



NORWEGIAN
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

THE ROLE OF IMMIGRANT CHURCHES IN THE INCORPORATION OF THEIR PARTICIPANTS TO THE BROADER NORWEGIAN SOCIETY

Margaret Wangari Wanjiru

Supervisor

Professor Tormod Engelsviken

*This master's thesis is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of
Religion, Society and Global Issues at*

MF Norwegian School of theology Spring 2013

AVH5035, Master's Thesis (60 ECTS)

Master in Religion, Society and Global Issues

Words: 30,454

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS.....	vi
ABSTRACT	vii
CHAPTER 1; INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background and Current Context.....	1
1.1.1 Overview of religious organizations	3
1.1.2 Christian immigrants and their establishments in Norway	3
1.2 Statement of the Problem	4
1.3 Research Questions	5
1.4 Preliminary definition of social capital	5
1.5 Contextual Factors for Social Capital Production	6
1.6 objectives of the study.....	6
1.7 Methods and Scope of the Study	7
1.8 The conceptual background.....	7
1.9 The outline the research	8
CHAPTER 2; THEORY	10
2.1 Social capital.....	10
2.1.1 Forms of Social Capital.....	12
2.2 Religion as a Source of Social Capital in Civil Society	14
Summary.....	17
CHAPTER 3; PREVIOUS WORK DONE.....	18
3.0 USA	18
Summary.....	23
3.1 Europe.....	24
3.2 Norway	25
3.3 Conclusion	32
CHAPTER 4; FACTORS AND METHODOLOGY	34
4.1 Factors	34
4.1.1 Activities and Programs	34
4.1.2 Connections and Associations with other Organization and the State	35
4.1.3 Participants' residential status	35

4.1.4 Organizational culture	35
4.2 Methods of data collection	36
4.2.1 Sampling and interviews	36
4.3 A short reflection of the interview process	37
4.4 Methods for Analyzing the Material	38
4.5 Short historical background of the churches that provided the sample population	38
4.5.1 The Scandinavia Chinese Christian Church in Oslo	38
4.5.2 The Redeemed Christian Church of God	40
4.5.3 Global Evangelical Church Oslo	41
4.6 Summary	42
CHAPTER 5; FINDINGS	43
5.1 Activities and Programs	43
5.1.1 Activities and programs at SCCC.....	43
5.1.2 Activities and programs at RCCG	47
5.1.3 Activities and programs at Global Evangelical Church.....	49
5.2 Connections and Associations.....	51
5.2.1 Connections and Associations at SCCC	51
5.2.2 Connections and Associations at RCCG	53
5.2.3 Connections and Associations at Global Evangelical Church	54
5.3 Participants' residential status	55
<i>Diversity in immigrants' circumstances</i>	55
5.4 Organizational culture	58
5.5 Summary	61
CHAPTER 6; DISCUSSION OF THE MAIN FINDINGS	62
6.1 Activities and programs	63
6.1.1 Connections and Associations.....	68
Residential status, Organizational culture and their effect in incorporation	71
6.1.2 Participants' residential status and its effect on incorporation.....	71
6.1.2 Organizational culture and their effect on incorporation	73
CHAPTER 7; SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION	74
References	80
Appendices	83

Appendix 1: An introduction letter to my master's project 83
Appendix 2: Interview guide to the pastor/leader of the church 84
Appendix 3: Interview guide to the members of the Church 86

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The successful writing and completion of this master thesis was supported by several kind people that God has positioned around me.

First and foremost, I would like to appreciate the Pastors of SCCC, RCCG, and Global Evangelical Church in Oslo and their participants for their openness, time and vital information that made it possible for me to conduct this research. I am especially grateful to my informants who willingly offered to sign in for this research.

I would also like to acknowledge the help and support of my supervisor Tormod Engelsviken who through his superb knowledge and experience, advised, encouraged and asked appropriate questions at every stage. This I must admit helped improve my ability in writing scientific work.

My friend Stian Holtskog provided me with necessary articles and other written materials relevant to my work. He also introduced me to several people and churches in Norway who later provided me with necessary information. I therefore want to say a big thank you for such kind gestures.

I big thank you also to Rune Fiskerstrand (KIA) and Jon Steinar Kjøllesdal (Norges Kristne Råd) for vital contact information that helped me began my interview journey.

This thesis would not have come this far were it not for the encouraging words and prayers of my family members. I would like to specially thank my beloved Uncle Patrick Muriuki for finding time to look at my work and give necessary feedback. I would also want to thank my sister Loise, my brother Richard, and my mom for patiently encouraging me in prayers.

Above all, I would like to thank my heavenly father for great ability deposited in me. The inner strength and guidance must have only come from His Spirit. My pastor –Pastor Oliseh Akpati deserves a big thank you. He encouraged me, offered practical help and supported me in prayers which were important in this process. I also want to acknowledge my friends sis Emma Sesay for being considerate, sis Geanette Osei Bonsu for believing in me and God’s ability in me, bro Sonny Boateng and sis Gunhild Irene Hafsten for taking out time to help me correct my work, not forgetting all Christ Embassy members Oslo who asked always about my school work, I appreciate you all.

For any errors or inadequacies remaining in this work, I take full responsibility.

May our Almighty God do you well now and forever Amen!

Margaret Wangari Wanjiru

May 2013

ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

KIA- Kristent Interkulturelt Arbeid

SCCC- Scandinavia Chinese Christian Church

RCCG-Redeemed Christian Church of God

NGOs- Non-governmental Organizations

ISU- The International Student Union Norway

CSU- Christian Student Union

ICSF- International Christian Student Fellowship

T-network -Trans-denominational Network

ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on the role of Christian immigrant churches in helping their participants to integrate in their new society. It does so by doing an empirical study on three different immigrant churches in Oslo, Norway, where it investigates their activities, programs, connections and associations, the sort of social capital they help provide and whether or not it can be said to facilitate incorporation into the larger society. To help do that, this thesis applies *social capital theory* and gives a broad presentation and analysis of the churches in question focusing on four factors namely: Activities and programs, connections and associations with other organization and the state, participants' residential status, and organizational culture. In spite of limited mentioning of *linking social capital* by previous researches, this thesis is concerned whether *linking social capital* can be identified and whether or not it can be said to facilitate better incorporation.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background and Current Context

An in-depth study conducted by KIA (Kristent Interkulturelt Arbeid) in conjunction with Flerkulturelt Kirkelig Nettverk (Norges Kristne Råd) and DAWN Norge in 2010 and presented in Oslo-March 2011, showed that the immigrant congregations has the highest growth rate in Norway with over 90 congregations now registered in Oslo. According to the study, most of the congregations were started in the last 10 to 20 years. This could be an indication that in general, the number of immigrants in Norway is increasing. As a norm, the Norwegian Government has clearly stated goals to have Norway act as an inclusive society where all its inhabitants regardless of their background have equal opportunities to contribute and participate actively in the Norwegian society. When it comes to integration and social inclusion of immigrants and their children in Norway, the policies are put in place with the aim to prevent lower social participation. The policies ensure that immigrants are able to participate in the labor market and in the society at large. (Ministry of labour and social inclusion, 2006)

One of the four areas that the Norwegian government was responding to by proposing an action plan for integration and social inclusion in October 2006, was a noticeable lower rate civic participation by the immigrant population compared to the general population. Commending NGOs, the report noted that NGOs are important and necessary actors in a democratic society, and involvement in their activities creates space for interaction that help people establish contact and network that are useful in various areas of life such as work. As a result, the Government promised to ensure that organizations representing immigrants use their voices and are heard on issues that concern the development of the society. Funding of NGOs among others is noted in the report as an important measure in creating an inclusive society. The Norwegian government is committed to funding voluntary activities in local communities that contribute to participation, dialogue and interaction. Local immigrant organizations are funded to strengthen participation of the immigrant population locally and provide access to social networks, while voluntary

activities are funded to create meeting places and activities in local communities across various population groups. The aim here is to increase trust and a sense of belonging in the Norwegian society. (Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion, 2006)

As a result, there has been awareness in the society about voluntary organizations and local immigrants' organizations, their activities, and effects on their participants and the society at large. A recent report by the general secretary in the volunteer sector Birgitte Brekke, appeals for the government to collaborate even more with the volunteer sector in order to bring out the potentials in these organizations. According to the general secretary, the volunteer sector has a multitude of activities and has a potential key to participation in employment, education and in politics (Association of NGOs in Norway, 7th Nov).

In addition, a number of studies have been conducted on these organizations and their role and effect to their participants and the society at large (see for example Predelli 2008, Hagelund and Loga 2009, Ødegård 2010, and Loga 2011). These researches exhibit the importance of these organizations in the civil society as an arena for integration.

It is nevertheless, not in the scope of this study to investigate immigrant's organizations or other civil society institutions at large. The focus of this work is limited to religious organizations and even narrower, to Christian Immigrant Churches and their role in helping incorporation of their immigrant participants to the broader Norwegian Society. By focusing on different Christian churches and how they conduct their activities when it comes to efforts towards inclusion and incorporation, we can get a clear picture on some of the ways immigrants are incorporated into an important establishment in civil society, the sorts of *social capital* made available and whether or not it is effective in incorporating the immigrants into the broader society. It is important to emphasize here that this study does not evaluate incorporation to a specific area but rather, evaluates incorporation in general. This is because; the choice to use some specific determining variables may block out other important variables that might actually be doing a better incorporation job.

1.1.1 Overview of religious organizations

Religious organizations can be an arena that promotes integration and participation in the society. They are often understood as crucial in individuals' lives and they can provide social ties, channel opportunities and motivations towards their members, as well as teach values and worldviews about how to live. When it comes to immigrants, religious organizations can provide special avenues for incorporating newcomers (Foley and Hoge 2007: 14). Nevertheless, depending on the context and a number of other factors, religious organizations can be understood differently as in the case of Norway (and other Nordic countries). According to Loga (2012) and others, religious organizations even though have been said to help maintain and protect important values such as cultural and religious identity, they generally have been said to lag behind in their efficacy when it comes to important duties such as helping their participants to integrate in the larger society (Jill Loga 2012, see also Hagelund and Loga 2009, Fangen, and Mohn 2010, and Predelli 2008).

A comparison of these religious communities with other types of organizations however, may show variation in performance but that should not nullify the fact that religious communities in themselves are active and committed to various efforts that helps improve the lives of their participants in a new society. Where they have lagged behind, these organizations can be improved to better play the role of integration facilitator, in which their participants can gain access to the labor market and other important contacts in the larger society. In the following section, I will briefly describe Christian immigrants and their establishment in Norway.

1.1.2 Christian immigrants and their establishments in Norway

Contrary to what may seem apparent, Christian immigrants in Norway are among the highest number of religious immigration groups. According to Statistics Norway, 60% of the immigrants are said to come from a Christian background (Statistics Norway, 2010). This being the case, Christian establishments already in the host country should be prompted to develop ways that help them better accommodate the new comers not only within but also outside themselves. This study is interested in the nature of activities/programs and connection/associations intended by Christian immigrant churches to help incorporation of their participants to the larger society. As recipients of Christian immigrants, what efforts have they put in place to stimulate incorporation? Do they encourage and promote activities that help their participants meet and mingle with others outside their cocoons? Are they in association with people or organizations

that can help their incorporation? Do they themselves provide arenas and activities that not only suit their members but that attract and accommodate others from the larger society?

The Christian Council of Norway has organized a Church Network that works as a point of contact in networking the established and the migrant's churches. This network helps in the integration of both the refugees and immigrants in the Norwegian society. The council however has admitted that it is mostly the minority churches that has done well in accommodating Christian migrants compared to the established local churches (Nilsen 2008:27).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In the last 5-10 years, several studies have been done to evaluate the effect of religion in helping the immigrants adapt well in a new environment (Synnes 2012: 9, Austigard 2008: 15). According to Synnes (2012) and Austigard (2008), most of the studies done however, have focused on children, youth and women. While some of these studies have addressed issues on women's participation in the society and religion institutions and identity formation among descendants of immigrants, others have addressed questions of the importance of immigrant's organizations, religious leaders and their attitude towards the new society. The two authors have also noted that most of these studies are focused on Muslim faith communities and that only a few have been directed to Christian immigrant churches (Synnes 2012: 9, Austigard 2008: 15). Nevertheless, it is an undeniable fact that there has been a few more researches done since then, but with the increasing number of Christian immigrants and their establishments, the number of researches would still be arguably low.

As noted above, there seem to be the question of the effectiveness of religion in helping the immigrants integrates in the larger society (Jill Loga 2012, Hagelund and Loga 2009, Fangen, and Mohn 2010, and Predelli, 2008). On the other hand, The Christian Church Council of Norway seems to suggest that there is some work going on in regard to efforts of integration especially by the Christian Immigrants Churches (Nilsen 2008:27).

The problem in this study develops as a result of the following two issues

1. Despite the fact that several scholars have conducted researches on immigrant churches and their importance to their participants, most of these researches have had a general point of view and have not focused on specific factors such as activities, programs, connections and associations and their role for the inclusion of the participants to the larger Norwegian society. Thus, this I would say is a fairly neglected area of study that needs attention.
2. A curiosity driven by the need to find out what the Christian Immigrants Church is doing to help incorporate its participants to the larger society, in a society where not everyone seems to agree that faith communities provides an arena for integration.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the above background that includes the statement of the problem, I was able to generate the following question/s that will guide in addressing the issues in this study.

What relevant activities, programs, connections and associations that relates to incorporation are different Christian immigrant churches involved in and what sort of social capital can they be said to have or produce? Can they facilitate incorporation of the immigrants to the larger society? If yes, in what ways?

In other words, the research question seeks to answer whether these activities, programs, connections and associations contribute to a social capital that does not only bond people but also encourage and help them to cross over and participate in the larger society.

1.4 Preliminary definition of social capital

In sociology, the role that immigrant religious organizations play in helping their immigrants participate in their host society's social, cultural, civic and political activities have been discussed in relation to the theory of *social capital*. Building on Bourdieu (1986), Foley and Hoge (2007) have explained social capital as those resources available to social networks and their benefits to the participants. Further, the two authors have used the distinction between two forms of social capital (bridging and bonding) as introduced by Putnam (2000). While the churches under investigation can benefit from the "obvious" two forms of social capital, this study argues that (linking) social capital if identified, can also play an important role in helping the immigrants to integrate better in the larger Norwegian society. In that case, I will in this

study examine whether the three forms of social capital as expressed by Alison Gilchrist (2000) in her work *the well-connected community* are found in the churches under investigation. In order to help me analyze the sort of social capital these churches provide and whether or not it can be said to contribute to the incorporation of the immigrant participant in the larger Norwegian Society, I will discuss a few main factors mentioned below.

1.5 Contextual Factors for Social Capital Production

There are a number of factors that could help explain variation in how and to what degree worship communities can be a source of social capital that can contribute or encumber the incorporation of immigrants to the larger society. Ugur (2007) and Furseth (2008) suggest factors such as organizations' structure and religious teachings/traditions among others while Foley and Hoge (2007) in explaining these variation in civic incorporation of new immigrants suggested factors such as; immigrant's circumstances as well as their reception by the host country, the organizational culture of the immigrant population and their faith communities and the norms and religious traditions that helps shape organizational culture and form religious leaders and lay members.

In relation to those mentioned above, I will in this study discuss the following factors;

- Activities and programs
- Connections and associations of these churches with other organizations and the state
- Participants' residential status
- Organizational culture

1.6 objectives of the study

This research will address the following objectives:

1. Try to gain a better understanding on whether Christian immigrant churches contribute to the incorporation of their immigrant participants in the larger society.
2. Understand different ways in which Christian immigrant churches contribute to the incorporation of their immigrant participants.

1.7 Methods and Scope of the Study

As I mentioned in the background, this study will focus on the activities/programs and connections/associations of different immigrant churches that facilitates immigrant's inclusion in Norway. Following is a brief outline of the methods I have chosen to use in this study but a more detailed presentation will come in a later chapter. Due to a high number of immigrant churches in Norway, it is not easy for me to conduct my research in all of them owing to obvious subsequent reasons such as financial, time and space constraints. As a result, I will be carrying out my research in three different immigrant churches in Oslo within a span of two months that is; between the month of November and December 2012. Since the study is qualitative I have chosen to use semi-structured interviews as my main method of data collection, which will involve interviewing and interrogating of 12 informants from the three churches. Among the informants will be the pastor/leader from each church. Other methods of data collection that I will be using include; document review which will involve visiting of previous related work done by other researchers and also looking at the churches' websites if any and notes taken during my visits to the churches. Citations will be used to ensure work references.

1.8 The conceptual background

Before going further, I would like to clarify the use of some important definitions and concepts that I have chosen to use in this study. I am aware that some of these terms can be used and applied variously in different immigration and integration researches depending on the context and especially at the international level, yet sometimes without a clear distinction. The terms I would like to clarify here include; "immigrant churches" "incorporation", "immigrants", "social participation", "participants"

- "Immigrant churches" in this work refers to churches that are started by immigrants and whose majority attendees are not ethnic Norwegians.
- When using the term "incorporation" in this study, it denotes the act and the process where groups and individual become part of the larger society while retaining the freedom to choose not to assimilate culturally into the receiving society. This idea is borrowed from the current use of the term integration in Norway (see Fangen and Mohn: 2010). Since in most cases what is meant by incorporation and integration is the same, though with a more common preference for the usage of the concept of incorporation in

the North America literature, and a more common tendency for the concept of integration in Europe Morales and Giugni (2011:1-18), the term incorporation and integration will be interchangeably used in this study.

- Gunnar Myrberg defining who an “immigrant” is in Norway, refers first to the Lexical meaning which defines an immigrant as any person permanently living in Norway, but who was born in another country is an *innvandrere*, regardless of how many years he or she has lived in Norway or any other factor such as nationality, parents’ birth country/ies, skin colour, language proficiency and so on. He goes on to explain a more restricted and emerging popular meaning used in the streets and the mass media, that seem to oscillate between an implicit code based on Third World» origin, different values from the majority, «dark skin», working class (unskilled or semi-skilled work). This study however prefers to use the lexical meaning in reference to immigrants due to its non-discriminatory connotation.
- Social participation in this study entails participation in activities such as; political activities, social activities, charitable donations, and volunteering.
- In this study, I have chosen to use the term “participants” instead of the term “members” to leave room for people who might be taking part in the activities of the church but are not registered as members.

1.9 The outline of the thesis

This study is divided into seven chapters. Having begun with an introduction chapter where a background is laid out, a chapter on the theory will follow. In this chapter (2), the theory that will be used in this study and its forms will be described and also briefly discussed. In chapter three, previous researches done on similar topics in both America and Norway will be reflected on. Chapter four will present methodology and factors (variables) that will be used to help evaluate social capital availability. This being an empirical study, specific area of data collection and their historical backgrounds, the mode of data collection and the methods that will be used to analyze the materials, will also be presented in this chapter.

Chapter five will reflect the findings of the data collected in the selected churches in regards to their activities and associations, participants' residential status, and the churches' organizational cultures. In chapter six, discussions of the main findings will be presented in two sections. In relation to other researches done, the first section will discuss the kind of activities/programs and connections/associations the churches' offer, the kind of *social capital* they make available, and how that facilitates incorporation of the participants in the large society. In the second section, this chapter will discuss how the participants' residential status and the churches' organizational culture promote or hinder (involvement in) the activities/ programs and connections/associations that promotes incorporation to the larger society (in regard to social capital).

In a final chapter (7), a summary and final conclusion will be presented.

CHAPTER 2

THEORY

This chapter presents the concept of *social capital* and develops a theoretical framework for evaluating the forms of social capital made available in immigrant churches through their activities/programs and connections/associations.

2.1 Social capital

In sociology, the role that immigrant religious organizations play in helping their immigrants to participate in their host society's social, cultural, civic and political activities have been discussed in relation to the theory of *social capital*. According to Foley and Hoge (2007), different researchers have used this concept widely but with little agreement over precisely what the term refers to. Some researchers have used this concept to explain features of social relations such as trust, norms and networks which can enable common actions, (Colemann 1988, 1990 and Putnam 1993), others to explain change in society (Putnam 2000), while still others to explain resources available to social networks and their benefits to the participants (Bourdieu 1986, Foley and Hogue 2007).

In a more definite form, Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu using a structural definition that emphasizes resources has defined social capital as the tangible and potential sum of resources available to individuals by virtue of their participation in social networks of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance (Bourdieu 1986: see also Foley and Hoge 2007 and Furseth 2008). According to Furseth (2008), social capital for Bourdieu is one of the several forms of capital, such as economic, cultural, as well as spiritual capital and consists of two elements namely: social relationship that enable individual to access resources, and the amount and quality of these resources (Furseth 2008:150)

For Sociologist James S. Coleman, social capital unlike other forms of capital, permanently exist in the structure of the relations between persons and among persons and neither in individuals nor in physical tools of production (Coleman 1990:302). But like other forms of capital, Coleman emphasize that social capital is productive and that it makes possible the achievement

of certain ends that would have been impossible with its absence (Coleman 1990:302). Coleman also emphasizes trust and trustworthiness. According to him, a group whose members manifest trustworthiness and place extensive trust in one another will be able to accomplish much more than a comparable group lacking that trustworthiness and trust (Coleman 1990:302-304). Social capital for Coleman can be viewed as a set of Moral resources that result in increased cooperation among individuals (Furseth 2008)

What is noted as common in the theory of social capital as understood by both Bourdieu and Coleman is the relationship that connects individuals with each other and individuals with a group or institutions in society. According to Furseth (2008), despite their commonality, Bourdieu and Coleman also differ. While Bourdieu emphasizes resources which vary in quality and accessibility for individuals hence creating conflict, Coleman emphasize social trust which he understands as inherent in social relationships stressing cooperation and consensus (Furseth 2008: 151).

For Robert Putnam, social capital means connections among individual in social networks, and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that comes as a result (Putnam 1993). This in a way draws upon Coleman's understanding of the social capital phenomenon especially the focus on trust. However, while Putnam looks at social capital as some ability that every individual possesses to build relations and connect in a social network and which is a transferrable resource that an individual takes with in entering a new relationship; Coleman sees social capital as socially embedded in particular relationships (Furseth 2008:151).

Focusing on the civil society, Putnam argues that civic engagement facilitates communication and creates social bonds, and social trust, which in turn makes collective action easier, and opportunism and cheating less likely. Participation in voluntary civic associations improves the socialization of individuals and cultivates values and ethics regarding communal life, such as reciprocity, trustworthiness and friendship. Engagement in civic life exposes the citizens to politically relevant information and enhances their social skills (Putnam, 2000). Social capital, or networks of civic engagement, is crucial to create a vibrant society with a meaningful dialogue among its constituents and it can be understood at two separate but interrelated levels. One is the individual level pertaining to the degree to which individuals are "community minded" with a sense of the common good. The other level is more inter-subjective and structural, and relates to

the absence or existence of trust between individuals in a society. In a way, voluntary organizations in the civil society play an important role in transforming anonymous masses into communities, and trust “lubricates” cooperation for mutual benefit (Smidt, 2003). Inger Furseth (2008) echoing this point puts it this way: the importance of social capital is related to its capacity to transform autonomous self-interested individuals into members of community expressing shared interests and a sense of the common good. Trust is seen as an important constituent of social capital that facilitates and lubricates cooperation and where trust is increased, it is likely that cooperation will increase (Furseth 2008:152). A literature review done by Gilchrist (2004) finds social capital broadly defined as a collective asset made up of social networks based on shared norms, trust, and mutuality.

All these definitions can be argued to be important elements in religious settings. Despite the marginal differences, the authors seems to commonly argue that social capital inheres in personal connections and interpersonal interactions, together with shared sets of values that are associated with these contacts and relationships. In addition, a common pattern that can be derived from these explanations and definitions is that connections are vital and the relationships made through connections and networking with one another help people to achieve those things they either could not have achieved by themselves. But for the sake of theoretical clarity, this study will adopt Pierre Bourdieu’s (1986) definition of the concept of social capital and later used by Foley and Hoge (2007) to suggest that Christian immigrant churches can offer activities and can be in associations that can provide valuable social capital necessary for the incorporation of their participants in the larger society. Besides seeking to identify bridging social capital, my work will look beyond to suggest that *linking* form of social capital if identified is as well vital for better incorporation.

2.1.1 Forms of Social Capital

There are different kinds of social capital widely recognized in the literature. While the most important ones according to Loga (2012) are bonding and bridging, different researchers have found the distinction between the two mentioned above, and a third form, useful in different contexts. While some have used the two forms (bonding and bridging), (see for example Putnam 2000:22, Foley and Hoge 2007:31-33), others according to Gilchrist (2009) such as Woolcock 1998, Putnam 1998, and Narayan 1999, have found the suggestion of a possible linking social

capital and the distinction between three forms of social capital helpful (bonding, bridging and linking).

In relation to these categories of social capital, in most cases, immigrant religious organizations have been characterized of providing bonding social capital, bridging social capital or both. Linking social capital is hardly mentioned or discussed. Could it be because the term often shows the state's facilitating initiatives to create links while these are civil organizations or is it a lack of clear distinction between bridging and linking social capitals? What about the error of not asking the right kind of questions?

Why might such linking social capital be vital and associated with religion? Vertical ties between immigrants and institutions of power might help increase the immigrant's Christian churches chances to secure resources that foster integration such as venues and funds to sponsor various activities.

How are the different forms defined? Foley and Hoge (2007: 31) defines bonding social capital as one characterized by tightly knit communities, where members can provide moral and material support drawn from their own resources, while bridging social capital, links people of diverse backgrounds, communities, and institutions providing them with resources and opportunities they might not have had within the confines of their own narrow circles. See also (Loga 2012: 24).

According to Alison Gilchrist, Woolcock building on Putnam's model and echoing Granovetter's distinction between 'strong' and 'weak' ties suggested three forms of social capital. These are expressed by Gilchrist in her work *the well-connected community* as; bonding social capital as one that links people with strong mutual commitments such as friends, family, and other close tightly knit groups. Bridging social capital as one that connect people of diverse interests, background, groups providing them with resources and opportunities they might not have had within their tightly knit circles and linking social capital as one available from the links between people or organizations that are beyond peer boundaries, and cuts across status and similarity enabling people to gain influence and resources outside their normal circles (Gilchrist 2009).

To shed more light on what is implied by linking social capital, a bulleting in 2003 on bonding, bridging and linking with social *capital*, explains linking social capital as a form of social capital

that involves social relations with those in authority, which might be used to gather resources or power (Wendy 2003. *bonding, bridging, and linking with social capital 2003*). Available at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/sf/pubs/bull4/ws.pdf> (accesses 12.May 2012). Linking social capital according to Jill Loga (2012:24) builds bridges between people who are at different levels in the society in terms of having access to knowledge, information and other vital resources that can facilitate intergration.

2.2 Religion as a Source of Social Capital in Civil Society

In order to understand the involvement of religious groups in public life, Etgait Ugur quoting Casanova (1994) in an article titled: *religion as a source of social capital? The Gulen movement in the public sphere (2007: 152-162)*, suggest that it can be relevant to look at the three domains of the public sphere: the state, the political society and the civil society. According to Ugur (2007), the state here can refer to the continuous administrative, legal, bureaucratic and coercive system with institutions, regulations, and enforcement that primarily include symbolic and legal functions. Giving examples, the author suggest the constitution, civil service and judiciary as some examples of channels in which religion can work within the state apparatus. When it comes to the political society, Ugur (2007) describe it as an arena in which societal groups contest to gain control over the state apparatus and influence public policy with this contestation taking place through political parties, interest groups and lobbies. The author further explains that many religious groups directly or indirectly become part of governing coalitions, political parties and other interest groups (Ugur 2007: 154). The civil society according to the author is made up of a body of associations, groups and organizations beyond the immediate reach and control of the state. The author further explains that the civil society requires a certain reference to the public good, as opposed to pure economic market rationality and self-interest. According to him, voluntary organizations and members of the associational life in civil society offer social services in education, health care, gender equality, minority rights, and issue-based platforms.

For Ugur (2007), religious groups choose to utilize a combination of these three domains and that the specific domains used by a group depend on its worldview and the cultural and political context. Some religious organizations primarily operate within the civil society, and sometimes interact with politicians in order to promote some of their objectives in the civil society, such as dialogue, freedom of religion and democratization (Ugur 2007: 154)

Religion is an important source of social capital in many modern societies and as such and also as a body of beliefs, values and norms, motivates believers to volunteer in community affairs in order to provide social services such as health care, soup kitchens, education, and helping the poor. It also provides a source of common identity to its followers and creates bonds between them (Ugur 2007: 154).

According to Ugur (2007), what is unique about religion when it comes to generating social capital in comparison to 'secular' sources is that religion can be an asset to promote a strong sense of reciprocity given its teachings of an afterlife and all-seeing omnipotent higher authority. In that sense, non-material basis of volunteering and self-sacrifice are key aspects of religious social capital according to the author. In addition, most religions claim universal appeal, which in turn fosters a sense of common identity and purpose across ethnic, racial and economic classes. While some religious groups get involved in politics more directly, some others prefer to invoke 'prophetic politics', working as an outside critique especially in 'moral issues'.

Quoting Smidt (2003), Ugur (2007:155) emphasizes that the fact that most religions are spiritual building motivated rather than worldly success helps them to take bold initiatives and politically risky ventures by providing a symbolic language that speaks the language of the masses. Then, is religion a source of conflict or cooperation in the civil society? The answer to this question depends on the way religion is used in the civic realm. Quoting Harris (2003), Ugur explains that religious groups whose organizations are congregational tend to promote a more active and engaged laity than hierarchically structured groups (Ugur 2007.155). The author continues to explain that teachings of religion also play a role in enhancing or hindering social capital formation. According to him, religions that emphasize distinctiveness of their beliefs especially the ones with exclusive evangelism, are more likely to be inward looking (bonding) whereas religions that emphasize social justice and interfaith dialogue are more likely to work across faiths and socio-economic classes (bridging or linking) Ugur 2007:155)

Furseth (2008) focusing on *Religion as a source of social capital* discusses three themes namely: The nature and limits of religion as a source of social capital; Contextual factors under which social capital is generated; and Negative social capital. On the nature and limits of religion as a

source of social capital, Furseth noted important the question of what type of religious associations, cultures, structures, and values foster what type of social capital. Furseth argues that several studies such as Anaan, Boddie, and Yancey (2003), Ammerman (2002) shows that active community life of religious communities whereby they provide social services within and outside themselves seem to suggest that these communities are producers of social and human capital (Furseth 2008:156). Further, Furseth has noted a conflict of religious authority between horizontal and vertical relations such as Protestant congregations and traditional Italian Catholicism that has hierarchical structures respectively. Giving examples, Furseth exhibits that while some religious communities promoted civic engagement, others did not and thus, some more capable of generating social capital compared to others (Furseth 2008: 156). Variation in the ability of religious communities to produce social capital also depends upon structures that encourage social interactions among members. Structures that allowed no room for socializing after the worship generate little social capital. Similarly, large communities committed to building community among their members through varied activities usually reach a small number of their members. Another important factor is whether the congregations are oriented outward or inward (bridging vs. bonding). Furseth observed that the type of social capital produced varied. While some congregations may have little interest a civic, public role, others may not want to get involved in activities they did not sponsor. Different congregations may generate bonding and bridging capital in varied amount in different levels. The leaders may be observed to be more connected to the larger society compared to their members as in the case of a Chinese Christian Congregation in Oslo (Furseth 2008: 157).

When it comes to contextual factors under which social capital is generated Furseth (2008) highlighted the relationship between religious traditions and social capital. Referring to Foley and Hoge (2007), she noted that faith communities such as evangelical and Pentecostal tended to emphasize salvation thorough participation in small, close-knit groups compared to civic engagement which they viewed as secular. In addition, Foley and Hoge (2007) looked at factors such as the socioeconomic status of the immigrant group arguing that it explained why immigrant religious communities varied in social capital production. The member's immigration history, level of education, and labor market condition affected the generation of social capital within these religious communities.

Finally, discussing negative social capital, Furseth noted exclusion of outsiders as a first negative effect of social capital as a result of strong ties developed within groups. Another negative effect according to Furseth is excess demand on the availability and participation of group members. Furseth also noted demands for conformity that result from solidarity. Giving an example of smaller immigrant religious communities in solo where members know each other, the level of social control tends to be strong. Finally, group solidarity may be a tool for opposition to the majority and hence, in such situation, individual success, may threaten group solidarity (Furseth 2008: 159)

Summary

The two authors have looked at religion as a source of capital from different angles. While Ugur (2007) has focused on the direct spiritual role of religion, Furseth (2008) has focused on factors around religion that affect its efficacy as a source of social capital. However, a common ground can be traced in both Ugur and Furseth's work. They both seem to agree that religious groups whose structure are horizontal tend to promote a more active and engaged laity than hierarchically structured groups thus generating social capital at varied level. To support his argument Ugur (2007) used the theory of Harris who stated that Religious groups whose organizations are congregational tend to promote a more active and engaged laity than hierarchically structured groups (Harris 2003). Religion traditions are also noted by both authors to play a role in enhancing or hindering social capital formation. From his quest of finding out the way religion is used in the civic realm, Ugur (2007) concluded that religions that emphasize distinctiveness of their beliefs, especially the ones with exclusive evangelism, are more likely to be inward looking (bonding) whereas religions that emphasize social justice and interfaith dialogue are more likely to work across faiths and socio-economic classes (bridging) (Ugur 2007:155).

CHAPTER 3

PREVIOUS WORK DONE

In this chapter, I aim to present some previous relevant empirical work related to religious organizations and immigration. Even though I aim to place my emphasis on Christian immigrants and their Christian organizations, I will expand my focus to existing work done on faith communities in general that exhibits efforts of integration.

Studies done on religion and immigrant's inclusion in the society in different parts of the world have addressed specific but diverse questions. Numerous studies on immigrants in the Western societies have been carried out with special focus on ways in which the cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds of the immigrants affect processes of integration. These studies however, have been largely directed to Muslim communities. Nevertheless, an interest on other faith communities is growing and several studies in this area have been carried out as well. In what follows, I will briefly look at work done first in the USA, and later in Europe with a focus in Norway.

3.0 USA

Due to an overwhelming wave of immigrants in the past three or four decades, recent studies in the USA, have looked at different issues affecting both the newcomers and the natives of the American Society (Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000 and (Foley and Hoge 2007). Among the addressed issues are; challenges of religious diversity which the new ethnic groups bring along with in the American societies and experienced by mainstream Protestant and Catholic churches while struggling to incorporate many groups into one body (Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000). Another study done in America aimed to find out the role of diverse immigrant worship communities in serving new comers and promoting their civic and social incorporation into the American life (Foley and Hoge 2007). I find these two studies relevant to my work and therefore, I have chosen to reflect on them in what that follows.

A three years study done by Michael Foley and Dean Hoge (2007) in the USA served to investigate the role of diverse immigrant worship communities in serving new comers and promoting their civic and social incorporation into the American life. The authors focused to seek the type and the degree of social capital provided in these worship communities. Referring to worship communities the authors had in mind organizations embedded in the American civil society to provide special avenues for incorporating newcomers in the American life at large. This study compared a wide range of groups with different religious traditions namely; Catholic and Protestants churches, Buddhist and Hindu temples, Muslim prayer centers and mosques, and Sikh congregations in the Washington and its Maryland and Virginia suburbs.

This study found out that there is diversity in the way different worship communities serve the new immigrants. According to the research, the diverse responses are shaped by the peculiar circumstances of immigrants and the reception of each group by the host country; their religious tradition; and the organizational culture of the worship community. These shaping factors were also found to interact in complex ways when it came to contribution and the role of local worship communities to the incorporation of recent immigrants. The authors noted that tightly knit social groups such as worship communities provided numerous social ties or network (social capital) for participants that may help link them to significant resources, including opportunities for involvement in the larger society economically, socially, and civically (Foley and Hoge 2007: 53). However, the value of the social capital made available in these worship communities was noted to vary in form and in level. While poorer and smaller worship communities could provide social solidarity, they failed to link members to opportunities for advancement in the larger society meaning that they did well in providing bonding social capital compared to bridging. Several Catholic, Protestant, Muslim and Sikh faith communities were noted to provide some level of both the bonding and the bridging social capital. These communities were also noted to associate with other organizations and institutions outside themselves.

The importance of bonding social capital was noted by the authors to depend on the social and economic status of the members while the extent of both bonding and bridging social capital depended on the organizational culture that characterized the worship community, and this in turn, depended upon both religious tradition and the ways local leadership had shaped the

community (Foley and Hoge 2007:53). While smaller Christian churches were noted to promote intimate relationships among members that provided several opportunities for interactions that helped build up social capital, larger Churches had to work self-consciously to produce the same results. An example given by the authors was the Korean Protestant churches and their “cell group” structure (Foley and Hoge 2007: 111).

According to the authors, a self-conception of a church as a “family” often triggers strong bonding social capital. Bonding social capital they noted is built largely through repeated face-to-face encounters and is richer where tightly knit communities, diversely interacted more socially and economically. The more intimate Korean and Chinese worship communities were found to appear particularly good at mobilizing resources for newcomers and members in need making (capable of providing both bonding and bridging social capital) while worship communities that primarily functioned with a “house of worship” organizational structure, for instance, as observed with the Hindu communities, was found not to build structures that encouraged sociality among members and therefore, had rare social capital results (Foley and Hoge 2007: 111). These communities even though their members were wealthier, their wealth did not translate into great care of the less fortunate members due to the loose organization structure that encouraged less social relations. Foley and Hoge therefore concluded that the socioeconomic characteristics of the membership had important effects on the social capital available to the members, but they interact with religious tradition and organizational culture in the type of social capital to generate (Foley and Hoge 2007: 111).

An overall significant comment and recommendation here was that the social capital that these worship communities represented, encouraged, and maintained could help migrants cope with life in a new land; but in order to help well incorporate them into the American society, the social capital must include significant linkages to opportunities outside the immigrant communities. Here the authors looked at the faith communities and their engagement in the civil society. It was observed that the Catholic churches, Protestants and the Mosques, engaged more in what was happening in the civil society and they also encouraged their members to do so. The small Evangelical churches however, were noted to participate less in the local society happenings but they kept track of issues happening back home and they took part in them rather. The Hindus as noted above due to their organizational style and the well-off attributes of their members participated to a very little degree. (Foley and Hoge 2007: 147).

Political involvement was noted to vary a great deal. While some worship communities encouraged their members to participate, others due to their religious traditions did not. For instance, Salvadorans that had adopted evangelical Protestantism could not participate in political activism while many other Salvadorans did (Foley and Hoge 2007: 147). Some pastors got involved and promoted these activities to their members while others did not. In other cases, some worship communities were involved politically but in what happened in their home countries for instance, the Korean Protestants (Foley and Hoge 2007: 148). Homeland politics on the other hand was noted to promote domestic civic engagement like in the case with Sikh-Guru Granth Sahib Center (Foley and Hoge 2007: 148).

An important finding by the authors was that immigrant's churches were more likely than average American churches to provide numerous formal social services. According to the authors, immigrant churches used significant resources on such efforts and were able to draw on outside resources to fund them. They however varied greatly in the sort of presence they maintained in the larger community with small churches providing no formal services with few links to secular or faith-based social services agencies. These churches however took care of their members (Foley and Hoge 2007: 148).

Larger Catholic, mainline Protestants and Mosques provided formal services to their members and society and were noted to be in corroboration with agencies that did so. Many were also noted to host numerous community organizations, and pastors and other leaders were noted to play prominent roles in civic associations and local politics (Foley and Hoge 2007: 148).

Relatively well-off worship communities such as the Korean and Chinese Protestant churches, Sikh congregations, and Hindu temples were noted to focus their charitable activities on supporting Washington area through money donation, clothes and food, and supplying volunteers to agencies serving people outside their immediate communities (Foley and Hoge 2007: 148). The authors noted that these responses were affected by differences in specific circumstances of the immigrant and ethnic community that each worship community served, its organizational culture, and the religious traditions in each of these worship communities.

Helen Rose Ebaugh and Janet Saltzman Chafetz

Concluding on social services and immigrant adaption, Helen Rose Ebaugh and Janet Chafetz (2000:79) noted that immigrant religious institutions served a central role in the adaption of immigrants to their new home. The focus of this work was directed to the challenges of religious diversity with which new ethnic groups brought along in the American societies as experienced by mainstream Protestant and Catholic Churches in their struggle to incorporate many groups into one body (Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000: 3). The authors collected data in thirteen congregations but described in details the following; Center for Vietnamese Buddhism, Jyothi Hindu temple, Chinese Gospel Church, St. Mary's Catholic Church, St Catherine's Catholic Church, Southwest Assembly of God, and St Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church.

Focusing on the trends and themes of these churches in trying to incorporate the newcomers, the authors noted that immigrant's congregations typically adopt many elements of "congregational structure" and "community center model" in order for they and their members to adapt to the American society (Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000: 69). With a congregational structure, the congregations functioned as religious organization with members, a local governing body, ministries, and raises funds from its local members while with a community center model, the congregations operated in addition to religious rituals, study, and education as a site for; secular holiday's communal celebrations, provision of secular classes such as the English language, ordinary services for the members such as job listings, a place for recreational facilities, and as a community hall for social services.

Reflecting on a few relevant selected case studies, the Jyothi Hindu temple was perceived by many worshippers to be a place for worship only and not to offer services to the needy and since most Indians come to America as skills workers, they needed little help from the church since they had established contacts before they arrived. A few however related their help to the temple but specifically to individual members and not to the church itself. The temple however through one of its board members made predictions of the need to offer more services as the needs of the community changes with immigrants needing assistance (Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000: 159).

Another interesting finding exhibits how sometimes being a one ethnic church can create insecurity that can result to lack of openness to welcoming others. The Chinese Gospel Church mainly composed of Chinese worshippers but who spoke several different native tongues and

comes from a wide variety of different lands. The church accommodated people from all walks of life from the Chinese community and offered services in 3 different languages (Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000: 194). Small groups formed according to language within the church were noted to help create a sense of intimacy in a rather large church that might otherwise be too detached. The leaders however see the importance of integration across the various subgroups and have tried to have some of these groups represented on the church council (Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000: 190). With a multi-ethnic vision in the newest church plant that does not have the word Chinese in its name, which aims at creating an arena for white Americans to participate, many members did not embrace this idea since they feared losing their Chinese identity and preferred to retain their distinctive Chinese cultural characteristics(Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000: 190).

Interesting also is how significant cooperation between organizations can be. Both to those who are directly involved as well as those who are indirectly involved. St. Catherine's Catholic Church, a multi-ethnic catholic parish, that incorporated seven ethnic groups including many new immigrants together with the Catholic Church was noted to corporately involve in some activities that assisted the Vietnamese refugees before and after they left their homeland (Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000: 229). St Catherine's Catholic Church was also observed to Sponsor a number of programs to help the new immigrants. English as a second language (ESL) and citizenship (GED) were provided by the Houston independent school District at the parish center when enough people requested for it. Some work with a Catholic Charities Immigration Attorney that booked appointments for immigrants with the need for it was part of the efforts put together by the above mentioned parish (Ebaugh and Chafetz 2000: 229). It was also noted that many participants created strong network ties with fellow ethnics with whom they celebrated their native traditions which resulted to reinforced ethnics and religious identities.

Summary

The two studies described above exhibits faith communities as important institutions in the civic society that helps new immigrants adapt and integrate well in new environments. The degree to which the resources made available are capable of integrating the members, seemed to differ in both studies depending on various factors. Different faith communities depending on the type of social capital they help provide either help the members establish strong ties within themselves which help cater for their basic needs, maintain their ethnical and religious identities or help

members establish outside links such as jobs, contacts with various other organizations that help them connect to the world beyond their own congregations.

Foley and Hoge (2007) investigating the role of diverse immigrant worship communities in serving new comers and promoting their incorporation in the American life focused on the type and the degree of social capital they provided. The authors noted that the circumstance of the immigrants and their reception by the host country, the organizational culture and the religious tradition of the worship communities all had a role to play in the incorporation of recent immigrants. The authors noted that differences in experience, attitude, and human capital had profound implications for the adaption of immigrant communities with poorer groups having less contact and resources while more privileged groups of immigrants were likely to worship in communities with a little diversity, thus richer in social capital and in resources generally.

On the other hand, Ebaugh and Chafetz (2000) focused on the challenges of religious diversity with which new ethnic groups brought along in the American life as experienced by mainstream Protestant and Catholic Churches in the efforts to incorporate the many groups in one body. The authors observed tension and conflict in some groups when it came to the willingness to open for integration. Some groups such as the Chinese Gospel Church were not open to receive new members in their midst.

It is interesting to note how cooperation between some congregations with their mother churches can be beneficial to the immigrants as exhibited by St. Catherine's Catholic Church parish and the Catholic Church. This two were noted to cooperate in helping Vietnamese immigrants before and after they left their home country.

3.1 Europe

In Europe the question of immigrants and their incorporation in the larger society has always had a place in most polity discussions. However, Anniken Hagelund and Jill Loga has noted that more attention has been given to discussions and debates on marginalization of the immigrants' in the work force, in school and in political affairs compared to immigrant's participation in the civil society and voluntary organizations, as an arena for inclusion (Hagelund and Loga 2009, Loga 2012). According to Loga (2012), only recently has attention been focused on the civil society as an arena for integration. Nevertheless, it seems like there is a more interest on sports organizations, children and youth organizations, trade unions especially in Scandinavian

countries compared to religious organizations (see for example Hagelund and Loga 2009, Predelli 2008). Nevertheless, several studies have begun to emerge on immigrant religious communities. Below, I have focused on such research done in Norway where the data for this project is collected.

3.2 Norway

In Norway, a number of studies relevant to the field of religious communities and immigration have been carried out. A recent literature overview done for the Ministry of Culture and Church by Jill Loga (2012) to highlight whether participation in faith communities led to better or worse integration emphasized the need to be specific on the level of integration one is talking about or in other words, be specific to what one needs to be integrated to. Loga's work looked on researches that focused on integration at different levels such as; organizational level, local society level, national level and many others. While some according to Loga focused on the organizational level and looked at participation within faith communities, others focused mainly on integration in the local society level (Loga 2012:71).

Concluding on integration at faith community's level, Loga noted that participation in a faith community can function as both integrating and segregating arena depending on concrete factors related to specific faith communities which can vary in many ways (Loga 2012:74-75).

When it comes to participation in faith communities and its benefits to integration in the local society, contrary to Putman's argument that participation in a faith community has the same value in production of bridging social capital as other organizations, Loga's review concluded that this is not the same case in Norway. Firstly, quoting others in her review such as Bo Rothstein (2012), Inglehart and Norris (2004) Loga concurs that social participation in the Norwegian community hardly happens through faith communities but rather, through secular children and youth's activities and secondly, minority religious participation may be more different from the general social participation patterns in the community (Loga 2012:75).

In addition, Loga on her qualitative study on Inclusion in the community: NGOs as multi-cultural meeting places (*Inkludering i nærmiljø: frivillige organisasjoner som flerkulturelle møteplasser* (Loga 2011) done in Møhlenpris and its environs in Bergen investigated voluntary club's activities and their function as a social meeting place for its residents especially those with a minority background. In this work, Loga points out that, faith communities are no longer a

central meeting place for most of the majority population but rather, children's and youth's associations, district and community associations for both the young and their parents respectively (Loga 2011:126)

Commenting on a Catholic faith community connected to St. Paul's Church, Loga notes that it owns both a primary and secondary school together with an old convent and that it represent an important social meeting place for many with a minority background (Loga 2011:130). Due to limited minority's organizations in the area of study, Loga suggest that there is an indication that the Catholic faith community like many other minority's organizations in other cities function as an important integration arena for newcomers who are without social network (Loga 2011:130). However, Loga notes that it must be emphasized that faith communities are a limited central arena for the local majority population that increasingly organizes their community around children, youth, and community events (Loga 2011:131)

A publication in May 2012 by *ScienceNordic* connected to Loga's notion towards faith communities and their inability to facilitate incorporation highlighted faith communities function as a social facilitator is an activity that hardly happens in Norway as in other Nordic countries compared to countries like the United States. Categorizing the Nordic countries as secular societies, Loga (2012) points out that, religious activities in these countries does not provide any significant common ground for migrants and the majority population. According to her, a religious lifestyle can be viewed with skepticism and can lead to marginalization especially if the religious activities constitute the immigrant's only social arena. Due to so much variation between faith communities, Loga finds no general integration effect. She rather view other voluntary organizations such as child and youth organizations in the local community as being more effective in providing arenas for children and parents to meet (Loga 2012. Faith in a New Country. Available at: <http://sciencenordic.com> (accessed 30. May 2012).

Despite Loga's claims above, there are enough evidences that exhibits faith communities' important role when it comes to incorporation of their participants to different levels of the larger society. In Norway, immigrant churches as mentioned earlier have been said to do well when it comes to helping their participants integrate (Nilsen 2008:27). But what role has the immigrant churches played? Following are some empirical studies done in some of the immigrants' churches in Oslo.

Ronald M. Synnes (2012)

In a recent a qualitative study, Ronald M. Synnes investigated five Christian immigrant Churches in Oslo namely: Den Spansktalened Gruppen I Salemkirken, International Charismatic Church (OICC), Filipino Christian Church (FCC), Ethiopian Evangelical Church, and St. Olav Menighet. The aim was to investigate their importance to their immigrant participants. The author carried out interviews as well as did observation in the different churches for a period of two months. In this study, the author explored specific issues such as; the kind of organization model used by the churches in question and why; their member's composition and the kind of meetings and activities they were involved in. Here, the author aimed to find out who are recruited in these churches and what importance does language, culture, and ethnicity have in the churches on one hand, and what do the participants say the church has for them on the other hand; Looking at the social engagement of the participants, the author tries to investigate what kind of help the church offers to their participants and to what degree do the churches contribute to the integration or isolation of their members when it comes to society at large.

When it comes to the kind of organizational model, the author found out that immigrant churches have some of what both Warner and Witter (1998), and Ebaugh and Chafetz's (2000) calls "church model" characteristics with gifts from the members as a main source of income, large involvement of the lay members, having the pastor/priest as an authority figure, and the use of formal membership list. The author also found out that these churches are familiar with this kind of organization model from their home country and therefore, it can be difficult to say how well these churches fit to a Norwegian church model (Synnes 2012:84). However, the author found out that the state system in Norway forces a type of an organizing model in these churches, and in addition to some elements of organizing that they bring along from their home country. Some groups for example the Latin American, met in each other's home, something they did in their home country. Others adapted to the Norwegian style of having fellowship with some coffee after the worship service (Synnes 2012:84).

An interesting finding in this study is that several of these churches were not registered as self-independent churches but rather, chose to cooperate with the Norwegian established churches. This according to the author could have been because of the need for a place of worship and lack

of knowledge on how to register a church. This however was a disadvantage in the sense that these churches do not get any direct support from the state.

In relation to the member's composition the study found out that there was large variation. While the African churches composed of asylum seekers without legal documents, the members in the other churches were mixed with a wider variation in regard to their education level, Norwegian skill and social economic status. Only a few were asylum seeker or were illegal immigrants. According to the author, this was because many in these churches came from more stable countries compared to those who came from Africa.

These churches according to the author were characterized by strong cohesion with a common culture and language being a foundation for identity and history.

When it comes to social engagement and the help offered to the participants, the author found out that all the churches mostly offered help through informal networks. The Norwegian language, vital information about job availability, housing and practical help in regard to resident permit form of help was mostly offered. The fact that many participants had their social network mainly in church and spent most of their time in church can lead to the notion that the immigrant churches has an isolating function to their participants however, the author established that it is through the church network that the informants got their jobs and information about the society in general something that can be thought to promote integration to the Norwegian society (Synnes 2012:86).

Reflecting on the social capital theory, the author by this study indicates immigrant's churches as a source of social capital. The immigrant churches in this study however seemed to produce more bonding social capital due to the fact that most of the churches are organized on the basis of ethnicity (Synnes 2012:86). This however even though assumed so, does not necessarily prevent bridging social capital. The members and the leaders of these churches were found to help those in need get jobs, housing, register in the new country and thus through their participation in these churches, the participants got access to resources and information about the Norwegian society.

It was noted that the immigrant churches in this study had little organized cooperation with local associations and organizations which corresponded with Loga's (2011) findings that the

established contact is at the leadership level and that the members are rarely involved. Churches that were organized under a 'parent's church' such as the Spanish-speaking church was assumed to generate more bridging social capital thus less isolated since it had common gathering arranged by the larger church which had majority ethnic Norwegians (Synnes 2012:87).

Kari Austigard (2008)

This study was done in a Spanish-speaking group that gathers in Salem Pentecostal church in Oslo. Notes taken under observation and qualitative interviews whereby the author used an interview guide were the main methods of data collection. The author aimed at giving knowledge about this group and the meaning that this group has for the immigrants and their participation in the Norwegian society, as well as enlighten the reader on how the participation in this group influence the immigrant's contact with the Salem Church in general.

Concluding on five different issues dealt with in this study, the author found out that when it comes to who are the participants in this group, though many came from different parts of Latin America, majority came from Chile, Peru, and Colombia with variation in ethnicity and social economic status. While some were able to get professional jobs relevant to their education background, others did not. This made it difficult for the group to provide relevant information about the job market. However, the group was still believed to be a stepping stone for its participants to the Norwegian society (Austigard 2008:114)

Also important is how some of their marriage relations contributed to the integration process. Several Spanish-speaking women were married to Norwegians which according to the author contributed positively to further integration (Austigard 2008:115).

When it comes to how important the Spanish-speaking group is to its participants, the author found that having a common language and culture is very vital which according to some informants, made them feel at home and accepted. This group was also found to have religious importance in that some informants said that they felt they were in a Christian fellowship that catered for most of their needs (Austigard 2008:118). Even though the group gave priority to evangelical work over practical help to its participants, some informants said that they offer and have been offered help with translating of documents, transport, tips on how to adapt well in the

new society among others (Austigard 2008:118). According to the author, the group could function as a bridge to the Norwegian society for the newcomers.

The fact that the Spanish-speaking group is a part of the Pentecostal movement means that the group is connected to a network with many resources, the study noted. An important point noted is the various opportunities that this connection presents to the Spanish-speaking group among them, the opportunity for bible study in house groups through the leadership school or a master's degree in Pentecostal theology. Women are also given an opportunity to take part in various activities (Austigard 2008:119). Such a way of organizing was noted to have previous conflict between the leaders of the Spanish-speaking group and the Norwegian leaders and therefore, had the Spanish-speaking pastor to adapt to the Norwegian model of organizing where he had to learn to work with others something he was not used to.

The group's contact outside itself was interesting to study especially because Salem church had a Spanish-speaking pastor which according to the author, influenced the Spanish-speaking group relation to the main church. The participants in the Spanish-speaking considered themselves members of the main church even though some of them had not fully qualified to be members. They participated in most common meetings and celebrations, associated themselves with the vision, and some participated in the Norwegian services.

When it comes to social capital, contrary to a general pattern whereby bonding social capital seem exclusionary and a hindrance to production of bridging social capital, this study exhibited that bonding social capital in form of practical help and support to the new comers could help generate bridging social capital inform of information of jobs possibilities leading to contact with the larger society. The same way, bridging social capital inform of contact between the Spanish-speaking group and the ethnic Norwegians in Salem church could lead to more bonding social capital among the Spanish-speaking group, in form of support and guidance offered by Salem church leaders (Austigard 2008:123).

Eveline Hansen (2007)

This empirical study done in Scandinavian Chinese Christian Church (SCCC) in Oslo aimed at exploring whether ethnic faith communities are isolated and introverted or they are able to create bridges to societies around them. Dealing with specific issues, the author gave a broad

presentation and analysis of the church's organizational structure, its ideology, activities, and its members. The data was collected in a duration of 6 months through interviews of eleven members and participants observation during church's activities and other activities.

As one of the main findings the church was found to exhibit all the hallmarks of the American church's structure as described by Ebaugh and Chafetz (Hansen 2007:82).

When it comes to the church's organizational structure, the church was found to have a relatively democratic organizational structure with supreme authority in the church's annual meeting, where all the members met and had voting right. The second authority is the parish council that is responsible for the daily operations of the community in which only the pastor and the evangelist are formally employed and paid by the church. In order to have all the responsibilities of the church taken care of, the church depends on the voluntary engagement of its members which includes their financial offerings. The members also fill out a membership list.

Ideologically, the church focuses on mission work, Christian education and care but even though the church focuses first and foremost on its members, the author found out that the church has a desire and vision to offer care and Christian education to the entire Chinese population in Norway as well as the Norwegians (Hansen 2007: 49-50).

The church offers different types of activities which cater for every age group and phases. Most of these activities deal directly or indirectly with training the members who in most cases have limited knowledge in Christianity (Hansen 2007: 62). Celebration of the secular holidays, serving of Chinese food during common meals and the use of the Chinese language was found to help maintain the member's ethnic identity (Hansen 2007:62).

When it comes to the role of social capital, the study exhibited that SCCC generated both bonding and bridging social capital in that it creates strong cohesion within its members but at the same time, it can create connections to its environments (Hansen 2007:86). According to the author, bonding social capital is necessarily not equivalent to isolation since through contact with others that participate in the same church, the new comers can get useful information that could help to familiarize with the new environment (Austigard 2008:86).

3.3 Conclusion

A surface study of the above mentioned studies might give the impression that the different authors have done something similar. While this may be true in some aspects, a careful study reveals that each one of them has a unique aim and is trying to answer a unique question but in one way or the other, touched issues that are similar. The above mentioned three studies have in different but related ways looked at how immigrant churches organize themselves in order to play a role that helps their participants adapt to the new society. While Syness (2012) sought to investigate the importance of immigrant churches to their participants, Austigaard (2008) aimed at giving knowledge about a certain immigrant group and its meaning to their participants in the Norwegian society as well as enlighten the reader on how participation in this group influenced the group's contact with the world right around it. Hansen (2007) on the other hand, looked at whether ethnic faith communities are isolated and introverted.

Looking at the relevance of my work in the research field, I realized that I somehow had in mind to utilize and explore almost the same factors and a similar process that all the above mentioned authors have used in order to answer my main research question. Looking at who are the participants in these congregations, how the churches are organized, what is the effect of activities and associations offered by these churches in forming relations between the members and their outside environment and so on are such similar factors that I wish to employ and explore in my work. Nevertheless, deciding to focus and investigate mainly on the kind of activities, programs, associations and connections available in immigrant churches, how they relate to different factors, the sort of social capital they provide and whether or not it contributes to incorporation of the participants in the larger society made my work unique and different from the rest. Furthermore, while most of the studies done evaluate availability of both bonding and bridging social capital, this study goes beyond to also explore whether (linking) a third form of social capital is identifiable. (See chapter two above)

In addition, I could still pick out more differences in my work compared to what has been done before especially by the Norwegian authors. When it comes to referential work, I have chosen to use different reference points in some aspects such as the following; while both Syness (2012) and Hansen (2007) have described and used the church's organization structure/culture in reference to what is described by Ebaugh and Chafetz (2000), I have in my work described and used the church's organization structure developed by Penny Edgell Becker and described by

Foley and Hoge (2007). With the various organizational styles described by Foley and Hogue (2007:46-50), it was easy to analyze which style helped provide what sort of social capital.

Reflecting back to the three empirical studies done in Norway, what I find common is their exhibition of the immigrant church as a source of social capital. Appealing is how all the three studies reveals immigrant churches to not only provide bonding social capital that could be assumed to keep them isolated, but that they are also capable of providing bridging social capital that could help their participants integrate in the larger society. In form of various practical help such as information about jobs, housing and such, the churches described in these studies acted as a stepping stone for their participants to the larger society. Other forms of support such as an atmosphere with sense of belonging and cultural identity were provided especially in the ethnic groups where participants could speak their native language. This helped in provision of bonding social capital.

Syness (2012) study revealed that even if most of the churches provided more bonding social capital, this did not mean isolation or in other words, did not prevent provision of bridging social capital.

In the study of the Spanish-speaking group that met at Salem church, Austigard (2008) presented an interesting finding that could put question marks on Loga's claim that faith communities do not provide an arena for the majority and the minority to meet (Loga 2012. Faith in a New Country. Available at: <http://sciencenordic.com> (accessed 30. May 2012). As noted above, the Salem church (which is a Norwegian church), had a Spanish-speaking pastor which according to Austigard (2008), influenced the Spanish-speaking group relation to the main church. The participants in the Spanish-speaking considered themselves members of the main church even though some of them had not fully qualified to be members. They participated in most common meetings and celebrations, associated themselves with the vision of Salem church, and some participated in Norwegian worship services in addition to their services. The members of Salem Church on the other hand, were welcoming.

CHAPTER 4

FACTORS AND METHODOLOGY

In my previous chapter, I have presented various studies done especially on immigrant churches and their meaning to their participants. The chapter revealed how immigrant churches have not only contributed in helping their participants feel at home away from home, but have also in various ways helped their participants to adapt in their new countries. In this chapter, I will present the approach to my research question/s as well as the method I have chosen to use for data collection. I will also make a brief historical presentation of the churches that I investigated.

4.1 Factors

This study concerns an empirical study of three different congregations which are: The Scandinavia Chinese Christian Church in Oslo (SCCC), Global Evangelical Church Oslo, and Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG). In order to be able to answer the main question/s in this study, I will give a broad presentation and analysis of the above mentioned congregations focusing on the following four main factors: Activities and Programs, Connections and Associations with other organizations and with the state, Participants' residential status, and the Churches' organizational culture. While discussing my findings in chapter six, I will present my work into two sections. In the first section, I will discuss the kind of activities and associations that these churches offers, the kind of social capital they help make available, and how that facilitate incorporation of the participants in the larger Norwegian society. In the second section, I will discuss how the participants' residential status and the churches' organizational culture promote or hinder (involvement in) activities, programs, associations and connections and how that in return affect incorporation to the larger society?

4.1.1 Activities and Programs

The kind of activities and programs offered by the selected churches are of great interest. Part of the research question seeks to answer whether these activities provide a social capital that does not only bond people but also encourage and help them to cross over and participate in the larger society. What kind of activities and programs does these churches offers? Who are the participants? How do they benefit the participants? Are these activities and programs attractive to the majority population and does that make the church an arena for integration?

4.1.2 Connections and Associations with other Organization and the State

Connections and associations that these congregations have outside them are as well of major interest in this study. What kind of connections and associations do these churches have outside them? How informed are the congregants? What do they do together? Who are the main participants among these congregations and how does that benefit the participants in terms of incorporation?

4.1.3 Participants' residential status

The residential status of the participants could have a number of implications. While some come as refugees with or without legal documents, others come as students, family reunion, or as professional workers. What repercussion does their residential status have when it comes to their involvement in the activities, programs and associations that the churches have? Does their residential status hinders or eases their involvement in these activities and associations? And how does that affect their incorporation to the larger society?

4.1.4 Organizational culture

What organizational culture do these churches present? Are they “houses of worship” where people come to worship and leave immediately after the worship service without any contact with one another or are they organized with a “family-style” where the churches see themselves as a family for their participants, acting as a source of intimate connections by fellowshipping together, stressing unity among them, with little stress on outreach (Foley and Hoge 2007:46)? They could also be organized with a “community style” where they may engage in the larger society through representation in civic action efforts, or on the boards of interfaith organizations and social services agencies. Community-style congregations may sponsor various activities where its members hugely participates and may also be able to mobilize its participants for volunteer work by both the church and by the community at large (Foley and Hoge 2007:48-49).

Or are they organized as “civic leader” congregations where they act as moral or civic leaders in their city or county or even state where the pastor often assumes the key role in taking stands on social and political issues while the church as a whole backs such activities by sending representatives to public meetings, organizing forums and opportunities for public figures to speak (Foley and Hoge 2007:46). What sort of social capital is available in the organizational styles available in the churches and does it help when it comes to incorporation?

4.2 Methods of data collection

Having decided to do empirical studies in three different churches, my first challenge was to identify the right churches. My internet search gave me no relevant information and so, I decided to ask a friend of mine whom I knew was working on a project similar to mine. He suggested that I should visit some offices working closely with immigrant churches in Oslo.

I therefore decided to contact and visit Flerkulturelt Kirkelig Nettverk (Norges Kristne Råd) that has a network working with immigrant's churches in Oslo. I also contacted and visited KIA (Kristent Interkulturelt Arbeid) to talk with some of their leaders. While at these offices, I was offered some information about the various immigrant churches found in Oslo, their activities, their contact and location. I left both offices with a list of names and contact information of about fifteen different immigrant churches and their pastors. The list however, was not a guarantee that the churches I chose would be willing to participate in my project.

This project seeks to identify the role of immigrant churches in incorporating their participants in the larger Norwegian society. Any immigrant church would fit in this project but since my work focused to explore their activities, programs, and associations, I had to identify churches that were more involving both within and outside them. Though a few churches declined to my request in the beginning due to lack of time and language barrier, The Scandinavia Chinese Christian Church in Oslo (SCCC), Redeemed Christian Church of God (RCCG), and Global Evangelical Church Oslo seemed just the right sources of my data. The informal information I had received both at KIA and Norges Kristne Råd helped in making my choice.

4.2.1 Sampling and interviews

Even though I was present during Sunday services and a few other meetings in the above mentioned churches, I choose in this study to use interviewing as a main research method with semi-structured interview as the main source of information. The opportunity to record the conversations and the flexibility of having and using predetermined questions and the freedom to modify their order based on what I perceived most appropriate, following up interesting responses and investigating underlying motives by asking people directly about what is going on contributed to my choice of this type of interviews. However, this exercise was time consuming and challenging from day one. Securing the necessary permit from the Norwegian government in itself took a month, while other processes such as making arrangements to visit and confirming

arrangements also took a long time. At two occasions, I had to reschedule the appointments since my interviewees (informants) could not meet as agreed. This however, did not deter my efforts to want to know what role is played by the immigrant congregations when it comes to helping their participants to integrate better in the larger Norwegian society.

Since I had no prior knowledge of the individuals who matched my criteria, I found the *snowball sampling* approach (Bryman 2012:424, Robson 2002: 265-266,) useful. Using an interview guide (see Appendix 2), I interviewed the pastor of each church first and in the process, requested them to introduce me to other informants from their congregation which I met and interviewed at a later date. The snowball approach had one weakness however. Even though I explained to the pastors the need to interview different participants in their congregations, I was aware that the pastors were vulnerable to suggesting those that they worked closely with or trusted most, thus leading to biased opinions. Even though I had no gender consideration, seven of those I interviewed were men while five were women. I tried as much as possible to hold the interviews at a place most convenient for my informants as long as it was conducive for recording .While eight of the interviews took place in the informants' respective church venues, two took place at the informants' sitting room in their homes, one at the Norwegian School of Theology resting room and another at an informant's meeting room at her place of work. Each interview lasted for about one hour and a voice recorder was used to collect and store information which I later transcribed.

I purposely interviewed the pastors and the assistant pastors of each congregation to try and gather knowledge on the activities, programs and associations that the church offered to their participants while I interviewed two other people in each church who were active participants in the church's activities and in one way or the other, had benefited from the activities and associations of the church within and outside itself to try and investigate whether these activities, programs, and associations contributed to their incorporation to the larger Norwegian society.

In addition to the interviews, I found useful some few field notes noted during the interview sessions and other visits to the churches.

4.3 A short reflection of the interview process

During one of my conversations with a fellow student who had the opportunity to collect his data from an African country, he pointed out that it was easy to access informants in Africa as long as

one had some money to give them. While that sounded practically different from how things are done in Norway, my experience is that whether in Norway or Africa, people value their time and are just not readily available to give information when one asks for it. I did not have a need to give any money to my informants in Norway, but it was very challenging to arrange for appointments since most of them were busy. In addition, the decision to meet my informants at their convenient time had some repercussions. It meant that I had to compromise with my schedule which was not throughout favorable. As part of the leadership team and having some responsibilities at my church, being away from Sunday services was something I had not done before. I had to make prior arrangement for someone to step in for me when I needed to be away either visiting my selected churches or meeting with my informants.

4.4 Methods for Analyzing the Material

According to Bryman (2012:13), the data analysis stage is fundamentally about reducing the large amount of information that the researcher has gathered in order to make sense of it. This being a *primary* data analysis, I collected the data and did the analysis myself. In order to help manage the data, I found identification of core themes very necessary. The *coding* process in which the data was broken down into component parts of which were later labeled was done. This helped to identify recurrences of the sequences of coded text within and across the different cases and also for links between different codes.

A process of constant comparison, maintaining a close connection between data and conceptualization, helped to develop and revise concepts and categories (Bryman, 2012:568). Finally, the data found in the analysis was investigated and discussed in line with the theory of *social capital* discussed in chapter two.

4.5 Short historical background of the churches that provided the sample population

4.5.1 The Scandinavia Chinese Christian Church in Oslo interviewee

The Scandinavia Chinese Christian Church in Oslo which is part of a unified Scandinavia Chinese Christian church was started around 1985, among two other churches in Sweden. According to one of my informants, the church started as a result of mission work that was inspired by some Norwegian pastors who worked as missionary to China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan and at the same time, helped Chinese in Norway to meet together and study the bible.

The Chinese people in Norway were later connected to a Chinese mission organization in London called the Overseas Chinese Christian mission that sent its missionaries to Scandinavia. As of now, the church has about one hundred and fifty active members, among them ninety adults. Located in Oslo, SCCC has rented a facility from one of the local established churches where they carry out their various worship services. Even though one may see a few non-Chinese people especially on a “family day service”, SCCC is first and foremost a Chinese church that welcomes Chinese people from all corners of the world. Using two of the main Chinese languages, that is Cantonese and Mandarin, the church is able to accommodate Chinese from different parts of the world. English and Norwegian languages are also used and translated to Mandarin which is understood by the highest number of participants whenever there is guest speaker or during the family day service. Besides the Sunday service, the church has activities for different groups that are found in the church. For instance, the church offers activities for youths, students, seniors, married couples, and bible study group.

The church even though evangelical in a way, prefers not to organize its activities according to any denomination. This according one of my informants is in order to be able to accommodate Chinese people from all over the world regardless of their denominational background. The church in its daily activities is lead by the pastor who is assisted by two *evangelists*-(the evangelists are non-ordained ministers who work in the office of a pastor or carry out the responsibilities of a pastor). The church also operates with a board of elders who helps in making of decisions. The highest numbers of those who participate in SCCC are students with about eighty percent returning to their home country after their studies. The vision of the church is to build a church with a biblical teaching, mission oriented, unified with other Chinese churches in Scandinavia, and also to raise and equip the second generation to reach to the Norwegians.

Having received his contact from KIA, I met and interviewed the pastor of SCCC on a Tuesday morning who later suggested that I should visit their family day Sunday service coming up in a few weeks in order to carry out the rest of the interviews. This sounded easy and exciting. By the time I arrived at the family day Sunday service, the service had already began but I had spent a few minutes outside the door contemplating whether I should go in or not. It felt a little uncomfortable walking in as the only black while everyone else apart from the two ladies preaching were seated. Several people turned to look as I made my way to an empty sit at the back row and I could tell from their looks that they were curious about my presence. The service

was going on in Norwegian while translation was in Mandarin which according to one of my informants, is understood by the highest number of the participants. When the service ended, I made my way straight to the front to meet the pastor who immediately introduced me to a few people among them some students. I had intended to carry out at least two interviews on this day but it turned out that most of the people that the pastor introduced to me had no time to wait. The students claimed that they had exams and needed to rush home and prepare while the rest said they had other things to do on that particular day. Fortunately, several of them were willing to meet me at a later date and so I took their contacts and later arranged to meet them at their convenient day and time.

Reflecting particularly on the family day Sunday service at SCCC, I found myself in the midst of about ninety nine percent Chinese people and a few Norwegians. Even though I did not get to know how many people were present on that day, the turnout was impressive. After the service, people made their way to the kitchen for snacks and drinks. I observed that there was no formal sitting arrangement but rather most people stood in groups of three to four chatting while eating. I also observed that some just ate in the kitchen in a rush while the pastor and some elders talked. A meeting for the leaders was announced to take place in about 15minutes meaning that the fellowship was not to last. In exactly 15 minutes, everyone apart from the leaders left the main service hall. A few people proceeded to have their chat in the kitchen while others made their way out.

4.5.2 The Redeemed Christian Church of God

The Redeemed Christian Church of God in Oslo which is part of a global Pentecostal denomination was started in January 2000 at the pastor's home in Oslo together with seven other families. When the number grew to about fifteen families, (most of them had one or two children), the church moved to Holmlia where it shared venue with Holmlia kirke. As of the time when this study was done, RCCG had bought own facility within the same building and even though the specific number of participants was not clearly stated, it was generally said to have increased.

The church's vision is to reach all men with the gospel and transform their lives to better focus on God's will for their lives. RCCG has a mandate to plant churches close to where the people are and as a result, has so since 2000, planted five churches in different parts of Norway.

Even though RCCG is open to people from all work of life, it is mostly Africans and especially Nigerians who worship in this congregation. The church is composed of mostly stable families with their children. The daily activities of the church are led by the pastor with English as the main language used in the services but with a bit of Norwegian especially during praise and worship.

The interview arrangement with RCCG was slightly different compared to SCCC. After my meeting and interview with the pastor, he suggested that I should visit one of their upcoming programs on a Saturday where they had invited a pastor from UK to come and teach their participants on how to train up children. Being among fellow Africans gave me an exciting feel. I came a little early and secured a sit near the entrance which was a strategic place. Unlike at SCCC, almost all the adults that came in at RCCG made their way to my seat to shake my hand and welcomed me.

According to the pastor, almost 80 percent of the participants came to this program and though the meeting started behind time, most of the participants seemed relaxed and not in a hurry after the service which took longer than expected. Taking every chance, I managed to carry out my interviews as the rest of the participants sat to eat and enjoy drinks and fellowship with one another. Unlike SCCC, I was at RCCG given a first timers card to fill my contacts details and whether or not I wanted them to contact me later.

4.5.3 Global Evangelical Church Oslo

Global evangelical church Oslo as a branch was started in 2008 and got registered in 2009. In 2008, it started as a fellowship with three people in the pastor's house. The church has about forty active registered adults with about twenty children and is currently meeting at a rented premise at Østre Frikirke in Oslo. The church's priority is to help people attain to the maturity level of Christ, to raise and equip people for this generation that will awaken the prayer life in the Norwegian society and also to see people with different backgrounds worshipping under one umbrella.

English as a main language is used during services and translated to French since according to one of my informants; they are more French speaking participants in this congregation compared to those who speak Norwegian. Global Evangelical Church in Oslo is multi-ethnic but have

students as the highest number of their participants with most of them returning back home after two-five years.

During my interviews with Global Evangelical Church Oslo, I met to interview the pastor at their church venue whom after the interview contacted several of his participants to inform them about the interviews and requested that they should make time to meet me. He later gave me their contact and I was able to contact and make arrangement to meet and interview them at a later date.

4.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have presented an approach of answering my research question as well as the methods for both data collection and analyzing. In order to help me answer my research question, the chapter presented various factors to be explored in a later chapter such as; Participants' residential status, organizational culture, activities and programs, and connections and associations with other organizations and with the state. When it comes to data collection method, interviewing using semi-structured interview was revealed as a first approach but also note taking and information from websites (if available) was mentioned but with less emphasis. The chapter also revealed coding process as an approach chosen to analyze the data collected. In a different section of the chapter, I gave a brief historical background of the three different churches under investigation.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS

In this chapter, I will present descriptive findings in four sections under four different factors as mentioned in the previous chapter. In the first section, I will describe the activities and programs that each church engages in, followed in the second section by a description of the connections and associations that the churches have. In the third section, I will describe the participants' residential status followed by a description of the type of organizational culture represented by each church in the fourth section. Finally, I will write a short summary of the chapter.

5.1 Activities and Programs

Activities and programs were found to be an important way of life in the churches under investigation. While some were initiated in the churches under investigation, others were as a result of their connections and associations with others churches, organizations or individuals outside them. In the selected churches, various activities and programs are designed to accommodate and function differently for different groups of participants.

5.1.1 Activities and programs at SCCC

At SCCC, I discovered that besides the Sunday worship service; the church also organizes meeting for the youths, cell groups for students and other groups in the church, bible study groups, and a group for the new believers. At different time in the year, several special days are celebrated in the church which is an opportunity for SCCC participants to invite their friends, families and colleagues.

Sunday Worship Service

Every Sunday, the participants meet for worship at their rented locality at Gamle Aker Menighetshus in Oslo. The meeting normally starts at 11am with some Chinese psalms. With the help of an overhead projector, the songs in most cases are displayed in both the Cantonese and Mandarin languages, apart from the family day Sundays (that takes place once in a month) or other special programs where Norwegian or English are used. The preaching takes place after the worship session and it is normally the pastor of the church who shares the word even though once in a while he can invite the evangelists to share a word or two. The preaching can take half

an hour or even more. After the preaching more singing follows as the participants give their offerings, tithes and other forms of seed offerings. Before the meeting closes, announcements are made by a service coordinator where new timers are welcomed and are requested to introduce themselves to the rest of the congregation. At around 12:30, the services ends and the participants make their way to the kitchen for something to eat or drink in what they call “coffee hour”. Apart from once in a month where after the service the hall is quickly arranged with several chairs around one table for participants to sit, these other Sundays, the participants eat, drink, and chat while standing. The new believers are normally guided to their own place where a leader sits and talk with them. The youths who meet in a different room also find their way to the church coffee hour. In most cases, the snacks are provided by individual members who prepare them at home or buy.

Family Sunday program and other programs outside the church

According to informant C^a, a family Sunday service is a day that is designed to accommodate all the participants of SCCC and their families. This is the same day that communion is shared. The order of the service is normally done in Norwegian so that the younger generation and the Norwegians who are married to Chinese can understand what is going on in the service. The service is always translated into Mandarin. During some family Sundays especially during the Christmas season, the younger generation are allowed to take part in the activities of the service. They may have songs to present, drama or other activities. The church together with other local and international churches, participates actively in the prayer for Oslo and Christians’ fakkeltog.

Youth’s group

The young people have their own Sunday service in Norwegian. This according informant D^b is an effective way to evangelize to the youths;

“Even though most of them understand the Chinese languages, some Christian terminologies may be easy to comprehend in Norwegian than in Chinese” said informant D.

^a Informant C is an active participant in SCCC.

^b Informant D is an evangelist (non-ordained pastor) at SCCC.

The youths sing the modern English songs and discuss different subjects where they have more freedom to interact than in the main service. During birthday celebrations, they may go out for fun tours or sports. Many according to one of the leaders enjoy the meetings and find it comfortable to invite their Norwegian friends. One in a while, pastors from other churches (mainly local churches) are invited to come and preach to the youths.

Cell groups and bible study groups

In the cell groups, the participants meet often in small groups where they are able to create tighter bonds. Some groups may decide to meet in the church, others at home during any day of the week and still others, outside in a restaurant or at the park. In these meetings, the participants share with one another their thoughts, experiences, problems and also counsel. Students meet in their own group, married couples in their own as well as the seniors. There is also a cell group for the Cantonese speakers and also one for the Mandarin speakers.

The bible study groups are a little different from the cell groups. The bible study groups meet once in a week to discuss a certain subject of the bible. The groups are not necessary divided into categories of for example students, married or such but rather a random group that studies the bible together. Sometimes after the study, the groups may have time to fellowship with drinks and snacks as well as chat.

Welfare services

The church is involved in several forms of activities and programs that offer both practical and emotional support to its participants. Every two weeks, the church organizes a fellowship at Kringsjå students' town to educate the new young students on how to organize and cope with life in their new society. This even though is designed for when new students arrive; SCCC continues to meet throughout the year. During this fellowship, the church may invite the pastor from Nordberg Church who introduces the new students to Norway and its culture. The church also organizes for shopping trips where the students are assisted in buying stuffs and are also shown where to get Chinese food and other necessities. A magazine that gives information about what is happening in the Norwegian society is provided in the church and in the Chinese languages.

The church offers Norwegian lesson through a friend who volunteers to teach those who are interested, every Tuesday. The church has also earlier helped some asylum seekers with accommodation and had catered for their other basic needs. Other practical help are offered by individual established participants. Several of them shared how they have assisted new comers to translate and interpret documents, accompany new comers to appointments and have also given information about jobs and housing.

Emotional support is given in different areas. The pastor and the evangelists offer prayers and counsel where participants go through family crises such as divorce, sickness, death and such. Due to increasing Norwegian-Chinese marriages in the church, the pastor has begun to give counsel to young married couples in order to help avoid cultural conflict in the marriages. The church also organizes home visits for people in need. According to informant A^c, Chinese people are known for their hard work, efficiency and calmness. Some have reported being overworked and therefore, the main leaders of the church has taken initiative to talk to the new comers about the need to be able to say no where necessary. The pastor has previously advised asylum seekers who have been denied stay in Norway to rather return home than live illegally in Norway.

Celebrations

To avoid political conflicts between the Chinese from the different parts of Asia, national days for the different countries are not celebrated in the church. However, the Christian holidays such as Christmas and Easter holidays are celebrated. The New Year's Eve in January/February and mid-autumn day (traditional day for the reunion of the family) are also celebrated.

During these celebrations, people from all walks of life are invited to church and Chinese food and drinks are served. According to informant A, the church through one of its members has several times invited the leaders of the Christian Democrats (Kristelig Folkeparti) to these celebrations in turn, the church leaders have also been invited to the party's various functions.

^c Informant A is the pastor of SCCC.

5.1.2 Activities and programs at RCCG

Activities and programs at RCCG are of diverse interests and take place in various days. From Sunday worship service to a Friday prayer meeting, women fellowship to men fellowship, educative programs and so on.

Sunday worship service, bible and prayer meeting

The Sunday worship service starts at 11:30am with a bible study session where participants ask questions from the bible while the pastor responds. This session lasts for 30minutes. At 12noon, the main worship service starts by a short opening praying session. This is followed by praise and worship. In most cases, the songs are in English but often times; the congregation sings some Norwegian songs. After the praise and worship, the pastor preaches the word which may take an hour. The preaching is followed by a session of praise songs while the participants give their tithes, offerings and other seed offerings. Later, the service coordinator makes announcements and at about 2pm, the service ends with a word of prayer. Once in a while, the participants may stay back after the service to fellowship with light food and drinks but otherwise, fellowship take place every 1st Friday of the month in what is called hour of refreshing.

On Tuesdays between 18.00pm to 20.00pm, the church holds a prayer meeting while on Thursday between 18.00pm to 20.00pm; there is a bible study where participants come together to study the bible. Some participants may choose to remain and have fellowship after the sessions but most of them usually leave immediately.

Special programs and various fellowships

RCCG at different times organizes programs that address issues of the society. The church have previously sponsored programs that educate their participants on how to bring up their children in a Western society. This they believe will result into their children becoming influential members of the society and also lessen the conflict between what they are used to from their homeland and the way of life in the society. While some of the programs are sponsored by the

church itself, there are times where the church has requested the local municipality to send experts to come to church and teach their participants according to informants E^d and G^e.

The church has also in previous years organized for extra tuition programs for some of their children who struggle with mathematics and are interested in music. This according to informant G, helps encourage their children and put them in a better competitive position;

“If we want to see our children integrated well, we have to help them be competent in whatever they do”

Another program organized by the church is when the general overseer of the ministry visits the church in Norway who is believed to perform great miracles such as healing. This according to an informant is an opportunity for the church to invite people from all walks of life. The church uses various means such as sending out hand outs to invite as many people as possible. In most cases, those who come are Nigerians who have heard or known the overseer beforehand and a few Christian Norwegians who are looking for healing.

Every last Sunday of every month, the men stay back to fellowship after the service. Here the men discuss and plan different activities for the month. A women fellowship is also held every 2nd Saturday of every month between 16:30 and 19:30. The women engage in various activities such as educative seminars for women where they may invite a guest speaker to talk on family matters and such. A youth fellowship is held every 2nd Friday of every month. Young people come together for various activities such as music lessons. Several young people are currently learning how to play musical instruments through programs paid for by the church.

Joining with other local and international churches, the church participates actively in the prayer for Oslo and Christians’ fakkeltog.

Welfare services

Besides the above mentioned programs and activities, the church has in different ways helped their participants to establish job contacts, housing and such. The participants have also helped one another in times of need. During baby dedication, baptism, weddings, and birthday

^d Informant E is the pastor at RCCG.

^e Informant G has been an active participant at RCCG. He is one of the beneficiaries of the activities and connections that RCCG has been providing.

celebrations, the various fellowships assist in different ways. The women help in cooking while the men help in transportation and in other areas. Participants also give money to sponsor such events where necessary.

5.1.3 Activities and programs at Global Evangelical Church

Sunday service and prayer meetings

Before the main Sunday worship services starts, the congregation holds a short prayer session from 2pm to 2:30pm. At 2.30pm, the main worship service starts with an opening prayer, hymn and testimonies. The choir leads in praise and worship before the sermon which is delivered in English but translated to French. The offering is later collected and the service ends at 5.00pm. Between 5pm and 6pm, there is a fellowship where participants chat together, and enjoy light food and drinks before cleaning up the venue.

One of the main things that the pastor of the church emphasized is the call to pray and therefore, every Wednesday between 6.30pm to 8.00pm, the church holds a prayer meeting at their church venue.

Fellowships and special programs

The church has different fellowships that take place once in a month. Both the men and the women fellowships meet once in a month in the same building but in different rooms. The men are involved in activities such as entrepreneurship where they discuss matters such as how they can integrate in the Norwegian society through establishing businesses. The church has previously invited advisers from the DNB bank to come and advice the participants on how to acquire business loan and how to go about establishing businesses in Norway.

The church also has a drama group that travels to various parts of Norway and even abroad (scheduled to travel to the UK). The drama group has performed in various occasions like during the International Student Union Norway (ISU) national assembly and during Christmas where many different people are invited.

The church is also concerned about how best it can help their children integrate in the Norwegian society and therefore have invited experienced people to come and educate the participants.

Informant J^f who has benefited from such programs gave an example of a three day's program where a sixty year Old Norwegian lady who had worked in a nursery school for many years was invited to educate the participants on how to bring up their children.

“This has helped me a lot. I have an easier time with my children and I would like the church to make room for more such program”, said informant J.

Once in a while, the church conducts baby dedication, baptism, weddings and such when opportunities are available. This according to informant I^g, facilitates integration since it is an opportunity to invite people from the larger society. Several Norwegians who are known to some participants do attend such events but they do not become part of the daily activities of the congregation.

The church joining together with other local and international churches, participate actively in the prayer for Oslo and in Christians' fakkeltog.

During summer, the church organizes sport games at Sognsvann in a program called “summer retreat”. Here, they invite different churches to come and compete. In the most recent years, the church has only invited immigrant churches for example New Beginning Church and Salvation Army but have plans to start inviting local churches as well. Nevertheless, there have been times when the participants boldly invited some Norwegians at the spot who have willingly formed a team and played against the Global Evangelical Church participants. While the men compete, the women prepare something to eat, while the children play with other children. After the match, all the participants sits together to eat and chat about the game. Once in a while, a few Norwegians have agreed to have a “pølse” but in most cases, they turn the offer down saying that they had brought their own food.

Another exciting program occurs in November each year. The church organizes what they call “global day celebration”. The pastor of the church and other leaders use their influence in the society to invite people from all walks of life. During this day, people from different countries

^f Informant J is a leader in the women fellowship at Global Evangelical Church in Oslo and also a theology student in one of the schools in Oslo. She and her family have participated in the activities of the church for four years.

^g Informant I is the pastor of Global Evangelical Church. He is a student but also has a very good network outside the church.

wear their national attire, bring their staple food and their flag, eat and celebrate together. According to informant L^h, this is one of the most successful and exciting events in the church.

Welfare services activities

The church is involved in various welfare activities that help the participants not only to settle within the church but also connect to the outside world. The church through individual participants and their connection with the outside world has helped the new comers to get jobs, housing, and other vital information such as where and how to get registered. Informant K is such a beneficiary. Though a student, he was helped to acquire his job by a fellow participant.

The church gives 6000NOK to their participants' couple who are getting married to help them aid their planning. The church is also committed to giving some "send off" monetary gift to any of its leaving committed participants

5.2 Connections and Associations

In this section of chapter 5, I will describe the kind of connections and associations that the churches have outside them. I will also reveal who are the main participants in such connections and associations, the benefits and precisely what they do together.

5.2.1 Connections and Associations at SCCC

Most of the relations that SCCC engage in involve both the leaders and the lay participants but some involve only the leaders. One of the major associations that SCCC has is with a Norwegian mission organization called by the name Areopagos. SCCC has had several joint worship services with this mission organization and in several occasions, the director of the organization has come to SCCC to preach. Through its link with Areopagos, SCCC has been able to establish contacts with other local churches and individual leaders such as Jesus Church and the Bishop of Oslo respectively. Such contacts have seen the pastor of Jesus Church come to preach to the youths at SCCC on several occasions. During the July 2011 terror attacks in Norway where many young people were killed, the pastor on behalf of SCCC was able to sign a letter of condolence to the Bishop through Areopagos.

During last year's Christmas, Areopagos organized a program where several participants of SCCC were invited to stay at some Christian Norwegian families during the Christmas season in

^h Informant L is the assistant pastor at Global Evangelical Church and also a student.

order to have them experience the Norwegian way of celebrating Christmas. The objective was and is to have a situation where both the Chinese and the Norwegian families can visit each other during the Christmas season every year. So far, this according to informant A has helped to establish lasting relationships between those who visited each other. Another benefit that SCCC is having through its association with Areopagos is the opportunities to have its participants learn the Norwegian language. Every Wednesday, the participants of SCCC are invited to the organization's premises for a language course. My findings however revealed that not many turn out but those who do, appreciate the offer." One of the student is about to sit for her Bergen test which is a proof that the lessons are beneficial" said informant D.

Besides working with Areopagos, SCCC has worked with other Christian religious organizations. Every year for the last ten years, the church has held joint worship services with KIA and has now agreed to have such joint worship with Gamle Aker Kirke which owns the building that the church is renting for its worship services. There are times when SCCC has had joint worship with Grønland Kirke. Several other times, SCCC choir has been invited to The Norwegian Bible Society and to Fjellhaug Mission Seminary to sing in their programs. The church is also a member of the Multicultural Church Network that works under the Norwegian Church Council to help address issues and share experiences that the immigrant churches face.

SCCC also collaborate a lot with the other Scandinavia Chinese Churches in Sweden, Finland and Denmark and sometime do activities together such as organizing camps.

On an individual level, the pastor of SCCC has several times been invited by the Bishop of Oslo to join in some activities. As a member of the European Ecumenical Assembly, the Norwegian Church Council invited the pastor of SCCC to speak in the Church of Norway Annual Assembly about the role of the immigrant church in the Norwegian society. This was to help decide and produce a policy that states whether the Norwegian church should hire immigrant pastors. These kinds of associations and connections according to informant A have put the church in the spotlight and have awakened a consciousness of belonging to a larger society. It has also helped the participants at large to open up for integration.

Through a participant who is an active member of the Christian Democrats, the church has been able to invite some of the leaders of the party to the church during various programs. This has in most cases happened during the celebrations but also during elections where they come to church

to talk about their vision. The party has also invited some church leaders to some of their meetings especially where matters of immigration are addressed. The church encourages its participants to exercise their voting rights but does not put much emphasis on that since according to informant A, the church does not want to mix political issues and their mandate of preaching the gospel.

Asked whether the church is registered, informant D said “it would have been very hard to function as we would like to if we were not registered”. SCCC is registered and is also receiving some monetary benefit from the state which according to informants A and D, helps cater for a few church’s needs.

5.2.2 Connections and Associations at RCCG

RCCG is a member of the Pentecostal movement of Norway and therefore the leaders get an opportunity to meet with other members when such opportunities are available. The pastor of RCCG is a member of an informal pastors’ network called the 5-fold network that is organized by a pastor of one of the local churches, which brings together both the local and international pastors to share their experiences in the ministry and in the society at large.

RCCG once in a while do hold joint worship services with Oslo Church.

Together with several other international churches, RCCG associates with the Multicultural Church Network a network that creates opportunities for international churches (leaders) to meet and discuss issues affecting them and their pastoral work.

Before buying its own building, the church collaborated with Holmlia Church in terms of a place to worship giving them an opportunity to rent the venue at an affordable price until they were able to buy it later. RCCG also works together with its other five branches in Norway. Sometimes they do activities together especially when the general overseer of the ministry visits Norway.

Even though the church does not have a substantial connection with the government or those with political power, RCCG is registered and do receive some funds from the state that helps sponsor some of its programs. According to informant E, politicians do make contact with the church during elections and the church encourages and gives information about voting to their participants but strictly do not emphasize on that since it has a different calling.

5.2.3 Connections and Associations at Global Evangelical Church

Global Evangelical Church in Oslo has connections and relations with different Christian networks, individuals, and organizations. One of such relation is demonstrated by the church's association with T-network (Trans-denominational network) that is established and led by a Norwegian. The network's aim is to break spiritual barriers between local and international Christians and churches and tries to encourage co-operate work into achieving spiritual goals. Global Evangelical Church is also currently involved in a Monday program at the American Lutheran Church premise where once in a while, its leaders have had opportunities to teach and its choir to sing in these meetings. Vice versa, the leaders of T-net and some of its lay participants regularly visit Global Evangelical Church especially during their Wednesday prayer meeting and other special programs.

A collaboration that merged the International Christian Student Fellowship that was led by the pastor of Global Evangelical Church and Christian Student Union is a relationship that is aimed to help those involved to work with Norwegians at a wider scope. Global Evangelical Church participants are active in the activities of this collaboration which is vice-chaired by their pastor. The new formed fellowship aims to open branches in all the universities in Norway and target all students regardless of their background. The significant of such a fellowship is exhibited during annual meetings and other important meetings where all participants get to meet. In such meetings, both the minority and the majority population get an opportunity to interact, establish new contacts that in most cases develop into lasting relationships.

The church also is in friendship with the Methodist Church and thus participates together in each other's programs once in a while. The leaders of Global evangelical church benefit from an informal forum organized by one of the local pastors which (5-Fold Network) brings together local and international pastors to share and discuss their experiences and also give and receive counsel on how they can make achievements both as individuals and also together.

Through their association with Oslo Østre Frikirke in terms of renting a place for worship, Global Evangelical Church is benefiting from the development of their relationship and unlike before, is allowed to use the venue any other days apart from initial binding days without any extra costs.

Even though Global Evangelical Church is registered, it does not receive any funding from the government despite having applied to receive. This however according to one of my informants does not hinder the church from achieving its goal but feels that the funds would in one way or the other enhance their activities. When asked if there exist any relationship between the church and the politicians, informant I quickly respond;

“We have nothing to do with politics, our work is preaching the word of God, but of course we use the political platform to publish the gospel and the politicians are welcome to come and share their vision with us”.

According to informant I, the church encourages its participants to exercise their voting rights but does not dwell on it. Participants are also free to join other voluntary organization if they chose to;

“We do our best to give information and encourage our members to get involved in the activities of the large society but the decision is left with them”.

Once in a while, the church donates money for charity through the Norwegian Church Aid.

5.3 Participants' residential status

Who are the participants in the three selected churches in this study and what residential status do they have? Discussing the circumstances of migration and their reception, Foley and Hoge (2007:42), notes that differences in experience, attitude, and human capital have profound implications for the adaption of immigrants in the United States. At the same time, quoting Portes, they noted that the context of reception can have a profound impact on chances for success in the United States.

In this section of chapter five, I will describe the participant's residential status in Norway and in a later chapter analyze and discuss how their current residential status affects their involvement in the various activities, programs, connections and associations of the church and the implication of it to their incorporation process. Following are informant's stories of how they came to Norway and how that has changed in the process of their staying.

Diversity in immigrants' circumstances

Various reasons may cause people to migrate from their home country to new countries. While some are forced out by incidents of violence, drought, political and other humanitarian grounds, others have journeyed away from home to reunite with their families, study or work away from

home. Informants in the various churches in this study described how they came to Norway and how it has been since then.

At the Scandinavia Chinese Christian Church in Oslo, a general exploration reveals that in the early years of 1980s, most Chinese participants in the church had come to Norway to work with a Norwegian shipping company. However, that trend has long ago changed and most participants are now coming to Norway as students either for three or two years while a few others are coming to join their families. Among those coming as students, it was revealed that eighty percent return home after their studies while majority of the twenty percent that remain, find professional jobs and a few gets married which allows them to stay permanently in Norway if they chose to. During their years as students, most of them get to work part time and especially in Chinese restaurants which according to an informant, give them some extra pocket money as well as expand their social circle within the Chinese community. When asked whether she speaks Norwegian, informant Bⁱ replied “very very little, I do not need it anywhere, I work with my fellow Chinese people, I study in English and I will soon return home after my studies”. Most participants who come as students do not speak Norwegian. Even when the church has made effort to help them learn, only very few of them register to attend the lessons.

Nevertheless, my interview with different people in the same church revealed that students are not the only main participants in the church. There is a good number of well established Chinese people in the church and have been participating in the church for more than twenty years. Some have already retired from their jobs but are participating actively in the church. Two informants at different times told similar stories of how they came to Norway at young age together with their parents who had come to work in a shipping company. Having lived in Norway close to about thirty years, they speak good Norwegian since they grew up and went to school in Norway, and are now bringing up their children and working professionally in Norway and still participating in the same church. Both of them mentioned language as key to being established in the Norwegian society. Their stories seemed to concur that it has not been the fact that they have lived long in Norway that they feel established and accepted in Norway, but the fact that they could speak very good Norwegian. “The language is the key, said one of them. I know several

ⁱ Informant B attends SCCC, but she is not a very active participant. She is a student who is looking forward to leaving the country after her studies.

people even my own parents who do not speak the language and are complaining that the society is not open”.

Another informant told of how she came to Norway twelve years ago to work in the church in Oslo. Having lived and worked in Sweden for many years, she explained that adapting to the Norwegian society has been easy for her since Norwegian and the Swedish culture are similar in many ways. “However”, she explained “I hardly find time to meet with other people. I work in the church with the Chinese people but if I have to use Norwegian outside the church, my Swedish is good enough plus I speak English”.

When it comes to change in their religious affiliation from back home, several participants at SCCC had no Christian background and it is through SCCC that they have come to believe. One informant explained “SCCC is my home now since this is where I came to know about Jesus and about Christianity”

At RCCG, things were a little different when it comes to who are the main participants. Unlike SCCC with mostly students, RCCG’s participants are families that are settled in Norway. An informant explained how the church started. “The church started around 2000, many participants were stable families who through information from their family members previously residing in Norway and other European countries had come to work or reunite with their family”. In about 2006, the church received a wave of refugees who after a while left the church leaving the church again with established families. Even though there are a few students found in the church, majority participants at RCCG are families that are well established in Norway. Informant F^j who has lived thirteen years in Norway explained that integration depends on the individual and he believes that the Norwegian society is open as long as one has the necessary merits.

“The language has been the key for my success in this country and therefore, learning the language was the first step that I took”.

Working in the hospital as a patient assistant, he finds it easy to relate with the patients and fellow workers in the hospital. Two others explained how they came to join their families nine and six years ago respectively, have learnt the language and are now working with people who

^j Informant F is the assistant pastor at RCCG. Having lived in Norway for over 10 years, he is very open and positive about incorporation in Norway. He has been an active participant at RCCG

need assistance at elderly homes. Several of those interviewed attended a different church back home.

Similar to SCCC, majority (95 percent) of those who participates in Global Evangelical church in Oslo are students. Most of them come as two years master's students in various programs but several especially those with an African background decides to extend their resident permit by either taking another masters in a different area or proceeding to a PhD.

Nevertheless, Global Evangelical church is different from SCCC in the fact that there are only a few established participants at Global Evangelical Church compared to SCCC. According to one of my informants, only a small number (five in five years) have been able to secure professional jobs and a permanent residency after their studies.

Most participants at Global Evangelical church do not speak Norwegian, had a different religious affiliation and majority leaves the country after a maximum of five study years. Besides their studies majority work with news paper distribution *aftenposten* while a few work in different cleaning companies.

5.4 Organizational culture

One way of understanding local worship communities differences in the way they are organized and governed, their lay participation character in both worship and the everyday life of the community, and their sort of activities is through the typology of congregational model developed by Penny Edgell Becker (Foley and Hoge 2007:46). This according to Foley and Hoge (2007) helps typify the distinct organizational cultures of local worship communities. In this section of this chapter, I will describe the type/s of organizational culture that each of the churches in this study seem to represent and in a later chapter discuss how the different organizational cultures aid or hinder activities, programs, associations and connections that promote incorporation to the larger society. The different types of organizational cultures are described in the previous chapter of this study, under factors and methodology.

Types of organizational culture

Having visited SCCC on a family day service, my supposition was that SCCC first and foremost, functioned with a 'family like style' and my interviews later, confirmed my assumption. Acting as a source of intimate connections which stresses commonality among them and little effort to

reach out to people from other nationalities, SCCC puts their energies into worship, religious education, and sociability within itself. On a family day that takes place once in a month, snacks, drinks, and sometimes other types of meals such as rice are served after the worship service where people sit, eat and talk together.

Fellowship with snacks and coffee after the main worship service does not only happen on the family days but rather, every Sunday.

“We used to have proper meals every Sunday after the worship service when the church was small but now we can only provide snacks and coffee” said one of the informants.

Once in a month, small groups of about six participants, sit together while they eat and talk together. The church also organizes groups for new believers after the worship services where they are introduced to each other and to how things are run and organized in the church. This way of organizing the church after the worship service is very vital, reckons one informant.

“It gives us an opportunity to know one another better, and we get to know how the week had been for everyone”.

However, not everyone may have time to stay for the fellowship. It also appeared like sometimes, there are different activities going on at the same time. During my visit on the family day, I observed that some participants ate while standing and my enquiry about that later in my interviews revealed that during exams, most students have no time to sit and fellowship. I also observed that the fellowship was interrupted by a leader’s meeting that was to take place shortly after the worship service ended. “Sometime when we have something urgent to share or discuss, we tend to overlap things since we do not want to keep our members for so long” said one of the informants.

Similar to SCCC, RCGG was also found to be organized with a family-style organizational culture but can also be said to have an element of “community style congregation”.

When I visited RCGG for my interviews, the church was holding a special program for the parents where the topic was “how to bring up children”. The program was held on a Saturday around six o’clock in the evening to around eight o’clock. After the program, dinner was served. Being a Saturday, I hesitated to assume that the eating and drinking that followed the program would automatically mean a family-style organizational culture and therefore I made my

enquiries during the interviews in order to get a glimpse of what the norm was. My findings were that RCGG; make time for fellowship after every meeting held in the church. Like SCCC, due to an increased number of participants, provisions of big meals only happen during special programs and every Friday evening. However; fellowship with drinks and snacks is available after every meeting held including meetings organized for various groups in the church. The participants enjoy the fellowship with food and many do contribute in making different types of food as expressed in the following by one of the informants;

“Eating together, bring an atmosphere of friendliness and smiles on everyone’s face. People relax when there is something to eat. The women in this church love to bring something to eat and they know that the brothers love it when there is something to eat after the service especially when we have had long meetings”

There was an emphasis from two of my informants that a church should not only be organized for religious education, praying and worship but also as an arena where people mingle and share their lives beyond the “norms”

“Our church is a “house of fellowship”, we always create time to know one another. We are a family and our fellowship after the worship service helps most of us to build and maintain good relationships”.

As Community-style congregation, RCGG sponsors various community building activities in which its members hugely participate. For instance, the church organizes programs that address issues of the society. Several times, the church has organized seminars to educate participants on how to encourage and raise their children after a realization that most immigrants’ children were generally dropping out of school. According to an informant, sometimes the “kommune” organizes a general team to come and talk to the participants about children and education which help their children participate better in the society. The church also is able to mobilize its participants to take part in prayer for Oslo program that takes place every year.

Lastly, Global Evangelical Church like the two other churches was found to be organized in a family- like style but also, to some degree as a “civic leader congregation”. With a family-like style, the church use about one hour time for fellowship after the service where participants eat and interact with one another. According to an informant, participants do fellowship in several

other meetings besides the Sunday worship services that are designed for different groups within every month.

As a civic leader congregation, it was found that Global Evangelical church through the pastor who appears “popular” makes efforts to engage with the larger society. When I met him, he explained that besides being the pastor of Global Evangelical Church, he is now the vice president of the Christian Student Fellowship (CSF) which has acquired its new name after joining forces with the International Christian Student Fellowship (ICSF) and the Christian Student Union (CSU).

The pastor has been participating in several societal meetings where he has spoken sometimes on behalf of the international pastors. For instance, invited to a peace forum by Med Israel For Fred on 23rd November 2012, where even parliamentarians were part of, the pastor in his ten minutes speech appealed to the Norwegian people to see the importance of supporting peace in Jerusalem.

In a different occasion several years ago, the pastor described an incident where he and some other Christian immigrant pastors and leaders made their way to the Norwegian National Broadcasting offices (NRK) after he (Global Evangelical Pastor) was approached by one of NRK workers after a prayer for Oslo forum held at “Trefoldighetskirken” in Oslo and asked if he was among the international faith communities who had previously said that they do not want Jesus mentioned in the elementary schools. According to an informant, even though the group of pastor and leaders went to NRK to say they wanted more Jesus in the schools, what NRK published later as the reason why the pastors went to their offices was misquoted http://kristen-tro.origo.no/-/bulletin/show/537913_innvandrere-ber-om-mer-jesus-i-nrk?ref=checkpoint

5.5 Summary

In this chapter, I have described how most participants in the various churches in this study came to Norway and also their general current residential status. I have also described how the various churches are organized, their activities and programs and also, what connections and associations they have outside themselves. The chapter reveals that while some participants retain their initial residential status, most of it changes and while some return to their home country others chose to remain. The organization culture of the different churches was revealed to be much similar while most of the activities and programs go along the same line. Some churches were revealed to have

a wider connection and association outside themselves than others. This chapter forms the basis for the discussion of my findings.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION OF THE MAIN FINDINGS

From my “previous work done” chapter, we saw that most studies on immigrants’ faith communities have focused on how these faith communities are organized and how well they are able to help their participants integrate into the larger societies. The study of various immigrant churches in this study tried to answer similar questions. However, a focus on the activities/programs and connections/associations and the kind of social capital they make available and whether it helps the participants to get incorporated is a key interest in this study. This chapter will look at how the findings of the factors described in chapter five, affect incorporation of the participants in regard to the kind of social capital they make available. I will also discuss such findings in relation to other researches done, before I finally make individual judgment and recommendations in a subsequent chapter.

While discussing my findings in this chapter, I will present my work in two sections. In the first section, I will discuss the kind of activities and associations the churches offer, the kind of social capital they make available, and how that facilitate incorporation of the participants in the larger

society. In the second section, I will discuss how the participants' residential status and the churches' organizational culture promote or hinder (involvement in) activities, programs, associations and connections that promote incorporation to the larger society (in regard to social capital)

Activities/programs, connections/associations and their social capital

6.1 Activities and programs

Activities and programs are an important resource that can facilitate both coping with a new environment while at the same time can be an avenue for incorporation in the larger society. The big question is not whether immigrant churches can provide resources for incorporation because they can, but whether the nature of their daily activities and connections and how they are organized depending on their organizational structures, traditions and beliefs, and other factors do actually facilitate incorporation.

Activities and programs can be of different kinds and have different objectives. Some may be consciously designed to accommodate changing dynamics that affect the settling down of newcomers, while others are norms that may consciously or unconsciously affect the new participant's process of settling down and incorporation.

Even though this study deals with the question of incorporation of immigrant participants in the larger Norwegian society through certain channels such as activities and connections, an early judgment however, suggest that resources such as activities and programs that are designed to primarily cater for emotional and other basic needs for newcomers in a new world, do complement activities and programs designed to facilitate incorporation and therefore, they cannot be ruled out as of little relevance. One may be tempted to assume that resources that are outwardly involving may facilitate better incorporation into the larger society than those that are inwardly involving. By outwardly involving I mean resources that go beyond the walls of the selected churches and are able to grant opportunities for both the participants and others in the larger society to interact (bridging and linking), while inwardly involving refers to those resources that promote intimate social ties within the walls of the selected churches (bonding). An American study done by Foley and Hoge (2007) on various worship communities seems to concur with this kind of assumption. Suggesting that the social capital that immigrant worship communities provide may have little relevance for immigrants' incorporation into the civic life

of the nation, the authors recommend that the social capital made available in the worship communities should not only be a resource that create friendships and other shared resources that helps participants to internally cope with their new life, but that the social capital should also include significant linkages to opportunities outside the immigrant communities (Foley and Hoge's 2007:113). While I underscore this recommendation, I would like to emphasize that resources provided by worship communities' whether they facilitate incorporation or coping with new life, are relevantly related and even though may not necessarily be of equal value, they in one way or the other complement each other. Participants without a bonding social circle may have challenges to effectively incorporate in a larger society even if opportunities for bridging and linking are available. It is in a bonding arena, I would presume, that the participants are able to build trust and confidence, and receive relevant information which gives them courage to face the larger society. Ronald M. Synnes suggesting the same, although in different words explains in his study the importance of the church's social network to its participants. According to him, the fact that many participants had their social network mainly in church and spent most of their time in church can lead to the notion that the immigrant churches has an isolating function to their participants (producing only bonding social capital), however, the author established that it is through the church's network that the informants got their jobs and information about the society in general, something that can be thought to promote integration to the Norwegian society (Synnes 2012:86). Kari Austigard also observed that though the Spanish group she studied had difficulties in providing relevant information about the job market due to different education background of its participants, the group still functioned as a stepping stone for its participants to the Norwegian society (Austigard 2008:114)

Looking at activities and programs offered in the three selected churches in this study, one might wonder what relevance do some programs such as the Sunday worship services, bible study, youth and cell groups have in relation to incorporation when such programs are primarily understood to cater for the participant's spiritual growth. Consequently, this study was able to explore what other opportunities such programs do provide. According to Foley and Hogue (2007), social capital starts with social networks and that it is assumed in the growing literature on religion in the lives of immigrants that immigrants turn to religious institutions for fellowship. The authors continue to suggest that fellowship is more likely in smaller worship communities in which people have opportunities to participate in small, face to face gatherings (Foley and Hogue

2007:92-93). In all the three selected churches, the Sunday worship service, the bible study, the cell and the youth groups gave room for the development of fellowships that created intimate friendships and interactions that helped ease the difficulties of adapting to the new settings. At SCCC where they once in a while had different fellowships for the two main Chinese languages, the fellowships created a sense of belonging and gave ethnical identity in addition to serving religious purposes. In addition, programs to educate new students on how to organize their lives in the new society, shopping trips, dissemination of necessary information such as where to find housing and job contacts were also provided in these fellowships. As we saw in the second chapter of this study, in this kind of atmosphere (in fellowships), bonding social capital is readily available. Conversely, while fellowships would first and foremost help build bonding social capital, within the social relations and shared norms of these groups and services, confidence and trust to face the larger society is produced and natured. In other words, when people who were not known to each other are brought together by similar values and circumstances and do continually meet together and interact, they are able to build trust that encourages them to share their experiences and advice to one another, on matters such as steps to take in order to penetrate the larger society. According to Qianhong Fu (2004), Woolcock (1998) has argued that “Trust and norms of reciprocity, fairness, and cooperation are important benefits that are nurtured in and by particular combinations of social relationships and may be one indicator of the types of social capital that are present. Woolcock (2001) proposes that trust may better be seen as a consequence of social capital rather than an integral component of social capital (Fu Qianhong, 2004: 21). In this case, the bonding social relations within the Sunday service worship, bible study, and cell groups help to build trust.

On the other hand as argued by researchers such as Coleman (1988) and Putnam (1993) who consider trust as a key component if social capital is to develop or as a requirement and not a consequence of social capital (Fu Qianhong, 2004: 21), through the use of existing trust build in the initial bonding stage, participants in these groups and services can confidently make efforts towards incorporation by trusting to interact with those who are outside their church’s walls. As such, these fellowships are a source of both bonding and bridging and linking social capital.

While the questions in this study focused mainly on efforts of the churches in helping incorporate their participants in the larger Norwegian society, several of the informants in this study expressed their thoughts about the need for the majority/natives to also open up and make

efforts for integration. Most of them believed that integration is a two-way process where both the immigrants and the majority should make efforts to adapt to each other. Coincidentally, the churches have several programs that are an attractive arena for such developments. The youth group in SCCC even though primarily designed to cater for the youths' spiritual growth, special programs and activities such as birthday celebrations that occur several times within the group, give the youth an opportunity to invite their friends from the larger Norwegian society thus giving the youth group the privilege to act as an arena for integration. In addition, special celebrations programs from all the churches were not only organized for the participants of these churches but were also deliberately designed to allow opportunities for people from the larger society to participate in. The Chinese New Year's Eve and the Family Sunday service in SCCC, baby dedications, weddings, and baptism at RCCG and Global Evangelical Church are programs and activities that were noted to attract friends, politicians, neighbors, and colleagues from the larger Norwegian society thus making these churches and their programs a place where both the minority and the majority can socially meet, and thus helps to provide bridging and linking social capital. This is however a limited observation that does not want to assume that religious communities are generally a central meeting place that fosters incorporation for both the minority and majority. But it is an indication that this does happen at some level. This observation if seen in perspective to Loga's claim that social participation in the Norwegian community hardly happens through faith communities but rather, through secular children and youth's activities (Loga 2012:75, Loga 2011:126) stirs up the question of whether this can be assumed to be entirely so. The kind of social participation one is talking about is a major determining factor. How many of the immigrant Christians do participate in the secular children and youth's activities? Secular activities and programs that do not attract Christian immigrants cannot be assumed to be a central meeting place for both the minority and the majority.

Programs that offer welfare services within the three selected congregations were noted to help provide mainly a social capital that helped bridge the participants to the larger Norwegian society. Educative programs for parents on how to bring up their children in the Norwegian society, language courses, and job connections were among those noted. Looking at individual churches, RCCG and Global evangelical churches organized programs to educate their participants on several issues that would make their integration easier. One such program is organized to educate parents on how to bring up children in the Norwegian society. From own

experience, most participants coming from backgrounds where for instance the mode of disciplining children is by use of cane, face challenges in trying to restrain themselves from such norms and on how to invent new ones. As Christians some may be caught up in a dilemma of how to apply biblical principles and at the same time, obey laws that govern a nation. Some, who ignorantly live in the new country as they lived in their home countries by ignoring laws and regulations in the new country, face shocking consequences for instance, in cases where children are taken away from their parents. Most of them live in bitterness and are left blaming the society for it. Thus, programs that bring knowledge to the participants on how to live in the new society are in no doubt helpful in facilitating their incorporation.

Besides training the parents, RCCG organized extra tuition classes for their youth who struggles with certain subjects in school such as mathematics. This they believe would help their children to compete effectively in the larger society which would finally give them a good position and acceptance. This kind of thinking I observed is positive and such efforts may be rewarding considering successful Christian immigrants such as Ezinne Okparaebo, a track and field sprint athlete who is quite well integrated in Norway. Other programs like the men fellowship at Global Evangelical Church with its entrepreneurship objectives has benefited from visits and counsel of some DNB bank officials.

However, whether these activities have facilitated tangible incorporation is something debatable but a follow up on whether they really have, exhibited that they have to those who have long term staying plans and are open and willing to avail themselves for such programs and activities. At RCCG, one of the youths who benefited from the extra tuition programs was said to have scored high marks in her secondary school which earned her a scholarship to further her studies in Canada and anticipate her return “home” (Norway) to contribute to the building of the society once she is done with her studies. Several parents also seemed satisfied with the programs that have helped them to raise their children without being in conflict with the law. At Global Evangelical church, a few of the participants with permanent resident permits were able to acquire loan to purchase houses through the advice they received from the visiting bank officials. Through activities and programs that attracted participants from the larger Norwegian society, some participants in the churches have been able to establish lasting relationships with some Norwegians that have helped ease their incorporation process. Several other participants are

working in the larger society through job connections by fellow individual participants, giving them an opportunity to interact with the larger society.

6.1.1 Connections and Associations

A previous observation by Inger Furseth (2008) explaining the nature and limits of religion as a source of social capital noted important the question of what type of “religious associations” fosters what type of social capital. She further noted that while some congregations may have little interest in civic and public role, others may not want to get involved in activities they did not sponsor (Furseth 2008: 157).

We have seen above that several of the programs and activities that the churches provided were capable of producing both bonding and bridging social capital and while some of these activities and programs were noted to be initiated and sponsored by the immigrants churches themselves, others were as a result of various connections and associations that the churches had outside themselves. Most of the connections and associations in this study can be said to mostly produce a bridge that facilitates incorporation into the larger society. This study noted openness and willingness within the churches investigated to work together with others, in their own (immigrants) programs or in programs sponsored by others.

All the three churches in this study had several associations outside themselves that have given birth to various joint activities and that can be said to facilitate incorporation. While SCCC seemed to have more connections and associations in which they were involved in different joint activities with different “majority” groups compared to the other two churches as exhibited in chapter five, its connections as well as that of the other two churches were mainly with other Christian organizations and individuals but who were part of the majority population. This observation undoubtedly puts a question mark on Jill Loga’s claim that religious activities in Norway as other Nordic countries are incapable of providing any common ground for migrants and the majority population, (Loga 2012. Faith in a New Country. Available at: <http://sciencenordic.com> (accessed 30. May 2012). While Norwegian Christians organizations and individuals may not necessarily be the majority population, they do represent the majority population, and in their involvement with Christian immigrants, they do contribute to the integration process at their level and in their context. My study have exhibited in chapter five, different ways in which all the three churches were involved together with several Norwegian

based groups and individuals outside themselves which not only gave room for the participants to participate in the larger society but made the churches an arena where both the immigrants and the majority could meet and interact. Some of these joint involvements have been in existence for many years while some are just current initiatives.

While not all connections and associations noted in chapter five of this study were found to be significant for the incorporation of the immigrants to the Norwegian society, the following were noted to facilitate incorporation; SCCC's cooperation with Areopagos and other churches has opened many doors that can be said to facilitate incorporation. Such opportunities are for example; learning of the Norwegian language (which several informants even from the other two churches noted as a number one and vital key for their integration), joint worship services with several Norwegian churches which gave the participants an opportunity to interact and establish contacts, and family visits to Norwegians homes during Christmas among others.

The T-networks program was observed to have provided many opportunities for the participants of Global Evangelical Church to mingle and interact with the larger society. In many occasions, either the T-net leader together with some of his Norwegian colleagues would join the participants of Global Evangelical Church in their weekly activities or vice-versa. Job opportunities for some immigrants were discovered in such contacts.

Global Evangelical Church and RCCG benefited from the 5-fold network, an informal pastors' network organized by a local church pastor, as an arena to fellowship and pray. This network has both local and international pastors and organizes other activities and agendas besides fellowships and prayers. It organizes meetings with political leaders in and outside of Norway where the pastors from RCCG and Global Evangelical Church are actively involved (Oslokirken 2012. *Member of Parliament visits ministers gathering and unity with Oslopastors for Israel*. Available at <http://www.oslochurh.org/maler/article/article/145224> (accessed 30. March 2013).

As we saw in chapter two, vertical ties between immigrants and institutions of power might help increase the immigrant's Christian churches chances to secure resources that foster integration such as venues and funds to sponsor various activities. Such ties or connections and associations have been described by some scholars as linking social capital. Linking social capital is generated from the links between people or organizations that are beyond peer boundaries, and cuts across status and similarity enabling people to gain influence and resources outside their

normal circles (Gilchrist 2009). Social capital also according to a bulletin in 2003 on bonding, bridging, and linking with social *capital*, explains linking social capital as a form of social capital that involves social relations with those in authority, which might be used to gather resources or power (*bonding, bridging, and linking with social capital 2003*). Available at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/sf/pubs/bull4/ws.pdf> (accesses 12.May 2012). As noted earlier, all the three churches in this study are registered but only SCCC and RCCG receive funds from the government that helps them sponsor some of their activities. This kind of connection even though can be said to generate some sort of linking social capital is more of a formal regulated interaction that has been put in place by the authorities to assist organizations that are non-profitable to organize themselves rather than a resource embedded and accessed in the churches to facilitate incorporation. There was an implication by the churches under investigation that even though they receive funds from the government, there was no tangible relationship that went beyond these funds. They also felt that the funds are too little and made almost no impact for their incorporation. Registration on the other hand was a form of legitimacy for the churches to employ some of their participants and as a result, gave them a right to stay in Norway. In itself, it did not facilitate incorporation. When it comes to connections with political powers, the churches have no tangible relations or associations with such groups. However, individual members had relationships that indirectly affected the participants at large. These relations opened doors for the politicians to visit the church not only when elections were near but during other special programs and as a result, exposed the participants to more knowledge on how and why they should exercise their voting right. A good example is the Christian Democrats and their relation with SCCC through one of its participants who is an active member of the party. Association with the Pentecostal movement of Norway for RCCG and association with the Oslo bishop for the leaders of the three churches were very flaccid and cannot be said to facilitate tangible linking social capital.

How about other connections and associations mentioned earlier in this section. Have they provided tangible incorporating help to the participants? Though SCCC makes arrangement for Norwegian lessons for their participants, very few were noted to enroll to these courses. The fact that many participants are students is a major contributing factor to the low turnout as we shall see in the next section. However, among the few, a beneficiary of the Norwegian lessons offered by Areopagos, is about to sit for her “Bergen” test and a few others are following the classes

though irregularly. There was an evident excitement among the members of Global Evangelical Church while they talked about their association with T-net and how well it has helped them to open up for incorporation. Several were able to meet individuals in these meetings who informed them about job offers. The pianist from Global Evangelical Church and some of the choir members feel more comfortable to now sing in T-net programs where several other people from different churches in Oslo gather together.

In an article on *religion as a source of social capital* Inger Furseth (2008)) noted that the leaders may be observed to be more connected to the larger society compared to their members as in the case of a Chinese Christian congregation in Oslo (Furseth 2008: 157). While this may be the case, this study noted that such connections play an important role not only in the Chinese church but also in the other churches investigated in this study. Particularly, it has helped to nurture and motivate the participants' open-mindedness about the possibility of their incorporation too, an important point expressed by more than half of my informants in this study. The association and connection of the leaders with various Norwegian churches, organizations, and individual has also helped them to rent places for worship services and even purchased own (RCCG) as noted above. Job opportunities in these connections and other vital information are communicated by the leaders to their participants.

Residential status, Organizational culture and their effect in incorporation

In this section as mentioned above, I will talk about how the participants' residential status and the churches' organizational culture promote or hinder (involvement in) activities, programs, associations and connections that promote incorporation to the larger society (in regard to social capital)?

6.1.2 Participants' residential status and its effect on incorporation

Alluding to Portes's (1995) work, Foley and Hoge (2007) explaining how circumstances of Migration such as their socioeconomic characteristics, account for immigrant's adaption in the United State, suggest that more privileged immigrants groups and those with a significant mixture of poor and well-off, well-educated and less well-educated are likely to worship in communities that are themselves diverse As a result, such worship communities are richer in social capital and other resources which encourages involvement in the larger society (Foley and Hoge (2007:44). This work argues that the type of one's residential permit can play a significant role on how fast and well one can get incorporated into a new society if and when the desire is

there. Citing from own experience, participants residing illegally in Norway, live in a lot of fear and hardly wants to get involved in anything that might expose them to the police or any other authorities. Activities such as political-related manifestations, voting and such would definitely not be anything such non-documented immigrants would want to get involved in. Consequently, a congregation that has a higher number of participants without legal documents whether they were well educated or were well-off from their home countries will be poor in social capital in a new society, resulting to poor incorporation. Fortunately, the churches in this study exhibited almost a null number of participants without legal documents.

Nevertheless, having a legal residential permit does not automatically guarantee incorporation to the larger society. There are a number of other dynamics that can stand on the way for instance; personal desire, effort, or the order of one's priorities. As mentioned in chapter five, most participants at SCCC and Global Evangelical Church were students who came to stay for a short period. With this in mind, they may see no need for integration since they anticipate leaving the country in a short period. Programs organized in the churches to facilitate integration such as the provision of Norwegian language do not matter to them and this in turn may affect the kind of jobs they are likely to get. Many work in Chinese restaurants and Aftenposten respectively where language is not a barrier but where chances of integration are limited. In other cases, there is a lack of interest among the students to explore opportunities and rights in the new society. Students especially those coming from Africa, prefer to work during their free time rather than attend Norwegian lessons or other activities that may interfere with their working schedules. Voting even though encouraged in the churches was observed to be of less importance. Most students' participants had no further information in regard to whether they were eligible to vote or not. However, a general feeling is that most of them were not interested to know or even vote since they would be leaving the country.

The process of receiving funds granted to the church upon submission of a membership list was observed to face challenges especially if the participants were without legal documents. This could have been the case for RCCG several years back who served mostly asylum seekers with no legal documents (See chapter 5). In a case where a church is not registered, the connection with the authorities may be totally non-existence. From own experience, such situations occurs when the pastor and those in the board do not have legal residing documents.

Other participants who now hold Norwegian passports and are well established were free to join activities and programs offered in their respective churches. While many did not have a need for such offers as the Norwegian courses, they rather enjoyed the benefits of joint services and for those who have been able to understand the importance of exercising their rights through voting do vote without any hindrances. Nevertheless, there was a group of older generation at SCCC who did not speak Norwegian. Most of them were no longer working but they lived with their children who provided for them. Church was their main source of network which mainly provided bonding social capital. Even though they once in a while attended joint services with other local Christian churches and organizations, it did not provide tangible incorporation for them.

6.1.3 Organizational culture and their effect on incorporation

While Foley and Hoge (2007) have described several different types of organizational structures, one which closely matched what the churches in my research exhibited was the family-style organizational structure. Family-style worship communities see themselves as a family for their members which provide intimate connections that stresses commonality among the members with little stress on outreach. Family-style worship communities also tend to be small, and put their energies into worship, religious education, and sociability within the local religious family Foley and Hoge (2007:46). We saw earlier in this research that besides worship and religious education, churches investigated here, emphasized hugely on fellowships and meetings which provided warm and family-like place for the participants. Such structures that encouraged sociality among members are said to be vital and necessary when it comes to social capital effects as expressed in the following:

Foley and Hogue (2007) concluding on how worship communities foster social capital among their participants, claim that even though a self-conception of church as a “family” often underlines strong bonding social capital especially among the smaller communities, social capital effects depend upon such structures that encourage sociality among members (Foley and Hoge 2007:111-112).

On the other hand, according to Foley and Hoge (2007), family-style worship communities because of their small size and their intense inward focus, are less likely to involve members in activities outside their walls such as mobilizing them as volunteers or political actors and are

more likely to spend their time in activities related to their own communities (Foley and Hoge 2007:49). While this may be true to some extent, churches in this study even though had activities related to their own communities compared to activities related to volunteer's work and political affairs, still made efforts through their inward activities and programs to make room for interaction with the larger society. We also saw that these churches had several connections and associations outside their walls and thus cannot be ruled as inward focused only.

CHAPTER 7

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This research endeavored to investigate the role of Christian immigrant churches in the incorporation of their participants to the broader Norwegian society. The investigation of only three churches in Oslo may arguably not be sufficient to uphold a general claim. However, the findings in these churches can be used to give a picture of what can be expected in a bigger representation. Divided in seven chapters, this research began by giving a glimpse of Christian immigrants' growth and a history of some of the policies and efforts put in place by the government and by both local and international churches to facilitate incorporation. It is in the first chapter that this work asks the main research question/s and also briefly explains how the question/s is to be answered. Chapter one also briefly tells of the research methods as well as explains some key concepts. The research question/s asked; “ *What relevant activities, programs, connections and associations that relates to incorporation are different Christian churches involved in and what sort of social capital can they be said to have or produce? Can they facilitate incorporation of the immigrants to the larger society? If yes, in what ways?*”

In order to be able to answer this question, this study applied the theory of social capital explained in chapter two. For the sake of theoretical clarification, a definition by sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1986) and later used by Foley and Hoge (2007) was found most suitable. Still

in chapter two, several forms of social capital and their sources were described and briefly discussed which was believed to be vital in finding answers to the research question/s. Unlike many previous researches which have examined bonding and bridging social capital and their influence on religious organizations, this study examined whether a third form of social capital (linking social capital) was possibly notable in the activities and association provided by the selected churches.

Chapter three presented previous work done in the field of religion and immigration. Even though there is a relative growth on researches done in this area, this work chose to reflect on a few researches both in America and Norway. In Norway, most recent studies were used to help track recent developments. It was observed that most of those researches noted and judged that even though immigrant churches mostly provided bonding social capital, this did not hinder the provision of bridging social capital that facilitated the incorporation of their participants. Some examples are such as Austigard (2008:114) and Synnes (2012:86) who observed that the immigrant churches and their networks provided a stepping stone for their participants to the Norwegian society.

Chapter four presented methodology and factors (variables) which were used to help evaluate social capital availability. Since this was an empirical study, specific areas of data collection and their historical backgrounds, the mode of data collection and the methods used to analyze the materials were also presented in this chapter.

In chapter five, the findings of the data collected in Scandinavia Chinese Christian Church, Redeem Christian Church of God and Global Evangelical Church of Oslo in regards to their activities and associations, participants' residential status, and the churches' organizational cultures were presented and in a following chapter (6), discussion of the main findings were presented in two sections. In relation to other researches done, the first section discussed the kind of activities and associations the churches offered, the kind of social capital they made available, and how that facilitated incorporation of the participants in the large society. In the second section, this chapter discussed how the participants' residential status and the churches' organizational culture promoted or hindered (involvement in) the activities, programs,

associations and connections that promoted incorporation to the larger society (in regard to social capital).

In regard to the main research question, this study like other related researches, found out that in general, immigrant churches are very much involved in efforts that promote integration of their participants in the larger society. In most cases, opportunities are made available and vital information is disseminated but it is left entirely to the participants to take advantage of what is made available. Seeking to find out specifically about activities, programs, associations and connections, this study emphasized that the most important question is not whether immigrant churches can provide resources for incorporation because they do, but whether the nature of their connections, daily activities and programs and how they are organized depending on their organizational cultures, traditions/beliefs, and other factors do actually facilitate incorporation. In some instances, efforts for incorporation were made available but it was left entirely to the participants to take advantage of what was made available and thus, the desire, effort, and priorities by the participants themselves also play an important role in whether or not they get incorporated.

One of the most important findings that this study seeks to emphasize is the need to see religious communities (immigrant churches in this case) and their activities and connections not just as spiritual-oriented and isolated, but as potential resources for incorporation. Sunday worship services, bible studies, youth and cell groups though primarily designed for spiritual growth, in most cases may have other benefits. They may provide room for the development of fellowships that create intimate friendships and interactions that helps ease the difficulties of adapting to the new society. In these fellowships according to Foley and Hogue (2007:92-93) is where social capital starts. In addition to the above mentioned, we saw in this study that job contacts, educative programs for parents on how to bring up their children, and language courses were made available in the churches investigated which can be said to positively provide bridging social capital.

Another important finding exhibited that religious communities (immigrant churches in this case) and their activities to some extent do provide a common ground for the migrants and the majority population. We saw from our findings that immigrant churches do not only provide

incorporation resources for their participants but they have made these resources and their churches an attractive arena where the majority can participate and thus, providing an opportunity for interaction between the majority population and the minority population especially where incorporation is believed to be a two way process. The youth programs at SCCC, baptism, weddings, and baby dedications at RCCG and Global Evangelical Church are examples of such notable resources. In other instances, as a result of connections and associations that these immigrant churches had, joint activities that provided a common ground for both the minority and majority developed.

Despite variation between immigrant churches and their associations in terms of how they organize their services, they were both still able to interact through joint activities. One may be tempted to assume that since associations and connections of immigrant Christians in this study are mainly with other local Christians and not with a wider range of organizations (secular), as limiting and isolating in terms of incorporation. But what is sensible to emphasize here as emphasized in chapter six is that even though such connections may not necessarily be with other majority population (secular), they still did represent the majority population and therefore, cannot be dismissed as incapable of facilitating incorporation.

Leaders as noted by Inger Furseth (2008:157) may be more connected to the larger society compared to their members as it was noted in the case of SCCC. This discovery however, did not explore what benefits such connections had to their members. During my study, I was able to explore other benefits that such connections are able to provide. Most of the participants were aware of their churches' and their leaders' in particular, connections and associations with the outside world. Such knowledge first and foremost helped the participants to be more open and get involved in such connections. It also helped the participants to more positive and optimistic about the possibility of their incorporations and especially where their leaders were heavily involved in such connections and associations. The participants of Global Evangelical Church were noted to be more excited about such leader's connections compared to SCCC and RCCG. The experiences that the leaders received from their connections benefited the church at large. In most cases, the leaders reported back to their congregations and sometimes made efforts to make some practical changes or improve things in their congregation with experiences gained from such connections. It is from such leader's connections that the church at large, has benefited in

securing worship venues. Other times, some participants did get the opportunity to accompany their leaders to meetings outside the church where they met job contacts or other basic benefits. Thus this study argues that a more connected leader can be assumed to be a source of bridging social capital.

The type of one's residential permit can play a vital role in incorporation. Immigrants with permanent resident permits are more open to incorporation efforts compared to those with shorter or with no resident permits. This is an important finding that this study emphasizes. Those who held students' residential permits in this study hardly participated in activities designed to facilitate incorporation. We earlier saw that at SCCC where the language courses were offered, only a very small number enrolled to take such courses. In addition, most of them worked in Chinese restaurant rather than in more "integrating-friendly" environments.

Family style organizational culture was the most notable organizational culture in this study. While this style first and foremost is known to provide a warm family-like place for the participants as described by Foley and Hoge (2007), it was noted in this study to also provide a platform for other outward activities that helped the participants to mingle with the world outside and thus, not only providing bonding social capital, but also bridging social capital.

Finally, this study had initially expected and was determined to identify what some researchers have called linking social capital. This form of social capital as mentioned in chapter two enables connections with influential people in the society such as political leaders and government authorities. However, only a limited degree of linking social capital was identified in SCCC as a result of frequent visits by some political leaders which were influenced by one of its participant's active role in the Christian Democrats party.

It is very tempting to imagine that the reality of a more solid and bold interaction between the immigrant churches, political leaders and government authorities can provide better linking social capital. However, the challenge of executing own vision without compromising values and beliefs can be inevitable in such connections and therefore, making such realities impossible. The churches, due to what they see as conflicting roles, have stayed away from political arenas. There is also a silent and even to some extent vocal believe, that if the church welcomes ties with

the government or the state, there is high possibility of control and that the church would be forced to adhere to rules that are against its faith. From my own experience, some churches have deliberately decided not to apply for funds from the involved authorities for fear of control.

Nevertheless, choosing not to be political but learning to use the political platform can be beneficial. Where the politicians may be needing votes, the immigrant church may be needing resources such as venues and other resources that could make their integration easier. The church should not fearfully close itself out of the society which it is obviously part of but must learn to wisely work together with others in the society.

On the other hand and especially where integration is believed to be a two way process, there is need for the government authorities to be open and accommodative to such processes in a sensible way. We saw in the introduction that the Norwegian government has taken necessary measures to ensure that incorporation of the immigrants to the Norwegian society is facilitated. However, the practicality of such measures to all immigrants is still in question. What is easily felt and experienced on the ground are tight laws that make it difficult for religious immigrant bodies to easily penetrate the Norwegian society. The Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) has incorporated a law that requires immigrants who wish to work as teachers or religious leaders to have a Master's degree related to religious studies and that the employer must be able to offer a salary that is approved for employees of such caliber. (UDI 2012. Skilled Workers. Available at: <http://www.udi.no/Norwegian-Directorate-of-Immigration/Central-topics/Work-and-residence/Apply-for-a-residence-permit/Skilled-workers/> (accessed 12 May 2013).

While most immigrant churches have qualified workers who would be willing to work at lower wages in their churches or in other local churches, these kinds of laws are a hindrance to such opportunities that can aid incorporation for the mere reason that the church (especially the immigrant church) does not have so much money to pay such qualified workers. On the other hand, there are many Christian immigrants who hold bachelor degrees and can easily get employment in well established immigrant churches.

REFERENCES

- Austigard, Kari 2008. *Den spansktalende gruppen i Salemkirken i Oslo*. Upublisert masteroppgave i kristendomskunnskap. Det teologiske Menighetsfakultet.
- Bryman, Alan. 2012. *Social Research Methods*-4th Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hagelund, Anniken og Loga, Jill 2009. *frivillighet, innvandring, integrasjon*. Oslo/Bergen: Senter for forskning på sivilsamfunn og frivilling sektor. Rapport 2009:1
- Bourdieu, P. 1986. *The Forms of Capital*. In *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*, edited by John Richardson, 241-58. New York: Greenwood Press.
- Coleman, James. S. 1990. *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard Press.
- Ebaugh, Helen Rose and Chafetz, Janet Saltzman 2002. *Religion and the New Immigrants*. Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.
- Furseth, Inger 2008. "Social capital and immigrant religions". *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society* 21 (2): 147-164
- Fangen, Katrine and Mohn, Ferdinand A. 2010. "Inclusion and Exclusion of Young Adult Migrants in Europe": Barriers and bridges. In *Pitfalls of Egalitarianism*, edited by Katrine Fangen, Kirsten Fossan and Ferdinand Andreas Mohn. Farnham: Ashgate
- Foley, Michael W. and Hoge, Dean. R. 2007. *Religion and the New Immigrants: How Faith Communities Form our Newest Citizens*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Furbey Robert, Dinham, Adam, Farnell, Richard, Finneron, Doreen, Wilkinson, Guy, Howarth , Catherine, Dilwar, Hussain, and Palmer, Sharon 2006. *Faith as Social Capital: Connecting or Dividing?* Bristol. The Policy Press. UK
- Gilchrist, Alison. 2004. *The well-connected community: A networking approach to community development*. Bristol. The Policy Press.

- Hansen, Eveline 2007. *En empirisk undersøkelse av Scandinavia Chinese Christian Church i Oslo*. Upublisert masteroppgave i religionssosiologi. Det teologiske Menighetsfakultet.
- Nilsen, Ingrid V. 2008. "Integrating and Disintegrating Factors in the Relation Between Migrants and the Church of Norway". In *Ecumenism in the Nordic Region, Together or a Part? 26-34. Report from the Nordic Consultation on Migration and Changing Ecclesial Landscapes*. Stockholm: Nordic Ecumenical Working group on Migration in Cooperation with ecumenism in the Nordic Region.
- Predelli, Line Nyhagen 2008. "Political and Cultural Ethnic Mobilization: the Role of Immigrant Associations in Norway". *Journal of ethnic and migration studies* (34): 935-954.
- Myrberg, Gunnar 2010. "Who is an Immigrant"? In *Diversity, Inclusion and Citizenship in Scandinavia*, edited by Bo Bengtsson, Per Strömblad and Ann-Helen Bay, 20-47. Cambridge Scholars.
- Loga, Jill 2011. *Inkludering i nærmiljø: En studie av frivillige organisasjoner som flerkulturelle møteplasser*. Bergen/Oslo: Senter for Forskning på Sivilsamfunn og Frivillig Sektor. Rapport 2011:5
- Loga, Jill 2012. *Trossamfunn, innvandring, integrasjon: En Kunnskapsoversikt*. Bergen/Oslo: Senter for Forskning på Sivilsamfunn og Frivillig Sektor. Rapport 2011: 3
- Morales, Laura and Giugni, Marco 2011. *Social Capital, Political participation and Migration in Europe: Making multicultural democracy work*, edited by Morales Laura and Giugni Marco. 1- 18. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan
- Putnam, R.D. 1993. *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press
- Putnam, R.D. 2000. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster
- Robson, Colin 2002. *Real World Research-2nd Edition*. Blackwell, Oxford: UK
- Ugur, E. (2007). *Religion as a Source of Social Capital? The Gülen Movement in the Public*

Sphere. In Ihsan Yilmaz et al. (eds), *Muslim World in Transition: Contributions of the Gülen Movement* (pp. 152-162). London: Leeds Metropolitan University Press.

Synnes, M Ronald 2012. *Kristne migrantmenigheter i Oslo*. Oslo: KIFO Stiftelsen Kirkeforskning. Rapport 2012:1

Ødegård, Guro 2010. *Foreningsliv i et flerkulturelt lokalsamfunn-En studie om sosial integrasjon of sosial kapital*. Oslo: Senter for forskning på sivilsamfunn og frivillig sektor. Rapport 2010:6.

DAWN Norge 2011. *DAWN undersøkelse 2010:Vokser kirken i Norge?* Available at: <http://dawnnorge.no/dawn-unders%C3%B8kelse-2010/> (accessed 15. August 2012)

DagenMagazinet 2010. *Kristen Tro: Innvandrere ber om mer Jesus i NRK*. Available at: http://kristen-tro.origo.no/-/bulletin/show/537913_innvandrere-ber-om-mer-jesus-i-nrk?ref=checkpoint (accessed 18. Feb 2013)

Stone, Wendy 2003. *Bonding, Bridging, and Linking with Social Capital*. Available at: <http://www.aifs.gov.au/sf/pubs/bull4/ws.pdf> (accessed 12.May 2012)

Loga, Jill 2012. *Faith in a New Country*. Available at: <http://sciencenordic.com> (accessed 30. May 2012).

Kristen Interkulturelt Arbeid 2011. *Migrantmenigheter Vokser Mest Norge*. Available at: <http://www.kianorge.no/2011/2/2/migrantmenigheter-vokser-mest-i-norge> (accessed 17. August 2012)

Norwegian Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion 2006. *Action Plan for Integration and social Inclusion of the Immigration Population and Goals for Social Inclusion*. Available at: http://www.regjeringen.no/Upload/AID/publikasjoner/rapporter_og_planer/2006/H-plan2006_int_og_inkl_english.pdf (accessed 17 August 2012)

Oslokirken 2012. *Member of Parliament visits ministers gathering and unity with Oslopastors for Israel*. Available at <http://www.oslochurch.org/maler/article/article/145224> (accessed 30. March 2013)

Statistisk Sentralbyrå 2010. *Sekularitet og Religiøsitet i Norge*. Available at: <http://www.regjeringen.no/mobil/nb/dep/bld/dok/nouer/2011/nou-201114/12/2/3.html?id=650977#noteref18> (accessed 15 November 2012)

(UDI 2012. Skilled Workers. Available at:

<http://www.udi.no/Norwegian-Directorate-of-Immigration/Central-topics/Work-and-residence/Apply-for-a-residence-permit/Skilled-workers/> (accessed 12 May 2013).

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: An introduction letter to my master's project.

My name is Margaret Wanjiru. I am a student at the Norwegian School of Theology. I am writing a dissertation on the role of religious organizations in the incorporation of their immigrants' participants to the broader Norwegian Society. My work is focused on several immigrant Christian churches.

I want to find out how immigrant churches contribute to the incorporation of their immigrant participants in the larger society and If yes, in what ways. I am to evaluate if the activities and associations that these churches have, plays a positive role in integrating the participants to the Norwegian society.

The project will last until May 2013.

Since my thesis is based on qualitative interviews I would like to interview you in order to be able to answer the questions in this project. The interviews will last for about 1 hour, and will be recorded on a voice recorder, so that I can be able to transcribe the interview afterwards. The recording will then be deleted.

It is important for me to emphasize that as a researcher, I have a duty of confidentiality, and the people I interview will be highly anonymised. I shall not normally name individual but the church name may be identifiable. Priests/pastors and leaders of the churches will be able to quote check if they need to.

Participation in this project is voluntary. Consent can be withdrawn even after the project starts without further justification, and any information you have provided will be deleted immediately.

If you have any questions for me, you can reach me by phone 915 687 54, or email maggiesuie@yahoo.com. If desired, you could also directed questions to my supervisor Tormod Engelsviken on email tormod.engelsviken@mf.no

Appendix 2: Interview guide to the pastor/leader of the church

Your own experience and the role of your church in integrating your members to the larger society.

1. Could you please give a brief history of this church? (*Prompt; when did it start, how many members, what is the vision?*)
2. What is your current post and role in this church?
3. Would you call yourself integrated as a person? (*Prompt; what is your reason for believing this?*)
4. Would you call your church a multi-ethnic church or one organized a long ethnicity, culture or language? And what does this mean for their incorporation process?
5. How many nationalities are represented in your church?
6. How would you describe your members and their status in Norway?
7. How is your church organized? (*Prompt: is this a house of worship where people come worship and leave or people are more involved with each other like a family. Does your church make efforts to build the society through various activities or is it more involved in the community affairs such as active participation in the political process?*)
8. Does the church's religious tradition encourage and promote practical involvement of certain activities that contribute to societal building? (*Prompt; Such as political involvement*)
9. How would you describe the social networks of your members? Are they isolated in their lives outside the church or are they connected to other social networks?
10. If they are connected, has the church played any role in this? If yes, which role?
11. Would you say your church is involved in integrating its members to the larger society? If yes, what kind of activities does the church promote and engage in?
12. Do these activities lead to networks and connections between organizations and people who would otherwise remain unknown to each other?
13. How far has these activities produced solid and practical support? Could you give me examples?

14. Is your church in association with other churches/faith communities, networks, movements or voluntary organizations at the national or international level? Who are the main participants from your church? What implications does this have in the integration of your participants? (*Prompt: For example, the Pentecostal movement or the Churches Network on Integration of Refugees and Immigrants. in case of national or international conferences, are your members invited to participate*)
15. What motivates the church's involvement in organizations such as voluntary organizations?
16. What would you say has been the effect of these activities? Would you say that individual members are incorporated?
17. Is your church registered? If no, does this pose any challenges in achieving your goals and vision?
18. Does your church receive funds from the government? If yes, what implication does that have in the establishment of the church (*Prompt: does this position the church well to practically cater for its members?*)
19. Do you ever receive political leaders in your church or have you any contact with any?
20. Do you think your church has contributed to the society at large? How?
21. How could the society help you to offer the immigrants better help? (*Prompt: state, other churches.*)
22. Can you think of anything else that could be interesting for me to know concerning this topic?

Appendix 3: Interview guide to the members of the Church

Questions about oneself and the church being attended

Experiences of ‘Bonding’

1. Please tell me a little about yourself (*Prompt: where do you come from? your education background, professional*)
2. How has it been for you to settle in this country? (*prompt: Has there been hindrances*)
3. What is your current residential status in Norway? (*Prompt: how has that affected your progress in life?*)
4. How long have you been coming to this church and taken part in its activities?
5. Why do you come here? (*Prompt: for company, for worship, to work with others to achieve community objectives, it's a tradition, to find job, school connection, etc.*)
6. Are there many others from the same background as yours?
7. If yes, how many and what does that mean to you?
8. How have you helped each other?
9. What church affiliation did you have at home, and has that changed? (*Prompt: are you more or less involved now?*)

Experiences of ‘bridging’

10. Are there many with a different background from yours?
11. If yes, how many and what does that mean to you?
12. Would you say it good to meet people who are different from you? (*Prompt: if yes, why is this?*)
13. How have you helped each other?
14. What kind of activities have you shared with others in this church?
15. How has these activities helped you relate with others different from you?
16. Have these activities presented a better chance for your incorporation in the larger society?
17. Do you meet each other outside of the church arena, for instance, in your neighborhood? (*prompt: if yes, please describe under what circumstances*)

18. Have you managed to get to know these people and develop trust and understanding of each other

Experiences of ‘Linking’

19. Through your involvement with this church, have you become more aware of its links with the wider world, the local council or with voluntary organizations? (*Prompt: are you aware of the local council and its councilors and officers, local governments, national or international religious organizations, missions or business organizations, NGOs?*)

20. Do you vote? Where do you get information from? Who motivates you?

21. Are you involved in any voluntary activities? If yes, what motivates your involvement in voluntary work?

22. Have you had any direct experience with these links? For instance, have you been involved in any meetings or activities that other people from ‘outside’ were involved also?

23. If yes, what does that mean to you, what positive experience can you talk about?

24. Is there anything you would like to add that could be helpful for me to concerning this topic?

Thank you for your contributions to the success of this research.