





**Perception of Bangladeshi Immigrants about the Integration Process in Denmark.**

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## Abstract

Every year the number of immigrants is increasing in Denmark from western and non-western countries and the integration of immigrants has become a major issue in Danish Society. A huge number of Bangladeshi immigrants come to Denmark every year for the purpose of getting higher education and employment. After completing their studies along with gaining some technical and soft skills they can get into the job market. And they can easily settle down permanently. On the contrary, some of them move back to their home country or some even look for other options. However, those who reside in Denmark permanently tend to integrate into Danish Society for many reasons. In their integration process, they are to go through an ups and downs. In this study, I tried to understand the perception of Bangladeshi immigrants about their integration into Danish Society. Besides, the perception of living of the Bangladeshi diaspora is also identified in this study. Understanding these issues will be helpful in a sense to the integration process of the immigrants and their contribution to the society. In this study, I have adopted interpretive phenomenological strategy and thematic analysis method for analyzing the collected primary data. In this research, I found that cultural differences generate some challenges for the immigrants in the integration process. They prefer to integrate in the Danish Society as it offers them some social and economic benefit. In this project I have focused mainly to discuss the experienced Bagladeshi immigrants acknowledged during the integration into Danish society.

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## Introduction

Denmark is a small Scandinavian country with a population of approximately 5.8 million. In the past, Denmark was a socially and culturally homogeneous nation with loyal customs, a single language, and a common religion that characterized its cohesive society. It was never seen as an immigration-friendly country and only saw a moderate amount of immigrants, mostly from Western and Nordic nations (Nellemann, 1981). Following the termination of the guest worker program in the 1970s, a substantial influx of immigrants into Denmark occurred when "former workers" made the decision to remain there permanently and brought their dependent families with them. Refugees who started arriving in Denmark in large numbers for a variety of reasons also contributed to it (Holm Pedersen, 2012). As a result, there are currently 481640 immigrants and their descendants living in Denmark, the majority of whom come from the Middle East and North Africa as per Danish Statistics (2022). According to Pedersen (1999), the difficulties have become more complicated as a result of an increase in immigrants and refugees, and Denmark's emphasis on integration has evolved. The majority of the initial wave of immigrants in the 1960s and early 1970s were from Turkey, Pakistan, and Yugoslavia (Nannestad, 2004). The purpose of integration was to address issues with racism, housing inequalities, and labour laws, among other issues. Integration was not discussed; rather, it was assumed that the majority of these people would want to return to their home nations and that they would do so. Politicians in Denmark frequently emphasized that their nation was not an immigration country (Jensen and Pedersen, 2007).

As it became clear that family reunions throughout the 1980s caused a rise in the number of guest workers who stayed, critics started to emphasize financial problems more frequently. They would claim, for instance, that immigrants took advantage of the welfare system, in part because their jobless rates increased much faster than those of native Danes. Similar to other European nations, particularly Germany. However, since the mid-late 1990s, there has also been a growing connection between immigration and the perceived risks of a heterogeneous society, which is reflected in the emphasis on integration policies. The ability to participate actively in local communities and civic society, as well as identification and loyalty, are becoming more important. Language competency and labour market integration are still key. Demand for cultural integration in a "thicker" meaning also entails initiatives, such as those made in integration courses to educate newcomers about Danish history and daily culture primarily for the goals of "cohesion" (Rezaei, 2013); Mouritsen et al. 2009).

Therefore, the purpose of integration in Denmark is dual, according to Danish Integration Act (1999): to promote financial independence and aid recently arrived immigrants in taking part equitably in society's political, social, economic, work-related, and cultural life. However, the objective is also to help each immigrant understand the fundamental principles and traditions of Danish society (Mouritsen and Jensen, 2014).

### Objective of the study

To begin with, I will share my actual intention which led to writing this research work. I came to Copenhagen, Denmark from Bangladesh along with my partner as a full-time master's student. I came to Denmark a couple of months earlier than my husband as he got a visa a bit late. In my free time I was exploring here and there in Copenhagen with huge curiosity as it was one of my dream countries to live in. I did a lot of research about Denmark before coming here and explored the fact that Denmark is one of the best peaceful countries in the world and there is a lot of opportunity to grow and make the dream come true. From the beginning, I was living in a shared apartment with another guy as I couldn't manage accommodation for myself. After a month I started looking for an apartment as my husband's coming date was getting close. During my first month in Denmark, I met some local people and people who are from Bangladesh and gathered a lot of vital information about student life, job opportunities, social security, and much more. Bangladeshi immigrants shared with me how their life was in the beginning, what sort of problems they faced in the early stage and how they overcame them.

Getting an apartment was my first initiative in Denmark and it put me in a real struggle. I contacted many people, visited different social media sites, and contacted companies that offer apartments. But I couldn't manage one during my first three months. As time passed, and I needed to pay the tuition fees, I started looking for student jobs. I applied to thousands of jobs through different job portals but there was no positive result. With little frustration, I talked with my fellow students and Bangladeshi people and both of them suggested that I should look for a job in the restaurants. As it is quite difficult to get a student job without Danish language skills they said. However, I got a job in a restaurant and started my class at the university which put me in the real-time machine. I literally have no time to chill out with my fellow students and friends. I am a girl with a cultural mind and love to participate in different extracurricular activities. But with huge pressure on my studies, and jobs I couldn't manage time to do so. Which made me separated from my fellows and



Bangladeshi communities. Everything was getting tough day by day at that point. Now I have been living here for almost two years and still trying to cope up with different social & cultural issues. This circumstances make me interested in studying the cultural challenges experienced by the immigrants when they integrate into Danish society. I have choosen immigrants who are from Bangladesh to do the research work so that I can easily understand the viewpoint of integration.

## Research Question

The main research question of the study is:

1. How the immigrants from Bangladesh are perceived their integration process into Danish society.

To answer this question, the question has been divided into three sub-question to address the study of my research. These are:

Sub-questions

- How Bangladeshi immigrants experienced the process of recognition in Danish society?
- How do immigrants from the Bangladeshi Diaspora percept their living in Denmark?

## Organization of Chapters

In this section, I am going to describe how I structure my full project. Chapter one will be focused on the introduction followed by the objective and research question of my study. Chapter two will focus on the research methodology including the research method, data collection method, ethical consideration, and limitations. Chapter three will shed light on the history of immigrants which will represent from the 1960s to 2021 immigrant status and situation.

Chapter four will concentrate on the theoretical framework which is related and connected with interview data. Chapter five will constitute the analysis section and for this, I will use themes that I have extracted from interviews of the participants. Lastly, chapter six will be the concluding chapter focusing on discussion and conclusion.

## Methodology

### Introduction

My methodological considerations, which are included in Chapter, are meant to help readers understand the study I've done. The chapter's introduction includes a summary of my study methodology and phenomenology. I then go into the data collection techniques and how they helped with the study. In the remaining sections of the chapter, I go into the ethical factors I thought about when doing the study, as well as my stance and how it affected the findings. The chapter also provides an overview of the materials and interview process as well as introduces the participants.

### Research Approach and Phenomenology

I was motivated to comprehend the cultural integration of Bangladeshi immigrants who are living in Denmark based on how they perceived what was happening in that specific situation, which is a characteristic of qualitative research and a frequent trait of social science researchers (Silverman, 2020). After that, I employed a phenomenological methodology when approaching the research. This method is more relevant to address the issue of my study and provide the answers to my research questions since it examines the phenomenon from the aspects of individuals who experienced it (ibid.). Finding out about the experiences of immigrants and discussing them allowed me to better understand the difficulties they face (Ibid.). One reason I went with this strategy is that the participants who participated in the study and I had a lot in common, which makes it easier for me to gather data. The interpretive technique I chose, is opposite to the descriptive approach phenomenological research, makes the assumption that the researcher's familiarity with or past involvement with the subject inspires them to perform the study and helps in data collection and analysis (Horriggan-Kelly, Millar and Dowling, 2016). An outline of prior information was given earlier in the thesis, and the next sections of this chapter will take my preconceived assumptions and shared experiences into account. Last but not least, I decided to interpret the results using a theoretical framework, which is characteristic of an interpretive phenomenological method (Lopez & Willis, 2004).

## Sampling method

A judgement sample which is regarded a part of as purposive sampling, as well as snowball sample were used in the research (Taherdoost, 2016). The participants in the sample were specifically chosen to have approximately equal representation from three categories. Participants who have fulfilled the following requirements for inclusion were given consideration for taking responses: having master's or atleast bachelor's degree in hand, aged between 30 to 45 years, and not less than five years of residence in Denmark at the time of the survey. I chose the following informants for the interview because I wanted to gather a wide range of information on their experiences of involvement in Danish culture and society because I believed they might reflect a larger group: one participant who came with green card scheme and later got permanent residence, one participant who came with student visa and later living on work permit visa, one participant who came with student visa and later got permanent residence . After a quick preliminary investigation and looking up information from the Bangladeshi community living in Denmark , I individually contacted the first participant. The purposeful sampling was accounted for by my prior knowledge of the sample (ibid.). The snowball sampling method was employed for the remaining participants, in which participants or familiar persons connected with me referred me the persons they knew had fulfilled the criteria for choosing the respondents.

## Data collection: Interview

The phenomenological approach's semi-structured and narrative interview technique indicates that the researcher is motivated by the need to truly understand the participants' experiences, that is, to comprehend what they went through and how they went through it (Lindseth & Norberg, 2004). Considering this common motive, I made the decision to use two interview methods to gather data. Usage of them was significant as narratives are connected to the identities of informants (Kartch, 2018; Tsegay, 2020) in a substantial method that "they help individuals create a feeling of connectedness and find meaning of their perspectives" (Tsegay, 2020, p. 126). By applying this interviewing method to gather data, immigrants were able to express a variety of ideas and in-depth core narratives, which helped me better understand how they felt about themselves (Riessman, 1993)

The interview guide for the semi-structured interviews was created using the questions of interest (see Appendix 1). The following sections made up it: Age of the respondents, country of origin,

education, occupation (which includes brief history of employment in both Denmark and home country), marital status, residence location, and migration-related questions (when they move and reasons behind their arrival in Denmark - with whom they arrived and for what or which reason); involvement as well as their acculturation into the Danish society(integration goals or motivation) (willingness to learn Danish, frequency and obstacles to social interaction with Danish people, prior social life);culture and social identity(perception of own view before and during life in Denmark); life during and after covid-19 (perception during covid-19 and after covid-19,social change,economic condition) I asked the participants. In an open-ended manner in order to learn about what was important to them, such as about their typical week and the difficulties they faced or the things they liked. The duration of each interview was between twenty to forty-five minutes. The same interviewer, i.e. me, moderated each interview. All the interviews were conducted in English. All the interviews were conducted from April 15 to May 20. In addition to the pre-planned questions that were a part of the interview process, each participant was also asked questions that came up during their individual interview. The participants weren't urged to respond to the questions, and it didn't seem like they needed to be convinced to elaborate on their responses.

### Data Analysis Method and Processing of Data

Analysis section includes all the interviews conducted. Before conducting analysis, all interviews were manually transcribed in English. Data was analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012). For analyzing the data, four themes which are extracted from the interview: Recognition, Diaspora, Culture and Economic Integration. Each transcript was carefully reviewed; textual passages that appeared to represent a probable code were then selected out. The codes in the list were assessed, and the best choice was arranged in a table. As a result, a coding structure made up of categories and codes was created. To make sure the framework did not need any changes or improvements, it was first tested on one of the transcripts before being applied to the remaining of the data. The development and review of themes and the addition of pertinent quotations. Themes were reviewed and necessary quotes were added. This method of analysis involved reassessing and interpreting the data once it had been taken from the transcripts rather than observing the transcripts again and again separately. Excessive involvement with the transcripts might have generated risk which could impact the formation of bias (Verity et al., 2021),

hence I did not continue intervening with them. This analytical approach's primary goal was not to attain generalizability so much as to determine whether the results applied to my sample and the topic of the study (ibid.). Although this is crucial when doing research, it can be challenging to show generalizability from a study with such scales (Golafshani, 2003). Due to this, I concentrate on how applicable the findings are and I hope that my study design can be regenerated so that my findings can be applied in more universally applicable research.

### Ethical consideration

The integrity of this investigation was extremely important to me. When doing any kind of research, Bryan and Bell (2007) make reference to the significance of ethical concern. Both scholars contend that it is essential to keep in mind that the research participants should get respect and dignity irrespective of their age, ethnicity, citizenship, or social status. As a result, I made care to read a brief confidentiality declaration before the start of each of my interviews. I made it clear to my informants that the interview was conducted solely for academic purposes and that any experiences or opinions they provided with me were held in the strictest confidence. They agreed to be interviewed after I explained the study and my objectives to them. Additionally, the fact that I was a Bangladeshi and pursuing a master's degree worked in my favor because they were constantly prepared and eager to help in any manner. In fact, I made sure to let them know that I got approval from my supervisor to answer the questions in my interview guide. I behaved toward my informants with friendliness and respect throughout this interview process. This always fostered a friendly environment that prompted my informants to be more forthcoming with me. I also asked for permission before doing each interview because I planned to record them. My informants all concurred to have record the conversations.

In addition, it was quite challenging for me to avoid bias in this project. Bias, in my opinion, is a morally problematic behavior. However, since I am a Bangladeshi immigrant, my viewpoint informs my research and assists in my understanding of aspirant perspective in the environment, therefore bias is acceptable for my particular topic.

### Limitations

This study was challenged by few difficulties. At the beginning of my data collection, it became particularly hard for me to make direct physical contact with my informants due to the present

COVID19 outbreak. According to the guidelines set forth by the Danish Ministry of Health and the Danish Health Authorities, I was required to maintain social distance, first and foremost for the health safety of my informants and then for my own sake. The limited sample size I used for this study also restricts how broadly I can generalize the results, but this in no way, shape, or form undermines the study's relevancy. Because only the collected and transcribed empirical data were used to generate the findings and analysis. Despite the fact that this was a short study, my aim is that the results will offer a comprehensive knowledge and representation of my informants and their experiences. As a result, I hope it significantly fills a knowledge gap about Danish family life as experienced by Bangladeshi immigrants.



## Theoretical Framework

This study only focus on the perception of integration process of immigrants from Bangladesh into Danish society. Therefore, I have chosen the literature after the interview of my respondents. My selection of literature was driven by themes identified from the coding of the primary data gathered during fieldwork. Participants perception or information are the base of all theory. In this section, I have discussed about overall concept of integration along with Diaspora, Recognition, Culture and following.

### Integration

Generally defined, integration entails the formation of new frameworks as well as the addition of components to existing structures, as well as the development of constructive relationships between these. This joining of parts in the construction of a full unit is concerned primarily with preserving and enhancing coherence within frameworks (Li 2003; Heckmann & Schnapper 2003). Thus an insight of the integration idea has paved the way for the analysis of processes occurring after someone migrates to a new nation in immigration related studies.

There isn't a prominent theory for immigrant integration which might explain all of its processes, claims van Tubergen (2006). Additionally, even though the phrase "integration" is seen as important and fundamental in many studies, it is rarely employed as a conceptual framework and is instead used as a limited framework for analyzing why native communities and immigrant communities vary from each other (Entzinger & Biezeveld 2003; Li 2003). It really has led to integration becoming a phrase with significantly prescriptive implications, therefore obtaining a definition that might be employed in educational studies necessitates a thorough consideration of various theoretical viewpoints. Since researchers appear to be in agreement that there isn't a consistent, "proper" notion of immigrant integration, creating a term that encompasses all aspects of integration appears to be outside the realm of possibilities. Broadly speaking, integration defines who belongs to societal structure and who doesn't (Olwig, 2011; Sobolewska, Galandrewska, and Lessard-Phillips, 2017).

Integration is defined as the procedure of integrating people or groups into new communities - teaching them all they need to know towards becoming citizens of the recipient countries; as an engagement among communities, which would need "new immigrants" to adapt to the rules and regulations of the new area they discover themselves (Brochmann 2003; Li 2003; Sardinha 2009). The primary domains of successful integration connected with four distinct themes, including



accomplishments and work opportunities, education, housing, and wellbeing, then practise of citizen status and privileges, socialising and relation with societal structure, and eventually structural connectedness via language, customs, and eco system (Ager & Strang, 2008). Integration is indeed a highly "individualised, debated, and debated" term (ibid). As per Castles et al., there is no universally agreed concept, theory, or framework of immigrant & refugee assimilation. The concept remains divisive and the subject of heated dispute (Castles et al., 2001:12)". Therefore, the notion is extremely broad and could be described or articulated in a variety of ways, yet it is crucial to migration research and policy. Therefore, when members of one culture acquire traditions from the other culture without decreasing their native, this called integration.

Integration theories in the social sciences

According to integration related scholars, assimilation theory, multiculturalism, and structuralism are the three primary approaches to the researches of cultural integration that are addressed in the social sciences.

### Assimilation

The philosophy of assimilation theory has represented most of the social thought for the better part of the past century in the corpus of research that has been published on the topic of the social integration of immigrants. This strategy is based on three fundamental dimensions. The first dimension is, that different ethnic groups naturally grow to develop a shared culture as a result of having equal access to socioeconomic opportunities as citizens of the host nation. The progressive replacement of old behavioural and cultural norms with fresh ones is the second dimension of this process. The third dimension, when this process begins, it progresses inexorably and irrevocably in the direction of total assimilation. Therefore, it is anticipated that various immigrant groups will melt into the dominant culture via a multigenerational procedure of cultural, sociological, and economical integration. Gordon (1964), who offers a paradigm of assimilating structures to describe this process, serves as an illustration of this viewpoint. According to Gordon, acculturation, or the process of assimilating into a new culture, is how immigrants first begin to adjust to their new home. Although cultural assimilation is an essential initial step, geographic isolation and lack of interaction may allow ethnic groups to continue to be distinct from one another. In the end, how much the dominant population accept these groups will determine how well assimilated they are. Other phases of assimilation follow socio-economic assimilation

ineluctably, and ethnic communities gradually lose their distinguishing qualities (White et. al, 2009).

The experience of the successive generations of European immigrants who immigrated to the United States at the beginning of the 20th century and 1950s appeared to support this assimilation theory. As suggested by the assimilation concept, these immigrant groups maintained continuous patterns of intergenerational social mobility and growing frequencies of intermarriage, as measured through educational attainment, employment market integration, English speaking proficiency, and degree of exposure to the culture of America (Alba, 1985; Chiswick, 1978; Lieberman and Waters, 1988).

During 1960s, cultural integration forms of novel non-European immigrant community in the United States of America challenged the traditional assimilation approach. Cultural distinctions seem to be more permanent than assimilation theory often would anticipate since these groups didn't appear to merge into the dominant culture but rather seemed to maintain distinctive ethnic and religious identities. Even after being in the USA for a long time, different results appeared to apply to locals (Kao and Tienda, 1995; Rumbaut and Ima, 1988; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco, 1995; and Landale and Oropesa, 1995). Instead of being reduced, drawbacks were increased (Gans, 1992). Cross-generational trends of the movement were shown to follow divergence instead of convergence routes (Goffman, 1963; Becker, 1963; and Perlmann, 1988). These findings ultimately sparked the creation of other methods for studying cultural integration.

### Structuralism

The structuralist theory emphasises how inequalities in socioeconomic possibilities relate to variations in the social integration among ethnic minority communities instead of emphasising assimilation or integration processes per se. There are structural barriers that prevent immigrants and members of racial and ethnic minorities from assimilating into society, including unequal economic opportunities, employment, accommodation, education, authority, and privileges. This results in ongoing racial differences in immigrants' standard of living, academic performance, and career outcomes (Blau and Duncan, 1967; Portes and Borocz, 1989). As a result, the advantages of integration primarily rely on what social class accepts the new immigrants. Contradictory to the viewpoints of structuralism, multiculturalism, and assimilation theory highlights the undelying conflicts that appear within social structure between minority and dominant communities and thus

puts into doubt even the viability of immigrants' integration into society on such a socioeconomic and cultural basis.

In brief, structuralism, multiculturalism, and assimilation theory all provide unique perspectives on the same phenomena. Assimilation theorists concentrate on how immigrants' subsequent generations progressively stray from their native culture. Multiculturalists recognize that immigrant cultures are always being altered throughout the integration process and might therefore never totally vanish. The host nation's social and economic framework has an impact on immigrants' capacity to assimilate into its cultural norms and partake in its economic rewards, according to structuralists.

Although each of the above viewpoints has insisted on a certain aspect of the patterns of immigrant integration, segmented assimilation theory offers a combination of these many views.

#### Segmented assimilation synthesis

The fundamental goal of such a line of study is to present a detailed overview of the different sequences of immigrant integration from the perspective of converging or diverging cultural adaptation pathways. This theory specifically sees three different pathways for the approach to cultural integration: 1) patterns of upward mobility linked to assimilating and integrating economically into the prescriptive frameworks of the dominant majority; 2) patterns of downward mobility going the other way, linked to assimilation and linear integration into the minority; 3) economic integration with lagging assimilation and purposeful upkeep of immigrant society's beliefs and culture (Portes and Zhou, 1994).

This theoretical viewpoint aims to clarify the variables that affect which sector of the host culture a certain immigrant group might integrate into. Its main concern is how different socio-demographic and economic elements (native language competency, education, birthplace, arrival age and duration of residency in the hosting country) engage to establish particular cultural integration habits of a specific group of cultural minority. These contextual elements include racial identity, familial backgrounds, and area of residence.

#### The economic perspective of cultural integration

#### Cultural Adoption

Lazear's research on the adoption of a shared language offers the first straightforward model that captures the motivations for cultural fusion (1999). People from two distinct cultures (a minority

and a majority)—are paired under this model to engage both economically and socially. Trade among people is made easier by cultural fusion. The motivations for a member of a minority cultural community to assimilate and embrace the dominant culture are thus closely correlated with the anticipated benefits from commerce that such an approach offers.

### Formation of identity

Akerlof and Kranton (2000) focus more straightforwardly on cultural or ethnic identity as a major contributor to the advantages or disadvantages related to social interactions among various groups, in contrast to Lazear's (1999) model, which places its focus on the possible benefits of a deal linked to the interaction among participants from various societies. Akerlof and Kranton highlighted the notion of cultural or ethnic identity in economic theories and examine how it might relate to people's motivations by drawing on findings from social and sociological psychology. Identity is more accurately described as an individual's self-image derived from predetermined social classifications as well as the recommendations that go along with them. Every individual has a perspective of both his or her group and of everyone else. In turn, recommendations outline which actions are regarded suitable for individuals in certain social categories and/or contexts. Recommendations sometimes include descriptions of aspirations in terms of material and bodily characteristics for each area.

Throughout this conceptual setting, Akerlof and Kranton focused on two identity development elements that are important to conceptualising cultural integration. First, people learn and master classifications and recommendations through internalisation as well as identification processes with other individuals who possess similar classes, — specifically, who seem to be members of a common culture. This suggests, particularly, that one's perception of oneself is dependent on how well one meets the requirements for the category. An individual's self-image may also be endangered by others violating the set of rules he identifies with since identification is an important step in the internalisation process. In fact, treatment plans connected to one group are frequently defined in opposition to those connected to others. When people engage with one another, this dimension serves as a source of greater potential societal externalities. Secondly, nothing is said about Akerlof and Kranton's cultural background. People decide which cultures they belong to (create their identities) by acting in ways that fit these classifications. Therefore, incentives may have an influence on the development process of identity. Similar to Lazear (1999), there are other

variables that might affect the costs of cultural assimilation, including the number of the group, the economic advantages of exchange and relationships, the importance of divergences in social relationships, and compatibility (Radu, 2008).

This conceptual model has significant relevance in the studies of opposing cultures, in which minorities embrace cultural classifications and recommendations that are defined in contrast to those of the prevailing majority. Opposing cultures frequently correlate to behaviour that comes at high monetary losses to the minority group embracing it. According to Akerlof and Kranton, social isolation and a lack of employment opportunities are at the root of the formation of opposing cultures. Social isolation results from the well-known sociological truth whereby dominant groups distinguish themselves by excluding outsiders (Little, 2014). This results in a challenge for minority members: ways to function within the majority culture without compromising their own. Such social disparities may therefore make it possible for members of excluded groups to embrace oppositional identities. A lack of economic opportunities also could lead to the creation of an opposing identity. It has been highlighted, for illustration, that the fall in well-paid, non-skilled professions might cause men who cannot help their families to lose self-respect, as well as an increase in inner city violence and drug usage (Wilson, 1996). Similar to this, Liebow (1967) explains the way lack of decent-paying employment lead these people to adopt cultures that severely impair the importance of any job market skills they may acquire in an effort to avoid feeling the guilt of not being able to support their families and themselves. This is described in popular ethnographic research on "corner street" men, also known as street people and idlers.

### Acculturation Strategies

The earlier analysis includes an essential component in that the establishment of cultural identification is portrayed as a straightforward binary decision: people from foreign origins could either ought to engage with the dominant society or culture or with their (for example, ethnic) minority society or culture. The assumption that a higher affiliation to the cultures of the majority inevitably means a weaker association with the ethnic minority restricts the model's scope and complexity, even when it is expanded to include opposing identities. However, such viewpoints have come under criticism for being too basic to account for the various potential forms of cultural integration of minorities. The extent of association with the mainstream culture is treated as distinct from the extent of affiliation with the minority culture in research within cross-cultural

psychology, suggesting a more complicated model of identity development. People could, for instance, have a good relation to both the mainstream culture and a minority culture at the same time (Ferenczi, 2013).

For illustration, Berry (1997) takes into account four different acculturation approaches when examining how people react to the majority's dominant culture and the traditional ethnic culture of the minority community or group. Integration is the very first tactic, and it suggests a clear understanding of affinity with both the originating and the dominant culture. Assimilation, the second approach, calls for a close bond with the dominant culture but a strained one with the culture of origin. The third, separation, is connected to a tenuous relationship with the culture of the majority but a great relationship with the native culture. The fourth approach, marginalisation, lastly relies on a frail connection to both the mainstream and the indigenous culture.

### Diaspora

The term Diaspora comprises a wide variety of groups including immigrants, asylum seekers, foreign workers, foreign residents, minorities of ethnic and racial communities. Displaced individuals who sense, preserve, invent, or restore a relationship with a former home use it more frequently. A history of dispersion, myths as well as memories related to the homeland, isolation in the host country, a hope for a future repatriation (which might be ambiguous, apocalyptic, or fanciful), and a commitment to the motherland, and A shared identity represented by the aforementioned relationships are all examples of the term diaspora. (Shuval, 2000)

The word "diaspora" derives from the Greek words "speiro," which means "to sow," and "dia," which represents "over. The word was interpreted by the Greeks to refer to colonization and migration. Today, the term "diaspora" refers to far broader categories that highlight political motivation mechanisms population uprooting and movement, worldwide connectivity, transportation, and displaced persons, rather than only the traditional groupings of Jews, Greeks, and Armenians. Around 26 million Russians residing in non-Russian FSU republics are one of the greatest recent groups to fall into this category; their status as minorities in CIS regions as a result of the dissolution of the unitary Soviet state. Since 1948, Palestinians have grown to feel a sense of diaspora. A Black diaspora is also mentioned, which refers to people whose ancestors were forcibly exiled from a number of African nations and relocated in other communities. Naturally, the most contemporary wave of refugees which is originated from Kosovo has also fallen into this

category (Kolsto, 1996; Pilkington, 1996; Shevtsova, 1992; Tololian, 1991). In fact, the term "diaspora" has come to have metaphorical connotations and is increasingly being used by displaced people who still feel a sense of connection to their former homes (Safran, 1991: 83).

The term "modern diaspora" was defined by Sheffer (1986) as "ethnic minority groups of immigrant roots living and operating in host nations but preserving strong emotional and economic linkages with respective home countries ." Four qualities are used by Chaliand and Rageau (1991) to describe a diaspora: Forced dispersal, keeping of a combination of cultural historic and cultural memories of the dispersal, a willingness to transmit a culture, and the collective's capacity to persist over time are all factors (Kearney, 1995; Esman, 1986).

Safran (1991), Sheffer (1986), and Clifford (1994) all contemplated the perspectives in-depth consideration and offered a number of formulations that were more comprehensive. A background of dispersion, mythologies and experiences of the motherland, isolation in the host nation, a hope for someday returning (which may be ambiguous, apocalyptic, or fanciful), continued support for the motherland, and a community cohesion defined by the relationship indicated above are all essential elements of these definitions, even though they are not identical.

A typology of Diasporas has been presented by Cohen (1997), each of which include include worldwide – de territorialized diasporas, commercial diasporas, cultural immigrant groups, labour and imperialism diasporas, victimized diasporas, and diasporas based on trade. Cohen points out that various categories could converge or evolve over time.

In all of these definitions the diaspora's reality is shaped by feelings, awareness, The diaspora's reality is shaped by memories, myths, experience, captivating tales, collective identity, aspirations, visions, metaphorical elements, and digital aspects. There must be a strong sensation of belonging to the home. at any one time to withstand forgetting, assimilating, or distance. Benjamin (1968) stated that "effaced stories are rediscovered, and various futures are envisioned."

Before the 1960s, it was typically expected of immigrant groups to lose their ethnic identity and assimilate to local customs. Early in the 1970s, as it became clear that assimilationist approaches were ineffective starting in the 1970s, numerous countries changed their policies to allow or even encourage immigrants to preserve various elements of their ethnic tradition. A remarkable increase in communication mediums over the past 20 years has made the world more connected. These procedures are likely to continue in the coming years since they have been picking up speed and sophistication. International economy, social, technical, and environmental interconnection,

wherein goods, money, information, criminality, cultures, drugs, and trends are all intertwined in crossing national borders, are manifestations of globalization. Ongoing interaction and contact among immigrants and respective home countries and with near and dear ones there is made possible by free movement, movable job markets, the global division of labour, and the growing availability of contemporary transportation modes. In addition, there is a growing backlash over nationalistic, ethnic, religious fanaticism, discrimination, misogyny, as well as other kinds of exclusion. (Shuval, 2000)

In relation to diaspora theory, Shuval (2000) mentioned in his article, there are three groups of actors. The diaspora group themselves, the hosting culture, and the real or imagined motherland are these things (Sheffer, 1986). Each of these players is split into a number of smaller groups with variable engagement, consciousness, competence, and curiosity in one another. Together, they constitute a complex harmonic progression interaction. Likewise, diasporas have been established to influence government outcomes in their actual home nations as well as to provide financial aid and military assistance for their countries of origin (Esman, 1986).

**Diaspora and Homeland:** The host's policies toward the homeland may influence a diaspora group's attitudes about that host. This could signify voting habits and other manifestations of political backing up or opposing by the host country's diaspora members. Similar to this, a diaspora community's attitudes toward particular community in the host society might be influenced by how much support these communities have for the host's national policy. There have been circumstances where members of the diaspora society have left the country where they were living to look for safety or political asylum.

**Diaspora and host:** A diaspora group's attitudes regarding its motherland are frequently conflicted. Many people choose not to go back to their own country when given the chance since doing so is frequently too upsetting or distressing. Many times, a homeland is either no existence or unwelcoming from a political, ideological, or social standpoint. Most often, a feeling of urgency to return home derives from dissatisfaction with the host community for whatever cause or from a strong conviction that returning home is both legitimate and desirable. Indirect political assistance for the motherland might be a sign of anxiety about being accused of having two allegiances, or



of oppression or prejudice. On the other side, overt support might signify a sense of security in a society that accepts and tolerates such viewpoints.

Diaspora and host: The homeland's attitudes toward the diaspora community might be to offer stability and support on an emotional and cultural basis, but they can also be used to mobilize the aid of host countries on a political, material, or other level. People from the diaspora may get a warm welcome upon their return, but it can also be indifferent or hostile. The latter may represent the perception of homeland inhabitants that diaspora returnees pose a threat to their position or their belongings and are not true "natives" (Munz and Ohliger, 1998). The host's approach of the diaspora society is indicative of the general tolerance or intolerance that is seen acceptable. The host may be politically connected to the diaspora group if it has a significant or influential political support.

## Culture

The notion and idea of culture were examined extensively by American sociologists Kroeber and Kluckhohn in 1952. The core of culture consists of ancestral thoughts and particularly their attached beliefs. Culture mechanisms could, on one side, be viewed as items of acts, on the other side, as conditional elements of future actions. as per Kroeber & Kluckhohn.

## Cultural Evaluation

The first is not a description of social processes or a plan for structuring them; it simply refers to the uniqueness of those processes. The characteristics of the processes themselves—specific methods for generating, influencing, acquiring, and so on. The other is culture like a strategy, system, or expression., as well as meaning-producing structures created on the basis of social knowledge in historical contexts that link specific existential circumstances with earlier historical configurations. As a result, culture never arises out of nothing but is always the result of historical development. Its importance among a population is correlated with the reality that it is logical in specific situations as it links to historical construction of common social knowledges. Objectification is a component of cultural production, and it can Objectification occurs throughout cultural production, and this process has the potential to become decisive in the sense that it can be utilized to socialize individuals or structure social settings. As the site of meaning creation, it is reliant on the existential circumstances from which meaning emerges, but it is capable of taking on a life of its own in the logic that Marshall Sahlins (1976) gave it: as a strategy of relevant structure.

The majority of immigrants (refugees, workers, students, spouses) found it difficult to acclimate to a new society. Immigrants who had experienced strong family ties in their native culture found their isolation and the absence of a supportive local community to be particularly upsetting and alienating. A few immigrants made the argument that it is important to share one's culture with others in order to foster understanding and give back to the assimilated group. Most non-immigrants understood how important it was for immigrant's communities to preserve their own cultural traditions. Regarding how locals saw the cultural contribution of immigrants to the community as a whole, there were disparities between the circumstances analyzed. Only Islington inhabitants frequently mentioned the importance of the region's cultural diversity, which is typically represented in the area's range of restaurants and the festivals that are observed.

## Recognition

There are normative and psychological aspects to recognition. It may be argued that when you recognize someone as having a particular trait, like being an autonomous agent, you don't only acknowledge that they have it; you also adopt a favorable viewpoint of them because of it.

This suggests that you have a duty to treat him or her a certain way because you acknowledge the other person's normative position, such as that of a free and equal person. However, recognition is not just important normatively. It has psychological significance as well. The bulk of recognition theories assume that for people to develop a practical identity, they must first and foremost rely on the input of other subjects. This perspective holds that it will be considerably more difficult for people to see themselves and their efforts as valuable if they do not receive enough attention (Fanon 1952).

## Respect

Since the intention of universal human rights was established in modernity, accordance with equivalent dignity or respect has long been seen as the basic element of recognition. Thomas Scanlon (1998) stated that, respect preserves the legitimized of acting in line with concept that others could not rationally reject. This absolute is intended to shows our interaction with others.

Whose value as well as appeal provide as the navigate factors beyond our resolution to act normally.

This connection could be referred to as a relationship of mutual recognition. Standing in this relationship to others is desirable in and of itself and merits pursuit (Scanlon 1998, 162). The interaction between normative and psychological components becomes more apparent when one is subjected to intense humiliation. Even if the victims are aware that their humiliation is unfair, they nonetheless feel ashamed. Their confidence in their capacity to manage their lives is undermined. However, there is considerable conflict between recognizing someone as the owner of legal rights and the concept of a formal recognition order. The sheer concept of subjective rights enables people to distance themselves from all interpersonal interactions and insist on their "right" regardless of whatever objections others may have (Menke 2009). However, law acknowledges each subject's autonomous agency by giving them the freedom to exercise their reason as they see suitable. It now considers the reality of sensible pluralism. "One has the ability to create an identity by getting other people's approval. Without a specific connection with another, it is impossible to recognise one's own individuality, form an optimistic opinion of one's skills, and forge an identity. (Honneth, 1997, p. 26)".

## Esteem

The greatest emancipatory movements of the past two centuries battled for equality in respect and rights, such as the women's or civil rights movements in the US. Contrarily, in many of today's social conflicts, individuals or groups fight for acknowledgment of particular components of their identities that their society's dominant value and norm system ignores or denigrates, such as cultural or religious ones. These developments have contributed to the rise in popularity of the concepts of "politics of recognition" and "identification politics."

All members who do not adhere to the dominant understanding are thus subject to discrimination (Taylor 1992, 42). The second reading contends that we ought to cherish particularity in and of itself. . "An individual who has high self-esteem can easily responds a correlative recognition of each other's social contribution. From this unity growth (Honneth, 1995, pp.196-210, p.139)".

## Love

According to intellectual aligned theories of recognition, love and care relationship has vital impact on individual as they believed this is first sort of recognition that individual experience. The little kid feel safe and secure and cherished because of the parent's unconditional care, and as a result, believes that they are deserving of affection. As the kids get old then they start value their own task, stick on the norms which gets more composite. If a child feels self-worthless in any point then there is high chance to get an end result with broken temperament and the individual might perceive "expression via negative feelings and emotions such as guilt, rage, hostility, or disdain" (Honneth, 1995, p.257).

Additionally, because love encompasses and individual's complete personality, it has been suggested that because of this early life experience, subjects have a constant source of incentive to demand acceptance for ever-more facets of their identity, leading to further moral advancement.

## History of Immigration and integration in Denmark

### Initial shifts in Danish society's homogeneity

Denmark had long been proud of its high degree of cultural as well as social homogeneity, which was primarily characterised by a shared language, ethnicity, and religion (Johncke 2011). Danish culture had become very homogeneous as a result of some sociological, political, as well as economic events in the 18th and 19th centuries. Being "Danish" implied individual independence with an emphasis on community involvement, camaraderie, and equal opportunities for all residents. Due to the homogeneity of the Danish population and their shared desire to live according to the idea of "Danishness," the Danish welfare system, which is intimately associated with a preset set of cultural and social norms, has endured for generations (Olwig & Paerregaard 2011). When Denmark had its first significant inflow of immigrants in the late 19th century, when many impoverished agricultural workers from Sweden and Poland started to migrate in seeking employment, this homogeneous nature of Danish society started to change slowly. However, because they were from nations with ideals comparable to those of Denmark, their presence is not acknowledged all the time because it did not threaten the principles of the nationalism of the Danish people (Willerslev, 1983; Nellemann, 1981). Just a few decades later did changes of truly significant magnitude start to occur. Most of the nations in Northern and Western Europe became countries of immigration in the late 20th century as a result of massive population shifts driven mostly by economic factors and decolonization (Entzinger, 1990). Similar to other European nations, Denmark saw a high demand for physical labor during the 1960s and 1970s. That was owing to the post-war manpower shortages brought on by emigration just before 1960s, which were driven by a lack of desire to take work that the Danish local population found unappealing (Olwig, 2011). Only hiring people from Western and Southern Europeans could not satisfy the enormous demand for labour. Due to these conditions, Danes were forced to look for employment outside of Europe, which resulted in the hiring of significant number of immigrants from the Pakistan, Middle East and North Africa as labourers with low-skills in Danish industries (Casey 2014; Olwig & Paerregaard 2011). Up until 1973, "guest workers" were still being hired, but that year saw a significant rise in unemployment as a result of rising oil costs in Denmark. Despite the fact that labour related immigration was halted, many foreign workers chose to remain in Denmark, and as they started to use family reunification programmes to invite their families to join them, the number of persons with foreign ancestry continued to rise. In consequences,

throughout the subsequent ten years, number of immigrants from non-Western nations continued to expand, reaching a high of almost 50,000 in 1983. (Udlaendingservice, 2008). During the nineties, Denmark also had to deal with an inflow of political refugees and asylum seekers from nations including Vietnam, Persia, Iraq, the Balkan, Somalia, and other regions with uncertain geopolitical issues. Additionally, international students and professionals started to view Denmark as an attractive location (Olwig & Paerregaard, 2011; Entzinger, 1990). In total, there were more than 100 000 non-Western decedents of this immigrant group, bringing the total individuals of non-Western countries to more than 230,000 in 2008 (Udlaendingservice, 2008).

### The inception of the discussion regarding integration

Many people became aware of this fact when the migration circumstances changed and realised that short-term workers would eventually become citizens of Denmark. Policymakers began to pay closer attention to the 1970s overseas labour migration. They realised that policies that had previously prioritised short-term accommodation and encouraging return among the immigrant workers needed to be altered by measures aimed at integrating these people into Danish society and assisting them in settling (Entzinger 1990). At first, it wasn't clear the ways state could handle this situation. Even though the term "integration" became a part of Danish from the eighteenth century, it was not frequently used when immigration started to gain prominence. The words "incorporation," "absorption," "assimilation," and "adaptation" were frequently used to describe integration. By the middle of the 20th century, when it started to arise in public debates and take on new meanings that referenced various social dynamics, it only started to become more widely used in Danish. The term "integration" was first used to refer to discussions about the European Trading Bloc in the 1950s, but it was later used to refer to the economical, political, and armed services integration of Europe. It was also prevalent in the pedagogy of the preschools (Olwig & Paerregaard 2011). Politicians, media, and social scientists didn't start considering the idea of integration as important for assimilating those people into Danish society until years just after economic crisis and a substantial inflow of immigrants and refugees. The term "integration" has undergone yet another definition during the 1990s, when foreign labour migration became a problem. The emphasis shifted to a more focused understanding that directly relates to immigration and approaches to interacting with those who are newcomers to the Danish welfare state (ibid.).

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, integration has become an increasingly widespread phenomenon. The prevalent perspective of non-Western refugees and immigrants was that they originated from nations with vastly different conceptions of democracy, engagement, and the labour market. These alleged disparities drew the attention of legislators, scholars, and the broader Danish community, who started to refer to the "integration issues" (Penninx et.al., 2006; Emerek, 2003; Casey, 2014). Danish, who viewed themselves as members of a homogeneous community with common values, viewed immigrants as fundamentally distinct and, as a result, a challenge to the Danish welfare state and its established order (Stolcke, 1995; Casey, 2014). Over time, the perceived difficulties of having and assimilating a significant portion of immigrants into society have grown to be viewed as a cultural issue. Mainly because of the perception of vast gaps among their diverse cultures and the Danish primary ideals of liberty and equality, it was thought that differences in culture prohibited immigrants from becoming properly integrated in Denmark. The most significant barrier to their acceptance was the perception that they were culturally distinct and so did not fit in with the ethnically and culturally homogeneous Danish community (Jensen, 2011, Olwig & Paerregaard 2011, Sjrsløv). As I've already said, the "integration problem" has been inextricably connected to the welfare system's guiding principles. Many consider "Danishness" and the welfare system to be inseparable, and the concept of being Danish has a significant effect on the development within sociocultural environment. In this approach, the welfare state is crucial in establishing a framework for the integration of immigrants and refugees. Having culturally specific values and interests, which are deemed essential to the efficient performance of Danish culture or society, means that immigrants who want to get integrated have to somehow feel like Danish, as well as also need to do like Danish" maintaining a set of guiding guidelines of the welfare system (Johncke 2011). As per some, the strong connection between the concept of "the real Danish" and the welfare state ended up causing all challenge of integrating 29 non-Western nation's immigrants for focusing on their uniqueness and failure to become integrated, thereby trying to push them towards a trivial position of non-belonging to Danish culture (Olwig & Paerregaard, 2011; Olwig, 2011). As a result of the realisation that immigrants was about to rise much more, the "integration issues" and its perceived threat to the cohesion and integrity of Danish welfare society assumed a greater place in political and popular discourse (Henkel, 2011). During the past four decades, political opinions toward immigrants and integration have evolved alongside fluctuations in the political climate. When attempting to comprehend the transformation of

political ideas on immigrants and integration into what they're doing today, it is vital to analyse these transitions.



## Analysis

As I have earlier mentioned, the aim of my research is to investigate the cultural challenges immigrants from Bangladesh are facing to integrate in Denmark. To examine this, I will focus on four themes respectively recognition, diaspora, culture, economic integration which I extracted from the interviews.

### Recognition

After conducting the interview for my research work, one point has become clear that it doesn't matter how long people have been living in Denmark, how much experience they gained to fit in the culture. They still are facing problems to get into the job market, to involve in the host culture and also to the society. There are certain things which can only be gained if you born here, but difficult to gain as an adult. One participant has been living in Denmark for a pretty long time but still he can't participate in so many things.

2nd participant said:

“With my fellow students in the university, when they talk about a topic (music, movie etc.) in general I always tried to participate and express my opinion. But most of the cases I felt like they are not happy with my opinion and gradually I felt like there is big gap of knowledge. I started feeling like I don't know what they are talking about. Day after day I started feeling uncomfortable”.

The above mentioned and other factors effect an individuals' life and so do others. In this part we will see the factors which make impact of recognition may have on a person as well as on the society. I'll achieve this by putting into practice Honneth's three notions of recognition while also briefly advancing the notion that going unnoticed can lead to experiencing exploitation.

1st participant sated,

“The truth is if you do not have respect, you will have no confidence. Respect cannot gain by force I believe. It's a social process. When your Danish friends talk with you normally even though your Danish language is not so good still they appreciate you, you will feel good and confident. At the same time, when some Danish people tell you, if you think you want to live in Denmark for

long time then you should know the language better. This will make you lose your confidence and respect.”

I got the point in my research work that those are still passing the hard time to feel comfort and think that they are the part of the society even they have been living in Denmark since so many years. I have discovered what might be described as an existential barrier, wherein particular experiences—as well as the absence of other experiences—form existential issues about safety, purpose in life, and how long it is worthwhile to fight. Since recognition is expressed, received, and understood in practice, and because the experience of recognition—or lack thereof—plays a role in determining a person's place in society and, consequently, her sense of belonging (Honneth,1995).

### Self-esteem recognition

“Self-esteem is concerned with the feeling of personal growth brought on by the appreciation of one's abilities, accomplishments, and accomplishments to society or culture (social esteem)”(Bona, 2018). An individual's self-esteem is created through having the skills and knowledge of social engagement, which can only be evolved when someone's expertise/skills and offerings are “Others recognize one's contribution to a practise as meaningful, hence one's social position matters.” (Bona, 2018:40)

It is stated many times by the 1st participants in the interview the matter of fact that he was to get hired or get a single positive call from the companies although he was well qualified for those position. In this way his skills and abilities was not being acknowledged.

1st participant:

“You know, I applied more than hundreds times to get a professional job. I started applying for an internship or working student jobs related to my own fields. But I always got a mail from the HR mentioned that we got so many application for this role and we can't processed with your application this time as we got other candidate who are more suitable for this position. And I had never been consider for a single interview. I have many years of professional job experiences along with double master's degree. It was tough to accept”.

It is crucial to be able to apply one's skills since without the ability to do so, one cannot hope to be recognized for them. When the presence of the skills is not acknowledged, it is a lack of acknowledgment and a manifestation of cultural distinguish because it is important to be recognized for one's abilities even when they are not being used.

1st participant:

“I got a call for a professional job interview: They asked me so many questions which is clearly answered in my CV. When I applied for this role, I saw the requirements and I had all the qualifications to fulfill their demand. I did all those task in my previous jobs every day and I had the educational qualifications related to the role. So, when they were asking me questions which is answered in CV, I felt like I was lying and the information I put in my CV was not true. It hurt my soul and I felt so many times that maybe I am not eligible to be the part of the society”.

This way his merits and accomplishments got questioned and showed disrespect by degrading his reliability and validity (Honneth, 1995, p.129). The immigrant' wellbeing has been negatively impacted by the lack of respect at various stages, to the point that they have begun to wonder what to do with themselves:need to explain more

2nd participant:

“In the very beginning of my first job in Denmark I was always upset and I couldn't put my attention on work as I was not stable in my personal life. I was alone, I had no one here to support me mentally and it was affecting on my working life. It's tough to be nice to others when you are not fit mentally”.

3rd participant said:

“Do you know what? In one point I was broken, I was depressed. Before coming to Denmark I had a strong passion and confidence that I will manage a professional job in the first year. I tried two and half year and tried really hard but no positive result come out. I had five year of professional experiences, I had great managerial skills and a number of other experiences which made my CV standout. But in Denmark it didn't work out not for a single job”.

Participants lose hope in a bright future and their motivation to keep trying when they are unable to exploit their talents and are not recognized as contributing members of society. There are thousands of immigrants with a great bunch of professional expertise even they have a very little chance to get the opportunity to prove them. In the contrary, they miss the chance to take part

in the local community to contribute although they are very willing to. Consequently, they are not getting recognized and which hold them back to get into the society.

In the working place, for example, if your ability get recognize even it's very tiny, but it can motivate you to take more responsibility and that made the 3rd participant feels like his effort has value.

3rd participant:

“When you get more responsibility in your working place, you naturally get a bit more respect from you colleagues and at the same time feel proud of your performance. I never feel bored at my work although I do almost the same thing every day. So, it wasn't anything I was specifically proud of , but as soon as I started to feel like I had some responsibilities, I started to think that I am someone who is more than the normal worker. I got to understand to deploy respect at the working place take time and effort. And to get their recognition you first need to gain their respect”. Self-esteem is developed by being acknowledged for one's abilities, accomplishments, and contributions; a person's competencies are not acknowledged when they are consistently not employed. This may cause a psychological and physical effect on individuals which lead them to think whether they are valuable and getting respect. In this way to integrate in a society one should contribute (Honneth,1995).

## Respect

1st participants shared:

“If you call to your doctor or Bank or any other institutions for any information, they first reply you in Danish but when you say ‘I do not speak Danish’ then they reply in English. Majority of the Danish knows English besides Danish and that is the one reason to pick Denmark not Germany as the destination of my higher studies. I heard from my friends and relatives that in Germany most of the people do not want to speak in English although they know English very well. But here in Denmark I never experienced anything like that.”

The immigrants who came here without family in their free time can spend time with other nationals or Danish people as everyone can speak in English so immigrants do not feel lonely at all.

1st participant said:

“In my free time I hang out with friends or play games in the club”. They can easily participate because of language flexibility. Moreover local people also respect the immigrants and they do not get bored because of not knowing Danish.

3rd participant said:

“It’s a good opportunity for us to get all the necessary information although we can’t speak Danish”. He also mentioned that when I go out and can speak in a common language with others (both Danish people and others), I feel like ‘integrating into the society’. He felt like he is the part of the wonderful society”.

By inclusion, participants refer the attention and respect they are getting from the society and native people. They feel confident and respected even sometimes they do not understand the language properly. ‘One day when I went to visit my doctor and I saw my regular doctor was not there due to illness and another doctor attended me who did not have good English. Still he tried to listen to me and his non-verbal gesture gave me self-confidence’

## Recognition of Love

According to Honneth's theory, self-reliance is seen to grow via the perception of love in the close-knit context of family and friendship which needs affirmation, emotional support as well as practical care) (Bona, 2018: 13). We did not discuss participant’s private lives in great detail

during the interviews because of the nature of the process and the emphasis on employment impediments.

3rd participant:

After one year stay in Denmark, I was feeling like I am not having the recognition of love in anywhere, for example like not from the work place, not from the school, not from the public place, nowhere. It hurt me too much, and at one point I was thinking like I can't survive here, this is not the right place for me to stay long. But, dramatically, many things changed in my life when my wife arrived in Denmark. Which I didn't expect to happen".

Similar circumstances may arise when looking for a decent job; there could be many sort of recognition but the above mentioned three are the main preferable in categories. Who live in Denmark alone, most of them feel their friends and families back in their own country. On the other hand who live with their family in Denmark, they feel much better as they feel the affection recognition and self-confidence. Although they also miss their love ones.

## Diaspora

### Dispersion

There are multiple reasons for the Bangladeshi immigration flow to Denmark. First and most common reason is to study, then find a job and be employed for a long period. According to participants' information, at present many immigrants from Bangladesh come to Denmark for study or job purposes compared to the previous years. Who are come to Denmark as a student, after study they find better job and live here with family.

Another reason for coming to Denmark is Family reunification. Family reunification in Bangladeshi immigration come in two ways: one way is a Bangladeshi immigrant marries another Bangladeshi living in Bangladesh and spouse moves to Denmark another way is a Danish or an European marries a Bangladeshi living in Bangladesh and spouse migrates to Denmark. One of my colleagues who works with me shared that her mother is from Bangladesh and met her dad (Danish) in Dubai and then they married and moved to Denmark. Also participant shared:

“I know some Bangladeshi immigrants who met their partner in other countries or in Bangladesh and after getting married moved here. Also, some Bangladeshi immigrants married European and living here permanently”

According to participant, some Bangladeshi immigrants come to Denmark as a student or job visa after that their spouse come to Denmark as a family reunification visa. This way they are living here. On the other hand, some other Bangladeshi immigrants come to Denmark with their non-Bangladeshi partners. It is evident from participants conversation that no matter which way immigrants come to Denmark but the fact is that they are integrating into Danish society and living here.

Due to the oppressive political climate and violations of fundamental rights in the nation, the number of Bangladeshis seeking political asylum abroad has risen over the past five years (Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development). The majority of applicants listed political persecution and unrest, repression of opposition leaders and activists, threats against and harassment of secularists, writers and publishers as their primary grounds for needing asylum or forced migration to safer places (The Daily Star, October 4, 2022). Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development said approximately 160,737 (UNHCR citation) Bangladeshi people applied for asylum due to political reasons in various countries including the USA, Canada, UK, Italy, Japan, South Africa and many European countries (ibid).

“I personally know some Bangladeshi people in Denmark who leave the country because of too much political pressure or they were too much engaged with the extremist group. They did not go to Bangladesh last 10 to 12 years due to security reason. It’s hard for them to stay away from homeland because they shared their roots belong there and all family persons and relatives live there. They just talk over phone or video calls with them. They do not have any other options. They fear of going to Bangladesh if they cannot come back or get into troubles.”

People who came as a political asylum seeker, staying here with long period of time and their children has grown up here. But they really want to make connection to their children with their roots where they belonged to. They define themselves as part of the diaspora since their homeland

is in Bangladesh. For them to integrate into the Danish society is more vital as to return to homeland is quite difficult for them. From participants' viewpoint they are more engaged and integrated into the society due to difficulty .

#### Desire to return to Homeland

As I already mentioned in the theoretical framework, "Ethnic minority groups of migratory origins now form diasporas, living and working in host nations but retaining close emotional and material ties to their home countries." (Sheffer, 1986:3). people who live in their host country for many years for employment, after having savings later in life want to return to the home country where they belong. In their imagination, homeland is a place where they live the rest of life peacefully and these feelings become strong when they face difficulties or tough times during living in a host country.

1st participant shared:

“I do not like the weather especially in winter time. It’s always windy and cold, dark and the sun sets so early. But in my country, it’s always summer and I really miss that. Sometimes it’s hard to integrate into Danish society because people are so formal. At the workplace you will have friends or colleagues to talk to but you will rarely find them on the weekend. You need to inform your colleagues or friends if you want to meet or want to visit them at home. On the other hand, in Bangladesh I can hang out with my friends and can go to their home anytime. People are not formal but open minded.”

2nd participant shared:

“I really miss my friends and family back in Bangladesh. Especially during the time of our own festivals, I went to my relatives and friends' home and they also came to mine. We put on different colorful dress on those days. We prepared various traditional foods that were cooked by my mother with the helping hands of and me and my siblings. Though those festivals we celebrated here with other Bangladeshi immigrant families still it’s not widely celebrated. That is why every year I go to Bangladesh to meet and celebrate those occasions with my family, friends and love ones.



Sometimes I feel like I will move back to Bangladesh but whenever I think about my child and their future I cannot stick to this decision.”

From above comments from the participants it is observed that they all are attached with their homeland emotionally. Physically they are in Denmark due to employment or family reasons but they always have desired to go back to their country of origin. The term "diaspora" has come to have metaphorical connotations and is increasingly being used by displaced people who still feel a sense of connection to their former homes (Safran, 1991: 83).

Along with the previously stated considerations, the attitude of the host society also plays a significant part in forming homeland orientation. Even if they are living in Denmark for so many years, acquired Danish citizenship, and integrated into Danish society, the majority of interviewees condemn how the host society treats those with immigrant backgrounds. They convey the idea that immigrants feel like second-class citizens, regardless of how well they speak Danish or how successful they are.

“When I was doing my master’s, in the 1st semester I was severely sick because of asthma attack and had to admit to hospital. That is why i needed to extend my semester and exam. When i went to study secretary office after recovery to submit my application for extension of my study then he looked at my application with doubts. Although i submitted all medical documents with my application. He said to why i was absent for so many days . I do not think it’s so serious I mean you are new here and the weather is also different from your country. All the outsider students face the problem like you. You should adjust with the situation. This demotivates me a lot. Since then i just want to finish my study and return to my country”.

Although there are a variety of motivating factors, as can be seen above, the immigrants have a natural affinity to move back their country of origin. The urge to return permanently to one's own country develops as a result of the difficulties encountered and the cultural differences. When immigrants are feeling low or feel alienated by the host culture, thinking about their home country also lifts their spirits (Ahmed, 2013).

Loyalty to Host country

The way they miss their homeland, in the same way they are also attached to their host country. When a person lives in a place for a long time, it becomes his or her own place. They become respectful to the host country's norms, values, culture, law etc.

1st participant said:

“The things I like in Denmark most are the social security system such as healthcare, tax system, pension etc. The living standard is here is the best without any doubt. Denmark is one of the happiest countries in the world. In Bangladesh, the human rights is equal only on the paper but in reality on the other way around. Huge imbalance of living standard. Lack of social security makes it worse. In Denmark, I really appreciate their efforts to make a balanced labor market, and a good working environment to make the society more standard.”

3rd participant shared:

“I have been living in Denmark almost 13 years. I got my permanent residence and I will apply for a Danish passport in the future. My two children were born here which made me feel so attached here. I want my children to live here for the rest of their life and get good values and norms from the society. I feel like I am learning new things here every day which is totally absent back in my country. I have a good relationship with my neighbors who are Danish. Though some Danish people do not like immigrants. Although there are some obvious reasons behind this. For instance; most of the non-western people love to talk in public places, on public transport loudly which Danish people doesn't like at all. They used to play music in high volume at home which is also not accepted by Danish people. After discussing so many pros and cons, I still wish to live here as all the human rights are equal shared for everyone”.

From this perspective, I can say that immigrants feel socially and economically secure in the host country which they cannot find in their homeland when they think about returning to their homeland. But it does not mean they are not attached to their homeland. In this way they are loyal and respectful to both home and host country(Shuval,2000).

“Here in Denmark, education system is different from my homeland. More advanced and practical based. I want my next generation will continue their life here so that they can get good education and job. I know their future is here not to my country of origin”.

“I already told you my first child is a special child. For her to stay here is safe and secured. She will get proper treatment and guidance which is not possible in Bangladesh. I am here paying taxes and getting benefit from society.”

From above conversations, I can say that immigrants are getting benefit from the host society they live in and they are satisfied with it. As the participant mentioned about his child and they are getting free treatment and guidelines to take care of his child . Immigrants who are living in Denmark, they are getting same social benefit like a Dane. Immigrants are paying taxes and contributing to the society, following rules and regulations like native people and this way they are integrating into the society. In return they are getting social benefits such as free treatment which they think not possible in their homeland.

### Economic and social Integration

Lazar's(1999) research on the adoption of shared language model explains the motivations for cultural fusion. In this model, minority group such as immigrants and majority groups such as native people paired or engaged with each other for social and economic purposes. Immigrants who are from minority culture try to assimilate with the majority culture for the benefit of employment. Employment is considered an important factor for successful integration. These issues were visible in the discussion with the interviews.

1st participant shared,

*“The first and foremost prerequisite to get permanent residence in Denmark is that you need to have a full-time job with a specific yearly income. And also with this income, you have to contribute to social security. So if you are jobless then you are not eligible to apply for permanent residency”.*

2nd participant said,

*“I worked in IKEA as a team leader. When covid-19 hit the country and the government announced the lockdown for decreasing the corona virus spreading, maximum organizations started working from home. During the time they terminated the job contract with many employees including me as they do not need many people for getting their job done from the home office. I got fired along with my many other colleagues as I was a new employee at that time. My others colleagues who had been working for pretty long time, got compensation / financial assistant from the company for several months to support themselves. Unfortunately, I didn't receive any financial assistant from my working place which put me in a big financial trouble to support my family. At the point, I feel helpless, depressed and felt someone who is separated from the Danish society. I spent all my little saving to lead a daily life”*

From the above participants' knowledge, it is observed that being stable in a job or have a fixed job is an important condition for economic integration. As Akerlof and Kranton (2000) said that social isolation and lack of employment opportunities can lead to create opposite culture. Social isolation means not included or integrate into the society by native people who are part of dominant culture.

It's observed these things among the respondents when I took the interviews. Besides, it is also true that non-professional job or low payment job make the person feeling disrespect or not able to contribute to the family. Therefore, the immigrants perceive that having Danish education and cultural knowledge can offer some advantage in a social and economic manner like they can interact with the society more clearly and create a positive strong bond with the society. It also allows them in pursuing better professional jobs where they can utilize their expertise. Therefore, they think cultural integration is a vital thing for them where social connection, better economic and employment opportunities works as incentives for the immigrants.

For this reason, immigrants often try to come to Denmark with study visa. Their primary goal is normally to get a good educational degree. Because they know if they have good educational qualification they can apply for better job which can make their professional life smooth. If the future career is good then it is easy to settle down and integrate into the society. They can contribute to the society, as well as to the local community. Participants who came to Denmark as a student, also shared the value of having Danish education.

*2nd participant said*

*“The way the Danish educational institutions offer education is completely different from my country. I came to Denmark for my master’s degree. Danish university offer practical based study which is very relevant to job market. And it leads to get into the jobs market very conveniently”.*

*3rd participant said*

*“I did my bachelor and master’s degree from Denmark. I know their education system is well organized and practical based. I also want my children to live in Denmark and be educated in this system. Your study life makes your way easy to get attached to society. During my study, I have participated in different cultural programs at university and also taken part in voluntary activities. These things easily integrate you into the society and culture. I had so many times along with my Danish friends work together in seminars and conferences where I knew without language, participation was not possible but just as a student I got opportunity to attend”.*

Education makes you integrate into society this way. They perceive that, in Denmark, if anyone has a professional degree from any Danish university and language skills they might have a high chance to get a good job. So language plays an important role for immigrants in many ways in Denmark. Lazear also found in his study (1999) that language makes it easier for people to enhance their economic performance. It aids them in reaping the anticipated benefits which might be economic or derived from the cultural context. The structural procedures can be referred to as the social and economic benefits (incentives) as per Akerlof and Kranton (2000). The perception of the interviewees are as follows-

*1st participant said,*

*“Language is a barrier to integrating into society. If you do not know the local language then it will take time to get a good job and it may also be a cause not to allow you to stay here for long term. I know the very basic Danish language and when I try to talk to my fellow danish friends or my colleagues at work, they truly appreciate my effort”.*

*2nd participant stated,*

*“I am still learning the Danish language and I know it will take time to master it as it is not that easy language. But I already realized that to get into Danish culture, Danish language is the gateway. My child is learning the language from school and whenever I visit his school I need to talk to them in Danish although I am not good at Danish”.*

From the above discussion , it can be said that employment,education,language all these are connected in Danish society’s social structure. To become integrate into the society first of all an immgrant need to employed and for employment he or she needs educational qualification and language skill. As Olwig(2011) already mentioned that integration clarify the immigrants who are connected to the scial structure and who are not(Olwig, 2011; Sobolewska, Galandrewska, and Lessard-Phillips, 2017).

## Culture

Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) conducted an in-depth examination of the idea of culture as well as its definition. "Culture consisted entirely of patterns, explicit and implicit, of and for behaviour obtained and conveyed by metaphors, comprising the unique accomplishments of human groups, along with their exemplar in artefacts; the essential core of culture composed of traditional ideas and particularly their connected beliefs; culture processes could, on the one side, be considered as products of action, on the other side, as conditional elements of future actions."

Culture simply does not mean as a process which needs to be planned or structured. It can be understood by its uniqueness to those processes. As a Scandinavian country, Denmark is well known for its uniqueness. The welfare system of Denmark is structured and organized in the way which makes it one of the happiest countries in the world.

2nd participant stated:

*“I was a chain smoker in my home country. I was used to throwing trash here and there in Bangladesh because it’s a very common scene in my country. But, I am now used to throwing trash in the bin in Denmark. Because it is a very organized country and people here are used to doing this. Another day I went to throw my garbage downstairs at my house and I saw an old woman come with a big garbage bag including all types of trash together and she threw all trash*

*separately in each located bin. Honestly, before I used to spend maximum time throwing all my garbage together but I am also used to throwing it separately. However, this was not easy for me at the beginning.”*

According to the participants, in the assimilation process, they replace their old behaviour with new concepts or behavior (Gordon, 1964). So, changing a prior behaviour with a new behaviour has raised difficulties for immigrants to integrate into the society. But when the citizens of the majority culture follow the unique rules and system then immigrants from minority culture try to assimilate with the majority culture to integrate into the society.

*3rd participant stated:*

*“I have been living here almost 12years but still I am learning very small things everyday. Few days ago, I went to one of my friends' houses at night by driving my own car. When I wanted to park my car I could not find the parking sign. I looked here and there but could not help myself. Then, one native danish came to park and I followed him. It was surprising that the parking sign was very close to me but I was not familiar with the sign. On that day I realized I am still learning and I have many things to learn from this organized society”. If I dot know the rules I need to pay fine for violating or not following the rules. For my sake, I need to learn and it is not the native who force me to learn”.*

From the interviews, it is perceived that the immigrants face many difficulties even though they are living in the host society for a long period. These difficulties emerged from the cultural differences between the original culture of the immigrants and the culture of Denmark. When minority people or immigrants access to a new society they naturally grow to develop a shared culture for getting economic and social benefits from the host society(Gordon,1964). Immigrants from different cultures interact together and they observe the differences between their culture and behaviour. These differences appear as an obstacle to building up a connection with the host country or culture. For this reason, they tend to assimilate into Danish culture for minimizing the cultural differences.

According to the participants, there are many differences in Danish customs and rituals from those of their original culture. They observed a change in the celebration of their festivals in Denmark

which are different from Bangladeshi culture. They shared that in Bangladesh they celebrated their festivals with a lot of people like family, neighbours, relatives and friends by exchanging greetings and gifts. There were festive moments and more social gatherings on the occasions. They find these scenes missing in Denmark. Although they shared on Christmas or Halloween, the participants enjoyed a lot and celebrated with local people. That is why cultural differences seem to be more visible sometimes than assimilation as these groups didn't appear to merge into the dominant culture but rather seemed to maintain distinctive ethnic and religious identities. (Kao and Tienda, 1995; Rumbaut and Ima, 1988; Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco, 1995; and Landale and Oropesa, 1995)

2nd Participant said,

*"Here in Denmark, on the occasion of Christmas, we have a holiday from work. I, along with my family, went out to visit Copenhagen city. The city is decorated with colourful lights and there seems everywhere a festive look. I do shopping for myself and my family because there are sales going on. My friends also invite me to their house on Christmas eve and I also go to visit and celebrate with them. However, I also celebrate my religious festivals here which I used to celebrate in Bangladesh with family and friends. However, I do not get the same feeling as I felt in Bangladesh. That was something else. There my mother was used to making different types of Sweets on Eid Day. Such varieties are not available in Denmark which was enjoyable"*

The participants also shared that the code of manners and norms is also different in Denmark than their native country. They have to think before doing anything in Denmark because of its strict social norms and codes of manners. Their perception is that when they were new to Denmark it was quite difficult for them to adapt the social norms and culture but gradually they melted into the new norms and culture which they found beneficial to integrate into the Danish society.

2nd participant shared:

*"In the beginning, things were not easy for us to adapt or to adjust. I can remember when I first came to Denmark, I saw even you do not know your neighbor they will say you 'Hi' which was not similar to my country's norms and manners. We do not say stranger to hi whom we do not know. So it takes time to me to adapt this new manner."*



Another issue is habituating their children with Danish culture. The respondents added that, the subsequent generations are less involved with their parents or grandparents culture because of the loose connection with that culture. Cultural values of their ancestors gradually disappear from generation to generation. Having strong relations with the dominant culture, their children are assimilating the Danish culture naturally.

3rd participant also shared,

*“My children are going to school and learning Danish culture, engaging with friends etc. As a parent I obviously want them to know or learn my culture where I originated from. Their roots also belong there and generation to generation it will be. But I also want them to be habituated with the society they are living in. I do not force them to follow either one. ”*

2nd respondent said,

*“I believe my son will learn Danish culture by mixing with society, friends & relatives. I think society is like water which is needed to learn swimming. So, he must mix with the natives and learn Danish culture. Which one he will choose it's up to him. ”*

As we have already mentioned earlier, according to Gordon (1964), people tend to outgrow their old behavior or cultural values with new or fresh concepts or ideas or behavior, when they see the old behavior might lead them to the economic and social disadvantage which he named as progressive assimilation. He also added, the behavioral or cultural connection with the native (originating culture of the immigrants) gradually disappears in the subsequent generation by the way of assimilation to the dominant culture which is identified as generational assimilation for integrating into the Danish Society.

## Discussion

In this study, I have identified the relevant theories using an inductive method of theory development where I had taken interviews of the respondents first and identified the relevant theories based on responses during the interviewing session.

In my research, it is highlighted that “How Immigrants from Bangladesh Perceive their Integration Process into Danish Society”. During my research analysis, I have applied recognition, diaspora, culture, economic and social integration theories as four categories as these are relevant to answer the research question. All the findings are based on the perception of respondents. Participants shared their way of adapting and integrating into Danish society. At the beginning, it was not easy for them to get used to the norms, rules, and regulations of a new society. As all the participants are not from the same cultural & social background but all the participants are from the same origin. For someone it was a tough time to get used to with new culture while for others integrating into the Danish society was easy in the means of contributing to society through employment and having language skills. It is also identified from this study that immigrants of Bangladesh disperse from their origin due to economic, political, better living and study purposes. But still they have emotional and sentimental attachment with their homeland. They are getting social security and benefits from the host country and many other benefits which make them loyal and they follow every single rule and regulations to be a part of the society. Recognition is prevalent for the immigrants as it helps the immigrants enhance their self-respect by recognizing their competences and contribution to Danish society. It is also observed that love and recognition of the rights of the immigrants is necessary for improving the abilities and successful integration into Danish society.

However, I did not focus on the citizenship status and the criteria in this study as there are plenty of studies regarding these issues already exist and the respondents did not deliberate much information. Besides, this study also has some limitations. Here, I have collected data from male respondents only due to unavailability of time and schedule. However, if there were female respondents there could have some distinct perceptions. Again, I did not focus on the gender regime which feminist scholars agree as a characteristic of welfare state. As I did not focus only on the labor market specifically but analyzed economic integration in general as it was not relevant.

In addition, the participants did not mention anything about their religious views in this study. Therefore, these issues need to be considered before generalizing the outcome of this research.

The findings of this research would be helpful in understanding the perception of Bangladeshi immigrants about their integration process in Denmark integration. Moreover, this study could be also useful as a first hand information for other immigrants who want to migrate or integrate into Danish society. For further research, both male and female participants participation could be add more information and perception in integration process. Moreover, the bigger sample size could also help the research to get more information from the participants.

## Conclusion

As stated in our research question, as part of my ambition for this study to understand the perception of immigrants from Bangladesh in the integration process into Danish society. My aim was to understand the procedures of integration according to the participant's points of view. As in my research, I chose the immigrants from Bangladesh because I am also from Bangladesh and it was easy for me to understand their thinking and perceptions. The study explored the underlying factors that are influencing Bangladeshi immigrants to integrate into Danish culture & society. I have chosen three Bangladeshi immigrants as the participants to collect primary data for my research work.

I have picked the theoretical framework according to the participant's perceptions. I have used integration as main theories along with other related theories which fit in for my analysis. In analysis, I have categorized the section into four parts namely recognition, diaspora, culture and social and economic integration. From the perception of my respondents it is evident that at the beginning, their journey to a new society or being recognized was difficult as they came from a completely different culture. But day by day through employment, education, and language

skills they get used to new norms and rules that make them contribute to the host society and integrate into Danish society.

Using the findings of this research, further quantitative research can be conducted to understand the impact of each predictor in the form of integration of the immigrants. In future, similar studies can be conducted using male and female participants to understand the validity of the findings of this study.

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## Appendices

### Appendix A

#### **Transcripts of the Respondent's interview session**

I am a master's student of Global Refugee Studies at Aalborg University, Copenhagen, Denmark. I am conducting a study on the Perception of how Bangladeshi Immigrants are Integrating into Danish Society. I hope to get your valuable knowledge through your input on this survey.

Your data will be kept confidential and it will only be used for the research analysis purpose.

Many thanks for your time.

#### Questionnaires

Please provide the answers in detail to the following questions

1. What is your name?
2. Your age?
3. When did you come to Denmark?
4. Family Status?
5. Citizenship Status?
6. What is the size of your family?
7. What are your thoughts about the native culture? (For me)
  - Danish Language?
  - Danish Hospitality?
  - Danish Culture?

*-Do you listen to Radio Programs in Denmark?*

*-Do you watch TV Programs in Denmark?*

*-Do you read newspapers in Denmark?*

- According to you, what defines best the Danish culture?

8. Which three things do you appreciate best in Danish society? Motivate your answer.
9. Which three things do you bother much in Danish society? Motivate your answer.
10. Do you think that it is important to learn the Danish language or how difficult it is to learn? Motivate Your answer.
11. Are you learning/ already learned the Danish Language? If so, how?
12. Do you find any major differences among cultures of your native country and here ?
13. Are there any difficulties you find when you started to live here? Motivate your answer.
14. Do you have a Danish friend?
15. Your relations with Danish Citizens except for Bangladeshi Community?
16. Do you like to participate in Danish cultural programs or festivals such Christmas or Easter sunday? Motivate your answer.
17. Do you like Danish Cuisine and the habits of Danish people?

## **Appendix B**

Date of interview: 29 may,2022

Place of interview: Copenhagen

Duration of Interview: 52 minutes

## **Interview 1**

**Interviewer (00:03)**

May I know your name please?

**Interviewee (00:05)**

I am Kamal Ahmed(Fake name)..

**Interviewer (00:06)**

Okay. Can you tell me your age?

**Interviewee (00:09)**

I'm 35 years old.

**Interviewer (00:11)**

Okay. How long are you living in Denmark?

**Interviewee (00:14)**

I've been living here for the last eight years or so.

**Interviewer (00:19)**

Okay. Do you come with a student visa?

**Interviewee (00:23)**

I came with a student visa.

**Interviewer (00:25)**

Okay. So what's your citizenship status now?

**Interviewee (00:52)**

I have recently got my permanent residence in Denmark. After that i can apply for passport but it will take time. The first and foremost prerequisite to get permanent residence in Denmark is that you need to have a full-time job with a specific yearly income. And also with this income, you have to contribute to social security. So if you are jobless then you are not eligible to apply for permanent residency

**Interviewer (00:33)**

Okay, fine. So where do you work?

**Interviewee (00:38)**

At present, I work at Nemlig.com. I am working there as an assistant supervisor.

**Interviewee (00:41)**

Okay. So tell me about your social life Besides your work. What do you do? Do you live with your family here or do you live alone?

**Interviewee (02:51)**

At this moment I live alone. But of course, I'm quite busy with my work. Apart from my work, I normally hang out with my friends, go around, explore the city, play games, and try to enjoy as much as I can offset my work. I know some Bangladeshi immigrants who met their partner in other countries or in Bangladesh and after getting married moved here. Also, some Bangladeshi immigrants married european and living here permanently. But my family live in Bangladesh. I am trying to bring my wife here but it's not easy because of the changing rules.

**Interviewer (01:09)**

Okay. So normally you have off on Saturday, Sunday ?

**Interviewee (01:12)**

No, not really. It depends on the work schedule. So it depends.

**Interviewer (01:18)**

Okay. That's fine. So do you have friends? Do you feel comfortable mixed up with foreigners or the community belonging to your country like from Bangladesh ?

**Interviewee (01:32)**

Well, the nationality really doesn't matter to me as long as personally I most so if I think I'm well with any other person who is good enough. So nationality or culture or religion doesn't really matter to me. Actually, friendship exists among the persons having the same norms, similar behavioral patterns. I talk to my Danish friends in Danish and they appreciate this. Besides our own culture, when we participate in their festival they appreciate us and we are warmly welcomed.

**Interviewer (01:51)**

Yeah, of course. So which things do you like most to live here like in Denmark, and which do you appreciate? Can you name three things?

**Interviewee (06:00)**

The things I like in Denmark most are the social security system such as healthcare, tax system, pension etc. The living standard is here is the best without any doubt. Denmark is one of the happiest countries in the world. In Bangladesh, the human rights is equal only on the paper but in reality on the other way around. Huge imbalance of living standard. Lack of social security makes it worse. In Denmark, I really appreciate their efforts to make a balanced labor market, and a good working environment to make the society more standard.

**Interviewer (02:13)**

Yeah, of course. Yeah. And which things you think are not good, but should be better according to you.

**Interviewee (05:24)**

I really miss my friends and family back in Bangladesh. Especially during the time of our own festivals, I went to my relatives and friends' home and they also came to mine. We put on different colorful dress on those days. We prepared various traditional foods that were cooked by my mother with the helping hands of and me and my siblings. Though those festivals we celebrated here with other Bangladeshi immigrant families still it's not widely celebrated. That is why every year I go to Bangladesh to meet and celebrate those occasions with my family, friends and love ones. Sometimes I feel like I will move back to Bangladesh but whenever I think about my child and their future I cannot stick to this decision.

**Interviewer(00:42)**

Do you feel like you change any of your habit because of living another country ?

**Interviewee(03:23)**

I was a chain smoker in my home country. I was used to throw trashes here and there in Bangladesh because it's a very common scene in my country. But, I am now used to throw the trashes in the bin in Denmark. Because, it is a very organized country and people here are used to do this. Another day i went to throw my garbage to the downstairs of my house and i saw a old woman came with a big garbage bag including all types of trash together and she threw all trashes separately in each located bin. Honestly before i used to maximum time threw my all garbage together but i am also used to throw separately.

**Interviewer (02:37)**

Okay. Why do you think they are like that ?is it their culture?

**Interviewee (07:43)**

It's totally cultural-based because I also have Danish friends and of course, but still sometimes it does not work. "When I was doing my master's, in the 1st semester I was severely sick because of asthma attack and had to admit to hospital. That is why i needed to extend my semester and exam. When i went to study secretary office after recovery to submit my application for extension of my study then he looked at my application with doubts. Although i submitted all medical documents

with my application. He said to why i was absent for so many days . I do not think it's so serious I mean you are new here and the weather is also different from your country. All the outsider students face the problem like you. You should adjust with the situation. This demotivates me a lot. Since then i just want to finish my study and return to my country.

**Interviewer (02:56)**

Okay.

**Interviewee (02:57)**

Of course, they talk with their friends or their circle. But when it comes to the people, it's not about the people from my country. It's all over the world. Even though people come from Eastern Europe, they act in the same way because they have their own circle and they actually don't get out of the circle and be open up and that's how it is. Yeah. So it's really hard to get integrated with them. Number two is the cultural barrier. So sometimes we try to convey our own norms and culture which is also harder for them. I can give you one example. Two days before I was coming home by train and one of the guys from one of the Arabic countries was playing loud music in Arabic songs and like all the Danish people around that person they started proving why you're making loud noise and the language, we also don't understand so why not play something everybody can understand for example in English? Yeah so first of all play music loud like on the train because people are from different mentalities and all those things. Number two is that even if you do then why not play English music so everybody can enjoy and understand, especially at the weekend? So this is certainly a cultural barrier.

**Interviewee (04:24)**

Do you think language is a problem or barrier?

**Interviewee (06:28)**

The truth is if you do not have respect ,you will have no confidence. Respect cannot gain by force i believe. It's a social process. When your danish friends talk with you normally even though your Danish language is not so good still they appreciate you, you will feel good and confident. At the same time, when some danish people tell you, if you think you want to live in Denmark for long

time then you should know the language better. This will make you lose your confidence and respect. Definitely, a barrier because think about the formula coming to our country and when they start like speak in Bangladesh even if it's one sentence that we get so happy and the core values in Danish society is of course about getting integrated with the society and they are forcing too much. So like doing with the culture, norms and language we complain a lot but at the end of the day, we actually don't focus that much on it. A Danish language to get used to practising in your daily life. I know personally some places and also heard from other people, some owner take advantage of not knowing Danish for his or her employee. People who know Danish, their salary is 20kr to 50kr higher per hour than people who does not. But this picture is not for every places.

**Interviewer (05:05)**

Yeah. So you think you already learned the language, right?

**Interviewee (08:11)**

From the beginning of my life in Denmark, I applied for many jobs and wrote to different companies, but they never considered my application and every time they replied negative. And it was always the scenario that there were many more qualified applicants and I was never taken into consideration, so I haven't even managed to be called into a real job interview with my bachelor and master education. And it made me really depressed, because it was very hard to accept that it never happened. Yeah. I know the basics for living here or you willingly learn that language to live here because. It's a part of the condition for permanent residence. I take that. But on the other hand, I enjoy talking in Danish. Of course, the broken one. But the thing is, I don't have, like in a bigger circle with the Danish people or the working culture. For example, before I used to work at Ikea, there are few people down there they don't understand how to speak English. So that was, I think, the good starting point back then for me, that no matter what, I need to talk in Danish. So, like, my mind goes back in time. I started talking just the time back when I started thinking about the importance to learn English.

**Interviewer (06:04)**



But when you say this basic language, like you say it's not complete, they appreciate you or they say, no.

**Interviewee (06:15)**

They really appreciate and even if you tell, like broken language or the accent is quite hard, even if it's not good enough, but they really appreciate that you try. Understanding and learning the Danish language can give us some edge in the workplace for getting and maintaining jobs. When I become able to speak in Danish, I can work with my coworkers more spontaneously. My coworkers feel comfortable to work and communicate with me in their language. For this reason, managers provide some advantage to hire those people who know Danish along with English. If you call to your doctor or Bank or any other institutions for any information, they first reply you in Danish but when you say 'I do not speak Danish' then they reply in English. Majority of the Danish knows English besides Danish and that is the one reason to pick Denmark not Germany as the destination of my higher studies. I heard from my friends and relatives that in Germany most of the people do not want to speak in English although they know English very well. But here in Denmark I never experienced anything like that.

**Interviewer (06:25)**

Yeah.

**Interviewee (06:26)**

But this is often, like, we don't do that because we focus on we have different conditions to follow, actually. So it's also not easy for us that we also have enough time to learn Danish. But it's a matter of balance. I like to integrate into Danish culture because it gives me some advantage in the workplace when I lose my job. Here, labour rights are so strong, so when I lose my job I get proper compensation. Besides, integration gives access to avail different social security benefits in the Danish Welfare State.

**Interviewer (06:42)**

What do you think? If somebody wants to learn Danish more, what should they do, like more social gatherings or social activities, like playing or cultural activities, which will help?

**Interviewee (06:57)**

Think, like in a big corner, as I told you, like, we have a good income source down here because I can only talk about my experience that we try to work more. Number two is we actually focus on the language. Number three is what our peers or the community always tell us is the hardest language. So psychological point of view also doesn't help us to get the time and learn this one. But the moment we start thinking about it for my own convenience because, like, since I've decided to live here. So it's really important to learn the language. For example, if you want to raise your kids, then they're going to talk in Spanish, they're not going to talk in English. So in that way, I think we should focus on learning Danish. And the simplest way to learn Danish is, like, keep talking. It doesn't matter or regardless of your grammar or how good you were.

**Interviewer (07:56)**

Yeah. Which things do you miss? I missed that thing when I was in my country, but I miss them here, like, which one you feel like the cultural thing or environment you feel if it is here, the life will be more good.

**Interviewee (08:19)**

In one word, I would say by Friends.

**Interviewer (08:22)**

Okay. That means your friends who are living in Bangladesh.

**Interviewee (08:29)**

Because of the weather or the work, we were always busy. We hardly get time for ourselves. It's not an excuse, but that's how it is. But, yeah, so I often miss hanging out my time with friends even

though I can have friends here from Romania or from Poland or from Denmark or from my own community. Pakistan, whatever. It's not the same.

**Interviewer (08:55)**

Okay. Do you think they don't get your emotion or they don't understand you or for language problems? This friendship doesn't work so much.

**Interviewee (09:07)**

Actually, it's not like that because the bonding of the friendship always depends on the culture and the same norms. So no matter which country we live in, actually the thinking process is highly backed up by our culture. So what we expect or how we deliver may not match with the person from another country. So, yeah, it will never be the same. Yeah, of course, you can act for a certain period of time. For example, when I hang out with my friends from Denmark like the Dennis Friends, so I Act in a different way than I Act in another way with my own community because it and they'll be the same.

With the same.

**Interviewer (00:00)**

Yes, of course. So how do you celebrate your religious occasion? Like do you participate in Christmas or Easter?

**Interviewee (00:10)**

I do.

**Interviewer (00:10)**

You do?

**Interviewee (00:16)**

So it's really hard, number one because he cannot actually say that you celebrate Christmas because I don't go to the family and celebrate with them. But I actually know how they do that. So what I do is I more like enjoy the festive modes.

**Interviewee (00:35)**

Festive modes of Christmas because everything is colourful, they decorate it.

**Interviewee (00:42)**

So for example, when they make the shopping for themselves, I love to do that for myself as well. To be more festive, we go out and hang out and I also hang out with my friends because they also manage them before or after. So it's not only about surrounding around, circling around the tree. This is definitely I don't have the experience with. But on the other hand, I do other things.

**Interviewee (01:11)**

Okay. So what's your relationship with your own community? Like those people who come from Bangladesh, do you regularly keep in touch with them or just occasionally?

**Interviewee (01:21)**

Not all the time.

**Interviewer (01:23)**

Okay.

**Interviewee (01:28)**

I don't know. Whenever I feel like talking with them or I need something from them or if somebody needs something from me, I'm always there for them. But not on a regular basis. Actually, it's really hard for the farmers, I believe especially from my country because we all are busy with our work. But at least it would be nice to say Hi and have at least one time in a week. But we actually don't do that.

**Interviewer (01:52)**

Okay. Nice.

**Interviewee (05:06)**

Yeah. So nice of you. Thanks for your valuable information. I hope you are also enjoying you're welcome. Thank you. Bye.

**Interview 2**

Date of Interview: 7 June,2022

Place of Interview: Copenhagen

Duration Of Interview: 55 minutes

Interviewer (00:02):

Hi, my name is Mowsumi and I'm doing my master's thesis at Albo university. And my topic is, the perception of Bangladeshi immigrants during their integration process in Denmark. So from that perspective, I need some information from you. So could you please help me to give some information?

Interviewee 00:27):

Hi, I appreciate it.

Interviewer (00:28):

Yeah. Yeah. So may I know your name, please?

Speaker 2 (00:33):

Uh, my name is Riaz Ahmed( Fake name) and I'm from Bangladesh.

Speaker 1 (00:36):

Yeah,

Speaker 2 (00:39):

I'm interested too, to join your interview.

Speaker 1 (00:42):

Yeah. So if you don't mind, can you tell, uh, your age,

Speaker 2 (00:46):

Uh, at near about 40.

Speaker 1 (00:48):

Okay. So how long have you been here in Denmark?

Speaker 2 (00:52):

Uh, almost 13 years. I'm living in Denmark.

Speaker 1 (00:54):

Oh, so long. So what's your, uh, like citizenship status? Are you Here?

Speaker 2 (01:01):

I'm, uh, staying here based on a work permit. Okay. So I'm working in a company. Okay. So I have for there and, uh, uh, based on my work, I got a residence permit here.

Speaker 1 (01:13):

Okay. So do you live with your family?

Speaker 2 (01:17):

Yeah, I live with my family. Uh, yeah.

Speaker 1 (01:22):

Yeah. Okay. So do i am.

Speaker 2 (01:24):

The family's here.

Speaker 1 (01:25):

Yeah. Do you have kids?

Speaker 2 (01:27):

Yes, I have, uh, one kid and he's my son.

Speaker 1 (01:30):

Okay. That's nice. Okay. So you work, uh, um, like how many days, like, uh, you have, uh, holiday Saturday, Sunday or not like that?

Speaker 2 (03:40):

Yeah. Um, usual. Uh, we have, uh, we called in the weekend. We are free, but I work on a weekday. Okay. So five days a week. In the very beginning of my first job in Denmark I was always upset and I couldn't put my attention on work as I was not stable in my personal life. I was alone, I had no one here to support me mentally and it was affecting on my working life. It's tough to be nice to others when you are not fit mentally

Speaker 1 (01:51):

Yeah. So how normally, how you pass your weekend, like with your friends, family, obviously you have some friends here.

Speaker 2 (07:00):

Yeah, of course. Um, we have some friends, we have colleagues, uh, we make some party. We go outside, uh, for S sometimes watching a movie, sometimes going to the restaurant. Yeah. Etc. We do a lot of activities, but, um, yeah, it's, it's not the same activity as we are doing all weekend, but we have, uh, at the different weekends we do different activities. I know some Bangladeshi immigrants who met their partner in other countries or in Bangladesh and after getting married moved here. Also, some Bangladeshi immigrants married European and living here permanently. I personally know some Bangladeshi people in Denmark who leave the country because of too much political pressure or they were too much engaged with the extremist group. They did not go to Bangladesh last 10 to 12 years due to security reason. It's hard for them to stay away from homeland because they shared their roots belong there and all family persons and relatives live there. They just talk over phone or video calls with them. They do not have any other options. They fear of going to Bangladesh if they cannot come back or get into troubles.

Speaker 1 (02:24):

Okay. That's nice. Mm-hmm <affirmative> uh, so do you have any Danish friend or foreign friend, like other than your Bangla, does she community to people?

Speaker 2 (06:32):

Yeah, of course. Uh, I have many friends, uh, from my university, also from my workplace, my colleague office colleague. So I have, I have some Spanish friends besides my friends from Bangladesh. "With my fellow students in the university, when they talk about a topic (music, movie etc.) in general I always tried to participate and express my opinion. But most of the cases I felt like they are not happy with my opinion and gradually I felt like there is big gap of knowledge. I started feeling like I don't know what they are talking about. Day after day I started feeling uncomfortable. I really miss my friends and family back in Bangladesh. Especially during the time of our own festivals, I went to my relatives and friends' home and they also came to mine. We put on different colorful dress on those days. We prepared various traditional foods that were cooked by my mother with the helping hands of and me and my siblings. Though those festivals we celebrated here with other Bangladeshi immigrant families still it's not widely celebrated. That is why every year I go to Bangladesh to meet and celebrate those occasions with my family, friends



and love ones. Sometimes I feel like I will move back to Bangladesh but whenever I think about my child and their future I cannot stick to this decision.

Speaker 1 (02:49):

Yeah. So you get together maybe at the weekend or something like that?

Speaker 2 (02:54):

Yeah, of course. Yeah. Yeah. We do. We do that. We sit in a restaurant where we, uh, met in, um, some cultural program also. Yeah.

Speaker 1 (03:05):

Yeah. So what's your feeling like you are living here for more than 13 years. So what's your feeling like, uh, why do you like Denmark? Like you feel like, okay, I am living here and my rest of the life, I will be here, which things motivate you to live here? Not another country.

Speaker 2 (05:24):

Um, well you, yeah, it's right. Nice question. The motivation for living in Denmark is, uh, a good level market. And, uh, we called, uh, they are very concerned about lever rights and working environment and, uh, and payment method, uh, besides cultural thing and the lever, uh, the market and the labour industry and their, um, policy and strategy are very nice is actually motivated me, uh, as a foreign worker to live in Denmark. When I was doing my master's, in the 1st semester I was severely sick because of asthma attack and had to admit to hospital. That is why i needed to extend my semester and exam. When i went to study secretary office after recovery to submit my application for extension of my study then he looked at my application with doubts. Although i submitted all medical documents with my application. He said to why i was absent for so many days . I do not think it's so serious I mean you are new here and the weather is also different from your country. All the outsider students face the problem like you. You should adjust with the situation. This demotivates me a lot. Since then i just want to finish my study and return to my country

Speaker 1 (04:10):

Okay. And which things, uh, do you feel upset sometimes? Like, no, this should not be like that. Or do you feel like something like that?

Speaker 2 (04:20):

Uh, it's very difficult because Denmark is a well-organized country. It is difficult to find. Maybe I miss my native culture. maybe. Uh, but it's not possible. Uh, every country has their own culture. Uh, so yeah, it's fine. I have been living in Denmark almost 13 years. I got my permanent residence and I will apply for a Danish passport in the future. My two children were born here which made me feel so attached here. I want my children to live here for the rest of their life and get good values and norms from the society. I feel like I am learning new things here every day which is totally absent back in my country. I have a good relationship with my neighbors who are Danish. Though some Danish people do not like immigrants. Although there are some obvious reasons behind this. For instance; most of the non-western people love to talk in public places, on public transport loudly which Danish people doesn't like at all. They used to play music in high volume at home which is also not accepted by Danish people. After discussing so many pros and cons, I still wish to live here as all the human rights are equal shared for everyone

Speaker 1 (04:39):

Which things you'll miss like you feel like,

Speaker 2 (04:41):

Yeah, of course, we miss our country, uh, our, uh, native culture. I can't get to Denmark, but the rest of the things are okay.

Speaker 1 (04:50):

Or, I think. Okay. Okay. Do you feel like here people are not so social or something like that, or?

Speaker 2 (04:58):

No, I don't think so. I don't think so. They are social. Uh, they are friendly. They are welcoming and, um, uh, yeah, helpful. So it's nice.

Speaker 1 (05:13):

Okay. So do you know the Danish language or not?

Speaker 2 (05:16):

Uh, actually I can, uh, I can speak in, uh, in, in very basic level. I can speak in Danish, uh, in primary level, but, uh, I'm not fluent in Danish, but I'm trying to, uh, level up. I worked in IKEA as a team leader. When covid-19 hit the country and the government announced the lockdown for decreasing the corona virus spreading, maximum organizations started working from home. During the time they terminated the job contract with many employees including me as they do not need many people for getting their job done from the home office. I got fired along with my many other colleagues as I was a new employee at that time. My others colleagues who had been working for pretty long time, got compensation / financial assistant from the company for several months to support themselves. Unfortunately, I didn't receive any financial assistant from my working place which put me in a big financial trouble to support my family. At the point, I feel helpless, depressed and felt someone who is separated from the Danish society. I spent all my little saving to lead a daily life

Speaker 1 (05:31):

Okay. But when you, you normally talk with your Danish friend or with Danish language, right. So what's your, uh, feeling like when you talk with them in Danish are, like you said, you are not fluent, so for, they appreciate you or they say, no, you should learn better, or like that.

Speaker 2 (05:50):

*garbage together but I am also used to throwing it separately. However, this was not easy for me at the beginning.* "Oh, actually, uh, helpful. They appreciate, uh, appreciate it. But, um, yeah, it's okay. I can say that it's fine. They have a good opposition and of, uh, I can say that they're welcomed also. It's nice. I was a chain smoker in my home country. I was used to throwing trash here and there in Bangladesh because it's a very common scene in my country. But, I am now used to throwing trash in the bin in Denmark. Because it is a very organized country and people here are used to doing this. Another day I went to throw my garbage downstairs at my house and I saw

an old woman come with a big garbage bag including all types of trash together and she threw all trash separately in each located bin. Honestly, before I used to spend maximum time throwing all my

Speaker 1 (06:09):

So do you feel that to living here language is a must thing or mandatory thing?

Speaker 2 (06:17):

Uh, uh, yeah, on the one side I can say that, um, yeah, sometimes it's mandatory because they're official, they practice and they're in, they practice more. But on another side, I can say that on other hand, uh, verbal communication level is okay. They are, they are very good in English, practising in an, uh, in practising level, in a communication level. So both are okay if I can speak in, uh, Danish fluently, that would be very nice appreciable. And if I'm not able, that's also, English is also, English is preferable and more practising a language.

Speaker 1 (07:02):

Also. And for social gatherings, English is not, uh,

Speaker 2 (07:05):

Yeah, it's not very, yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1 (07:08):

Okay. That's nice. So, uh, you celebrate your, uh, religious occasion here. So, uh, rather than that, do you participate in, uh, here another festival, like Christmas, Easter,

Speaker 2 (07:25):

We, uh, we enjoy Halloween. We enjoy, uh, what's called summer carnival, and also we enjoy summer, uh, Christmas vacation, Easter vacation. Yeah. There's the, a big culture of the country. So we are also part of. Here in Denmark, on the occasion of Christmas, we have a holiday from work. I, along with my family, went out to visit Copenhagen city. The city is decorated with

colourful lights and there seems everywhere a festive look. I do shopping for myself and my family because there are sales going on. My friends also invite me to their house on Christmas eve and I also go to visit and celebrate with them. However, I also celebrate my religious festivals here which I used to celebrate in Bangladesh with family and friends. However, I do not get the same feeling as I felt in Bangladesh. That was something else. There my mother was used to making different types of Sweets on Eid Day. Such varieties are not available in Denmark which was enjoyable.

Speaker 1 (07:45):

Yeah. Can you tell me more about this? Like, uh, you like, hang out with your religious, uh, like Danish friend or a foreign friend who celebrate this at their home, or you just, uh, get the vibe. Like I know like, uh, everything is decorated on that time. You

Speaker 2 (08:02):

Just, no, uh, we, uh, actively participated in some, uh, some of the cultural events. Uh, so I can't say that, uh, just we are, we feel, but we are not, uh, part of the col uh, the celebrity festival or celebration. Uh, we participate beside our own culture, also S uh, festival. We also, uh, make gathering and a party with, uh, uh, regarding the Danish and what's called, uh, country cult, uh, something cultural oriented program, festivals and program, also religious festival or program. We, we are appreciated, we joined. Okay. Actively.

Speaker 1 (08:47):

Yeah, that's nice. So I get you to say just one year around one year old, so when he will grow up, like how you want to, uh, make him grew up, like, uh, in this culture and your native culture, which is preferable to you, or you want to give it to his choice.

Speaker 2 (09:10):

Uh, it's very nice. Uh, when my children will try to swim in, uh, swim, he, he must go to the water, you know, without water, he cannot swim. In the beginning, things were not easy for us to adapt or to adjust. I can remember when I first came to Denmark, i saw even you do not know your neighbor they will say you 'Hi' which was not similar to my country's norms and manners. We do not say stranger to hi whom we do not know. So it takes time to me to adapt this new manner.

Speaker 1 (09:21):

Of course. <laugh>, it's nice. Yeah, because, uh, it's, uh, obviously as a father, it's tough for you. Like you like or miss your native culture, but you also know to live here. Uh, you cannot pressurize him to adapt to the native culture.

Speaker 2 (09:39):

No. Uh, because culture is actually based on the territory yeah. Territory and, uh, uh, is an actual environment creating some culture. So when I live in Africa, of course, I have to have, I have to adopt some, uh, some culture from, their society and environment. And obviously now regarding my job purpose, I'm in Denmark. And of course my children you'll see the Danish culture and, uh, hospitality and other things, and he must learn some of them. My children are going to school and learning Danish culture, engaging with friends etc. As a parent I obviously want them to know or learn my culture where I originated from. Their roots also belong there and generation to generation it will be. But I also want them to be habituated with the society they are living in. I do not force them to follow either one.

Speaker 1 (10:14):

Like positively. Yeah,

Speaker 2 (10:16):

Of course, of course. Otherwise, he can, he cannot, uh, he, he'll not be happy. Yeah,

Speaker 1 (13:32):

Yeah. That's nice. So thanks for all of your information. I hope I can use all of your information for my thesis purpose, and thanks again for giving me time.

Speaker 2 (13:44):

Most welcome. You are appreciated.

Speaker 1 (13:46):

Yeah. Thank

Speaker 2 (13:46):

You. Yeah. Most welcome.

### **Interview 3**

Date of interview: 16 june,2022

Place of interview: Copenhagen

Duration of interview: 40 minutes

**Interviewer:** [00:00:01] Hi. I am Mowsumi Ahmed, and I'm doing my master's thesis at Aalborg University. And for my master's thesis, I need some information from you. So would you please help me to give some information about my master's topic is the perception of bangladeshi immigrants integration process.. So as a Bangladeshi, I think you can give some information. So I need some information from you.

**Interviewee:** [00:00:35] Yeah, I would like to. That's so nice of you. And firstly, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Mohammad Rezaul Kareem Raju (Fake name). My nickname is Raju and they don't, they are not familiar with these nicknames. Things in Denmark are in our South Asian culture and I stay here with my wife and my two kids. Yeah, I came to Denmark in 2014, the middle of 2014, and my wife came just one year after I came here.

**Interviewer:** [00:01:11] And you came on a student visa or like work as work?

**Interviewee:** [00:01:17] No, actually, no, no. I came here as an immigrant.

[00:01:22] And at that time I think, if I'm not mistaken, mistaking from 2010 they had a scheme called Green Card Scheme.

[00:01:31] also they had some other opportunities, opportunities for students here in Denmark. Okay. Previously, a student could have easily migrated to Denmark if they have some kind of studies like four years or three years, because previously in Denmark they used to count full-term study as full-time work, but not anymore. They don't do it anymore.

[00:01:54] And here and I came with a green card scheme. I told you earlier, it's it was like a point-based migration system, like other countries have, like countries have like Australia, Canada and New Zealand and some others like Malaysia. Yeah. But, they actually thought about implementing something like that so they can go to their country or they can experience a multicultural environment or something like that. That's how Denmark works. Yeah. After taking some scheme like other countries are taking. Yeah. But actually, it paid, I mean my, my, my, my opinion is well because we came as high skilled migrant, it was a point-based migration system and we came as migrant and high skilled migrant, but still, we had to work like non-professional in non-professional sectors, like in the kitchen or most of them are cleaners or dishwasher or something like that.

**Interviewer:** [00:02:52] So if you don't mind, like what, what profession you are doing now like yeah.

**Interviewee:** [00:02:57] Actually before that I wanted to add something more in relation to my previous question. The thing is as a person if I if you are trying to migrate to other countries, yeah, you just want to come and see what's going to happen or maybe you don't think about, okay, I just have to do my job, my something, my professional job or something like that. But still, you have in your mind that you are going somewhere, so you are getting migrated, so you will stay there.



So you are visiting, residing there permanently. But in Denmark, although they had this scheme, it's not a green card. Actually, it was a red card scheme. Yeah. Okay. Although you are coming as a highly-skilled migrant, you are not actually immigrating to this country. You are something like a temporary worker here. The scheme was like that. It was not like a fully accomplished immigration system or scheme. Okay. So you will never know when you have to go back.

[00:03:59] So actually from the beginning when they developed the scheme, although they developed the scheme may be to be in a standard with other countries or something like that, I don't know what, what was the issue in their mind in that time but implementing the scheme. But I think they didn't plan it properly. Like how we will like what to say, how will it be integrated into society or what we have to do and what kind of problems we might face? They didn't think about it. They didn't ask us that. You must have to learn Danish when you are here or you have six months to learn this language like they do for doctors. Yes, but they told us just to come if you can speak in English, but when you are going to a job, they are saying, why not? Not speak Danish next time when I see you. Yeah, I faced it in my job place my next time. Even my doctor said, Well, you're not speaking Danish, although they are one of the good English speakers in the whole world. I guess maybe they. Second number. The second was to Sweden and one of the most advanced nations in English. It's true because English are their second language. They study not a second language, but the study of school, not like us we do in our country.

**Interviewer:** [00:05:15] So you think like language, you are doing it like as a mandatory, not willingly. Right?

**Interviewee:** [00:05:22] For you you are willing. No, I'm only learning now willingly because I'm. I'm residing here. So I just need to know how to talk, how to communicate in your language. Unless one thing is in my as far as I'm concerned, like if you are asking about immigrating or migrating or integrating, yeah. The first thing is the language. You have to learn their language. If they are not speaking your language like in Bangla or your second language, the one we speak mostly English, but still you have to learn the language. It's not in English-speaking countries like

Australia, Canada, New Zealand or England or other countries, but to be integrated, to have a good integration for yourself, you must have the language. That's the first step to integrating our first step. How do I describe it? It's the first step you're taking to their society or to the culture is the language is the medium. It's like like in our country. What you say, like, for example, I'm hip hop chi. I have the noun. Yeah. And English is saying I eat rice is something like noun, like subject and object and object verb coming first. But in Denmark, they have one thing that is in question. Yeah. Like when you are putting something then in our country, if we said tomorrow I will eat rice, it's the same. But in Denmark is not the same. No, not the same. If something is coming before the subject and there are many things. So it's completely it's their way of thinking, it's a way of life. The thing is that our language is our way of life. So for us, it was positive.

[00:06:59] For me it was not clear. There are some obstacles to understanding. Actually, to be frank, at the beginning I was just coming to work and going back. I didn't have that many friends from other communities like in Denmark. Who is Danish? Real Danish, yeah. But I had some friends actually from the beginning where they are my team, as some of our waiters. Yeah. When I started working, they become my good friend like they are on my Facebook. I like them, they like me. It takes them, they reply, That's it. But we actually didn't know the cultural, big cultural difference between us and them. But slowly, slowly in time, literally things coming forward that that one thing I notice for my life in fast time yesterday that they have to turn their headlights on in daytime also when they're driving. I didn't know that all the cars they are driving with the headline on. I didn't notice that in eight years. I was wondering, yeah, so it's like a barrier. It's something like a curtain in front of your eyes. You can see a lot of things. Okay, so you must have the language before getting into another society. So they are saying many things we don't we can't hear. It's everything is fuzzy. Just I'm doing work and going home and getting the salary, going to shop, buying and staying home and sometimes going out. That's it. Also only going, we're thinking, Oh, it's like that. Why? It's like that first when you're going someplace. Oh, it's, it's nice-looking nice. The technology is advanced, but still, you are not very easy.

**Interviewer:** [00:08:32] You that question like a few minutes ago, you don't like a country like Australia, Australia or Canada. They have English, so you need not learn a language then which things do you feel like motivate you to live in Denmark, like your preference? Can you tell?

**Interviewee:** [00:08:49] Okay, one more thing. One. One of the most important things to say in Denmark is the living standard is good, very good, and very high security. Life security is very high. Your insurance, your treatment, although many European countries have the same treatment system and some also have another scheme like in the UK, students don't have to pay for their medicines. Here you have to pay. But still, students are getting paid for studying. But when we come, we came as an immigrant. Actually, we are not immigrants. We are like on a temporary scheme, just like you are going to come going to our country with a job visa for some time. But recently I got my permanent residence and it's not so easy to get.

**Interviewee:** [00:09:31] You have to actually complete a lot of things like your language, your job requirements, your only requirement threshold. You have to pass some citizenship tests. So during the test, I got to know some of their cultures, not by exploring my own just before attending the exam, I had to study here. And then I knew a lot of things that what they invented, what they like, what did what they do. But last month I got to know that everyone may not last month. I was with the doctor earlier this month. And at 12:00 I had an appointment so I was with a doctor like 5 minutes before. And suddenly it was just that there were sirens everywhere. Yeah. And it's like the same time bomb all everywhere. They were making it like sounds of silence. And I was hearing, like, all kinds of silence. Whoa, whoa, whoa. I don't know what that is. Don't panic. It's not Rush. I said, what? It's just a drill. It's just a drill every year. First Wednesday of May, at 12:00, they make it real that now this is the siren. When you hear the siren, you have to go underneath somewhere, bunker or anywhere, because someone attacked. But it's definitely not Russia, it's just a regular drill. So I didn't know that. So it's like eight years, I didn't know that. So I didn't know a lot of things about it but.

**Interviewer:** [00:10:51] Is still learning.

**Interviewee:** [00:10:52] Yeah. Now I started studying the Danish language.

[00:10:55] I'm doing a professional course now. I'm learning. I'm knowing their language better and now I'm getting no about like get to I'm getting to know a lot of things about their culture also because they are telling us tomorrow is that they're doing that that so but then we asked our friends what are you going to do tomorrow? What is that tomorrow? Then they are telling us that we are doing that, that tomorrow. Okay, so it takes time. You can memorize, but you will not explore that until. So you're exploring on your own or you are knowing personally from someone. Yeah, and that's what I was telling you before. We are not sure about our immigration status or anything that was going to happen. We actually didn't bother that much about learning the language of culture. We just used to come to work and go home and going to go shopping, only those kinds of things.

**Interviewer:** [00:11:50] So do you have kids?

**Interviewee:** [00:11:51] I have two, actually.

**Interviewer:** [00:11:52] So do you feel like because of your kids you need to mix up with the Danish society or do they definitely go to school. So for accompanying them, you need to learn to communicate with their culture. Or do you feel that?

**Interviewee:** [00:12:07] It's actually a good question. I know what you mean by that, but actually, I would like to add something more to it. Yeah, I think when you are going to send your children to Danish school, yeah, you have to know something. Otherwise, they will let you know. They'll tell you, no, you don't come to that day to school. But because we do that, most of the children do

that, but our parents are doing that. So they have to stay home. Or someday they said no, they have to come. They have to bring something, maybe their own form, suit or something like that or something. So but because I'm not like the person responsible to take what is the Olivia, Olivia or hunter like? Like to drop them off or receive them from school. It's my wife, but. But still, she tells me. Okay, yeah. So I got to know that. So even though I don't have to learn, or if I don't wish to learn, I will learn automatically because it's the by the time and also in the immigration scheme. They also say that if your children are going to school for a certain time, that is also a qualification in Denmark. That's also qualification and I believe that. Okay, yeah, it's like you are doing a full-time job, you are at any school. It's kind of that it's also an experiment. It is an experiment and it's an experiment.

[00:13:31] So you will learn. You will learn. Then you can do some experiments as I did with my elder son. Yeah. He used to be in kindergarten, and he has some difficulties I would say this is the and I knew it. I knew it even last year, not last year or two years ago. Denmark was number one the immigration education system in the world number one country for the education system. I feel that I was in the UK so I know the difference and I was in Bangladesh. My child had some problems and generally what they do you know, I am familiar with this education system like Barney how kindergarten, and nursery school. It's like the 0 to 2 years they are in bogus to like a nursery. Then for two years, they are in Barney for kindergarten. Then they go to go to school. It's a law. So children master whether they go to one how to or not like they're going to no nursery. They go or not, that doesn't matter. But they must have to attend school when they are turning six. So it's very important. It's a rule then they are all abiding by the rule. In Denmark, I have something in my hand. I didn't throw it out. It's like like a piece of paper. I want to get rid of it. But I didn't throw it anywhere. I was looking for searching for garbage like Skyler's plan the same.

[00:14:47] And then I tried. But we don't do that. It is a practice. Even though when I was in Bangladesh I had something in my hand. Maybe I was a smoker at that time. I had to pack of cigarette empty packet and I didn't throw it. I was looking for a bin. It's been. It's been. Yeah. And they said say Skylar Spender's garbage bin. So I was looking for that. Then I saw on the road everything everywhere. So that's also a cultural difference here. And I don't like that. I didn't like that anymore. I said, Oh, everyone is. I didn't like that. It's not like I'm living in a country and I'm forgetting my country. No, never. But I didn't like that. But I clearly found a difference, a cultural

difference. That's also a big difference, like the mentality of how we are thinking, yeah, yeah, this is the way of thinking. We can see the big difference between our thinking and their thinking. Although they have something I don't, I will not be able to copy it. I will never receive that. There are some other cultures that are our go against our religion. Yeah, those cultures are from me. I hate that too much. Yeah, I will not. I'll never hear of that. I always hate that. And I. I'll try to teach our children also the same.

**Interviewer:** [00:15:57] I feel like your children are naturally getting that vibe, that cultural vibe you want.

**Interviewee:** [00:16:04] Yeah, yeah, yeah. They all get. But in the end, we are the boss, we are the ones responsible. It is in our hands. They will get to know it's okay. They will get to know that. Now I'm going to the previous question again. Yeah, so I know what is the difference there? They are changing and I correct that or I add that I amend that. I know they're doing that, then I amend it on my own at home.

**Interviewee:** [00:16:28] And why I was saying the education system is like number one or one of the best in the whole world, not only the when they are going to school or like when they turn 18. Yeah, now I'm an adult, I'm going to school, I'm a family residence now. Yeah, I'm going to a technical school like professional training. I get paid for going there and I get my conveyance also. Yeah. And I can do a part-time job also and my tuition is completely free. Okay, so the are education system in the school also different from what I saw. Yeah so everyone will learn. It's not like if someone wants to learn, they will learn and those who don't will know. They will learn automatically, automatically. This is their education system. And I was talking about my eldest child here. He had some kind of not had he already has some, but previously it was bad. But now it's a little better. A little better. You are the normal gets. Yeah, yeah. But they were more concerned about me. Oh, they were telling me something from long ago.

[00:17:31] I didn't care. Oh, I thought no, no, no, no. They are saying no, he has to talk. He has to talk. Now we are worried about him. I said, no, I'm not worried, but they are more concerned. They said, no, it's getting worse. He needs to now do, does, does that. Then I permitted they have to have my agreement or concern before making a decision. They can't do it on their own. I must approve that as a parent. Yeah. So they told them finally they said, okay, we have to call a psychologist. Yeah. So you could give us consent. I said, okay, let's see what she says. Or they said. Then our lady came and she said a lot of things. And from then on I was trying to realize that when my little child was born, I was clearly different. Like I was able to differentiate, I was able to differentiate the difference between these two children. Yeah. Then I realized that no, actually they were concerned and they were what they were saying is okay, so I started to take the initiative.

**Interviewer:** [00:18:40] Yeah, yeah.

**Interviewee:** [00:18:42] Then after some time they, they like the, they said he needs this. So from our side what we can do, we can employ one teacher for him only. Okay. Then they gave him one teacher and I didn't have to pay for that. It's communion with them. Yeah.

**Interviewer:** [00:19:00] So it's a good thing.

**Interviewee:** [00:19:01] Yeah. Then there were a lot of visits from other doctors and experts. He's like they say tell a bit about that is a speech therapist and support specialist like it's too debatable and they called if someone is taking a degree on child education to how to take care of a little child they call they become not they don't become a teacher is left they become pay double. Yeah, so they have different experts ago now today now finally I agreed and we found a school they found a school for him. A special school. It's not like it's for disabled mentally disabled children. School is not for them, is for those who need some support. Like there are some children who need some support. We don't know in our country we never knew it. Maybe I was like that. I didn't know.

Nobody knew. Yeah, but they know. Like as a father, I said, No, it's okay. He's going to talk. He's singing every day. He knows what he hears, he can learn. So it's okay for me if we can just give the exam and pass. Excuse me. That's okay for me. But then I realized I visited them today and it's totally different.

: [00:20:10] You can't imagine if you're not there. Yeah, it's something different. It's like it's another world for him. They made it separately for him. And there are also some specialists whose guy will guide them, guide him and others for like five children. There are three teachers. Three. Yeah. And also the specialist speech therapists, they're coming thrice a week and they are also spending time with him and they're going to school. And also they are giving suggestions. What you have to do this, they have a plan, they have a whole plan list and they have to check whether he did it or not. And so it's not like they're just saying we did it. No, they are doing their duties. They are responsible for their job and they are much more responsible and they are much more honest. If we're asking about Denmark, they are like from the bottom, like the second least corrupted country in the whole world. Yeah. Yeah. And also you said about migration, you have a lot of questions about migration. Okay, I'll try to later we'll come to the Corona situation and other things, but I'll just give my experience at a glance.

**Interviewee:** [00:21:22] Yeah.

**Interviewee:** [00:21:23] So first of all, when you come here, you like it because your life is completely different from our country, especially Bangladesh, although we had much more life, luxurious life in the country, I would say. For what purpose? Like there are people to help, you know. But here we cannot just have someone to help me. Okay? Yeah, I at my home, like, for making my food, washing my clothes, cleaning my house here. It was very expensive. But still, if you need like me, my company is offering me. I'm not expecting they will send someone to help me at home. But I'm not expecting that. I'm not I'm not approving that actually. Also, I don't want it. Yeah. I don't want someone to come to my home and all. Apart from that, you have your own life, your job, you have your job satisfaction for some mean not totally, but for some extent, you



will have your job satisfaction. Also, you have good earnings here. Whatever you do, you have good earnings if you work full-time. Yeah. Like you will not get that in our country for a very, very good job. Like you have to be top of the top. You do not earn that from the job. You have to do business to earn that kind of money in Bangladesh. And that was a good point. And secondly, life is easy, like transportation and everything, easy with treatment. It's fully free. And no matter how much expensive medical treatment you need, they will give you for free. My child was like a premature elder for nine weeks. Yeah. And he was in the machine. That machine. So for like six weeks. So you can imagine how much it could have cost me this in Bangladesh. Also is.

**Speaker2:** [00:23:09] Here is Free. education is free.

**Speaker1:** [00:23:13] For.

**Speaker2:** [00:23:13] Everything. Child Yeah, you have.

**Interviewer:** [00:23:16] You feel like if you are in Bangladesh then you need to like cost a lot for your child.

**Speaker2:** [00:23:23] Have been cost a lot and there is no cost. Yes. Also, the treatment in the medical system is advanced, much more advanced than in our country.

**Speaker1:** [00:23:31] You still I want to ask you like which things you miss, like, okay, I missed these things when I was in Bangladesh.

**Speaker2:** [00:23:38] Like it's my family and friends. Only those, only those. And of course our festivals, festive things. Yeah, those. You can't. We can't.

**Speaker1:** [00:23:48] But you celebrate here also.

**Speaker2:** [00:23:50] Yeah. It's not bad, but it's not. It's in a small like how to say you cannot do it like in a past like.

**Interviewee:** [00:23:58] Totally in in in total environment. Like it's not how to say it's not a multicultural society. Denmark is not a multicultural society at all.

**Speaker1:** [00:24:07] Okay?

**Speaker2:** [00:24:08] It's just one culture. It's Danish.

**Speaker1:** [00:24:10] Culture. Okay.

**Speaker2:** [00:24:11] And also, I didn't try Danish food before, like in my life, eight years here almost now. I was trying some of their foods and it's amazing. I was scared of that kind of food because this dog bed was going to eat it. That is bitter. But if you actually try this within their recipe, it's amazing. You try, you have to try. You just try some recipe with shrimp and egg. It's amazing.

**Speaker1:** [00:24:35] Okay.

**Speaker2:** [00:24:35] Yeah, it's very nice. But we didn't explore that. But because we are scared of actually, it's us not adapting their culture. Yeah, that doesn't mean I'm saying that you have to adapt to their culture and you have to forget your religion and other culture. No, not that. That's why we are scared. But it's not. It's not that you should adopt that from the heart. And that's what they are telling them. For a long time, we didn't understand. We are always opposing ours. You are so anti-immigrant. You are so in. But they're not saying it wrong. They're saying, we're not integrating. You're not adopting. You're not going to school. You're not learning our language. That's true. You can go further. You can leave here. You're going to stay here, but you're going to stay here forever as a guest. Yeah.

**Speaker1:** [00:25:15] So they don't have that. Also, they don't have permanent residence, but they can throw you out anytime you.

**Speaker2:** [00:25:22] Feel like it's bullshit. So it's like propaganda. It's like they say something. Oh, they give you a passport. Actually, my passport was due next year. But somehow they make it more difficult. They're making it difficult every day. Every day. I'm in residency and passport, but I would say that, no, from next year, maybe no one, no one will get permanent residency if they're not so lucky, you know, because it's that hard now and they have no other option open for them. They made their skin like they don't like immigrants. They want to keep society small now. Okay.

**Speaker1:** [00:26:47] About your passport.

**Speaker2:** [00:26:49] And immigration and as soon as it's quite impossible now and it's. Oh, and another thing they say is propaganda that they can take your passport away any time the one you heard. So you are scared and are leaving this before you are getting the powerlessness because they will take it from you.

**Speaker1:** [00:27:04] Any time people say.

**Speaker2:** [00:27:05] Yeah, it's just propaganda. And he said this These people have a very narrow mentality either or they don't know what they're talking about. It's just propaganda they have. They are talking about it in our country, also in our passport. The right. We can take your passport any time.

**Speaker1:** [00:27:20] Okay.

**Speaker2:** [00:27:21] Yeah, it's written on their passport also. That doesn't mean they are taking it from it. There is no single evidence that someone got kicked out. Okay? It's just propaganda. So just to make you scared and I don't know what is in their mind so you can.

**Speaker1:** [00:29:41] Okay, that's fine. So thanks for your valuable information. I hope I can use this information for my thesis and thanks for today.

**Speaker2:** [00:29:51] Yes, I was also happy to give you some information. I don't know whether I would be able to give you. I did. I provided you with all the information. You need it. So if you need something, just text me or you can call me and ask me. So I'll try to explain that. So you can

write it, and use it in your thesis. And good luck with your thesis. Yeah. Hope you'll do your best. Yeah. Have a nice day. Have a nice day with you.

**Speaker1:** [00:30:14] Thank you. Thank you.