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THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC RELIGION TO SOMALI WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LABOR MARKET.

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in Comparative Public Policy and Welfare Studies

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ABSTRACT.

A number of contemporary studies in the field of immigrants' labour market participation in Europe have focused on the skills and gender while putting less emphasis on religion and residential location of immigrants which determines social network effect. I conducted semi-structured interviews with ten unemployed Muslim Somali women living in Vollsmose in order to know their experiences on job search in Odense Denmark. The data suggest that religion has a marginal effect to women when it comes to get a job- especially in what concerns from their dressing style. The root of the problem seems rather to be their difficulties in acquiring education in a new country with a new language. This made the women to perform poorly in adult education and hence little chance to get good jobs. Furthermore, most women are willing to work but the type of jobs they are capable of getting are not well-paying jobs and hence they opt to have children as an activity which replaces their jobs in order to get income. These women came at their old age and ended up struggling with education due to their poor language skills. Poor performance from schools when they arrive in Denmark makes them to end up in poor jobs where they also come into contact with people especially older natives with less exposure to foreigners. Respondents explained their difficulties in dealing with old people who are scared of foreigners especially those of different race from them. The impact of media which presents Somali women with negative image has also shown to play a role in employers' hesitance to employ Somali women. Policy makers should look on providing language skills to immigrants until they are competent before joining professional education classes. I suggest future studies to check on how highly educated employed Muslim women experience in their workplaces. Lastly, it should be taken into account on the ways in which part time jobs can be feasible to mothers.

1. CHAPTER ONE

1.0 Introduction

Integration of Muslim immigrants in Europe has ever since been a huge matter. Migration itself in Europe has a long history although the most notable ones are from the first wave of 1950s - 1974 which comprised Guest Workers and return of people from colonies. Second wave from 1974 to the End of the 1980s during The Oil Crisis and the fall of the Iron Curtain, this phase comprised of family re unification and it's the time migration control started in Europe. Lastly is the recent phase from 1990s which comprised of various reasons for migration such as family reunification, labour migrants, and asylum seekers (Mol & de Valk. 2016).

In 2006 PEW reported that in general all European countries were hostile to Muslims (PEW, 2006), but the 2018 survey shows that there is high improvement in western Europe with less improvement in Eastern and Central Europe. Using the 2016 and 2017 surveys data, Denmark is reported to have 81 percent of citizens who would accept Muslims (PEW 2018, 03). However, these positive results do not reflect in economic integration to women especially with low education.

1.1 Somali refugees in Denmark.

Civil wars since 1980s in Somalia caused displacement of Somali people all over the world mostly in Europe. Among the European countries, Denmark also received a high number of Somalis who came as asylum seekers being the second to those from Syria (SIRI, 2016). OECD and EU (2016, 30) indicated that refugees represent one of the most vulnerable groups of migrants on the labour market. In many countries women have been the central victims of wars and hence upon fleeing to other countries as refugees, it keeps them being the highly affected group of individuals as how Dyke and James (2009) call it triple Paralysis. They explain triple paralysis as a tendency of some immigrants being faced by disadvantages in integration due to three things which are; being a woman, being black and being Muslim. Due to the fact that Somalia is an Islamic state, it is mostly males who are the breadwinners and therefore there is a high culture of women being housekeepers waiting for their men to work and decide the family life. In 2019 the Danish government published the data which shows that in 2018, 17.6% of full-time unemployed persons in the Danish labour force were Somali women. 21.1% of unemployed Women in the province of Fyn where Odense is located were from Somalia

(Danmark Statistisc 2020). Surprisingly the number keeps increasing in Odense city since according to the data I obtained from Odense Commune is that in week 52, the year 2019, the total number of 776 Somali women between 16 and 66 years old were living in Odense Municipality by which 313 (40.9) were unemployed (Odense Kommune, email exchange 07 January 2020).

The concept of Work in Islam is given a special importance as a part of worshipping the Almighty God. God through the Qur'an in An-Najm 53:39-41 gives a message that a human should make use of what is created on earth in order to survive, a human will be rewarded for working. In the book Al-Albani, Series of Weak and Fabricated Hadiths, Prophet Muhammad himself, who is considered special man in Islam, used to pray seeking God's protection and ability to avoid laziness or idleness. He instructed Muslims to balance between worship and work and not just worship. He went further in the Qur'an Surah 67, verse 15 saying that the most truthful names are 'thinker' and 'cultivator' meaning that individuals should use their brain and physical body to work in order to earn something for a living.

Through Work, Islamic religion gives conditions to its people to eradicate social ills and vices that result from unemployment, idleness, and poverty (Badr, 2019). Other scholars argue that the inequalities we see today is the result of humans to neglect Islamic laws which needs everyone to work hard (Baqi, 2018). Being specific with women is that, women also in Qur'an are obliged to work as long as the work does not contradict the legal rulings and at the same time the type of job should suit woman's physical and psychological nature. Referring the evidence from Sunna (the body of traditional social and legal custom and practice of the Islamic community), Jabir Ibn Abdullah tells a story that her divorced aunt went out to work in a dates plantation, Prophet Mohammad gave permission to her while advising that she should later give out charity or do an act of kindness from her work. Likewise in Qur'an verse 28:23 the first wife of Prophet Mohammad who was known by the name of Khadijah used to go out and work so as to help the family.

Since Denmark is constitutionally a Christian country, this has implications on how the Christian values are reflected in public or public life. The Christian religion has a significant role in a Danish society. The Constitutional Act of Denmark (Grundloven, section 4) states that the Evangelical Lutheran Church is the established Church of Denmark (Folkekirken). It is furthermore governed and financed by the state, from the Ministry of Affairs. Thus legally, the church is supported by the state. Although the Danish government identifies itself as secular, still the church tends to play a visible role in various official settings such as during the Queen's

New Year's speech, in the annual ritual opening of parliament (Folketinget), children's baptism (barnedåb) for official names and CPR number as well as in the state schools (folkeskole) curriculum. There is a widespread recognition of the fact that Christianity and Islam differ on issues such as type of meal that believers should/should not eat/touch, the way men and women interact in public as well as issues related to fulfilling religious duties. For example, while praying is an important element of faith in both religions, Christianity sees praying as a private act or one that is performed in churches, while Islam believers need a specific space for performing the prayer.

This thesis focuses on female Somali Muslim migrants for two main reasons. First, as indicated above, there is high number of Muslim Somali women in Denmark who are unemployed and hence they rely on social welfare. This has been repeatedly identified as a major problem by politicians and perpetuated as such by media. The second reason is that Muslim immigrants, especially those with asylum seeking background, are considered as difficult to integrate due to the fact that they are not highly educated or have non-transferable education from their country of origin (Somalia). Moreover, as Joppke (1998) has shown, individuals with lower education originating from Islamic countries who emigrated to the US, displayed stronger attachment to Islamic religious values compared to their higher educated co-nationals. These findings made me want to know whether such attachment has implications on labour market outcomes of individuals of Islamic religion, in particular Somali women.

2. CHAPTER TWO

2.0 Literature review

2.1. Introduction

Bommes and Kolb (2006), define economic integration as the general ability of an individual to sell service or goods in order to earn income which enables him or her to pay bills and other human needs. This literature review looks on various studies related to Muslim women's entrance into the economic integration through getting a job. Although all migrants and refugees are expected to work in host countries as it is a fundamental liberal norm, the focus is on Women especially Muslim. In European countries, Muslim migrant women are portrayed as victims of patriarchal cultures with low labour market participation. At the same time European countries consider employment as core part of the integration process (European Commission 2016, 8).

2.2. Main Factors associated with labour market attachment

There are three main groups of factors that are usually associated with labour market attachment. First is *skills and education*; second is *social networks and social capital*, and the last one is *discrimination*. In the following I will discuss the findings in the literature connected to these factors.

2.2.1. Skills and education

2.2.1.0. General impact of education and immigrants

Education is a key factor which facilitates an individual's entrance into labour market especially in Europe. European countries are interested in highly skilled migrants in the context of a global competition. (Christof & de Valk. 2016). Science and technology has significantly changed the way people operate in various activities. Individuals are supposed to have the right skills for the right job. To avoid skills mismatch employers constantly develop mechanisms to test and understand potential employees with the updated skills. Most of European jobs are replaced by technology and hence the labour market needs skilled individuals to perform the complicated jobs since routine jobs are replaced by machine. European labour market needs individuals who can do non-routine jobs which require high thinking like management and

technology designing. Therefore, only those with right skills in the present time are going to make it. Those without the right skills find it harder to be attached to the labour market because the jobs correspond their skills are even scarcer. Researchers like Frey and Osborne (2017) predicted that up to 47 percent of the current jobs keep on being automated hence there is high risk of massive unemployment among people with lower skills. This proves that the problem is even going in the direction which does not favour unskilled labours. To combat the effect of technology, European countries keep updating or changing their education system to fit the requirements of the modern market, but the problem remains for immigrants who acquired an outdated education which does not apply to the modern market. Particularly, individuals from countries where technology is low have a high chance of being left out once in Europe. Due to development imbalance in the world, individuals from third world countries who reside in Europe as immigrants are considered to be victims of modern technology especially automation which takes much of the routine jobs. This includes individuals from Africa where it was once labeled a technological desert (Rorissa & Demissie 2010). Dros and Mante (2013, 13) say that the country of origin is the foundation for analyzing labour market integration since it defines the quality of education, language and culture which are essential in labour market attachment. The education provides the right skills to perform various tasks. Most immigrants have been facing the problem of having mismatched skills from the labour market in European countries such as Polish and Lithuanians (Dros and Gaizutyte, 2013) as well as those from African countries. Language skills also is strongly related to job attachment. Some immigrants in Northern America and Western Europe end up disqualified in the job market due to language skills problem (Connor and Koenig 2013). Apart from job skills and language skills, also scholars have put much emphasis on the differences in culture between the host country and immigrants. Culture as a way of doing things is given much attention by employers since it has relevant effects in the organisation's productivity. Cultural differences such as time management, self confidence and even social opinions are said to have hindered refugees and immigrants labour integration (Bevelander 2015).

2.2.1.1. Muslim women skills and job

Muslim women are the largest victim in education systems in their countries due to the arranged marriages and lack of freedom among them (Global Campaign for Education, 2010. 7). Islamic culture does not give much of liberal freedom to women in performing some tasks. Therefore even when obtaining education skills it is likely Muslim women to be selective since it is believed that there are some tasks cannot be done by women. For example, if we talk about

religious jobs we find a big difference. In most Christianity religions women can work as leaders in religious organisations like at University of Southern Denmark women are studying religion while expecting to be pastors but such a thing is forbidden in Islamic culture, a woman cannot be a mosque leader such as Iman or Maalim. Apart from religious jobs also Muslim women are directly or indirectly blocked from doing other normal jobs. Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) told his followers that Allah through the Holy Quran treats both men and women in the same manner as individuals. Allah has the same standard of justice for all, male or female. The rewards and punishments for their actions will be alike. The Quran states:

“And their Lord hath heard them (and He saith): Lo! I suffer not the work of any worker, male or female, to be lost. Ye proceed one from another (Pickthal 3:195).”

Furthermore, Allah says:

“And whoso doth good works, whether of male or female, and he (or she) is a believer such will enter Paradise and they will not be wronged the dint in a date-stone (Pickthal 4:124).”

However, with the rules of way of life to men and women Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) with his claimed heavenly direction made some demarcations on what men and women can and cannot do or be. For example, a Muslim woman shall never be a ruler that means a Muslim woman should not bother to acquire education related to be being a leader such as political leader, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of an organization or a public manager in any public institution. Various verses in Quran demonstrates this, Al-Quran 4:34, made it openly that Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, in other way a woman can never rule over men. Also, when Prophet Muhammad (Peace be upon him) heard that Persians had made the daughter of Kisra ruler over them, he said: “Never shall a people prosper who make a woman their ruler.” Apart from all these verses of being a ruler or a leader, we can see also some of the works a Muslim woman cannot do are tied in the way a Muslim woman is directed to wear or to cover her body. With rules of covering her fully body and wearing the gowns which are directed then automatically a woman cannot do some works in the modern word such as a pilot (because of wearing hat), police office (because of police officers uniform) as well as being a sports person such as football, handball and . Apart from dressing codes which can make a woman not to be a part of some job also the biological nature of a woman in Islam prevents a woman to perform some tasks, for example a Muslim women when in her menstrual cycle is it prohibited for her to travel alone and shake hands with strangers or other people

except husband or relatives only, this automatically prevents a woman from doing jobs which require constant human interactions. Separation of tasks in relation to jobs hinders women from developing the culture of work which also influences job skills. Islam is so selective when it comes to women performing some tasks.

Dressing code as a part of culture and social skill had a negative impact on women's labour market participation as we have seen above. In modern labour market, not only cognitive skills are needed but also non-cognitive skills (Oreopoulos & Salvanes (2011), and Heckman, (2013, 4)). Non-cognitive skills are developed and impacted from our way of interacting with other members of community in formal and informal environment. It is argued that social skills which are part of Islamic women's life, contribute in poor labour market participation. For example the rule asking women to cover their faces in public, - including in working places. This way of living is considered in the Western perspective are oppressive to women. This is the reason there is official ban of full-face veils (niqab) to Islamic women in public areas such as working places. Various European countries like German, Belgium, France, Austria have already passed that law including Denmark which upheld the ban in from August 2018. Strict Islamic laws already act as a barrier in labour market since women who obey them can not work (either by themselves or through their husband's order) comfortably participate in workplaces.

2.2.1.2. Somali Islamic women skills and labour market participation in Denmark

While participating in Danish labour market, individuals from Somalia are faced with two major challenges. First is the fact that the country experienced political instability and war which are sources of weak education (Global Campaign for Education (2010, 5). Weak education exposes individuals to low labour skills.

Second is the religious nature of the country. Somalia is 100% an Islamic country. Islamic countries are notoriously known for low emphasis in education and labour participation to its female citizens (Lincove, 2008); Korotayev, Issaev and Shishkina (2015). Therefore the education of Somali refugees and immigrants plays a big role in their attachment to labour market due to weak skills, which do not match in the Danish Labour market. Somalia has the least functional education system in the world with just 10% of children attending primary school (Global Campaign for Education 2010). Although there are some improvements in recent years, but Somalia is still lagging far behind.

Immigrants from Somalia who are in Denmark are divided into groups of those born in Somalia and others who were born here in Denmark. Those born in Somalia (first generation) have education from Somalia and those who were born in Denmark (second generation) have education from Denmark. This brings a difference in their human capital skills since the education obtained in Somalia is different from the one obtained in Denmark in terms of quality and application. According to the data by Gapminder Foundation (2015) Denmark is on fifth place with the 15.1 years average of women in school while Somalia is on 181th position with the 1.98 years average of women in school out of 187 countries worldwide. This explains the large education difference between female natives and those who acquired education Somalia. Apart from just talking about the number of years in school, the quality of education matters the most, and still Denmark has far better education quality. The OECD's Programme for International Students Assessment's (PISA) released the 2018 results showing Denmark is on the top twenty countries (OECD 2019). From this difference in education between Denmark and Somalia we get a picture of Somalia women have lower education and skills. Although education obtained in Somalia can explain the reasons for Somali female's less participation in labour market, but education is less able to explain the muted capacity into joining the labour market of the second generation of Somali women. This is because it contradicts the human capital theory in labour market due to the fact that they all get the same education that native Danes get. Of course, the difference in immigrants' and natives' performance in school is an issue which has been widely discussed in the literature indicating that immigrants perform poorly compared to the natives. Regardless of the fact which we see in Denmark that the role of education to Somali Muslim female immigrants is less observed in Danish labour market but the role of education to other immigrants in other countries explains positive results. For example, Vermeulen (2010) explains that the second and third generation Italians and the Greek in the US were able to join the labour market perfectly as the majority population after acquiring education in US. This finding is contradictory to the situation observed for the Somali women who acquired education in Denmark.

The performance gap of immigrants in Danish schools in relation to natives is relatively big. An immigrant in Denmark has almost the double chance of performing poorly in school when compared to natives. Analyzing the current data from OECD, Schleicher (2019:28) shows how poorly immigrants in Denmark performed in 2018 PISA results. In countries such as Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia immigrants perform far better than natives while countries such as the USA, Canada, Hong Kong (China), Montenegro, Singapore and Israel the performance of immigrants and non-immigrants is almost the same. These data of poor

performance in Danish schools suggest also a poor performance of immigrants in the labour market after school. This issue takes us to the language skills. Since Most immigrants from Somalia speak Somalian and Arabic language at home it has an effect on their mastering the Danish language which is the official language of communicating in workplaces and schools. This huge differences in language plays a bigger role both in school performance and in job performance. We see in countries in which there is a historical connection from colonialism there are almost no clear difference in immigrants' and natives' performance. This is strongly explained by the sharing of common language between the colonizers and colonized such as UK and former colonies like US and India. Immigrants from former UK colonies enter in the UK well equipped with English language skills. This is different from immigrants in Denmark who struggle with Danish language (Dros and Gaizutyte 2013).

We have seen performance between immigrants and natives varies significantly. This is because the education systems in the countries treats immigrants with 'equality' and not 'equity' in relation to the natives. The treatment in schools is general due to the fact that the migration issue is a national level case (see Blom-Hansen, 2012; Emilsson, 2015.12; and Doomernik & Ardon, 2018). It is managed without strategically interconnecting it with the education of immigration. Islamic students in Europe experience differences in terms of Islamic ways of life when in public schools where they get education. This is because Muslim school do have special areas for players and restrooms which are gender separated. This can have impact in an individual's wellbeing and hence it can affect the school performance. Interestingly, some researchers have insisted that having policies which give cities more power in integrating immigrants can help to disentangle integration challenges. In supporting local integration, Scholten (2017) recommends national governments to reduce their own role in immigrants' integration. He proposes immigrants' integration should be left to cities' governments which may be more inclined to accommodate and support cultural and religious activities of minorities in response to migrants' needs and demands. In most European countries, the migration and integration policies are created by the national level with a nation general perspective, hence, Doomernik and Ardon (2018) conclude that city governments "feel" underestimated and even neglected as agents in migration and refugee integration. Moreover, at national level immigrants are seen as a threat while at local level immigrants are seen as a social capital (Doomernik and Ardon, 2018. 98). To our case in Denmark, the 2007 and 2009 trend towards decentralization in Denmark marked major municipal reforms which transferred power to municipalities included other issues except migration issue (Blom-Hansen, 2012). Primary education, child and elderly care, social services, physical planning and labour market were

transferred to municipalities but the refugee and immigrant's integration is still a national government case (Blom-Hansen, 2012). We can see the migration issue in Denmark is more of from national government and the municipalities are just working to fulfil the instruction from the central government (Emilsson, 2015.12). This way, all groups of migrants are treated the same as a homogeneous group while even Muslim migrants are so much in various categories in terms of race, education and country of origin (Statham & Tillie, 2016, 184). This needs a special mechanism in administration especially from the local government angle since the centralist model or top-down has become less relevant to the whole process of migrant integration according to numerous scholars like Scholten and Penninx (2016) as well as Entzinger and Scholten (2014).

Apart from language and education system, we also see immigrants' education is challenged by the development in science and technology. Women especially from Islamic countries have low skills hence they are likely to have routine jobs which do not require high skills. But again, automation has revolutionized and overtaken those jobs. In his research, Bevelander (2015, 187), found that up to 1975 foreign women in Malmö had a high level employment but this trend moved to the opposite direction after 1975 when immigrants and refugees from non-EU and Eastern Europe started to arrive. Bevelander explains that personal qualifications like language proficiency, gender, age, origin and business culture and religion are considered more problematic for immigrants to signal their informal skills. The structural changes of the economy and the institutional conditions played a big role in women's unemployment because the advancement of technology needed skilled workers. Most of the routine jobs were replaced by machines while at the same time most women had low education. Of course, in his research, he explains the lack of human capital and less similarities to Swedes as the reasons for the poor participation of foreign women in Swedish labour market. However, this does not give us the full picture of why some Islamic women born in Europe, the continent where women have the same chance of getting education as men, lag behind in labor market if human capital matters.

Apart from human capital, perhaps we need to look on the role of Islamic religion by evaluating the Danish instructional conditions to understand why Somali women are still lagging behind. We cannot rely on the conclusion from Bevelander (2015), who concluded the lack of human capital and cultural differences as being the reason for the poor participation of women in Swedish labour market. His quantitative research was so general to "foreign women" which can skew the results as foreign women can have lots of categories with different

characteristics. We need to specifically look into this problem by focusing on the category of people and their religion. When making analysis in a topic like this, scholars Alba, Reitz and Simon (2012) have alerted us to be aware and make careful analysis of the independent variables like characteristics of the host society as well as of the immigrant groups. Furthermore, since Dros and Gaizutyte (2013) show that immigrants in Denmark (even those from Eastern Europe) tend to take jobs which are over qualified when their human capital is compared to the locals in the workplace.

The labour laws of countries where immigrants and refugees reside needs to be given a special look instead of just blaming the poor performance of immigrants in labour. The fact that some migrants come in host country at old age, means there is a high chance of their education from home acting as a blockage due to employers' prejudice or under recognition of foreign education. When studying the probability of job loss among immigrants and refugees in Norway, Bratsberg, Raaum and Røed (2017) found that, the probability of job loss of immigrants and refugees from low income countries including Somalia is twice than of native workers. The authors indicate that even a lower-level host-country degree provides better returns for refugees in the labour market than a degree from the origin country of immigrants and refugees. This is why immigrants and refugees in Norway who attained education from their home country end up with temporary jobs as a result of being fired due to poor performance. The probability of job loss is even severe to immigrants from low-income countries who tend to have more precarious jobs. The main reason why immigrants and refugees tend to have a high probability of job loss is because they tend to work in precarious sectors, where firms have high risks of experiencing a downsizing or closure event in the near future (Bratsberg, Raaum and Røed, 2017. 25). Therefore, when these precarious firms are closed, automatically immigrants become jobless and when the firms undergo economic problems, they turn to reducing workers. The workers who are always in the first list of being reduced during firms' economic hardship are immigrants and refugees due to their limited contribution at work. Bratsberg, Raaum and Røed have made us to understand the reasons of immigrants and refugees to lose jobs or being in high unemployment risk. However, their conclusion must be taken with a grain of salt, since the researchers do not tell much details on the context of how the labour laws (hiring and firing laws) are applied to immigrants from outside EU. There is a possibility that the job loss is connected to prejudice regardless of immigrants education quality (Dros and Gaizutyte 2013). Furthermore, the researchers do not study the mechanisms that help immigrants into employment as they focus entirely on examining the mechanisms by which a job is lost after being attained. Additionally, the data or

measurements of the education quality from the origin countries compared to the host countries are not explained. The researchers blindly treat low income countries as countries which automatically have poor education quality. Probably the job loss is caused by other things like the stigma immigrants receive from the general public hence this results to their lack of confidence and higher levels of insecurity in workplaces. Lack of confidence and higher levels of insecurity in workplaces can lead to poor performance at work also. From personal experience and observation, many Muslims in Denmark are uncomfortable seeing their religion as an invitation for negative public attention since it is more pronounced by politicians in public (Mikkelsen et al. 2010). Therefore, I can say negative public debate of Islam in Denmark may invite hardships in immigrants job finding and job loss.

2.2.1.3. Social education on Family Care

Another reason which affects Muslim women's participation on the labour market is childcare. In most Muslim families, the child caring duty belongs only to women. Dyke and James (2009) in their study they interviewed 634 unemployed Muslim women through phone in UK who had Pakistan or Bangladesh origin and their response was surprising: Muslim women would like to go out and work, but they are restricted with childcare responsibilities. We see this is another challenge facing women within the community of Islam migrants in Europe. This is connected to the education social skills which gives Islamic view that a duty to take care of the family belongs to only females.

2.2.2 Social networks and social capital.

2.2.2.0 Introduction

Since we as humans are interdependent, it is quite useful immigrants and refugees to have connection and relationship with other members of the community. The absence of historical link between Denmark and Somali is something to look closely here. In countries where there is a colonizer and colonized history, researchers find less obstacles to immigrants' integration for example in France where there are many immigrants from West African countries like Senegal. Senegalese immigrants have less pressure in labour market integration since there is an established ideological and cultural link between Senegal and France. The situation is different when it comes to Somali immigrants in Denmark.

The connection between immigrants and the natives can be facilitated or be hindered out of various reasons. Religious affiliation has been found to be a significant connection to individuals' social networks and social capital. Being connected to Christianity gives opportunity or access to resources and information which can assist in getting a job. In France, Christian Senegalese individuals were seen to have high chance of getting job and also high income due to social networks compared to individuals from Islamic religion. This is due to the fact that they have affiliation with Christianity where they were able to get education in Catholic schools and colleges back home in Senegal before immigrating to France (Adida, Laitin, and Valfort, 2010. 22389). These results are based on the analyses which control for individual's same age, education, gender. Besides, Islamic schools have been found to focus their teachings in eternal life compared to Christian schools which teach more of real world social economic issues. The difference in education between Islamic and Christian schools has been observed in other instances. For example, in Tanzania (a mixed religion country; half Muslim and half Christians) when final secondary school results are assessed, Islamic schools mostly from Zanzibar Islands are always in the last position at performance compared to Christian schools from mainland (The National Examinational Council of Tanzania results).

Some researchers have tried to explain the mechanism through which the next of kin theory works for job attainment. Immigrants migrate to countries where already there are other migrants with already established settlement. This is due to the fact that connections results in declining costs and risks for the new immigrants (Massey, Arango, Hugo, Kouaouci, Pellegrino & Taylor. 1993, 449). Certainly, there is huge difference when trying to apply the next of kin theory of immigrants and refugee settlements when we discuss the Somalians. Their situation is different from the one of, for example, the Chinese and the Mexicans in USA, who settle in states where their co-nationals have been living, which enables them to get jobs within few days of arrival. However, this theory is hard to be applicable to Somalians when looking for a job in Denmark for three reasons; In the US there is no specific religion which guides the way of life of Americans meaning that religion has no closer impact in most of public policies like the dressing code as how some Islamic dress code are restricted in Denmark. Therefore those Somalians decide to migrate in US already they know they will have a certain freedom in their religion not compared to those in Europe. This freedom has an impact on who they socialize with and who they don't socialize with. The second reason is that there is no specific race which defines US as nation, Somali women are racially, ethnically and culturally different from the Danish natives and the majority of immigrants. Therefore, there is a high possibility of not feeling much lonely as a total stranger. The last reason and the most important one in relation

to this thesis is that; the high number of Somalians came to Denmark as refugees and family reunion which is different to Mexicans and Chinese who went to America as totally immigrants trying to find economic or business opportunities. When individuals enter a country with refugee status most of the time they stay in areas which are prepared by the government and with less works (Portes & Borocz 1989, 616). The settlement pattern brings us to another discussion.

The settlement pattern between migrants and the majority population has impacted the Social networks and social capital of immigrants in Europe. Separation in the settlements of refugees and natives has been pointed to facilitate limited Muslim immigrants' social contact with the majority population hence poor integration. Statham & Tillie (2016) hypothesized that, institutional and discursive opportunity structures are the main reasons which determine immigrants' social networks and social capital. This is based on the tendency of institutions to be able to discourage or sanction and reward or tolerate some public behavior, opinion and expression towards Muslims. If negative public behaviors and opinions towards Muslims are tolerated by institutions, they will marginalize Muslims' social networks in the community. In fact, the Social networks of Muslim immigrants and refugees are concentrated among themselves that's why the connection to job opportunities is particularly limited too. Many Muslims in Denmark live in areas like Vollsmose and hence they are connected within themselves without being connected to the majority population who can give tips and information regarding jobs. Although this is the fact, but it cannot be generalized since not all immigrants live in isolated areas with complete stigmatization but Somali immigrants living in Vollsmose are victims of this stigmatization. The theoretical framework from Statham and Tillie (2016) is indeed convincing, but their analyses may contain bias since they relied on onomastic method (name recognition method) to determine Muslims' settlements. Onomastic method cannot be trusted fully since people are able to change names in order to fit in the mainstream. Changing names is legal and easy especially in Denmark where many processes can be done online. Moreover, this method does not give the full picture of the current individual's religion attachment situation because it is difficult to attribute religion in the basis of the name only

Apart from separated settlement being an obstacle in social network, researchers have shown its impact also in intermarriage among Muslims and the natives in receiving countries. Intermarriage as among the key indicators for integration has been studied in relation to Muslim communities in Europe so as to identify its impact on individuals' social capital and network.

Noticeably, strong attachment to Islamic values prevents some individuals from getting partners outside Islamic community since it is widely considered as immoral to have a partner who is not Muslim. A cross-national study which studied influential factors and characteristics of intermarriage concluded that the more Muslims are educated, the more possibility they are to marry natives (Statham & Tillie 2016:190). This takes us back to Joppke's (1998) findings that educated Muslims are less attached to Islamic values and that's why they marry outside their community. Nonetheless, it is not clear if those Muslims marrying natives choose not to attach themselves with Islamic values or maybe they convince their native partners to convert or change religion. Yet, the contribution of intermarriage in immigrants' and refugees' social capital is different from those immigrants disconnected from the majority of the population.

I have discussed the affiliation in Islamic religion, but we need to go deeper to understand the details since religious affiliation is different from religion attendance. Connor and Koenig (2013) looked at the impacts of religious affiliation and attendance on immigrant structural integration and argued that religion variable is context dependent. The relevant causal mechanism depends on levels of state regulation, pluralism, and religious organization power in supporting its members. In short, they assert that religious affiliation can be an asset since an individual can get access to education, job and social capital through his or her affiliation in the religious-based organizations. However, they emphasize that the positive impact will only be to the members of religious majority (2013, 06-11). Their conclusion is that religious affiliation and attendance (whether Islamic or Christian religion) do have direct effects upon network and occupational attainment within immigrant generations. They found positive effects in the USA as expected but not in Western Europe where nations are Christian traditionally (2013, 29). In US the positive effect is explained due to the fact that religion is not particularly part of government and there is no religious historical relation in public spheres. The US government does not associate with religion even historically and hence even in public or in workplaces it does not have much negative effects as in Europe where the history of Christianity still have indirect impact such as in Denmark where Christianity is observed during the Queen's New Year's speech, in the annual ritual opening of parliament (Folketinget), well as in the state schools (folkeskole) curriculum. There are however few things to keep in mind when assessing the finding of this study in relation to immigrants of different religious dominations. First, the authors relied on a sample of second-generation immigrants to analyze religion attendance and network and occupation attainment. Conclusions based on this sample cannot be generalized to all immigrants, because the second-generation individuals are almost adjusted to the mainstream due to having same education, language skills and even a new way life compared

to the first generation who can be more attached to their home country values. Secondly, although they tried to predict the impact of religion affiliation in labour by using the first generation data but still it is impractical because first generation data cannot be used to predict the impact of religion affiliation in labour market without knowing anything about their human capital value in the host country. Some immigrants enter the host country while highly educated and some with low education, therefore they will have differences in religious affiliations and attendance. Those highly educated are expected to be more skeptical in religious values and have less commitment to following the values (Joppke 1998). Moreover, parallel to the previous argument, the researchers treat religious affiliation and attendances as being able to follow all the religious rules while it is possible for someone to attend religious activities at the same time act or behave in a more different way from the religious rules. Attending religious services does not necessarily translate someone into living an extreme religious life. Deep diagnosis is needed to understand the mechanism.

2.2.3. Discrimination

2.2.3.0. Introduction

During the guest worker period of 1960 to 1975, an increasing number of immigrant workers who were Muslims were not seen as problematic in European societies. Things took a different turn from 1990s on, when Muslims and their culture started to be presented as a contradiction to the Western culture. Empirical research literature uncovered numerous factors which contribute to discrimination, but findings have differed. What makes the existing literature to reach different findings is the fact that Islamic religion is practiced by different individuals from different race and ethnicity of Africans, Asians and Arabs. Some researchers have come up with results which point out race to be the problem while others point out Islamic religious values as the reasons for discrimination.

2.2.3.1. Visible differences between immigrants and the natives

Various researchers have tried to disentangle this paradox, Alba, Reitz and Simon (2012) observe that immigrants and refugees frequently face prejudice and discrimination from members of the mainstream society because of their ethno-racial distinctiveness. The more

visible the differences, the more likely that society block their integration efforts. Besides, in labour market Massey et al (1993:453) say if a job has a high number of immigrants it becomes labeled as immigrant job hence the natives gets reluctant to that job. In countries where there are various immigrants from different continents like Denmark the competitions among immigrants in filling the ‘immigrants jobs’ becomes even higher. This is because already there is an importation of cheap labours from Eastern Europe who can do the routine jobs which don’t require high skills.

Furthermore, Somali immigrants come in Denmark and then end up in areas with underclass immigrants such as those from Middle East and the former Somali migrants who mostly stay in Vollsmose area hence they end up in downward assimilation. In his work Vermeulen (2010) explained that in the USA immigrants who come into permanent contact with the native blacks end up in permanent poverty due to downward assimilation or integration. Having a specified area for underclass immigrants creates a pathway for discrimination since employers have in mind a connection of someone’s residence with some social characteristics. The area of Vollsmose is notoriously known for crime and all negative features which can be related to an individual. Thus, the address in the CV of a person who is searching for job has an impact on job obtaining since employers are hesitant to have someone from the area with high rate of delinquency. Individuals from this area are sometimes thought to be unreliable to appear at workplace due to the fact that police officers happen to close the whole area; no one to exit, and no one to enter during inspection when crimes occur. Nonetheless, we cannot exaggerate the impact of downward assimilation as how Vermeulen (2010) says it results to immigrants ending up in permanent poverty because some of the immigrants are able to get jobs and good life while in the same address of poor immigrants, but still it is clear that an address of an immigrant which has crime reputation gives a higher chance of immigrants being discriminated in labour market. For example the Anne E Casey foundation conducted a survey of residents in 10 low-income urban neighborhoods in America and the address proved to be the source of financial insecurity and discrimination (Rawslings, 2007).

Increasingly however, the downward assimilation due to residence is not the only factor. An interesting comparative analysis through logistic regression from Reitz, Simon & Laxer (2017) measured social inclusion/exclusion of Muslims in Canada and Paris and found mixed results. They used dependent variables such as reports of discrimination and fears of victimization, friendship networks, feelings of trust, participation in civic activities, and

identification with mainstream society. They found mixed results in Europe and Northern America. They explained the mixed results by the fact that the religion is treated differently in Canada but not in France. Public religion discussions are avoided in France and even some local authorities refuse the construction of Mosques (Reitz, Simon & Laxer 2017, 2475). In Canada immigrants are viewed by the public as economic assets (Reitz 2011), which is different from France where most immigrant are less educated. Additionally, Reitz, Simon & Laxer, (2017) examined how important religion was to generations of Muslims and non-Muslim foreign-born and the second generation. Time of arrival reduced the sense of feeling discriminated in both countries, and also stronger religious attachment is associated with less social contact outside the group. When it comes to Sub Saharan Africans, the discrimination from black Muslims in France were about 6% more frequent than from black non-Muslims from the same origins (Reitz, Simon & Laxer 2017, 2483). This is even more for women. It indicates there is double disadvantage for being seen as both a visible minority and a muslim. This increases the likelihood of not being perceived as French. This study is different from the situation in a Nordic country like Denmark. It is a comparison in multicultural societies since France has many foreigners from former colonies, and Canada is a country of immigration. Therefore, in these two countries there is a lot in common between immigrants and natives while refugees from Somalia who have exceptionally little in common with the Danes. Likewise, Muslims represent a large share of immigrants in France about 36.5%. However, it has to be noted that in this study the researchers treat discrimination as a natural issue and not a social constructed issue.

Martin, Heath & Boswell (2010) discussed in their study the triple disadvantage of some immigrants in Britain, namely being female, being non-white and being Muslim. They conclude that double disadvantage based on the first two characteristics is less hazardous compared to the third characteristics of being Muslim. The effect of being Muslim and being non-white are more powerful explanatory variables in labour market inequalities. In their study they show that the Muslim effect for the second generation of Indian, Bangladesh and Pakistan Muslim immigrants decreased. This is because they received less disadvantages in labour market compared to Black Caribbean whose 'black effect' did not decline. However, I might say that there is possibility that the decrease in discrimination to Indian, Bangladesh and Pakistan Muslim immigrants can be explained by their partial detachment to Islamic values such as dressing style especially those highly educated (Statham & Tillie (2016.190), Connor & Koenig, (2013.29) and Joppke (1998)). Globalization has resulted to interconnectedness of people from various areas and prejudices over female and non-white individuals started to

decrease compared to times before the 21st century, this is according to longitudinal studies which look on trends in racial attitudes from 1942 (Krysan & Moberg, 2016). However, since the September 11 terrorist event things have changed and added an even bigger disadvantage to Muslims in general (Hanes & Machin, 2014; Rytter & Pedersen, 2014; Lynch & Veale, 2015; and Zorlu & Frijters, 2019). This means that women especially those with strong attachment to Islamic values face triple disadvantage in Western societies.

2.2.3.2. The size of immigrants population in the country

The small number of Islamic Somali women migrants also can be seen as a source creating potential obstacles to labour market integration. When studying the predictors of segregation and discrimination in Europe, researchers Lichter, Parisi, & Ambinakudige (2019) found that the more the number of immigrants increases the less discrimination. Based on data from Paris, France, which has the highest Muslim population in Europe they concluded that discrimination from natives decreases as the percentage of immigrants in the country increases ($Rho = -.135$). This suggests that immigrant groups become more widely accepted as they grow in population size. Nevertheless, from study lacks straightforward information because it is not necessarily that the increase in the numbers of immigrants reduces discrimination against Muslim immigrants; perhaps variables such as education attainment and high level of integration makes them live almost the same in a cultural way, as studies by Statham and Tillie (2016, 190) and Joppke (1998) have shown that the more an individual is educated, the less attachment to Islamic values has. Similarly, more education gives the highest chance of getting proper jobs therefore this gives chance an individual to be well integrated. Therefore, these variables might have affected the results and not only the increase in numbers. Furthermore, a comparative approach in studying ethnic stratification from Shibutani and Kwan (1965) tells us that discrimination or any treatment does not come from what an individual is, but from manners that an individual is defined. The treatment is associated with expected behavior from the individual, although the expected behavior might be true or false. Indeed, the number of immigrants can act as the source of presence or absence of discrimination; it just depends on what they present in the host society. If they are a burden or a threat, it is obvious they are going to be disliked, no matter the number and if they are a valuable resource the discrimination can be low compared to them being an economic burden.

Apart from the number of immigrants and refugees in a host society, employers continue to have an impact in increasing or decreasing discrimination. Literature shows the double standards in European labour market still exist. Di Stasio, Lancee, Veit, and Ruta (2019, 16) put it bluntly, “employers discriminate against applicants originating from Muslim countries regardless of their human and social capital even when they show signs of civic engagement through their voluntary work”. These researchers did a cross-national field experiment to examine discrimination towards Muslim job applicants in Germany, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom with callback as a dependent variable. The results showed high levels of discrimination especially towards visible groups of male minorities in all countries. Job applicants originated from Muslim countries received less callback regardless of the information in their CVs. However, these results need to be contextualized: the study was done in 2016-2017 which was the time where in most countries of the study the right wing parties were making gains in the political sphere, and at the time immediately after the refugee crisis, which is most likely to have an influence on employers. Likewise, the report claimed that male Muslim workers experience more discrimination, but the reason might be because female Muslims participate less in job searching. Even more doubtful, they used unpaired design while giving the reason that they wanted to avoid high risk of detection from employers, but this does not give a clear evidence of discrimination. To solve this problem, Adida, Laitin, and Valfort (2010) did a corresponding test and matching strategy that compares two identical candidates with only difference in religion while controlling for race and country of origin (Senegal). Significant findings show affiliation to Islamic religion contributes to poor economic integration due to religious discrimination. A female Muslim candidate is 2.5 less likely to receive a job interview callback than the female Christian candidate.

Bagley and Abubaker (2017) studied a case in Manchester Britain and found that Muslim women experienced high levels of discrimination in obtaining jobs due to various reasons including institutional prejudices. Applying quasi-experimental design by using situation testing researchers sent applications with same qualification except the name of the applicant, an application with a Muslim name (Aminah Husain Muhammad) received a response to 151 of her 516 applications (29.23%), compared to the application with an English name Emily Woodward which received interview response of 306 out of her 527 applications (58.06%). This indicated prejudice in the minds of employers treating Muslim names with skepticism even before interviewing the applicant.

2.3. Aims

My study aims to make a valid contribution to the field by taking religion as the central theme. Denmark has refugees and immigrants from various countries with different backgrounds but Muslims immigrants have proved to have the lowest employment rate. For the purpose of clarity, I chose Somali women due to the fact that they possess all the characteristics of my study such as unemployment rate and being related to Islamic religion. Literature informs that, when trying to engage in European labour market, women from Sub Sahara Africa face triple disadvantages which are related to religion (being Muslim), colour (being black) and gender (being a woman) (Martin, Heath & Boswell, 2010). Rather than assuming or generalizing that race, gender and culture do hinder foreign women from joining the full economic integration in Europe especially Denmark I try to look on the most important theories of labour market participation which are skills, discrimination and social network. Through understanding the main reason of poor labour market participation my study can offer a contribution on how the policy makers can focus on the main problem in order to eliminate the number of welfare assistance dependants. Apart from just being welfare dependants economic integration will help the represented group of respondents to attain jobs. Having a job has impact on the quality of an individual's life since the reason behind working is for individuals to earn a good livelihood, which consists of access to nutritious food, good health, stable psychological sense, positive involvement in community, stable family and happiness (Clark, Georgellis & Sanfey, (2001) Bamba & Eikemo (2009), Jahoda, Lazarsfeld & Zeisel (2002 [1933]), Marx & Nguyen, (2016), Edmark, (2005), Gangl (2006) and Blakely, Collings & Atkinson. (2003).

Furthermore, the level of language understanding to Somali migrants is well investigated. Peschner (2017) found that there is strong impact of language skills in migrants labour participation regardless of their what level of social and human capital they possess.

3. CHAPTER THREE

3.0. Methodology and Research Design.

My study wanted to explore this topic with original data from the rights sources. The main interest of this study lies in investigating whether Somali women are being disadvantaged in Odense Denmark by their religion, colour, or perhaps education level because the data from Odense commune indicates that Somali women belong to various categories of unemployed women: 43 (5,5 %) are labor market ready, 177 (22,8%) are labor market not-ready and 93 (12,0 %) are disability pensioners. Data was provided by Odense municipality and counts women between 16 and 66 years of age. (Odense Kommune, email exchange 07 January 2020)

3.1 Design

Denzin and Lincoln (2011) explain research design as the process of situating the researcher in the empirical world and connecting research questions to data. Furthermore Punch (2014,138) writes that research design connects research question to data, and it is based on strategy and conceptual framework. It also shows from whom and how the data were collected and analyzed. My Qualitative Research uses a case study strategy which intrinsically focused to Somali Women in Odense especially in Vollsmose area. This is a typical area where Somali women who are Muslims do live and they have the lowest employment rate in Odense.

This single case helped me to research in-depth and in the real context of the Somali women who are in Odense without permanent work. According to Punch (2014, 138) it is of utmost importance to emphasize the logic in behind case selection. In my study, the case selection is driven by the fact that Somali women are being presented as a burden on the Danish Welfare due to their high unemployment rates.

The advantage of using Case study is that it both allows us to achieve high levels of conceptual validity and detailed information where statistical methods and formal models are weak (George & Bennett 2005, 19). Semi-structured Oral Interviews are the most prominent data collection tools since it avoids imposing any priori categorization which might limit the field of inquiry. It allows a researcher to access people's perceptions interpretation and meanings of events and situations, and their symbolic and cultural significance (Punch 2014, 147). Generally, Semi-structured interviews offered first-hand information from Somali women

and their opinion regarding Danish employers and how the community played a role to helping them in their job search.

3.2. Methods and Data

This Qualitative Research was designed to use a case study strategy whereby ethnographic interviews from ten Islamic Somali women without permanent job in Odense took place. These Somali women of Islamic faith who were interviewed have been living in Odense at Vollsmose area for more than 10 Years. Case Study is a method of qualitative research which studies a case in detail with the purpose of developing a full understanding. Specific individual(s) or phenomenon is studied in-depth from its existing context (Punch 2014:120). Case study has the advantages of both allowing us to achieve high levels of conceptual validity and detailed information. Case studies focus on understanding the dynamics present within a single setting (Eisenhardt, 1989). I conducted unstructured oral interviews in order to get in-depth data. Interviews are the most prominent data collection tools and it allows a researcher to access people's perceptions, meanings, the definition of situations and construction of reality (Punch 2014:144). The questionnaires are in annex 1.

3.3. Sampling method

Knowing two male students in my class who are Somali by origin I used the Snowball Method through their wives. Being close to their wives helped me to be trusted by the sources who are always hesitant to talk to strangers since they are afraid to be exposed in Danish media. Somali women are not happy on how the Danish media reports them. Snowball method allowed me to get more variability than having only my classmates' family members. The criteria which were used were as follows: They had to be of Somali by origin, (both parents must be from Somalia). Muslim, unemployed and woman. Participants were informed about their rights and about the fact that I intended to use what they told me, with exception of parts that were explicitly "off-record". I decided not to include the interviews of people who were so selective of what I can and I cannot write in my report because omitting some information would lose the relevance for my research.

3.4. Participants

The participants were ten women from the age of 19 to 51 years old. All of them are originally from Somalia, two of the participants aged 19 and 20 were born in Odense Denmark and the rest were born in Somalia. Some of them came in Odense Denmark as refugees and others as family reunification after being married by Somali men who were already living in Odense Denmark. The table below 1 below includes basic information of my informants. For anonymity reasons, names were replaced with numbers.

Table 1. Informants – Basic information

Number	Age	Country of birth	Number of children	Marital status	Education
1	36	Somalia	2	Not Married	Secondary education
2	30	Somalia	3	Not Married	Social Care assistant
3	29	Somali	4	Not Married	Social Care assistant
4	37	Somalia	3	Not married	Social Care assistant
5	34	Somalia	1	Not married	Child caretaker (Never finished)
6	20	Denmark	-	Single	High School (Currently studying social worker at University)
7	19	Denmark	-	Single	High School
8	51	Somalia	7	Not married	Teacher
9	43	Somalia	5	Married	Social Worker
10	35	Somalia	3	Not Married	Social Caretaker

3.5. Interviews

Primarily, I planned to conduct the interviews face to face, as it is the best way to get information. Since my research was done in the critical time of COVID-19 when Denmark was on lockdown, to avoid virus I used Skype and Facetime communication. While talking I recorded the conversation in my MacBook computer through a software named QuickTime Player. English and Danish language were used. English was used to those interviewees who were comfortable to speak in English and those who were not comfortable with English we used Danish language whereby a Danish speaker who is the wife of my classmate and a good friend translated on behalf. She is originally from Somalia, lives in Vollsmose and with Science university degree. She is good in both English Danish and Somali languages. For better clarification I consulted my wife who is a Native Danish Citizen for the translation of the final product. More details of quotations from some respondents is attached in the annex 3.

3.6. Data

My purpose was to ask questions related to Islamic religion, Work and Education. In order to ensure that my respondents are free to give information, I sent the questions in advance to my helper Khadijah (Fake name of a Somali woman who is a wife of my classmate) talked to them and explained the questions as how I explained to her. Explanation of the study and assurances about confidentiality were the most important issues which were addressed in advance. The respondents were also asked to choose to give their informed consent either in written form or verbally but all of them chose to later option. After they were okay with the questions and the conditions, I was given their contact to communicate with them. Instead of going directly to the question I established a friendly talk by talking a little bit about the current pandemic disease, how they are protecting themselves and their children with Covid-19. Also, we talked some spontaneous question how their day was because most of the interviews were conducted in the night or evening when the kids are asleep.

My pre-prepared questions were semi-structured across all respondents and then other unstructured questions came from the conversation while making sure we were not going out of our main topic. To start, the respondents were asked about their names, their age, and brief history of their life. Then the questions were asked in which various information were obtained.

In the questions, I also asked about the state of health as this could eventually affect the possibility of getting a job because those in health problems or disabilities could not meet the requirements. In addition, I asked about their ability to relate and cultivate new friendships in their life because this makes it easier to find a job according to social network theory.

Although all my respondents came from same country of origin and they have the same residence in Odense Denmark, I also needed to get some diversity. The diversity was ensured by including informants of different age and education. The questionnaires and informed consent are found in the annex 1 and 2 respectively.

3.7. Validity and Reliability

In order to be sure with validity and reliability, my data were obtained from the sources who are not integrated in the Danish labor market - as they are unemployed. By being unemployed, I obtained data from Somali Muslim women living in an area known as Vollsmose in Odense Denmark. This area is notoriously known for having a large number of unemployed Muslim immigrants mostly from Somalia and Middle East. To ensure the data was correctly understood, English language was used with those informants who are competent in English language and Danish language was used to those who were competent in Danish language. Then I used a native Danish friend who is also a student at SDU to translate.

4. CHAPTER FOUR

4.0. Findings and data analysis

4.1. Introduction

About 40 years ago Matthew Miles wrote, “The most serious and central difficulty in the use of qualitative data is that methods of analysis are not well formulated.” (1979:591). However, these words were written long time ago and currently the qualitative methodology has evolved. The methods of analysis has considerably improved. This chapter presents the main ideas from my interviewees since data reduction throughout the analysis is a part of analysis (Punch 2014, 171).

4.2. Analysis

After all of the respondents were recorded, I wrote down every word word which was spoken by the respondents. This allowed me to be able to note down by highlighting the important points. I did listen again for the second time to the recorded interviews to make follow-up if I wrote down every word. After having the words written down the following procedures were done.

Coding. Here I coded words such as Religious beliefs, Social ties, Social Capital, Education level, language problems, academic or profession fields, Time and age of entering Denmark, Education level from Somalia, Number of children at home and marital status.

Narrative analysis. Here I looked on the content from the conversation, how grammar was used and word usage in general and their meanings.

Semiotic analysis. I generally focused on words which individuals repeat several times during the conversation and what these words signify. Good example is when women were saying ‘I just get internships and now I am tired’, or when they said that ‘‘media talks ‘dirty stuffs’ about us that’s why no body likes us here.’’

These analytical methods have various advantages in the validation of my study. The level how an individual is talking about Islamic religion signalizes how she is attached to tradition beliefs in Islamic religion such as gender relationships. How a woman is regarded as

inferior to a man and there are some jobs she cannot do without a man's permission. Social capital helped me to understand the cycle of a woman how it keeps her being in the unemployed mindset and environments. The level of language determined the social capital of an individual and at the same time how serious a person is especially the one who has been in Denmark for ten years and still not competent in both English and Danish language. When an individual entered Denmark helped me to understand and get a difference in life's perception between the one who was born in Denmark and the one who was born in Somalia. These two individuals has slightly differences especially when it comes to life in liberal Denmark. The number of children with the marital status also was used to determine how a woman is interested or not interested in finding job because babies have been used as a scape goat for some women to work. Lastly, I took close look on how women repeated some words or statements. This helped to know the common problem among all women regardless of their age. The repetition on blaming the Danish media and the 'unsuccessful or endless internships' were more informative in determining problems both to women themselves and the government.

4.3. Findings.

After I have interviewed the respondents about their general life, education and the role of Islamic religion, all my ten respondents described what hinders them from being employed. Various reasons emerged and the reasons varied in relation to each respondents history. Reasons varied in function of age, country of birth (Somalia or Denmark) and also educational background. Respondents who were young said they just became jobless after turning 18 because at the age of 16 and 17 they had plenty of jobs. Individuals who were born outside Denmark had a hard time to get education in new language and their professional education from Somalia was not recognized in Denmark. Respondents born in Denmark did not experience hardship or much discrimination in schools because they know the language. All in all the main reason lies with education. Those without professional education have hard time to find a job. Of course there are some jobs which do not need high education, but most women are not willing to do those jobs because they involve either low payment on old people who are uncomfortable working with the new faces from outside Europe. Therefore, the women opt to have children in order to have a living since there is a support from government for mothers and even more support for single mothers. Islamic religion has proved to be of smaller disadvantage since those with professional education (some of their friends) have jobs.

Therefore, religion is much of a reason to someone without a professional education. In the following analysis is presented in details.

4.3.1. Impact of Education and religion revealed

All women interviewed in this project said education is very important. This is because all of them have at least some education. They admit education is very important if someone needs to have a good job. However, they added both education (religious and normal education) should be taken seriously without ignoring Islamic religious education. For example, the number four said:

“...Yes it is very important...actually my religion is very important because I live and I was born that way but not very often I go to the mosque but I pray at home. But its very important to me actually.”

Also, religion limits some women to work in some fields such as leisure areas and security areas. Religion has been the limit in working due to dress code as well as the type of activities. For example, interviewee explained they cannot work in places where they sell alcohol or where they slaughter pigs. Coming to the dress code young interviews number 6 and 7 of 20 and 19 years respectively explained that they can never be policewomen or pilots although they had interests with those job because a policeman or a pilot in Denmark cannot wear hijab or scarf but only specified hats. Interview number six said:

“...in Denmark you can't wear a head scarf if you wanna be a police officer and you are not allowed to be a Pilot as well if you were head scarf, you are not allowed in the military as well if you wear a head scarf there are lot of stuff...you can't practice the way you want if you want to work in those kinds of fields.”

Furthermore, the interviewee experienced statements from the employer regarding the dress code. Some employers in Odense do not accept dress codes which reveals someone as Muslim. Here the same number six interviewee says:

“There was at once I was at this internship, the boss asked me “do you expect that you will get a job with those kinds of scarf and dress”

Also, the interviewee number three experienced the same thing which made her not to get a job.

“So at once I was at this job interview they asked me ‘if we ask you to take the scarf off, would you do it’ then I answered no, then I didn’t get a job.....it was a job interview about working at a care taker home for old people.”

However, most of the women seem not to have education which can allow them to acquire good jobs such as white color job. Most women when they arrived in Denmark they took language education and some small educations such as assistant child care or old care taker as well cooking. Interviewee number one who is 36 years old said;

“Regarding my skills, I can clean, and I can cook.”

This suggests that their jobs are mostly low paying jobs which they can substitute with just having kids and receiving government money for mothers. This was revealed by the interviewee number ten who said who said:

“I don’t work because its hard to find job and even the jobs I get will just make me lose money because of too much tax. If I start working the money I am getting will be reduced. The money I get as a single mom is enough.”

Also, those who have been in Denmark for long time said that things changed after much terrorism reports in the media when they were connected to Islamic religion. Interviewee number five says:

“I think after September 11 it was more hard to have your religion in peace and also when we hard discussion in the class because there were only Danish people in my class then they had their own opinions in the discussions and they wouldn’t listen, so I could hear in their discussions they were very negative in Islam.”

4.3.2. Impact of Media on employers and the Somali women

A large number of interviewees explained their negative concern about Danish media on how they report issues related to Somali Women. These women I interviewed specifically

blamed the media for painting their picture negatively in relation to work and welfare assistance. Some women spoke with angry tone concerning how the media exaggerated their problems. This made me understand even why in the beginning some women were skeptical to talk to me since they thought I came from media (They specifically said I come from TV2). Some women stated that the way media presented Somali women influenced the negative attitudes of employers. A 29 years old interviewee number three said:

“The negative side is that its hard to get a job if you live here...the media is putting us in bad life and sometimes if people hear we are from Vollsmose its negative ...”

An interviewee number one who was tired of the rumors said:

“If I could change anything about Vollsmose I could change the way media presents about Vollsmose”

She went further by even saying;

“I feel discriminated almost every day, because of the media and when I walk outside in the shops, always I meet prejudice, almost everyday I fell people are judging me either directly or indirectly I feel it everyday.....I feel like I am not wished here...the way how people look and I have heard a lot of comments for instance about my dress style ...when I drive in the bus or in the supermarket. ...How the media is speaking about us especially Somali women.....Sometimes I meet people saying what the hell are you wearing?, why are you wearing towel on your head.....some people even told be go back where you came from....some people also said go back to Saudi Arabia.... I heard a lot of words from people.”

Likewise, the 29 years old number three interviewee said;

“The negative side is that its hard to get a job if you live here...the media is putting us in bad life and sometimes if people hear we are from Vollsmose its negative ...all those things are said in TV I have never experienced any of that....for me myself I have never experienced those negative sides...It's the rumors I don't like ,”

She added even by saying that:

“...and the Danish TV they scare people and they scare them to be friends with us, for instance the Vollsmose media picture, they are scaring people.”

One of the angry interviewee number five even said:

“I like the commonship here (Vollsmose) we have a lot in common here, but I don't like all the rubbish you hear in TV its nonsense. But in general I live Vollsmose because I have family and friends and commonship here.”

4.3.3 Part time job.

Some women are willing to work but the work hour rules are a big challenge to them. Single women and women with some social problem need to have different way of employment. Some of the interviewee shown a willingness to work but they have no adjustable time for working since there are times they have to be with their young kids or disabled children. Women in these situation suggested that they would work if it was possible to get a part time job instead of a full time job.

Number four interview said:

“I cannot work as how I want right now because I have small children. Because I have small kids and I am a mother alone then I cannot work as how I want right now. There is a problem here in Denmark, they don't understand single mothers, they don't understand how it is. They say you are supposed to work 37 hours a week and I think that is unfair because that 37 hours it doesn't matter if you are single mother or who you are, no matter your situation that's the rule for everyone and that's not fair. When you are searching for a job it has to be 37 hours and I think that's very difficult. I think Denmark has to be flexible and has to listen to the situation of the people.”

She went far by suggesting part time work would be the best option. She said:

“For me it will be good to work half time which means 16 hours per week. It will be very cool if you could apply for a job which had only 16 hours a week, then you could work without stress, but here in Denmark all women have stress, the women they get

crazy because of too much work. So its too busy I would really like a part time job. But they are putting pressure on me they say I need a full time.’’

Likewise, a 34 years old woman had the same problem because she has son with autism. She is willing to find a job but the timetable with her child becomes a challenge. She just had some few jobs as a translator which were not permanent. Here she says:

“I have no problem in finding a job, but my problem is my son who has an autism he drives with a taxi in the morning and also he gets delivered again in the afternoon in a taxi because he attend a special school so those times he is picked up and delivered is the problem , Those hours he is away I am able to work.. He leaves every morning at 8 and the taxi can not change those hours. And if everything is not as how it is always in a routine then it will be a very hard for him and for me that’s why I am very challenged.’’

She suggests her working time would be when her kid is at the school. She added:

“...because I’m a lonely mother so not when my kids are home, the time I can work is from 9 to 2 because my autistic son leaves at 8.’’

4.3.4. Social events for Integration

Social events seem to work since those participated seem to be positive with integration. Interviewee number five who happened to have many Danish friends than all other interviewees said that she got friends from social events arranged by the commune where foreigner and immigrants could meet and socialize. Here she says:

“At once I was a part of a volunteer group where we made food together arranged by the Danish government, about food and culture is a good thing because in some way food connects people no matter where you are from. So it was an arrangement for both Danish and foreigners so it was for the sake of integration, the purpose was to mix up and eat nice food together, we had to eat together while sitting with someone we didn’t know to get to know new people. That was very nice.....there were a lot of topics you could choose for me I choose food but also you could choose for instance sports, you could choose different things.’’

When asked how much she appreciated this effort made by the government to bring together natives and immigrants she said:

“Yeah somehow but the media its like they are against us. I think the media scares Danish people, they get scared and they think aaah I don’t wanna mix up with those people, so it could be better is there was a better reputation. If there were most positive talk about us then Danish people would dare to come closer to us.”

4.3.5. Discrimination in schools and training centers

Before joining labour market, Somali immigrants experience some sort of discrimination in school and training centers. Number six and seven were High school student and University students 19 and 20 years old respectively. A 20 Years old said that:

“But I think discrimination it happens mostly in schools. I have experienced discrimination from teachers where they feel like because you are from another background then you are not able to do certain things as the Danish students....so they will give the Danish girls and boys higher grades than you.... ...I had a teacher one day he made an article it came out on a blackboard and he said (in his article) Non Westerns students need to go two years more in kindergarten than Danish kids...because their parents can not speak the language, we are not able to be as smart as Danish kid...and he was my teacher ”

This implies that since in school, even before joining labour market minorities experience hard time which makes them lack self-confidence and even poor performance in school to due to being treated unfairly in schools with teachers. Having experienced that the number seven who is 19 years old even adds;

“..you have to work (school studying) two times harder.”

She explained this statement showing her dissatisfaction in the school grades which are being given to them as immigrants by the teachers. The grades are not encouraging to them hence they lose the motivation.

4.3.6. The address has impact on social and economic integration/Downward assimilation

Respondents told me that they live in Vollsmose because of the fact that the area has people whom they have a lot in common. From my view of point a lot in common can mean people with almost the same characteristics of life. Vollsmose is characterized with a lot of immigrants from Somalia and Middle East who are jobless as how a number six interviewee said:

“There is a bit of criminality, of course you don’t like that, as well as low income families who don’t work”

Of course, I am not saying immigrants prefer to live in Vollsmose because there are many people who are unemployed, but it is the fact that the place has many low income families and hence immigrants don’t feel so much different there. Nevertheless, this can affect other since if being unemployed is not seen as a problem then others who are unemployed might not stress themselves hard to find job. The concept of address should be looked if living in Vollsmose is typically negative to anyone or it is racial culture that defines. Some interviewees mentioned to have Native Danish neighbors. One can see the impact of address of Vollsmose between Somali and native Danes.

Talking about how the address contributes to downward assimilation, Vermeulen (2010) explained that when immigrants reside to immigrants with low social economic characteristics, they are likely to be dragged in the same situation. Many women are jobless in Vollsmose and hence their friends are jobless too. When someone is surrounded by same jobless people it is likely they will share same thoughts and feel as if being unemployed is a normal thing. An interviewee number four who was living in Copenhagen with a really job is now jobless since she came to live in Vollsmose Odense. Here she says:

“Yes I had a really employment as a cleaner ...I stopped because I gave birth to kids. I had maternity leave and I moved to Odense. Then when I moved here I thought I would get a job but I never got any. So that’s why it was just in Copenhagen...I was employed as a cleaner one year at a school next to the central station in Copenhagen.”

Some interviewee see a lot of positivity in living Vollsemose. Interviewee number one said:

“Positive things about living in Vollsmose is that I have good network in Vollsmose and feeling good being together, We are many people from the same place so we understand each other”

This statement indicated that the people they meet are almost with the same characteristics and hence therefore they understand each other.

Although a place has a negative image which can influence others to feel okay with being unemployed because they are surrounded by unemployed people. Interviewee number three shown how comfortable she was in Vollsmose regardless of all those chaos from media and police. Here she says:

“I real feel at home at Vollsmose”

She even added;

“The negative side is that its hard to get a job if you live here...the media is putting us in bad life and sometimes if people hear we are from Vollsmose its negative ...all those things are said in TV I have never experienced any of that....for me myself I have never experienced those negative sides...It's the rumors I don't like ,...for me I have only positive things to say about living here in Vollsmose....I feel very good here....I feel very much at home.”

The address and the media makes these women to rely in the same cycle of friends because the friends they have are of the same religion, culture and same economic characteristic. This makes hard for them to even have information about job or change their attitude towards work attainment. The interviewee number four said she could not do anything because she has no one to help her except her single sister. Here she says:

“When I came to Denmark, I had no education. It was difficult and I was limited, I have no much family here, only a sister, she is the only family to me but she couldn't help me...so I was very limited because I had no help.”

Even those mentioned to have friends but their friends were of the same origin. The number two interviewee said:

“Yes I would say I have many good friends...yes I have many friends I have good networks.....I have few Danish friends....Some of my neighbors are Danish... someone just I know but not that much good friends. But I have a lot more Somali friends and other nationalities than Danish ones.”

Their communication and social life in general is nothing more than being household keepers. She goes far by saying:

“Me and my friends we do many different things, We are talking, drinking tea, eating together going out together, sometimes we do gymnastic sometimes its just a regular day...we are talking a lot together for instance being a mother”

The comfortability between employed or not employed was shown especially by an interview number 7 who is a 34 years old woman who said:

“We are like sisters all of us in a Danish society, some work some stay at home.”

She said some women do work, some do stay at home in a very comfortable torn showing that it was not a stigma for them to be jobless.

Understanding some negative impacts of being in this residence some parents choose to educate their kids outside Vollsmose area so that they can see a different world. A 51 years old interviewee number 8 stated that;

“..... but my kids didn't go to Vollsmose schools they always go to the Danish areas schools.....because I want them to see the both worlds, I want them to see the white people, how they live how they go to school and I want them to grow up around Muslims having the Muslim values, having the Quran, having all that like who you are as a Muslim but at the same time also see what is around because its not all about the religion only you have to also think about what is around you what is the world around you and how does those people live so for me it was like see the both world like see the difference what they do and what we do and take the best of them and the best of us and you're your own and create your own, that was my idea”

4.3.7. Undesired jobs make some women keep being students

Some women I interviewed exposed the reason why some women choose to constantly stay at school. People choose to register for further studies after not getting their desired jobs because that is the best option for them to avoid being totally idle and jobless. Being a registered student for them it has two advantages; not being in activation programs and also earning some money from being a student. All these is because when immigrants arrived in Denmark, they had a short time to study Danish and then straight to adult education classes where they could not perform well and end up in simple jobs which they did not wish for. The dream job for an interviewee number three was to be a midwife but she ended up being a helper in a place for taking care older people. Also, she wasn't happy with working with some old people who were not comfortable with a stranger (non European) hence she decided to register as a student where she also earns some money as a student. Here she says:

Right now I choose to educated myself further six months more to a social assistant. So right now I am a registered student.... Right now I get some other kind of student money.''

4.3.8. Opinion of Immigrants behavior differs with age among immigrants themselves.

Due to the fact that immigrants in Vollsmose have a negative behavioral image in the general community of Odense, some immigrants are not happy to see their children grow in the same neighborhood. Immigrants want to have both good part of their identity and culture by choosing to stay in Vollsmose but at the same time they wish to get away their kids with negative culture and behavior known within themselves. Immigrants of older age openly said that young people in Vollsmose don't behave well and therefore they don't wish to see their kids being affected too. Robert Putnam said in his book children in unstable neighborhoods or families had uncertain future (Putnam 2015). Therefore, in order to make their kids experience both lifestyles some parents choose to live in Vollsmose, but they are not willing to take their kids in the same schools as number 8 single mom aged 51 with 7 kids explained:

“.... even though we were living in Vollsmose but my kids didn't go to Vollsmose schools they always go to the Danish areas schools.....because I want them to see the both worlds, I want them to see the white people, how they live how they go to school and I want them to grow up around Muslims having the Muslim values,

having the Quran, having all that like who you are as a Muslim but at the same time also see what is around because its not all about the religion only you have to also think about what is around you what is the world around you and how does those people live so for me was like see the both world like see the different what they do and what we do and take the best of them and the best of us and you're your own and create your own, that was my idea''.

4.3.9. Language skills.

Some Somali women were not competent in neither Danish language nor in English. With exception of number six and number seven interviewees, the rest had some problems in Danish language and English language. The reason why only two interviewees (Number six and number seven) were competent in English and Danish is because they were born in Odense Denmark. They are young women who have been studying in Danish schools one being a high school student and the other being a university student. For them the reason of being jobless is because they turned 18 hence, they could not work in supermarkets where they used to work. They are hoping to get jobs after they complete education. A number four interviewee who claimed to use Danish language in the conversation was struggling very much to express herself. This suggests how she ended up in cleaning jobs in Hospitals and Train stations than being in a profession jobs. Being a mom was a reason for her not to work anymore because she was able to receive government money as a parent. The rest were somehow trying to show their competence in both English and Danish language however they both had to sometimes mix languages when they needed to clarify a statement.

4.3.10. Family disintegration

Borrowing ideas from Martin Jørgensen's work, is that, there are even many single mothers in Vollsmose due to Somali men's Islamic culture. In Islamic culture it is only a man who has the authority to offer a divorce no matter how the situation is. It has to be a man's will for a divorce to be written. Therefore Jørgensen says that there is a higher number of single mothers than the number known in the government documents due to the fact that Somali men have difficulties accepting divorces and the loss of authority (Jørgensen 2018, 176) Although even in the Native Danish Community there are single mothers but the difference comes in education and number of kids, Danish single mother don't have many children compared to the Somali single mother which becomes hard to control the children and giving them proper needs

such as love, education and care. At the same time the dysfunctional marriages (which in reality women are single mothers) makes the raising of a kid even difficult. Parents at least need to be in good communication for a child to be well raised. All single mothers I interviewed had more than three kids with smaller age difference and the interviewee number 8 even had seven kids although she is trying to raise them both in Danish lifestyle and Somali lifestyle. Furthermore, interview number 8 seemed to be much concerned with the single mothers problems when she was asked if she can change anything in Vollsmose she said:

“I think what I will change in Vollsmose is not the young ones but the older ones which means the single moms, the parents actually, I want them to realize and get education, so they know what is going around in the community. I want the parents to be more involved so they don't like just sit at home and doesn't know what the kids are going around, like being more involved, know what is going around you and see what can you do better for your own kids and other kids. But the most problem we have in Vollsmose is like we as parents especially the older generation we don't think about what is going around with the young ones.....as long as you to school and you do your homework that is no problem but we need to know what is the world that the young people are seeing that we don't see, what is that they get involved in, what kind of temptations out there, you need to know what your kids is living through. I have seven kids and my seven I know what they are doing”

Moreover, some interviewees raised an issue that the problem which kids are facing should be solved from their parents first. In advising how the government should handle this, my interviewee number 8 added more by saying:

I mean I don't think the Danish government is doing enough and not in a right way. When it comes to integration, they think the problem will solve itself as the time goes and that everything will be better and better and solve itself more and more generation after generation. So, what they do is, they focus a looooot on the children - they always focus on the “fresh” generations - the youngest generations, and for me I think that is how they miss the whole root of the problem. Because the root of the problems in integration is the parent generation, especially because they are role models for their kids. So I think if the government put a lot of money and resource in the parent generation it would really work, because if we get good jobs

and better lives and better integrated, our kids will be very positively affected by that, and not being kept stuck in a vicious circle where they copy their parents' low status, low jobs and bad ability to integrate. So, if a lot of resource made us parents better, I think automatically the kids will be much more better. It doesn't work to put so much effort in only the kids, when their parents affect them negatively.''

4.3.11. Danish rules contribute to limiting the number of jobs women can do.

The job selection has been a point discussed in this research. There are some kinds of jobs women cannot do because of their religion e.g. number...said about working in places where they slaughter pigs. However, in the other side Somali women say there are some rules which limit them from working for example number six said about policewoman and pilot rules, therefore number 8 concludes by saying say:

“I believe I can (do any job) but I think some companies put their mindset to know this kind of people can not work for me but if you ask me as a person I think I can do everything. I don't think it is limiting me as a person, no.....if you ask me as a person I can be a policewoman or everything but the thing is the government has to change the mindset, its them who limited the options because they choose set up rules who can work and who cannot but it should not be like that. It should be everyone can do a job and it doesn't matter if you have a heart or scarf on.''

Apart from that, Internships should be with feedback then someone can learn and make a choice. For instance, number 8 went to many different internships until she gave up because she was not getting feedback what is wrong. Here she says:

“they always said that you can come and be on internship....I have been in many internships in schools but everytime the internship is finished...there is no job.....that's why you get disappointed because you come in and with all hopes you putting your own energy, your doing your best, you thinking maybe this one will take and then after six months they will say to you I'm sorry we don't have any space and we don't need a teacher right now....and then you get stranded because you are thinking aa what did I do wrong?.....to be honest I gave up because I had so many

different internships its enough its enough.....(Question: Were you in touch with Odense Commune about internships). Yeah Yeah I did that she was the one even sending me to all these different internships and she was always saying I don't know what happen why they don't you, you are always so nice ...I'm like yeah what can I do?...she also get tired because she sent me to many different places and always they say no.''

Number one also said the same although without going into details:

"I am not looking for a job now because I applied so many times before and I got no, no no so now I don't apply anymore."

4.3.12. Homogenous mindset is still a problem.

Interviewee number 8 thinks Danish society is not ready to be with different people especially out of Nordic community. She said:

"I think because of the mindset of the Danish people, they are very close minded and they are afraid to have new faces or new way of doing things. And as long as we stay life this being close minded I think it gonna be very difficult for us people who are trying very hard to get a job because we need a more open minded community, we need people who are okay seeing new faces or different ways of doing things you know.'"

4.3.13. The credibility and visions of foreign NGOs in Denmark

Literature informed me that some non-government organizations which focus on Muslims in Denmark face some hardships in getting support from the government. Rytter and Pedersen observed that the Muslim activists in Denmark addressing the rights of immigrants in issues like labour equality and political equality face a high challenge of being activities being perceived as inappropriate hence end they up being classified as politically illegitimate or as Islamist (Rytter and Pedersen 2014, 2311). In my research I wanted to find out if there is any NGOS supporting Somali immigrants in Denmark.

After learning about the existence of SAHAN through some sources I visited the internet but very few information were found. Although SAHAN has also a Sahan Radio is a local radio in Denmark for immigrants which was launched in 2018 under the supervision of the Danish agency for culture it is not well known among immigrants. The radio and its organization in general has very good visions but the vision is far from achievement. The organization intends to facilitate and contribute to the integration of the Somali community within the Danish society by helping in various issues such as Women Issues, job search and many more. I tried to contact SAHAN through their phone number, but my call was never received. I even visited their office through the address which is in the website (Heliosvænget, 143 D, 5250 Odense SV) but I never found anyone there since the address is currently occupied by another people. This means even information in the website is not updated.

SAHAN is purposely for helping Somali people in jobs etc but it is less known and some of my respondents don't know anything about it. For example, interviewee number 8 said:

“I think is one group called eeh SAHAN or stuff like that maybe...SAHAN I think is called yeah”

Some even think it is not for them at their age. Number 5 interviewee who is 34 years old didn't know any organization helping Somali women to get job and when she was given example that some other interviewees mentioned SAHAN she replied:

“But I thought that was for young people? I think its for young people. I haven't been in contact with them.”

Other knew completely nothing about SAHAN or any other organization.

Interviewee number two said:

“I don't know any of the organization dealing with Somali people to get job.”

Of course, some women knew some information about SAHAN for example interviewee number three said;

“I know an organization called SAHAN that's for Somali women. I have tried to contact them they were trying to find a job. They are helping us in what's good to

say in job interview and what's good to write when you are searching for job. They help us to make an application and a CV.''

4.3.14. The role of government

All interviewees were critical of the efforts of the government for integration. Some even went far by saying that the government does the opposite. Interviewee number three said;

‘‘No, I don’t think the Danish state is doing enough for integration, actually I think they do the opposite. I think that the Danish government and the Danish TV they scare people and they scare them to be friends with us, for instance the Vollsmose media picture, they are scaring people, so now they don’t do enough at all, they scare them away, its so bad what they say in the media and its not true, I think they work against the integration.’’

The left and right parties have been strongly observed by Danish immigrants. The immigrants experience much problems with integration process when right wing parties are in power because they constantly change the rules which make it even harder for immigrants to feel safe happy and wanted in Danish society. Interviewee number four said:

‘‘...they are far away from helping enough. Most Danish people don’t like foreigners and also the Danish state they have very different upon about foreigners. Some of them they want to tighten and tighten the rules and they are constantly talking negative about us...they are very different in the state...but most of them don’t feel good about foreigners. So my answer is no...they are not doing good.’’

4.3.15. Conversations among women.

From the interviews I came to discover that none of the women when they meet discuss anything about jobs when they meet although they do not have jobs.

When asked what do they talk when they meet with friends an interviewee number 8 responded:

(Question: Do you get information about job in Mosque?) ‘‘Nope....we never talk about jobs and stuff like that’’

To her side an interviewee number 3 said they mostly talk about being a mother: Here she explains:

“We are talking, drinking tea, eating together going out together, sometimes we do gymnastic sometimes its just a regular day...we are talking a lot together for instance being a mother”

Also, an interviewee number two said:

“From activities I can say that sometimes we walk together, we are going to parties together, we together to weddings and also to baby showers.”

4.3.16. Adult education upon arriving in Denmark

From the conversation with the women it seems that most women when they came in Denmark, they had a short time to learn Danish language and then they had to use Danish language to study other professions. This was a bit frustrating to them and hence their performance was not so good from school up to the labour market. People were more comfortable in classes with majority of immigrants compared to the classes with the majority of native Danish.

Interviewee number three said:

“It was very hard when they started putting us more and more in the really classes (normal classes with native Danes) because we had to compete with the other students while we knew the language very badly. I felt very different with the others, I spoke different, I look differently, and I dress differently there was a lot of things which made me feel different, I was very different from them. But the receiver class was good because we were all in the same situation. There was no one laughed at another because we were all the same. When we came to the real classes everyone laughed if you say something wrong and everyone expected you to learn the language within few minutes so it was tough. And they made fun of how you pronounce things. That was not fun it was not easy, its hard to be different.”

4.3.17. Activation programmes.

Although activation programs have been shown to work in most countries and cities but with Somali women this seems to be the opposite. Many Somali women interviewed have been in activation programs but nothing positive came out of the programs. Employers are thought of having different mindset towards Somali women – this is why after every internship they don't offer them a job. However, some of the women in my study did have problem in both job skills and language skills. Someone who is bad in the language it is obvious that the employer will not be willing to offer a job. Here is what the interviewee number three said:

“Yes I have been in activation with help from the Commune, it means that you go as an intern somewhere for instance at a place for old people for 3 months, I have been in that kind of activation many times and then it can happen that you are lucky by the end of the activation they employ you, but I was never lucky.....(has it helped?) No I don't think it has helped.

So I tried many times that I was in places for 3 months and then they tell me at last that there is no job for me. And then again they send you to a new activation and you just know it will end you wont get a job so its like you are working for free, and that kept going on and on and that's why I gave up, that's why now decided to start school again.”

Number two interview also said:

“They don't do it so well, they try to put us in activation but in the long run we get nothing out of it, in the long run it is hard to get a job...it is a total waste of time. I have been in activation for 4 months and I did not get anything out of it...I did not get a job out of it ...so for instance that was big waste of time in my opinion.I don't think it works....maybe it works for few people but not all.”

An interviewee number eight also said:

“I have been in many internships in schools but everytime the internship is finished...there is no job.....thats why you get disappointed because you come in and with all hopes you putting your own energy, your doing your best, you thinking maybe this one will take and then after six months they will say to you I'm sorry we don't have any space and we don't need a teacher right now....and then you get stranded because you are thinking aa what did I do wrong?..... to be

honest I gave up because I had so many different internships its enough its enough.....(Question: Were you in touch with Odense Commune?). Yeah Yeah I did that she (A female worker at Odense Commune) was the one even sending me to all these different internships and she was always saying I don't know what happens why they don't take you, you are always so nice ...I'm like yeah what can I do?...she also get tired because she sent me to many different places and always they say no.''

Likewise, on the side of language, an interviewee number four struggled with language so much. She could not finish any statement without putting a work 'men..meneee'...which in English is like saying 'eeeh...eeehh' or literally 'but'.

4.3.18. The level of integration among individuals

In this study I uncovered had been revealed that the age by which a woman came in Denmark determines the level of her integration, job acquiring the level as well of appreciating the Danish government. A 30 years old interviewee (number two) who came in Denmark during grade 4 was more positive toward the Danish government efforts in integration as well as she was positive in her interactions with Danish people, although she had no job. She chose to apply for further studies because she was not happy with her job of taking care of old people. Explain her whole situation she says:

“Attending schools I have no negative side,..... I was happy coming hereand I was happy to attend school.....I was good at integrating myself in Danish society...no negative side at all.....I came when I was young with my parents, that's why it was easy to me...I did not feel alone or as a survivor it was just okay... I felt safe to come here with my family ...many people have harder time to come here because they feel bigger responsibility and bigger loneliness”'

4.3.19. Possibility for part time job to women

People with Children or disabled children explained their reason for not having a job is because they can't not find a part time job. It has been suggested that the rules on part time job should allow people with such characteristics to apply for these jobs or they should be given entrepreneur education so they can employ themselves and work on their convenient time. Moreover, the COVID-19 has taught us that it is possible to work from home some other kind of jobs. Therefore, women who cannot stay out of home for many hours should be encouraged to get involved with jobs which can be done online from home. Of course online jobs need

skilled people but technology can be simplified to the extent of being able to train people with lower skills to perform some online simple tasks like monitoring some activities and reporting to authorities. Furthermore, jobs with flexibilities should be encouraged. Jobs which allow someone can do at their convenient time such as a delivery company like WOLT which allows people to work on their own time. The interviewee number four offered a suggest that:

‘‘For me it will be good to work half time which means 16 hours per week. It will be very cool if you could apply for a job which had only 16 hours a week, then you could work without stress, but here in Denmark all women have stress, the women they get crazy because of too much work.’’

4.3.20. Immigrants isolation

The fact that high percentage of residents in Vollsmose are Muslim migrants causes all those negative images. This is different from other neighborhoods which are more mixed between natives and immigrants. The mixed areas does not have much negative image in media or in public like Vollsmose. This is why an interviewee number four suggested that:

‘‘I think it could be a good idea if we mixed up so that more native Danish people also lived here...if I could change something, I want to mix up people.’’

4.3.21. Religion Practice

Regarding religion practice, I have asked my informants about their religious practice. One person (interviewee number four) declares that she prays five times a day and each prayer session takes almost half an hour. Here she says:

‘‘I pray from home approximately 4 or 5 times a day and I read the Quran.....Everytime I pray it takes a little bit under 30 minutes.’’

This suggests that the less educated an individual was more serious in prayers. Her ability to speak Danish language and English language was very limited compared to all interviewees. This suggests why she is not educated both in Somalia and in Denmark. In Denmark she didn't finish well the Danish courses also.

The rest of the interviewees had some education 6 months to one year education for taking care of old people. Their religious practice was not too serious compared to number four interviewee. Those who shown partial attachment to religious rules especially praying were a

number seven interviewee who is a high school student and an interviewee number 6 who is a university student studying social work. Here a university student says:

(Question: How do you see the role of school?) To be honest...obviously the Quran means everything, but you can study the Quran at home, but education is very important as well, it opens us. (How much time do you use to study Quran in relation to other studies?)

“we don’t use much times as in school. (Question: Are your parents or guardians are appreciating the way you are doing Islamic religion?) Our parents are modernized in Danish society they can see why it will be hard to practice Islamic 100% and still be able to go to school parties.”

In the interview also I came to realize that when an individual is below 18 there is no problem in getting a job. The race, country of birth, gender, religion and education does not play any role. The two young girls I interviewed who were 19 and 20 were both having no job in the time of interview but both they had jobs when they were 16 and 18. This is due to the system that people at this age are less costly to employers. These girls had jobs in Supermarkets but when they turned 18 both had no jobs up to the time of interview. They insisted that when they were below 18 there was no problem in getting a job because there is a high demand of such kind of workers compared to the old ones.

4.3.22. The Danish Tax system as a problematic to less educated women

The tax system was mentioned as problematic- because my informants stated that they get less money from their precarious jobs and they have to pay much of the money to the tax (it is too much tax when they compare to their system back in their home country). Some women they make calculation and see it is in their gain to be single mothers with a kid because the amount of money she can get exceeds the money she would earn from the unwanted job. A number ten interviewee said

“I don’t work because its hard to find job and even the jobs I get will just make me lose money because of too much tax. If I start working the money I am getting will be reduced. The money I get as a single mom is enough”

4.3.23. Feedback from the government institutions

Lastly is on the feedback from the government. Government offices should try to answer all people’s concerns when they write in suggestion boxes or in emails. Some people feel are

not valued because they contact the government officials with their ideas but they don't get replies. An interviewee number eight who was spoke very much in my interviewees said that;

“....but I wrote so many letters so one day they will open their eyes maybe...I don't know haha...because I wrote so many articles and so many letters to the government so lets see if they will ever respond. ...I wrote them under internet on opinionsno one came back to me...I'm more than happy to sit down and talk....I don't mind because I did everything I could in my power as a human being and I don't know what is the problem where did it go wrong.”

5.0. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion.

This thesis wanted to know how and to what extent Islamic religion affects employment attainment among Somali female immigrants. This is because of the widely perception in public and in media that Somali women are lazy, and they don't like to work, they are in welfare just using taxpayers' money. Most women in this study explained the reason why they were unemployed, why they could not get jobs even after their internships. According to them they were not getting jobs due to their wearing style (however they were not told directly that the dress was the problem) although from my analysis it shows that most women I interviewed have less education and are deeply attached to most of the Islamic rules such as wearing style which contradicts with the policies of some workplaces. According to the existing answers from the literature the answers from analysis confirms the impact of education to individuals because most of respondents had lower education and followed traditional ways of life. Apart from education, the issue of discrimination was revealed because some employers and even just people in the streets were uncomfortable with Muslim women. This was explained by women as the impact of how the media brands Somali women in Denmark. Some women were rejected in job interviewees without any answers from the employers of why they were not hired. Women felt the reason for them to be rejected in job interviews comes from how the media presents the image of Somali women. Some women participated in activation programs and at the end of the internship they never got offered a job. When they asked why they wouldn't get a job they were told the offices were not in need of any person, but my informants expressed the view that the employers were not willing to employ them due to them being Islamic Somali women. In this, my results confirm similar previous findings. However, when it comes to immigrants' age, I found something different. This is because immigrants when they are below 18 they easily get plenty of jobs compared to when they are over 18. The question remains why discrimination in labour market exists only after an individual turns 18. All in all, this suggests that discrimination in labour markets also exist and is more visible in the case of people of adult age.

5.2 Reflection of the method

My gender as a male interviewer might have an influence towards my results. Since I was a male interviewer from a different country although from same continent of Africa but probably, they could give more information if I was let's say an unemployed Somali Muslim woman. The method of talking through Facetime and Skype (due to COVID-19) might as well have had some impacts because face to face communication is different from online communication. However, I do believe I did all my best to be friendly to them and bring comfortability to them in expressing themselves. This is especially when they expressed that they were glad I was not from TV2 trying to expose them to the public 'again'. Furthermore, the fact that I used a translator might have affected my results although I do believe the effect is not that much large. To reduce this effect, I used two translators, a Somali woman and a Danish woman so that I do not get either exaggerated information or less information.

5.3. Conclusion

According to the evidence from the women I interviewed, Islamic religion when mixed with lower education and African origin contributed to most women living the life without employment. Women expressed being discriminated in Danish labour market due to their dress codes which is a part of the Islamic religion. When an individual is Muslim, and she follows closely all the Islamic rules, she is more likely to suffer from being rejected in job interviews- according to the experience of my informants. Some individuals were asked in job interviews if they would still keep their long dresses and scarfs at workplace and all those who insisted on wearing Islamic dress codes never got jobs. Most of those who were resistant in giving up their dress codes were those with lower education. Women who came in Denmark at their adult age (above 20 years) demonstrated lower education and lower language skills which are essential in labour market. In short, my study found that, Islamic religion plays a big role especially in the life of those women with lower language and education skills, who insist on the traditional Islamic ways of life for a woman.

Although one might ask why unemployment happens mostly to women and not to Somali men since they almost have same characteristic such as low education and religion? I have not interviewed men, so an answer to this question can only reflect the women's point of view. According to most women I interviewed the answer was that men could do some works which they (women) could not perform due to their biological nature. They regarded some jobs

as men's jobs. For example, some women said their husbands were taxi drivers, driving old people and some worked in construction industry. Due to this reason most women said they could not be drivers or construction workers hence they rely on social work jobs, for which also they are not fit because of language problems and culture.

Future studies should look on the impact of Islamic religion in work performance to Muslim Women who are already working. It could be fruitful to check by conducting a comparative study between those who are highly educated in professional non routine jobs and to those with medium education in routine jobs. Furthermore, the government institutions should pay attention on the feedback from immigrants, because ignoring immigrants' views, the government institutions are missing ideas which would help in solving some of the problems in the society.

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QUESTIONS TO RESPONDENTS FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES ONLY

Hi how are you today and thank you for this opportunity that is so kind of you. {Saying something about myself} I am Seleman from Tanzania a country of half Muslims and half Christians. Our country has a lot of people from Somalia so I feel good to be connected with Somali people again. ... (I can say something in Relation to Weather) And the weather today is good so very good day/ if its so rain today- it's a sign of Blessings we say in Tanzania.

In doing this interview to make everything smooth will be with Khadijah who will help me in translation in case a respondent does not well with English, this is because I don't know both Danish and Somali language and Khadijah knows all three language English, Somali and Danish languages. Khadijah is a woman originally from Somali and I know her since she is a wife of my friend and classmate Abdulrahman Mohammed who is also from Somalia

So, I would like to start our conversation by talking about your life here in Denmark in general. Your family life, friends and your social life.

- ❖ How long have you been living here in Odense? Have you always live in Vollsmose? What do you think about Vollsmose as a place to live? (what do you like, what do you dislike), what would you change?
- ❖ Thinking about your circles of friends, would you say you have many friends? By friends I mean people with whom you spend time, whom you invite in your home with whom you discuss about things that matter to you? Do you have any Danish friends? (why not – if she says no).
- ❖ What kind of activities do you do with your friends?
- ❖ In your opinion, does the Danish government encourages in any way that foreigners and Danes become closer to each other, to help the integration of foreigners?

- ❖ How important is for you and your life in Denmark that you can attend mosque and practice your religion?
- ❖ Are you a member of any religious organization (apart from Mosque) here in DK?
- ❖ Have you ever got job connection/information from people you meet at the Mosque or in the organization you are a member of?
- ❖ Does your religion has an influence on the way you think about being employed or not being employed? Can you explain? Are there some types of jobs that you are not interested in because of your religious beliefs?

Now let us move to another topic regarding education and skills in general

- ❖ When you arrived in Denmark, what education do you have and up to what level?
- ❖ Did you get any education here in Denmark? (if she answers no, then ask: Did you attend some qualification courses? If no, ask Why not?)
- ❖ How good would you say are your language skills? For example, if someone talks to you, do you understand immediately, or the person needs to repeat?
- ❖ If responded studied in Denmark: Can you tell me a bit about your school experience in Denmark? What did you like, what did you not like? Did you feel any differences between you and your Danish colleagues?
- ❖ In relation to your religion, Did you ever experience hard time in school?
- ❖ How many hour did you use in studying Islamic religion (Quran) compared to the hours you used in studying school subjects?
- ❖ When you think about school, from the perspective of Islamic teaching, How do you see the role of school?
- ❖ When you think overall at your education (including possible courses taken in Denmark) – what skills would you say you have?
- ❖ Do you think that any of these skills would be useful for a job?

This is the last topic we are going to talk about. Let talk your experience with looking for jobs.

- ❖ Are you interested in finding work outside of home?
- ❖ If they answer no, then ask why not?
- ❖ If they answer yes, ask What would be your ideal Job?

You earlier mentioned that you were interested in looking for a job outside home.

- ❖ Are you currently looking for a job? May I ask where you look? How you look?
- ❖ Are you in touch with the municipality – the job center – to help you in the process? what do you do with them?
- ❖ Do you think it is helpful or not? Why yes, why not?
- ❖ In your opinion, does your Islamic dressing code affect your chances to get a job? How? (depending on what she answers, ask something like: can you give examples? Have u been in the situation that...? Has it happened to you? Or to a friend?....)
- ❖ Have you ever been discriminated, or have you ever feared being discriminated because of your religion?
- ❖ Since you live here in Vollsemose, have you ever been asked where you live and you could feel that after you said you live Vollsmose, people reacted like that was a problem?
- ❖ Have you ever worked in Denmark? (depending on the answer, if she says, yes, but I got fired): why were you fired? Did they give you a reason? If not, why do you think you were fired
- ❖
- ❖ in your knowledge, there is any NGO helping Somali women or Muslims in general in various activities like equality in labour market or in other public issues? If yes, have you been in touch with it? Would you consider getting in touch with them?
- ❖ How do you think the Danish government understand Islamic NGO the way you wish.

Thank you so much you explained all my questions really well and I really appreciate that.
It was a very good talk.

Thank you again for your time and can you please anything more you want to tell me?

INFORMED CONSENT**Title of study**

THE ROLE OF ISLAMIC RELIGION IN SOMALIA WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN LABOR MARKET.

Investigator

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Purpose of the study

You are invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the following information carefully. Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information.

The purpose of this study is to to understand the impact of Islamic religion to Somali women in their effort to join the labour market in Odense.

Study procedures.

In this study I plan to conduct several interviews. Each interview is expected to last 30-45 minutes and will take place at a location commonly agreed upon with each person involved. This can be at respondents home or at Translators' home or in a restaurant.

For accuracy, each interview will be recoded on iMac through the software QuickTime Player and will be transcribed.

However, at your request, voice-recoding can be replaced by hand-written note-taking.

Risks

This study does not involve any foreseeable risks for you.

You may decline to answer any or all questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

As a general rule, the researcher will make use of all the information you provide. However, if certain statements are "off the record" you are encouraged to explicitly signal them to the investigator.

The information will be securely saved/stored during the entire process of thesis-writing and thesis evaluation. Six months after the thesis has been evaluated, the data will be deleted.

Benefits

There will be no direct benefit to you for your participation in this study. However, we hope that the information obtained from this study may will help policy makers to understand and find solutions to put Muslim women in labour market

Confidentiality

For the purposes of this research study, this interview will be anonymous. Various efforts will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality and anonymity in the process of analyzing the data and reporting the findings.

The investigator will follow all the ethical rules in place concerning research in social sciences (<https://ufm.dk/publikationer/2002/vejledende-retningslinier-for-forskningsetik-i-samfundsvidenskaberne>) as well as the rules of the Data Protection Agency (Datatilsynet) concerning the collection and handling of data.

To ensure the anonymity and confidentiality, the investigator will do the following:

- Will assign code names/numbers for participants that will be used on all research notes and documents.
- Will keep notes, interview transcriptions, and any other identifying participant information in a locked file cabinet in the personal possession of the researcher.
- Will ensure that the data collected will be used only for research purposes, and will be reported following the ethical guidelines for research in social sciences.

Voluntary participation

Your participation in this study is voluntary. It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign a consent form. After you sign the consent form, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Withdrawing from this study will not affect the relationship you have, if any, with the researcher. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed, your data will be returned to you or destroyed.

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this study!

CONSENT

I have read and I understand the provided information and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason and without cost. I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form. I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Participant's signature _____ Date _____

Investigator's signature _____ Date _____

Excerpts from Interviews (English translations, by author).

Questions are in brackets.

INTERVIEWEE NUMBER ONE.**36 Years**

(How long have you been in Denmark?) I have been in Denmark for 20 years

(How long have you been in Vollsmose?) I have been living in Vollsmose 20 years

(What are the positive and negative things you like being in Vollsmose?) Positive things about living in Vollsmose is that I have good network in Vollsmose and feeling good being together, We are many people from the same place so we understand each other.

The negative side is that the media creates a bad rumor about Vollsmose that's why many people think that Vollsmose is an awful place to live but it is.

(If you would change anything in Vollsmose what would that be?) If I could change anything about Vollsmose I could change the way media presents about Vollsmoseand also I would like to change young boys who make troubles, I would like to change those families and parents and parents of those boys that they could control their boys better, I would like to change that because it affects all of us that a small percentage is behaving as bad citizens.

(How can you talk about the cycle of your friends? And what do you always do with them?) I would say I have enough friends, I have exactly the amount of friends I would like to have.

I don't have Danish native friends

I do a lot activities with my friends like walking when there is good weather, we drink coffee together

(Do you appreciate the efforts of the Danish government in integrating natives and foreigners?)
I don't think of the Danish government is doing much enough effort to make foreigners and natives live together or integrated, they just do it in a limited scope.

(How important is Islamic religion to you and how many times do you attend mosque?) Im not a kind of a woman who visit the mosque everyday but it is important that the possibility is there in case I suddenly feel the need to go to the mosque, I need to have a space where I can go there to pray anytime I want.

(Are you a member of any religious organisation) Im not a part of any religious organization

(Have you ever got information from religion) I have never got any information regarding the job in the religion environments

(Do you have limitations of places where you can work?) I can not work in some places due to my religion for example in the restaurant or a bar where they only sell alcohol. Thats the only limitation I guess my religion has.

(What education did you get in Somali and also in Denamrk?) I had no professional education when I came to Denmark and I did not take one here in Denmark.

(How do you talk of your Danish skills?) About the language I do fine in daily speaking, I don't walk around needing a translator all the time, a little good Danish I would say

I went to Language school for two years since I came to Denmark in the 1996 and 1996. I did not go to more schools.

(How many hours do you spend in Learning about Islamic religion?) I used to study Islamic religion approximately 20 hrs a week.

(How do you talk about the relevance of school) I think school is important and if you have the possibility to educate yourself you should do it, school is important.

(What skills do you have?) Regarding my skills, I can clean, and I can cook.

(Are you interested in finding a job?) Yes I am interested to find job but it is difficult to find a job

(What is your favourite or dream job?) From what I can do with my skills I would like to work in a restaurant and cook.

(Are you looking for a job now?) I am not looking for a job now because I applied so many times before and I got no, no no so now I don't apply anymore

(How do you find job?) I used job center to find job and Odense Commune.....they tried a lot and they kept telling me I do it and I can find something but something never came up.

(Do you think your address has an impact in you getting a job?) My dress has affected my chances of getting a job.....there was at once I was at this internship, the boss asked me “do you expect that you will get a job with those kinds of scarf and dress”-.....so already he told me my possibilities are limited because I was wearing big Scarf and long dress. That boss was having an attitude that a woman like me it would be very difficult to find a job with that dress code because some customers and some citizens they feel insulted or scared by my dress code.

(Have you ever felt discriminated?) I feel discriminated almost every day, because of the media and when I walk outside in the shops, always I meet prejudice, almost everyday I feel people are judging me either directly or indirectly I feel it everyday.....I feel like I am not wished here.....the way how people look and I have heard a lot of comments for instance about my dress style ...when I drive in the bus or in the supermarket. ...How the media is speaking about us especially Somali women.....Sometimes I meet people saying what the hell are you wearing?, why are you wearing towel on your head....some people even told be go back where you came from...some people also said go back to Saudi Arabia.... I head a lot of words from people.

(Have you ever been asked about where you live and you felt it was a problem?) I don't have native Danish friends that's why I have never met a prejudice about people asking me where I live and get Irritated by me living in Vollsmose

(Have you ever had a job before?) I have never had a really paid job in Denmark...just internship and courses...

(Do you know any organization helping Somali women in getting a job?) I heard of an organization called SAHAN which helps Somali women to find job....I have not contacted them though...I want to find a job on my own initiatives

(How do you talk of Islamic connected organization in relation to the public support from the Danish organization?) I think the Danish government like the organization which help women to find the job.

NUMBER TWO.

30 Years

(how long have you been here?) I have live in Denmark more than 20 yearsI have been in Odense Vollsemose since 2012

(What do you like and don't like about Vollsmose?) I like Vollsmose because there is more social life compared to other places in Odense. People are more together here and its more exciting. Here you don't feel lonely. More commonship and more nearness.

I don't like the way we are describe in the media, I agree there are some bad side and there is a lot of good side but is a shame that only the bad side are shown in the media. It's the rumor that I don't like.

(How do you talk about the cycle of your friends and what do you usually do with them?) I have both friends, also Danish friends, The ones I worked together were Danish.....a whole bunch of other friends are non native Danish

From activities I can say that sometimes we walk together, we are going to parties together, we together to weddings and also to baby showers.

(Do you appreciate Danish government's efforts in Integration?) I think the Danish Government they do a lot of things but they don't do enough and they don't do it so well, they try to put us in activation but in the long run we get nothing out of it, in the long run it is hard to get a job...it is a total waste of time

I have been in activation for 4 months and I did not get anything out of it...I did not get a job out of it ...so for instance that was big waste of time in my opinion.I don't think it works....maybe it works for few people but not all.

(How long do you use in Studying Islamic and praying?) I pray 5 times everyday...I don't go often to mosque...I pray mostly at home...in general women do pray at home.

(Are you a member of any religious organization?) I'm not a member of any religious organization

(How do you get information about jobs?) The jobs I ever had I applied myself and I found the information myself

(Does religion affect you in job attainment?) I don't think the religion has influence of getting a job...having a religion is another thing and having a job is another thing...they don't interfere each other...I like to keep it apart.

(What education did you get in Somali and also in Denmark?) I had no education when I came in Denmark...so when I came in Denmark I took education.....I took an education about social workertaking care of old people...

(How can you describe your language skills?) I attended public school here in Denmark that's why I know the language well...I came in Denmark in 4th grade

(What was difficult for you attending school here?) Attending schools I have no negative side, I was happy coming hereand I was happy to attend school.....I was good at integrating myself in Danish society...no negative side at all.....I came when I was young with my parents, that's why it was easy to me...I did not feel alone or as a survivor it was just okay... I felt safe to come here with my family ...many people have harder time to come here because they feel bigger responsibility and bigger loneliness

(Did your religion make you feel some problems?) No my religion did not cause problems here when I was in school....you just have to accept you do it yourself, you pray when you want and you can fast when you want ...its up to you, there are no Danes who will come to you and tell you that you don't have to practice fastingalso I think its important to separate your religion time and your school time...you can do your religion at home.....I did not find it a problem I was good at separating....if you want something to be a problem it will become problem...so you have to think positive then it will be positive...so I was good at thinking positive and separating school and religion

(How much time do you use in studying the Quran?) Yes I use a lot of time to study the Quran I like to do it when I have time and energy for it...I do it when I have time.

(Did the study of Quran affect your schools studies?) No the study of Quran did not disturb my studies at school

My religion is my religion and Danish people have their religion also some of them go to church and they have their own stuff to believe in...for instance many of them are Christians and I am Muslim so we don't mix them at school...Your belief is your belief and we don't mix them at school...nothing can stop your belief ...your belief is your belief and it should not be something that is important and school...your belief is your belief you should do it in your spare time and you should not mix it up and complicate your life ...you have to be good at separating studies and religion...don't mix them up....do it in your spare time

(Have you ever had a job before?) I was hired as a social worker...but now I decided to just take more education.

(Do you know any organization helping Somali people in getting jobs?) I don't know any of the organization dealing with Somali people to get job.

29 YEARS

(How long have you been in Denmark?) I came to Denmark in 1998

(How long have you been in Vollsmose?) I have been in Vollsmose Odense since 2004

(What do you like and dislike about Vollsmose?) For me Vollsmose is a very safe place I am very well here. I really feel at home at Vollsmose

The negative side is that it's hard to get a job if you live here..the media is putting us in bad life and sometimes if people hear we are from Vollsmose it's negative ...all those things are said in TV I have never experienced any of that....for me myself I have never experienced those negative sides...It's the rumors I don't like ,....for me I have only positive things to say about living here in Vollsmose....I feel very good here....I feel very much at home

(How you talk about the circle of your friends) Yes I would say I have many good friends...yes I have many friends I have good networks.....I have few Danish friends....Some of my neighbors are Danish... someone just I know but not that much good friends. But I have a lot more Somali friends and other nationalities than Danish ones.

(What do you always do with your friends?) Me and my friends we do many different things, We are talking, drinking tea, eating together going out together, sometimes we do gymnastic sometimes it's just a regular day...we are talking a lot together for instance being a mother

(Do you appreciate Danish government's efforts in Integration?) No, I don't think the Danish state is doing enough for integration, actually I think they do the opposite. I think that the Danish government and the Danish TV they scare people and they scare them to be friends with us, for instance the Vollsmose media picture, they are scaring people, so now they don't do enough at all, they scare them away, it's so bad what they say in the media and it's not true, I think they work against the integration.

(How important is your religion?) For me it is very important....and I am a Muslim girl...and I hear that in Denmark you have a freedom of religion so also I should be allowed to practice my religion.

(If you ever got information about job in your religion?) No

(Does religion affect you in job attainment?) My religion has no influence if I can work or not, or which work I can do. I can do everything, I can do any job.

(What education do you have from Somalia and here?) I took an education when I came to Denmark, I took a one year education about being a social care taker.

(Did you have any hardship at school in Denmark?) Of course the language was very hard and also it was hard to come as a teenager 14 years...you feel very different because you have been to other school for many years then you come to Danish school and you are put at first in certain class with only people who come from outside...it was a good time when we were in a receiver class because everybody was the same and everybody had the same challenges but then slowly they started putting us some hours in the receiver classes and then in other hours we hard in the really classes and mix with the Danish people and that's when it became hard. It was very hard when they started putting us more and more in the really classes because we had to compete with the other students while we knew the language very badly. I felt very different with the others, I spoke different, I look differently and I dress differently there was a lot of things which made me feel different, I was very different from them. But the receiver class was good because we were all in the same situation. There was no one laughed at another because we were all the same. When we came to the really classes everyone laughed if you say something wrong and everyone expected you to learn the language within few minutes so it was tough. And they made fun of how you pronounce things. That was not fun it was not easy, its hard to be different.

(how hard about your religion in school) Yes..it was a bit hard to adopt because there was no time at school for prayer because that how it went in my home country, and also still where I work we don't get time to pray. It was a problem to me in the beginning I felt like some of my freedom was taken because I could not pray. But it never stopped me to go to school or to work. Then I just have to do in my spare time So I need to pray to my God in my spare time and I got used to that.

(How important and how much time do you spend in Islamic Religion related activities?) The time I attended Danish Public School I did not spend time in my religion at all almost because I had such a busy time getting good at Danish. Also I feel like I am born a Muslim so its not something you have to study about al the time, its something you are, its not like you have to study to be a Muslim and that you have to pass an exam, its just you are Muslim in your heart,

if you just pray 5 minutes in a day it can be enough because you know you are Muslim in heart. So in average I do pray 25 minutes a day. Its not necessary to do more than that when you have faith that you are Muslim in your Soul. I am born a Muslim. Its not something which has to take a lot a time, its like I am born with the knowledge.

(Have ever had a job?) I have had no really job, I get some part-time jobs. Finished my education in 2012

(Are you interested to find a job?) Yes I am of course I am

(What is your dream job) My dream is to be a midwife

(Are you currently looking for a job?) Right now I choose to educated myself further six months more to a social assistant. So right now I am a registered student.

(Have you ever contacted any places which help to find job)Yes I have been in activation with help from the Commune, it means that you go as an intern somewhere for istance at a place for old people for 3 months, I have been in that kind of activation many times and then it can happen that you are lucky by the end of the activation they employ you, but I was never lucky.....(has it helped) No I don't think it has helped.

So I tried many times that I was in places for 3 months and then they tell me at last that there is no job for me. And then again they send you to a new activation and you just know it will end you wont get a job so its like you are working for free, and that kept going on and on and that's why I gave up, that's why now decided to start school again. Also I have studied some HF courses. So right now I a student

(Do you get money like SU out of being a student) Right now I get some other kind of student money

(Islamic dress code has effect of you?) From my point of view the dress code is no problem at all and it doesn't limit to do any kind of job I can wear long and I can wear scarf and I do any job which all other people can do. So that my point of view, but from employers' point of view if very different here. From their point of view it is a problem and I think they feel threatened when they see something different. I don't know exactly what they are think but I feel they feel

threatened. But in my point of view no problem with the dress code. From the employers point of view it indeed limits.

(Can you tell a concrete example) Yes I have a concrete example from a job interview I was asked....So I wear long dress or long skirt everyday and if they tell me I can not work like that, If they tell me to wear pants while I am at the job I will accept it but about my scarf I wont accept it off. I don't accept that I wanna keep my scarf. So at once I was at this job interview they asked me 'if we ask you to take the scarf off, would you do it' then I answered no, then I didn't get a job.....it was a job interview about working at a care taker home for old people.

Yes I tried to be discriminated because of my religion for instance that story I just told...I felt that it was very directly, I felt like they said to me indirectly that you can not get this job if you don't take your scarf off. So sometimes I feel discriminated especially because of the scarf.

I have tried many times to experience some stupid comments from my coworkers at the internships or activation I have been at. Some of them can just ask me in a sudden way like why cant you take your scarf off. We think you have long beautiful black hair why cant we see it? Is it Allah who says that you cant take it off? So many strange comments I get. Its like they don't understand.

(Have you ever been asked where you live and the reaction was strange after saying its Vollsmose?) No I haven't tried that directly but sometimes I feel like there are some negative comments or thoughts about Vollsmose for instance sometimes when I say I am from Vollsmose then people say aaah that's where all the troubles happen? Okay have ever experiences some shootings yourself? Have you seen it yourself? stupid questions like that...again you think aaah again that stupid ramours about Vollsmose.

(Did you ever feel it was embarrassing to live in Vollsmose) No. actually I am proud of it. For me its not a problem at all.

(You know an organisation helping Somali women?) Yes I know some organization which helps Arabs to get job for istance I know an organization called SAHAN that's for Somali women. I have tried to contact them they were trying to find a job. They are helping us in whats good to say in job interview and whats good to write when you are searching for job. They help us to make an application and a CV.

(How do you think Danish Government understands the organisations eg SAHAN?) They think good about them and they even received a prize and they are especially focused in helping younger Somali women and especially helping the mothers. They are appreciating that way. They won a prize called BUDIR PRIZE So it is a group or an organization which is registered in Denmark so it is a respected group, it is respected from the Danish view. For me I think it is a good thing. I think it is a really good organization

NUMBER FOUR

37år

(How would you describe yourself about living in Vollsmose?) I like to live in Vollsmose. We feel very good, our kids go to school together here, we are like sisters all of us in a Danish society, some work some stay at home, we are many different people and different parents here. We have no big problems. But one negative side is that sometimes there are problems with some of the kids. Some of the bigger kids or young kids they don't behave I don't really know why maybe because of education I don't know. They are running around together in groups. Its not the smaller kids, it's the bigger kids, and they can make the smaller kids scared....and the bigger kids can affect the small kids in a negative way...it's a bit like a disease they can pass the bad behavior on to the smaller kids...for me I don't have bigger kids so I'm worried for my small ones if they can get into drugs or something, so I'm worried. ...and the positive here is that we are very happy here we are well and we have a big house ...im very well actually.

(If you could change anything about Vollsmose, what is that?) There are many people here with the same culture you know?...I think it could be a good idea if we mixed up so that more native Danish people also lived here...if I could change something I want to mix up people.

(How would you describe your social network?) Actually I feel like a busy woman I have three kids. I don't think I have many friends, but I have a big family. I wouldn't say I have many friends and a big network. I have some Danish friends but they don't live here in Vollsmose, they live in Odense, outside Vollsmose

(What do you do with your friends?) We speak together on phone for instance and once in a while we eat together...we contact each other if we are in doubt of anything

(Do you think the Danish government is doing enough in foreigners and natives Integration?)
they are far away from helping enough. Most Danish people don't like foreigners and also the Danish state they have very different upon about foreigners. Some of them they want to tighten and tighten the rules and they are constantly talking negative about us...they are very different in the state...but most of them don't feel good about foreigners. So my answer in no...they are not doing good.

(You sound like they are even against friendship of Danish and foreigner, can you explain more?)....they are bad at making the integration work between foreigners and Danish..... if the Danish state try to show a picture that we are regular and normal people and good people and if they try to talk about us in a positive way then I think people will integrate easily. ...If the government keeps talking in a negative way ...If the government talk in a positive way then the Danish society will have an easier access to accept us...then they would feel more were good and regular people, right? then it could be easier to be integrated and it could be easier to mix up together more in the society...but the problem is against us all the time, they are talking ugly things about us...and then the Danish society wants to keep a big distance to us. They want to move away from us and keep distance because of the bad reputation. The Danish society thinks that we are unregular people.

(how important religion)Yes it is very important...actually my religion is very important because I live and I was born that way but not very often I go to the mosque but I pray at home. But its very important to me actually...

(Are you a member of any religious organization?) I am not a member of any religious organization

(Have your religion ever connected you to a job?)...eh no

(How often do attend mosque?) I go only in the mosque when there is Eid

(Are there some jobs you can't do because of religion?) Yes Yes I have tried many places that I was there but I did not get employment...and they told me you can not work here. With my religion some places they say yes some places they say no. My religion has limited me to get job for instance at the hospital they told me to take my scarf off when I was applying for a job there. My religion says no I can not take my scarf off. Then we found a compromise I was wearing a hat.

(What education did you have from Somalia and what education did get here?) When I came to Denmark I had no education. When I came to Denmark it was difficult and I was limited I started at a language school, when I was done there and then after that either you have to work or you have to be activated. After the language school also people choose to educate themselves..... I have no much family here, only a sister, she is the only family to me but she couldn't help me...so I was very limited because I had no help. So I have been in a kindergarten where I helped with the kids... I took no education here in Denmark.....(why) because as I said here in Denmark I think the rules are very tight and very difficult I had no one to help me. So in case you have an education or you have some skills then you need a help to find a job and I had no connection here in Denmark I can not find a job, I have only a sister. She can not help me actually. So I chose not to take education because I had no one to help me in language.

(How many hrs. do you spend in studying Quran?) I don't go much in the Mosque, I pray from home approximately 4 or 5 times a day and I read the Quran. When I was a child, I used to study the Quran a lot so I don't do that so much anymore. So I remember a lot of prayers when I was a child so when I pray I tell those prayers at home, 5 times a day approximately. Everytime I pray it takes a little bit under 30 minutes...So you can calculate that might be three or four hours I don't know

(How do explain the role of Education in Islamic perspective?) In Denmark the school is not about Islam, in Denmark most are Christians, but they treat Islamic kids well, as long as they allow us to wear scarf and they do that, so its fine.

(Which skills poses?) I am very good at kids I worked a lot with kids....I worked as a child helper, I'm not an educated child helper but I worked there, so I would say I a very qualified Child helper because I worked as a child helper, also I have worked in cleaning, I worked cleaning in the hospital, also I worked as a helper in the hospital helping children those who are born too early. I helped with so many things in that department for instance putting a breast

machine in the women's breasts. So as you hear I worked so many places and also I took many courses. So I think I can do many things.

(Are you currently searching for a job?) Yes I am jobless and I am searching for a job.....I am very interested in finding a job, but actually I can not work right now because I can not work as how I want right now because I have small children. Because I have small kids and I am a mother alone then I can not work as how I want right now. There is a problem here in Denmark, they don't understand single mothers, they don't understand how it is. They say you are supposed to work 37 hours a week and I think that is unfair because that 37 hours it doesn't matter if you are single mother or who you are, no matter your situation that's the rule for everyone and that's not fair. When you are searching for a job it has to be 37 hours and I think that's very difficult. I think Denmark has to be flexible and has to listen to the situation of the people. So I am a single mother and I take care of my children all day long. So I am very busy here with my children as a single mother I feel I can not work all those. Actually I work more than 37 hours here at home without any help.

For me it will be good to work half time which means 16 hours per week. It will be very cool if you could apply for a job which had only 16 hours a week, then you could work without stress, but here in Denmark all women have stress, the women they get crazy because of too much work. So its too busy I would really like a part time job. But they are putting pressure on me they say I need a full time.

(How are you searching for a job?) I put my application on jobnet, it's a rule that I have to apply for four jobs every month. I search advice to the people I know also.

(Do you also get help form jobcenter) no, they don't find job for us or for me.

I was using jobcenter but they called me all the time and they disturbed me too much, they kept asking me why and some stuffs like that, so the jobcenter didn't help me in getting a job. What the jobcenter did they just asked me you get a job? Did you not get a job, they were not helpful, also they asked how did you apply and questions like that and all the time I had to show them that I applied, they disturbed me more than they helped, they disturb people.

(Dressing code has ever affected you in searching for a job?) Yes many places they said they preferred without scarf, at once I worked at a hotel they told me I should wear short skirt but I said no thanks to that job because of dressing style, I did not wear short skirt.

(Have you ever encountered Discrimination because of religion?) No, I don't feel discrimination, but I feel that some people are not happy for me hear, mostly they don't say anything but you can just feel it, its something I sense something I feel... so its not like directly, but you feel it, I feel it a lot. I have an example one time I was walking in the street when I was shopping there was a very big tall man he was pushing me saying go back where you come from, I think he must be sick in his head. But I don't see discrimination when it comes to regular people.

(Has Vollsmose address ever been a problem to you?) yes I tried that, many places when you have your address in Vollsmose then they are negative about it, I have tried it in connection with job. Example when I applied for a job when I was in job interviews or maybe when other people asked me where I live or for instance also at an internship, so in those examples I just mentioned then I have tried many times that I say I come from Vollsmose and then they look at each other and then you can see that what they think its that aaah you live in Vollsmose, so I can feel vividly that there are people who are not happy if you live in Vollsmose and that is the government mistake, because of the news. In the news they always talk about us and they talk about Vollsmose as a ghetto place and also they talk about stealing, so they say so many things and I am tired of it, they scare people.

(Can you mention all your working places you ever had?) first I worked in cleaning, then as a child care helper, then I was having an internship while someone was in maternity leave in a kindergarten, I was taking care of kids at my home as a kindergarten. ...this one was back in Copenhagen, here in Odense it is not possible.

(Have you ever had a really employment before?) Yes I had a really employment as a cleaner ...I stopped because I gave birth to kids. I had maternity leave and I moved to Odense. Then when I moved here I thought I would get a job but I never got any. So that's why it was just in Copenhagen...I was employed as a cleaner one year at a school next to the central station in Copenhagen.

I have three kids, 2 boys and a girl, 11 9 and 8 years.

(Do you know any organization helping Somali women in job issues?)I don't know any organization helping women to get job, actually I heard about an organization which collaborates with the commune and help something about job but I am not sure.

(How about this organization called SAHAN) I know them but they don't help with job, they just help you if you have a problem.....I only contact them because they had a nice club you could meet and talk and if you have a problem you can tell them. But actually they gave me and internship at once. When I finished that internship they did not give me a job

NUMBER FIVE

34 Years

(How long have been in Denmark and Vollsmose) I have been in Denmark 25 years and I have lived in Odense 24 years. I lived in Tarup before I moved to Vollsmose... I lived 3 years in Tarup and then I moved to Vollsmose.

(What do like and don't like about Vollsmose?) I like the commonship here (Vollsmose) we have a lot in common here, but I don't like all the rubbish you hear in TV its nonsense. But in general I live Vollsmose because I have family and friends and commonship here.

(What would you change?) I would change the bad reputation.

(Do you have friends here and can you explain the types of your friends?) Yes I have many friends. (You have Danish friends) Yes there is actually, I have three Danish friends, most of my friends are Arabic and Pakistan friends also some Turkish.

(what do you like to do with friends?) it depends which group of friends, if Im with Danish friends then we like sit and talk. With the others also we like to talk and also we like to shop but there are differences according to which group I am together with.

(Does Danish state do enough for integration?) At once I was a part of a volunteer group where we made food together arranged by the Danish government, about food and culture is a good thing because in some way food connects people no matter where you are from. So it was an arrangement for both Danish and foreigners so it was for the sake of integration, the purpose

was to mix up and eat nice food together, we had to eat together while sitting with someone we didn't know to get to know new people. That was very nice.

It was an arrangement which took place in Vollsrose, and we were a lot of volunteers helping the arrangement to take place, it was arranged by the commune and mostly for young people

There were a lot of topics you could choose for me I choose food but also you could choose for instance sports, you could choose different things.

(so in your opinion the Danish government encourage native Danish to be friends with the foreigners?) Yeah somehow but the media its like they are against us. I think the media scares Danish people, they get scared and they think aaah I don't wanna mix up with those people, so it could be better if there was a better reputation. If there were most positive talk about us then Danish people would dare to come closer to us.

(How important is religion to you?) it is very very important to me. It's a freedom and I know here in Denmark there is freedom of religion, so its very important to me

(Are you a member of religion organisation?) no not really just I'm a Muslim and sometimes I attend mosque but no not really.

(Have you ever got information from religion?) no I haven't

(Does religion has influence?) yes there is, for instance to slaughter pigs, that's not for us, our religion that's not good. I don't think there is others.

(How do you say about men and women jobs? Are there some jobs you cant do?) no I don't think so, we as women can do many things

(Can you explain about your education here and in Somalia?) I took an education here...I took 9th 10th grade here and then I took a social care taker education. But I stopped in the middle of that education because it wasn't something for me. And then also I studied HG (About business) but also I did not finish it was not something for me. Then I started to study child care worker but then I stopped there because I came to know that my son had autism, he is 8 years now, from there it was really hard for me, I could not understand what autism was and I got a depression. Then it has been standing still from there. (how is your son now) now he is growing and it is getting much better, it was very hard the time I couldn't understand and I didn't know

about it, but now its better because I understand. I know many things now I'm trying to help him as much as I can. But its hard he has many challenges. he is getting big now and more well and he is doing good when there is routines, but without routine it is crazy.

(How good are you in Danish from scale 1-10) I would say 7 actually at ince I worked as a translator, soo 7 or 8 I would say im not perfect but Yes....., I used to work as a translator when I was young.

(What did you like and ndisliked during your days at school here in Denmark?) to be honest I always hang out with the Danish also because there were no many foreigners in my class, actually I was the only one, so it was very tough to get in there, it was very hard because it is hard to get to a new country but for me im an open person so also I think it was easier for me than for others, so I would say both hard and easy. I managed to get friends but it took a lot longer than if it had been only foreigners then I would be much faster at getting friends. But Danish with people its harder to get friends but of course it depends which persons. But no big problems for me.

(How was the situation your religion at school?) I think after September 11 it was more hard to have your religion in peace and also when we hard discussion in the class because there were only Danish people in my class then they hard their own opinions in the discussions and they wouldn't listen, so I could hear in their discussions they were very negative in Islam....I know my religion but they expected I knew everything in discussions.

(Have you ever had hardship regarding your religion practices such as Praying?) Yes that was a big problem to beginning with, I tried once there was a teacher yelling me because I was praying, she said you know what you don't pray here in class. So it was very difficult sometimes but not always. Some places there were places some places there were no problems.

(How much time did you spend reading Quran during the days in school?) Only in the weekend I used to study the Quran 3 or 4 hours and that is the maximum.

(Tell me about your qualification, which job you can do best) I think something about cooking or food. I am a very active person I don't like just to sit with nothing to do. Because I'm active so sitting in a computer for instance like a secretary is not something for me. It has to be a bit an active job. And also, a quality about me is that I say things as they are. So I am very active.

(Are you interested in finding job) I have no problem in finding a job, but my problem is my son who has an autism he drives with a taxi in the morning and also he gets delivered again in the afternoon in a taxi because he attend a special school so those times he is picked up and delivered is the problem ,.... Those hours he is away I am able to work,, he leaves every morning at 8 and the taxi can not change those hours. And if everything is not as how it always in his routine then it will be a very hard for him and for me that's why I am very challenged. But if is to find a job I could find a job. (It means you tried to find a job and you got a job?) Yes yes that's correct, for instance I worked as a translator and also I have worked as uneducated a social worker helper with very old people, also I worked with some cleaning. All my jobs it has been as a part-time helped. My son got autism when he was two then I have not worked everything went wrong for me. (since those days you have not applied for jobs?) Yes I have {applied} but I can not find a job which suits the hours my boy is away.(If a job which suited when your boy is away then you would be interested?) Yes Yes of course. My dream actually I would like to have my own independence , it would be nice to work without a boss. And also a possible dream job could be someone who cooks (afternoon time or when?) noo because I'm a lonely mother so not when my kids are home, the time I can work is from 9 to 2 because my autism son leaves at 8.

(Are you not searching for a job now?) Yes actually I am but just didn't find anything, when my son is at school from 9 to 2 I use the time to search for job. I go to job index and also the Odense Commune has tried to help me. And also I use my network, I ask them if they know someone who knows someone who can use me in those hours. (did you try job center?) yes I tried that one (it helped?) no I didn't help because it's the hours which is my problem. Actually, now I have an internship at somewhere calledits for disabled young kids, its an institution, but the problem is I have to be there at 7. you have to be there at 9 but I have made it from 9 to 2. (so your only problem is limited time to work and not to find a job?) Yes exactly

(Have you ever had problems just because of your Islamic dress?) No I never tried that.

(Have you ever encountered discrimination?) Yes sometimes some places but not always. (in job interview) no I never tried that

(Has your address ever caused some problems to you?) No also I didn't try that, but sometimes people ask me aaah is it a good place? But not a really problem.

(Do you know any NGO related to helping Somali women?) No, I don't know any....(How about this one called SAHAN?) But I thought that was for young people? I think its for young people. I haven't been with contact with them, I know some of them but I haven't gone there.

NUMBER 6 (Interview done in English)

20 Years

(How long have been living in Odense?) Since I was born

(Where specifically do you live now?) We live in Vollsmose

(What is a positive and negative thing of being living in Vollsmose?) There is a bit of criminality, of course you don't like that as well as low income families who don't work

We like that we all know each other, different cultures as well

(Do you have Danish friends?) No actually we don't have Danish friends like that we mostly have Somalis friends, Middle Eastern friends or Turkish friends

(Which activities you usually do with the friends?) we just hang out shop go out to eat, normal stuffs

(Do you think Danish government is doing enough in Integration?) No, to my side, no one makes really efforts, its most in school you speak to girls and boys...(only your efforts) Yes

(How important is religion to you?) It is very important, I think you can definitely maintain a normal life and practice your religion as well but it doesn't overshadow the country you live in, its like balanced and relaxed now....we have mosque in Vollsmose right next to us but they are not allowed to make Azana (loud voice)

(Are you a member of religious organization?)..yeaah...I think...kind of...we are all part of ...we have DUGSI where you can go and learn the Quran...Its non profit organization...its under Somalian... Middle Eastern have their own

(Have you ever got Job connection from DUGSI?) noactually mostly is learning Quran...Sometimes they can guide you switch jobs, you can do and all that...we have a lot of volunteering jobs....many volunteer jobs where you play with kids

(Does religion influence of you way of life here in Denmark?)..Mmmmh there is something you cant do in all religion and there is something you can do, so it depends ...like in Denmark you can't wear a head scarf if you wanna be a police officer and you are not allowed to be a Pilot as well if you were head scarf, you are not allowed in the military as well if you wear a head scarf there are lot of stuff...you cant practice the way you want if you want to work in those kinds of fields.

(Being a Somali girl how did you feel at school?).... I mean It was okay, in Vollsmose we never felt different because everyone is like you, but when you come outside of Vollsmose and you start University you then meet other people, you meet Danish people and then you feel a little different you are kind of in isolated world.

(What are you currently doing?) I just started University.....I worked in Fakta Supermarket... (Why did you stop working there?) I not working anymore....I just stopped because of school and I turned 18....If you turn 18 it changes because you don't get the same payment and therefore your employer will not decide to keep you, its just to fire you...it is in the contract, I worked under something called Young Employee which is from the age of 16-18.

(It mean its easy to get a job when you under 18?) Yeah yeah....(for you not a language problem?) No its not.

(Have you ever had a hard time in school to practice your religion?)..typically is at the same time as our exams but the schools don't take any precautions or anything because its just our religion its up to us we wanna starve or not.

(Can you explain how many hours do you use in searching for Islamic knowledge and in Normal schools?)the Islamic school is only like 2 hours in a week, its nothing..its in the weekend....We do have to prepare some homeworks for the next week, you can do that in 15 minutes a day then you have your homework done for Saturday....we don't use much times as in school. (Are your parents or guardians are appreciating the way you are doing Islamic religion?) it could be better in some ways but our parents are modernized in Danish society they can see why it will be hard to practice Islamic 100% and still be able to go to school parties.

(How do you talk about the role of school?)...Its just normal to us....To be honest...obviously the Quran means everything but you can study the Quran at home, but education is very important as well, it opens us.

(Which job skills do you have?) We had study jobs....Im studying social worker.... Study jobs I can apply job councils, in the city as a social worker and work for them I haven't applied job then I didn't get it, I applied I got them both. But I think discrimination it happens mostly in schools.....I have experienced discrimination from teachers where they feel like because you are from another background then you are not able to do certain things as the Danish students....so they will give the Danish girls and boys higher grades than you.....I had a teacher one day he made an article it came out on a blackboard and he said Non Westerns students need to go two years more in kindergarten than Danish kids...because their parents can not speak the language, we are not able to be as smart as Danish kid...and he was my teacher

(Have you ever had any challenges regarding your address?) yeah 100%....because in the 90s and 80s they put a lot of people from Non-Western countries and then it became a ghetto....you can call it a ghetto because there is a bit of criminality and some people not working and therefore it has a reputation that it is very bad...so when you say you are from Vollsmose then people are like ooh really? OMG I don't even wanna go out of my car when I go there because I am so scared but there is nothing wrong.

(Do you know any NGO helping Somali women in getting jobs?) I heard about SAHAN for example, SAHAN is a Somali organization for women where they get interviews sometimes they get like interviews and all that. Its Somali women who created it....I think they have a facebook.

(How do you speak of the role of Danish Government in Islamic NGOs do you think they appreciate them?) No I don't think they do....I feel like the Danish they think that the Somali women don't know how to speak the Danish language... that's why they don't take them Serious.

NUMBER 8 (Interview done in English)**51 Years**

(How long have been in Denmark) I have been in Odense Denmark since 1999

I have been in Vollsmose and just few days I moved to Nybogvej...I used to live in Vollsmose but now I moved to Nybogvej...I have been living there for long time and I came to Odense with 7 kids when I was young and I was a single mom with 7 kids and you know when you just came to the country and you don't know the people you need to have your own community, you need to feel like you are safe, you need to feel like you are part of the normal community.....in Vollsmose everyone is from different origins but the origin is Muslimsthat's what brought me to Vollsmose because of the origin, my kids would grow up with Muslims around them, even though we were living in Vollsmose but my kids didn't go to Vollsmose schools they always go to the Danish areas schools.....because I want them to see the both worlds, I want them to see the white people, how they live how they go to school and I want them to grow up around Muslims having the Muslim values, having the Quran, having all that like who you are as a Muslim but at the same time also see what is around because its not all about the religion only you have to also think about what is around you what is the world around you and how does those people live so for me was like see the both world like see the different what they do and what we do and take the best of them and the best of us and you're your own and create your own, that was my idea

(What do you Like and dislike in Vollsmose?)...To be honest with you is that in the beginning Vollsmose was not that much Problematic like it is today, back in the 90s it was okay, maybe it was few people, you know those few people who they are and you always keep distance from them, but the majority of Vollsmose we used to have a good life like there was a bit business, they used to be polite people like when you are walking around all that, the only thing I didn't like about it and the reason why we moved out of Vollsmose and why now we live in Nybogvej is because of that the crime now is becoming more and more serious and its more young people getting up now and doing crimes, but in the beginning like when we used to in the earlies it was all people maybe 20 above who used to do stupid stuff and not young kids now you see a 10 years young boy doing something. But what I like about Vollsmose is about the way we treat each other and I like the way that you always you always help each other and somehow I always feel safe there, you know, and even though you meet those people who do weird stuffs, when they see you they show you respect, they speak with you with kindness, they help you with kindness even though they know they are doing weird stuffs....and that is the thing I like

about it and I always love about it, and I always go there for Quran and stuff like that I go to Vollsmose to see my friends to be with the community still even though I don't live there anymore because I still have the bond with them you know.

(If you are to change anything in Vollsmose, Do you have anything?) I think what I will change in Vollsmose is not the young ones but the older ones which means the single moms, the parents actually, I want them to realize and get education, so they know what is going around in the community. I want the parents to be more involved so they don't like just sit at home and doesn't know what the kids are going around, like being more involved, know what is going around you and see what can you do better for your own kids and other kids. But the most problem we have in Vollsmose is like we as parents especially the older generation we don't think about what is going around with the young ones...as long as you to school and you do your homework that is no problem but we need to know what is the world that the young people are seeing that we don't see, what is that they get involved in, what kind of temptations out there, you need to know what your kids is living through. I have seven kids and my seven I know what they are doing, I know what they like and who they like to be with and all that because I choose to be involved in their lives, but if I choose to live my own life which means just go to the school, read quran, stay with people of my own age, and come home make food go out again then I choose not to know about my kidsbut if you choose to involve with your kids, go out with them, eat with them see what they are playing do all that then you know what kid of kids you have, what kind of friends they have and then you know what is going around most of the time, of course you can not know 100% but you will get an idea of what they are going through and also if you can see your kids hand out with the wrong group you can easily pull them out in the early stage but if you catch them later on maybe it will be too late to put him out because they will become family friends .

(How can you talk of the cycle of your friends?) eeh I would say mostly Somali friends, but those Somali friends I have isI will be honest with you....I think is mostly we meet each other because of purpose we meet each other in the Mosque or we meet each other doing something for the Eid and stuff like that we have Ramadan...I don't have close friends whom I would bring them in my house , no... I only out in the Mosque, read Quran with them, have Eid with them, have Ramadan with them and that how I chose to have them. ...but I don't bring them to my house, (why) its because I chose to be friends with my kids...I don't focus my energy on people...maybe when my kids grow too old I will go and find friends when I become lonely..haha

(Do you think the Danish government is doing enough efforts in integration?) No I don't think so but the problem with the Danish is like they have this mindset if we choose to focus from generation to generation it will be melt out and the problem will be solve itself out, but the problem can not solve itself out, you have to focus on people from the beginning but they don't do that they just look from lets say my kids how they gona get into a kind of social life and then they will look on their kids and their kids hopeful one day they will be like Danish kids, that is what they always say and believe in Danish systemI mean I don't think the Danish government is doing enough and not in a right way. When it comes to integration, they think the problem will solve itself as the time goes and that everything will be better and better and solve itself more and more generation after generation. So what they do is, they focus a looooot on the children - they always focus on the "fresh" generations - the youngest generations, and for me I think that is how they miss the whole root of the problem. Because the root of the problems in integration is the parent generation, especially because they are role models for their kids. So I think if the government put a lot of money and resource in the parent generation it would really work, because if we get good jobs and better lives and better integrated, our kids will be very positively affected by that, and not being kept stuck in a vicious circle where their copy their parents' low status, low jobs and bad ability to integrate. So, if a lot of resource made us parents better, I think automatically the kids will be much more better. It doesn't work to put so much effort in only the kids, when their parents affect them negatively.

(Are you a member of religious organisation?) NO

(Have you ever got job information from the Mosque?) Nop....we never talk about jobs and stuff like that

(Does your religion has influence about employment here in Denmark?) No I don't think so

(Which are some jobs you can or cant do?) I belief I can (do any job) but I think some companies put their mindset to know this kind of people can not work for me but if you ask me as a person I think I can do everything. I don't think it is limiting me as a person, no.....if you ask me as a person I can be a policewoman or everything but the thing is the government has to change the mindset, its them who limited the options because they choose set up rules who can work and who can not but it should not be like that it should be everyone can do a job and it doesn't matter if you have a heart or scarf on.

(Which profession you have) In Somalia I am a school teacher, When I arrived here I studied college and then I ended it, I got sick. I was trying to be a teacher, so I finished high school, I finished college and then I was about the begging the teacher education but I didn'tI had to come and study high school again, and during college, chemistry biochemistry and all that again..haha....(but why studying again while you had education from Somalia?) they didn't approve when I came here.

I began with language school. And then after that I went to Adult Education Center, I was doing the high school classes over there. In language school everything actually fine, in Adult Education Center I have been in small bad difficulties but I get a lot of hope for my kids.....there were big differences because the classes I was in is mostly Danish and few of us ...it was difficult because you don't get the wide amount of hope because the Danish teacher just keep on talking and you say ooh what he just said....it was difficult but when I came home I had a lot of stuff to do so I read more I tried to learn myself Danish and with kids we put the rule that we can not speak Somali in the house we only speak Danishstuff like that helped me then I became better, speaking and watching Danish

(Any problems in relation to your religion?) Few people looking weird at me when I was praying but no one said anything

(How many hours do you use or were you using in issues related to your religion?) When I was studying I think it was maybe ten hours a week , maybe less because I used to go to Quran school twice a week....so four hours a week.

(role of school) in Islam is very hard, you have to educate yourself, you have to be a part of you, the sociality that you live in, you have to be a part of it. So in Islam we believe that you have to educate yourself, you must go school, you must try to get yourself as much education as you can and that's what I believe and that's why I chose to go to school and all that here, so its very important.

(Why did you leave school?) I was studying then I got sick then I became behind

(Have you ever tried to search for jobs?) I was trying to find jobs like tutor jobs at schools or being a help teacher or stuff like that but it was very difficult but also I tried to find jobs like cleaning or stuff like that but it was hard

(Which feedback were you getting during job search?) they always said that you can come and be on internship....I have been in many internships in schools but everytime the internship is finished...there is no job.....thats why you get disappointed because you come in and with all hopes you putting your own energy, your doing your best, you thinking maybe this one will take and then after six months they will say to you Im sorry we don't have any space and we don't need a teacher right now....and then you get stranded because you are thinking aa what did I do wrong?

(Since you were a teacher back home and here you wanted to be a teacher is that your dream job?) Yeah that's my dream job

(You gave up?) to be honest I gave up because I had so many different internships its enough its enough....(were you in touch with Odense Commune). Yeah Yeah I did that she was the one even sending me to all these different internships and she was always saying I don't know what happens why they don't you, you are always so nice ...Im like yeah what can I do?...she also get tired because she sent me to many different places and always they say no.

(Why do you think they don't take you?) I think because of the mindset of the Danish people, they are very close minded and they are afraid to have new faces or new way of doing things. And as long as we stay life this being close minded I think it gonna be very difficult for us people who are trying very hard to get a job because we need a more open minded community, we need people who are okay seeing new faces or different ways of doing things you know.

That shows you the problem is not me, that shows you the problem is the government the way they see things and the way their mindset is. At the end of the day you can do your best and I know a lot of friends that are like me they try very hard to be the part of the community and trying very hard to know still being Muslim still having my Hijab and all that but still wanna be the part of the Danish society and do my workthey have to change the rules and make it easier and everyone can be a part of it .

(NGO?) I think is one group called aaah SAHAN or stuff like that maybe...SAHAN I think is called yeah

(Did you try to contact them)..Yeah they tried to help me but ...I think the problem with them is also they only give you internships you know? There is no job guarantee you know?

(Do you think the Danish government supportive to Islamic NGOs?) I don't think so but I wrote so many letters so one day they will open their eyes maybe..I don't know haha...because I wrote so many articles and so many letters to the government so lets see if they will ever respond. ...I wrote them under internet on opinionsno one came back to me...im more than happy to sit down and talk....I don't mind because I did everything I could in my power as a human being and I don't know what is the problem where did it go wrong

.....and my kids always ask me mom you say you can get a job and why you cant a job? And I can not answeri always tell me if you work hard you will get a job and they ask me you work very hard why you cant get job?