when occupying positions that do not require many years of academic studying.

Nigerian culture has a very high score on indulgence, according to Hofstede's description of culture dimension (Hofstede 2001). Generally this mean willingness to realise their impulses and desires with regard to enjoying life and have fun. They also tend to be positive, give priority to leisure time and spend money on what they wish. This study, however, was not completely in line with these assumptions. They told about a happy life, they were positive, but they tried to use their money wisely, plan the family budget and have a control over the economy. The families in this study had high education and many of them, have or have had a good income. A high income make it more possible to use money on leisure activities, however, this was not the top priority of the families in this study, except for the sport or other activities for the children.

In this study I expected to find a high level on collectivism among informants (Hofstede 2001). High level in this dimension means that the members of society define their self-image more as a "we" and not as that of "I". The findings show that both mothers and fathers more often talked about the family and "us" instead of emphasizing their individual opinions. When facing a new culture, people may experience anxiety and difficulties when they try to adjust to it. The sense of belonging to a particular group and the wish for such belonging probably increases when one lives as a foreigner abroad. When facing unknown situations or going through different kind of changes, it may be easier to be understood by a person or group of people who are 'in the same shoes'. That may be the reason why some Nigerian felt it was important to be surrounded not by the 'others', but by people with the same values and background as their

own. It may also explain why they preserve strong attachments to their close friends and extended family, and why they wish for the children, to grow up as caring for others and ready to help the family or someone who is in need.

Some informants mentioned that they are ready to make sacrifices for the best of their children or the family. They were ready to undergo uncertainty or be in the different kind of uncomfortable situations, if they knew that this would result in their family prosperity in the future. In return, they expected the children to follow family rules, demonstrate obedience and loyalty, and study well. The parents seemed to interpret obedience and loyalty as the children's contribution to the family in particular, and to the society in general. Children were also expected to learn from childhood that in this life, punishment for wrong action is inevitable. The parent's attitude to punishment seemed to be their way of preparing the children for possible difficulties in their adult lives. One father even broadened this perspective and said that strong nation cannot be built when children do not know the concept of punishment and its consequences. These findings may demonstrate that the wellbeing of the group is valued more than the wellbeing of the individual, which is associated with behaviour of people in collectivistic societies.

The informants perceived the Norwegian norms to be too individualistic and the people as very independent. This was sometimes interpreted as being negative. For example, the Nigerian argued that Norwegians do not care for their elders, mentioning among the fact that it is not rare that old people live in a nursing home instead of staying with their families. For them, such practice is considered as being disrespectful and cruel to the elders. However, they added that for many Norwegians, this practice could be considered as providing the best comfortable living conditions and professional care for the elders.

The level of femininity was also in line with Hofstede's dimensions. The findings showed that informants in general support the ideas of the different roles for men and women. They believe that the role of a man is to be a provider for a family, and woman is supposed to take care of the house and children. Nigerian culture is described as competitive and many informants demonstrated the willingness to support 'the competitive spirit' among their children. Norwegian norms on this were described as lacking competitiveness and therefore not stimulating the development of one's skills. Informants perceived the life as competition, where one needs to learn this fact in order to succeed in life. One of the reason to this may be that Nigeria has very big population, with youth being the biggest part of it. As a result, there

is a big competition on the labour market, where it is not easy to get a good job and become independent. For informants children is seen as an investment to the future and many parents put the high hopes on their children and expect them to occupy good positions when they grow up.

The findings on uncertainty avoidance among informants didn't give very distinct results as informants answers were not aligned with maximum point in the characteristics of the dimension. The majority of the informants felt it better, when the future was predictable and seemed stable. They were not very comfortable with uncertain situations, such as losing the job or possible unwanted behaviour of a child, due to the influence of the social surroundings. Probably this can be due to their status of a foreigners in Norway. It may also be a general concern or worry all humans may have from time to time. In a long-term perspective, many of Nigerian parents were thinking of 'spending the old age back home' and admitted that they can be completely happy and free only in the familiar 'home' surroundings.

### Parenting style and socialization

Socialization is described as a process of social interaction through which children become functional members of a society. The Nigerian families were very conscious about how their children should be able to cope with in the Norwegian society. The main findings was that the Nigerian families had the opinion that the way they had been raised themselves had worked out well, and that they saw no reason to change this practice. This meant that the families wanted to keep long hold traditions and Nigerian culture. In early socialization the parents emphasized that the mothers should stay at home to take care of the children until the children were about three years of age. The argument they used was that they wanted to create a strong bond with the child, and that the children this way would get a better care than was provided for in the Norwegian kindergarten. Although staying at home with small children are practiced also by many Norwegian families, and also supported economically by cash support ("kontantstøtte") from the state, the Nigerian families emphasized that their practice was different from what they observed in Norwegian families.

In spite of the strong attitude to stay at home when the children were under the age of three, all the Nigerian families in this study sent their children to Norwegian kindergartens. Some of the children were under three years when they were sent to kindergarten. This may mean that the parents are using for and against arguments about what is best for the child and the family, and in this way negotiating basic values in parenting. The pro arguments were related to language

and the opportunity to socialize into a Norwegian context. The children will learn Norwegian norms and rules and attitudes from other children and the kindergarten teachers. One part of this negotiating was considerations about what kind of culture the children would adopt. The parents were on one side, seeing the possibility for the children not to be fully Nigerian or too Norwegian. They wanted the children to be integrated in the Norwegian society, but at the same time be Nigerian. The doubt and challenge for the parents, were that their children might grow up to be like all the other children in Norway and different from them. In a way, they might unconsciously be afraid of their child ending up as a third-culture kid. By sending their children to kindergarten, they seem to accept the influence the kindergartens and schools have on their children, but it did not mean that they did not reflect on the consequences.

Some parents, however, were clear about the limits for what they could accept. Although there were some variation between the families, two families accepted more Norwegian norms and attitudes, than the others. These two families also tried to follow Norwegian norms at home, not only in the public life, as all the others.

In his model, Anderson (2013) among other things describes how socioeconomic status impact socialization practices. Here the families agreed that it was important for them to make a future for their children that was better than they had had themselves. Other demographic factors such as an immigration status may influence the socialization practices of parents and as a result – child outcomes. Five of the families had a permanent residence permit to stay in Norway. Two families were holding temporal residence permit, but can apply for permanent residency by the end of 2017. In this study, the difference in residence permit did not seem to influence their parenting. All of them wanted to secure the future of the children, and they did not want to redo all the paper work the immigration process is requiring. Based on this, we can assume that the informants wanted their children to be adapted to the new culture. They wanted to stimulate their children's social competence and development of socialisation and academic skills. Motivation to stay active in the children's leisure time to improve their social network and skills was an example of this.

Baumrind (1971) categorised parenting into three different styles – authoritarian, authoritative and permissive. Akinsola (2013), who studied parenting styles in Nigeria, found all the three styles of parenting. In all of them, emphasis was, however, on obedience to authority and compliance with parental instructions. The permissive parenting style is associated with lack of clear and consequent rules in the parenting style. In my study, I found no examples of

permissive parenting style among the informants. I would characterize the parenting style in my sample as a mix of authoritarian and authoritative, in line with the power distance and masculinity dimensions of Hofstede. The parents expected the children to obey, but they were willing to discuss the right things to think and do. The fact that I did not find examples of permissive parenting style, may be due to the selection criteria. The informants of this study had a high level of education, and a relatively good social status.

#### Integration and acculturation strategies

All families seem to have chosen to try to be integrated in the Norwegian society. By sending their children to Norwegian kindergartens, we may say that segregation was not a chosen strategy. Many families did feel that they were not integrated enough, but also reflected over the reasons for this. They meant that the differences in culture and the fact that they were black, probably were significant factors making integration more difficult or that it took more time. In family life the Nigerian norms were practiced and this was important for them. If the families had wanted to be “Norwegian” and fully assimilated into the Norwegian society, they might have tried to practice Norwegian norms at home also. Many of the parents in the families spoke poor Norwegian. Since English is their native language, they may function well and be understood at the work place and in public and social life. This may have reduced their motivation to learn Norwegian. Still, many emphasized that there were no good reason to learn Norwegian. Thus a fully integrated life in Norway was not so important that they gave priority to learn fluent Norwegian. This may mean that the Nigerian norms for relatedness to the extended families and other Nigerian may be the dominant cultural trait, as argued by Anderson (2013).

The families in this study, seem to have chosen the integration acculturation strategy, described by Berry (2007). They demonstrated willingness to adopt and to a certain degree adjust their behaviour to the new culture’s norms and rules. At the same time, they maintained many basic assumptions from their own culture. The large socio-cultural difference between the informants’ host and heritage cultures such as family and social norms, may make the acculturation process slower. Also informants’ cultural distance from the host society may suggest that adaptation may not be as easy and that informants may not easily want to choose to mix their own and new culture.

So, how does good knowledge of the Norwegian language influence informant’s adaptation and acceptance of Norwegian culture and norms? If we look closely at the findings, and the

parents' attitudes towards the new culture, families where at least one of the parents spoke fluent or good Norwegian, had a tendency to be more open towards Norwegian culture and accept more of its norms or traditions than other families. The families where the parents spoke Norwegian poorly, or at the intermediate level, demonstrated more scepticism against the new culture and adherence to their own culture and beliefs.

### Negotiation of culture

According to Schein, we have three levels of culture. On the top level we have visible structures and processes. The next level is espoused values and on the bottom we have assumptions and beliefs. In this study one mother tells that she wanted to send their children to schools and Sunday schools in churches with members having the same world view as her family, because she wanted her children to be raised with Christian values. This was her espoused values. Behind this, there might be some assumptions and beliefs that are unconscious or not spoken. This might be, for example, that the belief was that their way was the only way to salvation. Her basic assumption was that her children needed to be raised in a Christian church closer to the one she had had in Nigeria, because it was right and the only way to a good life. When the families choose a church where 90 % of the members are Nigerian, a basic assumption behind this, might be that they believe that being black make it almost impossible to be fully integrated in a church where the majority is Norwegian. The visible part of the culture, is that they go to church. Another visible part of how the Nigerian parents were still part of a Nigerian culture may be seen out of their contact with families and friends, looking on them as a kind of extended family. They were expecting that members of this extended family should take an active part in raising their children. A visible part was also their religious practice of going to church together with the extended family and bringing their own food to different social encounters.

Schein states that basic assumptions are hard to change and tend to be non-debatable. To change them it takes a lot of anxiety and mental work, so instead people prefer to communicate or associate more with others with the same set of assumption in order to have feeling of safety and avoid anxiety. In this study I observed how the majority of the Nigerian parents preferred to avoid such anxiety and associate more with other Nigerian families who shared their views.

### The parents and a dynamic perspective of culture

In the dynamic perspective of culture we do not so much focus the culture individuals have and differences between cultures as something permanent, but on what people do and how norms

and behaviour change over time, situations and context. If we could not physically see the Nigerian parents and did not know where they came from, only observing what they were doing, what would we have found? Could we determine their origin from these observed behaviours? In this study we found, that small children were home with their mothers, like many Norwegian children. I also found that older children were sent to kindergartens, like most Norwegian children. The children went to ordinary schools and took part in ordinary sport and leisure activities. The most visible parts of their parenting behaviour was thus the same as the behaviour of Norwegian behaviour. As a consequence of these main activities, the Nigerian parents had open interactions with other Norwegian parents, teachers, trainers and public health representatives. Here they meet new attitudes and norms, which the parents reported on in this study. They told about Norwegian regulations on punishment and upbringing, made it clear that they did not always agree, but tried to adapt to stay within the rules. The issue they most freely spoke about in this regard, was physically punishment of their children. Another issue related to this, was about the type of communication between the parents and the children. In Nigeria, when the children are verbally disciplined, the children are not supposed to talk back. This is very different from what the parents observed in Norway, where there could be a kind of dialogue between the children and parents in this situation also. Several of the parents meant that this was a practice that they to a certain degree could accept, and tried to adjust to.

#### Experience the change of cultural identity?

In Nigeria there are a more strict division of responsibility and roles between the genders, than you find in Norway. The Nigerians observed when they came to Norway that also women with small children had paid work, and that this was not only a practice of a minority of women, but expected of all. The Nigerian parents adapted to this practice, but at the same time, they tried to keep it a secret to the family back in Nigeria. This may mean that the Nigerians in Norway over time came to accept different values for different members of their extended family, as long as it was not open communicated. Given this, it might be possible that the context to a certain extent determine what the parents are doing and saying. As for the cultural identity, such a practice may have some unwanted side effects. The practice speaks for flexibility, but may also give a feeling of not completely fit in, neither in their home country, nor in Norway. When you consciously or unconsciously use several sets of norms, it is not predictable what you will do in specific situations. An example of this, might be attitudes to daughters and if they are motivated for education and sporting activities in the same way as their brothers, and if the expectation for them, are the same when it comes to helping their mothers and fathers in

the family household. One father also told about how they themselves and other people thought about them, and about how this might have influence their behaviour. In Norway, he said, they felt like ordinary people, because all the people here have about the same living standard. However, when they went home to Nigeria, they were treated like kings and queens, because they were supposed to be rich coming from Norway. This 'royal' treatment influenced how they acted and also how the children behaved as a response. The father said that his children became a little arrogant towards people being on holiday in Nigeria, but very rapidly had to change back, when they came back to Norway. In line with a dynamic perspective on culture, this might be an example of not being able to always predict people's behaviour out of cultural characteristics, and that the behaviour is context specific. It may also be an example of how the context and situation activate different parts of both parents' and children's cultural identity.

Travelling back and forth and living in different cultures, may contribute to the development of what is called 'third-culture kids' (Pollock et al. 2001). Such children build relationships with all cultures they are exposed to, but do not have full ownership of any of them. I do not have data on how the children perceive their identity, but some of the parents explicitly perceived their children to be different from themselves. They thought that the children would be more like other Nigerian children raised in Norway, than their parents and children living in Nigeria in their extended family. Some parents also emphasized that the children would be like all other Norwegian children, learning their language and ways of behaving. This fact were on the same time something the parents appreciated, but also something they worried about. The parents were particularly worried about the attitudes to sex among the Norwegian, and the practice to talk about sex with their children. When asked about it, the parents in this study admitted that talking about their punishment practice and sex, were like kind of taboos.

The ability and willingness to adapt and change, by be influenced by the higher education the participants in this study had. With high education they got good jobs and worked together with people from different countries. Higher education and this kind of jobs are in a way 'global', and may come with an understanding that some knowledge and norms are almost universal. This may mean that if my sample was different, the results, would also have been different.



## Conclusion

It is hard to deny that the world is becoming more and more internationalised. People travel all around the world, meet new cultures, bring their own culture to the other countries and when they come back home, they bring something learned with them. Some people raise children in countries different from their own, and those children grow up to be the new generation. It is of interest to look at the phenomena of how immigrants experience raising children in a new culture.

A main objective of this study was to find out how immigrants from Nigeria raise their children in the Norwegian society. Additionally the aim was to look into how having children in Norway influence the immigrants' cultural identity. The findings of this study demonstrated the life experiences of seven Nigerian families that raise children in Norway. The participants varied in the level of their integration into Norwegian society and acceptance of Norwegian norms, but all of them said that they wanted to preserve the Nigerian culture and transmit it to their children. At the same time, all the parents wanted that their children should be well integrated into the Norwegian society. They used different socialization techniques to help their children achieve it. Consciously or subconsciously, the informants were negotiating Nigerian and Norwegian culture and values. Many of them admitted that they were following the Norwegian norms in public life, but maintaining their own cultural norms at home. Some parents expressed their worries about the Norwegian child welfare services. They said that it was sometimes hard to find the right balance between the parenting techniques that they were used to, and what expected norms for parenting in Norway were.

Some of the parents admitted that they observed the changes in them and their identity. Having children and living in a country with different culture had influenced them. In this study, I discovered that some of the informants had experienced changes on their perception of gender roles and what was expected from them as being woman or man. For example, some women had to work when their children were still very small, and the husbands had to be at home with the kids. This and similar practices were kept secret from their extended family. Some informants said that they did not have a sense of belonging to the Norwegian society. At the same time they already had changed their cognitive maps, mentality and worldview compared to their families, or to themselves before they immigrated to Norway. This might mean that parents gradually change their cultural identity when they immigrate and for a long period stays in a new culture.

All the informants in this study agreed that it is not an easy task – to raise the children in a new culture. The parents admit that this task come with certain challenges, but it is also beneficial. They are bringing up the new generation that will inherit cultures of at least two different worlds. This is a great advantage, but at the same time a responsibility. The parents try to the best of their knowledge to find the right balance which would benefit them and their children.

Sometimes when we meet the unknown, it may scare us. When people move to a different country and meet a new culture, it may be frightening and worrying for both the newcomers and the host citizens. Immigrants may have to take time to adjust to the new culture and learn how to ‘act like a Roman’, while locals should struggle to understand why immigrants act the way they do. Something new may be developed if both sides simultaneously try to understand each other, using their worldview and their culture as a starting point for communications and discussions.

Sometimes Norwegians are looking at the strict and authoritarian ways of raising children by the Nigerian parents and probably they think that it is cruel or too harsh. Meanwhile, when we know what lies behind it, we may say that this is the way Nigerian parents are preparing children for adult life. This is the way they were raised and taught, and probably this was the best for the context in which they grew up – at least in their opinion. They wholeheartedly mean the best for their children while doing it. When Nigerian parents look at the parenting style of the Norwegians, they may think that their way is too soft, that parents have no authority and act like they are slaves to their children. Meanwhile, Norwegians simply want to teach their children to know how to make decisions by themselves and want them to grow up to be free and independent.

When we know what lies behind each other’s actions, it is easier to understand and interpret the others. It may be that social workers, teacher, leaders in the kindergarten or other interested persons will find this study helpful in their efforts to understand Nigerian parenting style. For foreign parents living in Norway this study may give insights and interpretations of the Norwegian culture as it is seen by Nigerian parent.

When people move to, live, have families and children in another country, there is probably no way that those processes would pass without a trace. Immigrants have to live between two worlds, where they are comparing, choosing, making decisions and thus negotiation the culture. Consciously or unconsciously, people may change their habits, their attitudes and behaviours, which eventually may lead to changes in identity.

We may thereby wonder, is negation and open dialogue the only way forward in the modern world? We probably cannot stop the global processes of migration and globalisation, so maybe it is better for all people to learn how to cohabit with mutual respect? And is it possible, that after some years, the world will be homogeneous so there will be no such thing as a ‘culture’? And when answering the question “Who are you?” the world “human” will come first? Future research may give the answers.

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