Playing our way: Participation, recognition and creativity as resources for growing up across cultures

Hildegunn Marie Tønnessen Seip

University of Oslo, Ansgar University College and ABUP/Sørlandet Hospital

Dissertation presented for the degree of Philosophiae Doctor (PhD) 2020

Department of Psychology

Faculty of Social Sciences

University of Oslo
© Hildegunn Marie Tønnessen Seip, 2020

Series of dissertations submitted to the
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Oslo
No. 809

ISSN 1564-3991

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be
reproduced or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without permission.

Cover: Hanne Baadsgaard Utigard.
Cover photo: Lars Verket
Print production: Reprosentralen, University of Oslo.
Prelude: Puzzles and potential

Where did this story begin? Was it when my grandparents brought me gifts from Jamaica and Nairobi after traveling to UN conferences, and I as a child felt the excitement of being part of a big and colorful world? Was it when I admired my other grandfather’s treasures from his migrant years in New York in the early 20th century? Was it when I lived in Mexico or California or Greece, or when I returned home to Norway with my own multilingual children?

Whenever it began, I followed my curiosity, and it got me moving. That sense of wonder in encounters with people who had lived different lives from me, as I understood that we therefore saw and moved through the world differently. The ways I learned from and grew in those encounters. The richness of finding different perspectives interacting and unfolding, even in one and the same person – like melodies and rhythms from different musical traditions playing together, blending into something rooted, but also new.

The challenges also stirred me: The injustice in how much harder it is for a refugee to move around in this world than for a tourist or traveling researcher. The discrimination and othering people often face when they are visibly different. The loneliness of the outsider.

With more migrants now than the world may ever have seen before, more opportunities for interaction across borders, but perhaps also more polarization and prejudice – what kind of a world is this for children to grow up in? Acknowledging the importance of our formative years, and the cultural nature of human development, how does living with multiple cultures impact a developing child or young person? What vulnerabilities and what potential can cross-cultural experiences foster?

As I was already starting to ask these questions and preparing a PhD project in cultural and community psychology, I heard the sound of Kaleidoscope, coming to a theatre near me. I listened up. Here, I could meet young people with complex cultural backgrounds, explore their stories and interaction with each other, and see what beauty their joint efforts could create, as they combined their different songs and flavors. Some of the participants were already telling stories of how much it meant to them to find an arena where their mixed background was not a problem, but a resource. My case had found me.

I packed and embarked on my journey, still trying to find out what I was looking for.
# Table of contents

Prelude: Puzzles and potential ......................................................................................... i
List of articles .................................................................................................................. v
Preface .............................................................................................................................. vi
Acknowledgements ......................................................................................................... vi
Summary ............................................................................................................................ ix

1. Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1
   1.1. Topic ....................................................................................................................... 1
   1.2. Context of study ................................................................................................. 1
   1.3. Research questions ............................................................................................ 3
   1.4. Overview of research design ............................................................................... 5
   1.5. Plan of foundation ............................................................................................. 6

2. Background and research history ................................................................................ 7
   2.1. Humans on the move ......................................................................................... 7
      2.1.1. Migrants and minorities – acculturation, exclusion and belonging ............... 8
      2.1.2. Culture and development ........................................................................... 9
      2.1.3. Growing up across cultures, across borders ............................................... 14
      2.1.4. Cultural participation and creativity ............................................................ 20
   2.2. The ecology of human development and living well ......................................... 24
      2.2.1. Health and wellbeing .................................................................................. 26
      2.2.2. Salutogenesis: Finding the flow towards health ........................................... 28
      2.2.3. Social inequalities in health ......................................................................... 32
      2.2.4. Cultural health promotion: the potential of participatory and creative arenas ...... 33
   2.3. Case: The participatory and creative arena of Kaleidoscope .............................. 36
      2.3.1. Kaleidoscope as a majoritarian discourse .................................................. 36
      2.3.2. Music as an intercultural tool ..................................................................... 38
      2.3.3. Ongoing projects .......................................................................................... 39
   2.4. Current research gaps and aims of the study ..................................................... 39

3. Methodology ................................................................................................................ 41
   3.1. Philosophical foundation .................................................................................... 41
      3.1.1. Ontology and epistemology in a multicultural world ..................................... 42
      3.1.2. Dialectic pragmatism: Useful inspiration ..................................................... 44
      3.1.3. Critical realism: Stratified and interdependent reality .................................. 46
      3.1.4. What is critical about critical realism? ......................................................... 47
3.2. A participatory approach ........................................................................................................ 48
  3.2.1. Participatory Action Research – why and how? ............................................................. 49
  3.2.2. The reference group ........................................................................................................ 51
  3.2.3. Contexts of knowledge production: Participants and other stakeholders .................. 52
  3.2.4. Co-creating knowledge: Learning together ................................................................. 55
  3.2.5. Ethical concerns – participation, power and integrity ................................................. 56

Interlude: Rap from afar .............................................................................................................. 62

4. Mixed methods, participants and procedures ......................................................................... 63
  4.1. The rationale and strategies for mixing methods ............................................................... 63
  4.2. Case in context: Kaleidoscope as local communities ....................................................... 65
  4.3. Participant observation – exploratory fieldwork ............................................................. 66
    4.3.1. Participants in the fieldwork stage ............................................................................. 67
    4.3.2. Data collection – participant observation ................................................................ 67
    4.3.3. Analysis of ethnographic data .................................................................................. 68
  4.4. Interviews ............................................................................................................................. 68
    4.4.1. Participants in the interviews .................................................................................... 69
    4.4.2. Data collection – interviews ..................................................................................... 70
    4.4.3. Analysis of interviews .............................................................................................. 71
  4.5. Survey .................................................................................................................................. 73
    4.5.1. Participants in the survey .......................................................................................... 73
    4.5.2. Data collection – survey ........................................................................................... 74
    4.5.3. Analysis of survey data ............................................................................................. 76

5. Summary of papers .................................................................................................................... 78
  5.1. Paper I: Supporting cross-cultural identity development ................................................. 78
  5.2. Paper II: Navigating cultures ............................................................................................ 80
  5.3. Paper III: Recognition as a catalyst for agency ............................................................... 81
  5.4. Paper IV: Better Together: Co-Creating Salutogenesis with Migrant Youth .................. 82
  5.5. Brief reflections on additional data ................................................................................... 85

6. Discussion .................................................................................................................................... 86
  6.1. Contributions ......................................................................................................................... 86
    6.1.1. Simultaneity ............................................................................................................... 86
    6.1.2. What to do with diversity? ......................................................................................... 87
    6.1.3. Navigating together .................................................................................................... 89
    6.1.4. Voice: Finding it and singing out loud ....................................................................... 90
    6.1.5. Agency as freedom of movement ............................................................................ 91
    6.1.6. The perks of playfulness ............................................................................................ 92
Appendix

NSD approval
Information for participants and parents/guardians
Interview guide
Survey

Papers I-IV
List of articles

Paper I

Paper II
https://doi.org/10.1007/s42087-018-0052-4

Paper III

Paper IV
Better Together. Creative Participation with Young Migrants. (Transcultural Psychiatry)
Preface
This PhD is a psychological study that explores the lives and experiences of young people growing up crossing cultural categories. I met them through the musical project Kaleidoscope, which is an important context that I describe and analyze. However, this is not an evaluation or a study of Kaleidoscope per se, but an exploration of participants’ life worlds and the psychological processes unfolding in participatory and creative communities.

The research project has been a collaboration between my main employer Ansgar University College (Departments of Psychology and Intercultural Studies) and the Department of Child and Adolescent Mental Health (ABUP) at Sørlandet Hospital in Kristiansand, while I followed the PhD program in psychology at the University of Oslo. I have had great support along the way, but stand solely responsible for any faults in this work.

For clarification; I changed my last name from Schuff to Seip in 2019, between the first and last publications in this project. This means that when I refer to my own work, I will sometimes refer to Schuff (e.g. 2016, 2018, and earlier work) and sometimes to Seip (2020). New name, new stage in life – the same developing person, still becoming and learning.

Acknowledgements
I am grateful to everyone who made this learning process possible, and a long road less lonely. First, to all the children and young people I have met in Kaleidoscope – thank you! You moved me. Some of you I have met up close, others as part of the community – I have seen you dance, hug and cry, and heard you sing, complain and giggle. I have witnessed you straightening your backs, bravely facing an audience. I have found myself excited and nervous and relieved with you, and often singing and dancing along. Your courage and appetite for life are an inspiration. I hope you dance!

I am grateful to all the Kaleidoscope leaders and assistants who have welcomed me, answered questions and made it possible for me to join them during different stages of my research. Thank you, and all the best of luck in co-creating the citizens of tomorrow.

To my colleagues at Ansgar University College and all of Ansgarskolen – thank you! You are not only colleagues, but also a vital everyday community. I am grateful to librarian and dear friend Birgit Myrene, for all that you are. I want to thank the two main ingroups (departments) that have supported, inspired and sharpened my thinking and passion – Lars Mandelkow, Beate Helmikstøl, Helge Slotten and Linda Fisher-Høyrem (until recently) in the psychology department, and Ingrid Eskilt, Torstein Try and Anne May Abrahamsen in
intercultural studies. I am grateful to the leaders who have had faith in me and given me the opportunity to pursue this project; former principal Harald Nygaard, current principal Ingunn Folkestad Breistein, and research leader Marie Strand Skånland. Priceless support has also come from the academic gentlemen Reidar Salvesen, Cato Gulaker, Thorkild Bruhn and Øyvind Skjegstad, who make things work. Thanks also go to Martin Jakobsen for the humor and wisdom you bring to coffee breaks, and to Eva Dønnestad, who passed by as an office companion for a while, and left traces of golden dust and loud laughter. Laughter and singing also follow our colleagues in the music department, such as fellow research fellows Bodil K. Nørsett and Kjetil Høyer Jonassen and (formerly) Hege B. Beckmann, Elisabeth Mjanger the lovely, Pål Rake with his big heart and all the rest of you who keep the music alive. I could go on – thank you to the whole Ansgar family!

I also want to thank my colleagues at ABUP, particularly former leader of research and development Dagfinn Ulland and head of department Karl Erik Karlsen who gave me the opportunity, and current leader of research and development Åshild Tellefsen Haaland, for supporting my work with kindness and clarity. Thomas Bjerregaard Bertelsen, thank you for your advice when I was lost in statistics: You helped me find a way, with your passion for probability densities and the like, and your willingness to share it. I also want to thank Carina Ribe Fernee, Leiv Gabrielsen, Kari Vik, Anne Helgeland, Reidun Kerlefsen, Liv Larsen Stray, Indra Simhan and the rest of ABUP FoU for constructive discussions and communal sharing of julegrøt and island hikes. I appreciate the support and follow-up from Frode Gallefoss and Sandrine Schuhler Slotten at the research department of Sørlandet Hospital HF.

I feel privileged to have been part of the PhD program at the Psychology Department of the University of Oslo. The cultural and community psychology research group has been a greatly appreciated community of fellow explorers, a group I have felt academically at home in, characterized by critical and political courage and genuinely warm and caring engagement in the world and in each other’s academic work. Thank you! I am wiser because of you. I want to specifically thank Mona Irén Hauge, Ola Jacob Madsen and Susanne Normann for input on different texts, and Sigrun Marie Moss for all the hurra!

My supervisor Nora Sveaass has been a priceless companion throughout the process. Thank you, Nora, for all the good advice, for your patience and flexibility, and for picking me up in your rowing boat. And not least, thank you for your never-resting work for everyone’s rights and dignity. It is a great inspiration to see you combine psychology and politics, both arguing wisely and fighting eagerly for what is right. I will do my best to carry on that legacy.
Co-supervisor António Barbosa da Silva has been a wonderful source of wisdom and writing advice, gently cheering me on, and always ready to respond swiftly and thoughtfully to my drafts. Your philosophical soundness has helped me be more thorough. Obrigada!

Co-supervisor Anne Haugland Balsnes, thank you for the encouragement to get started, as well as to complete this marathon. Even when we meet briefly in the midst of busy days, your optimism is quite efficient and it is always energizing to talk to you. Shine on!

I am blessed with the funnest and finest of friends. Thank you, Juliane and Mari, for everyday chats and serious conversations, for rock concert relief and silly dancing, perfect GIF encouragements and lots of laughs along the way. And for that important study week by the ocean, Juli! Dear Randi, thank you for our long conversations, for laughing and praying with me through thick and thin. ¡Gracias Maria! Takk, Siv Anne! And all my poetic and political and fun and different and just lovely friends – thank you for the color you bring to my life. I enjoy being human with you guys.

Thank you, mamma & pappa, for life, and for all the love. Thank you for listening to me and reading what I write. Pappa: Thank you for praying me through. And mamma: Thank you for not only being all that you are as a mother, but also taking the time to give me thorough and constructive feedback on the whole dissertation, from a professor to her daughter. I am also grateful to my brothers and the rest of our family, simply for being us.

*Kjæreste* Jan Kristian – takk! I happily lean on you and could not have had better support. I thank God for you. Keep dancing with me!

Beloved Em, Sunniva Luna and Naomi Maria: Sharing life with you will always be my richest, most challenging and most beautiful journey. No one could teach me more than you have. May you navigate life and love it – and let yourself be loved. *Glad i dere for alltid!*
Summary
In a world with extensive migration, many children grow up with multiple cultural influences. Even though this is increasingly common, the young in question may still feel different and be treated as outsiders where they make their home. With this context, participating in an inclusive community can make a welcome difference. The aim of this study is to listen to the voices of young people who grow up with multiple cultures, and explore what participation in creative communities means to them. Knowledge about growing up across cultures, with the challenges and opportunities it brings, is needed in a psychology that takes contemporary society and its diversity seriously. Society at large will also benefit from knowledge and practices that support these young people in navigating their complex worlds.

The theoretical approach combines cultural and community psychology, presenting a contextual take on salutogenesis: what strengthens health, taking diverse meaning-making resources and unequal power distribution into account. The mixed methods design was to achieve a multidimensional understanding, based on critical realism, which acknowledges reality as multi-layered, and our knowledge of it as positioned and always limited. From this, it makes sense to seek to build knowledge in a dialectic and intersubjective manner. Inviting to participatory action research, I started out in dialogue with stakeholders and participants, and had a flexible design that allowed for adjustments throughout the study.

The first stage of data collection was fieldwork in a multicultural creative community called Kaleidoscope, in one of the Norwegian towns where it takes place. Based on this participant observation and dialogue with a reference group of participants, I went on to interview ten young participants from two different Kaleidoscope locations. As a third and final stage of data collection, I developed a survey and invited participants from four locations to respond. All in all, around 200 children and youth aged 7-28 years participated in the study.

The first paper describes how a creative community can serve as an arena for constructive intercultural identity development, based on observations from the fieldwork. Leaders emphasize that everyone has resources to contribute with, and that participants’ different backgrounds make a greater whole. This inclusive approach allows for and acknowledges identity complexity. When implicit stereotypes loom or ownership of expressions is at stake, participants engage actively in identity negotiations that are both playful and serious. Given room, these dynamics set the stage for a flexible and colorful performance of identity.

The second paper presents a narrative analysis of long-term participant experiences, in the synthesized story of ‘Nadia’. This shows how young refugees find ways to navigate diverging expectations and cross-pressures. Nadia tells us about her loneliness and confusion
when she first came to Norway, and how important it was to be invited into a community where she could contribute with songs and dances from her country of origin. Through depression and complications at home and at school, the Kaleidoscope community was her ‘happy place’. Here, she practiced raising her own voice and navigating challenges from both minority and majority voices, and now balances her cultures confidently.

In the third paper, I explore how the participants that were interviewed experience the opportunities they are offered in the creative community, and how this impacts their everyday lives. They contrast this community with experiences at school and elsewhere, and emphasize how on this arena, they can contribute, be themselves and grow. The paper discusses how the recognition characterizing this arena serves as a catalyst for agency.

The fourth paper presents survey data about how creative participation affects health and wellbeing. A clear majority of the 102 participants who responded emphasize that the community is important to them and has helped them grow as a person. The quantitative health/wellbeing scores were generally high, but without statistically significant change related to having participated longer. The qualitative responses shed light on this by showing the complexity of wellbeing, illustrated by participants who found the community vital to their happiness during other health problems. Their health as a whole might thus vary over time, even though Kaleidoscope participation contributed positively, towards salutogenesis.

Taken together, these findings illuminate several dimensions of growing up across socially defined cultural categories, and the freedom of movement that a participatory creative community can provide – a place where “everyone is different” and both-and-competency is valued. This allows for simultaneousness; being and doing several things at once. The thesis also discusses different approaches to diversity, and how navigating together makes challenges easier to manage. The discussion also underlines the perks of playfulness, to build community and positive affect, and fight stereotyping with fun.

The study’s strengths lie in the multiple ways of listening and observing that were applied over a fairly long period of time, and the closeness to the interaction and participants’ voices. Still, these perspectives are not exhaustive, and cannot be generalized. However, the findings can transfer to other contexts where young people deal with differences, cross-pressures and stereotyping categorizations. Community and joy can be nurtured when we take time to play and dance together, invite and recognize different contributions, and co-create something new. This challenges health and social systems that do not allow for the patience and relational investments required to build participatory, creative communities over time. Such inclusive communities may just mean the world to young people growing up across cultures.
1. Introduction

The aim of this study is to explore how participation in creative communities can strengthen children and young people who grow up with multiple cultures. I have participated and observed in a multicultural art project in Norway, and interviewed and gathered survey data from participants – to understand what it is like to be them, and what participating in this creative community means for how they are doing and their everyday lives.

1.1. Topic
Human beings have always been mobile, with migration as an opportunity, often also a necessity. In our globalized time, people move ever faster and more frequently. As people move faster than cultures change, more young people than ever grow up with multiple cultural influences. How does this shape their development? What are the challenges and possibilities, vulnerabilities and resources of these ‘children of migration’?

Research on the subject has often been problem-focused, but here I am curious about the learning and potential growth catalyzed by intercultural experiences, and how the children in question navigate their worlds. The empirical basis for the project is a mixed methods case study of young participants in the multicultural art project Fargespill (literally ‘Play of colors’) – in English, Kaleidoscope. The project explicitly recognizes the children’s different backgrounds as resources. What difference does that make?

1.2. Context of study
Global migration is possibly at an all-time high, with an estimated 70.8 million forced migrants at the beginning of 2019 (NRC, 2019), and an estimated 244 million migrants in total in the most recent report from the International Organization of Migration (McAuliffe & Ruhs, 2017). Norway is currently a country with net immigration (StatisticsNorway, 2018)\(^1\). In addition to South-North and East-West migration within Europe, recent years have seen a relatively high influx of asylum seekers from countries in conflict around the world, with a peak in 2015 (Brekke & Staver, 2018; Bygnes & Erdal, 2017). The so-called refugee crisis in 2015 was followed by stricter immigration policies and a more polarized public debate about immigrants, in Norway as in other European countries. Young migrants pursue their developmental projects (Omland & Andenas, 2017) in the context of these transnational

---

\(^1\) Statistics Norway is the national statistical institute of Norway and the main producer of official statistics (StatisticsNorway, 2019b).
movements, often facing skepticism and risking marginalization, while dealing with multiple cultural norms and expectations (Fangen, Johansson, & Hammarén, 2011; Salole, 2018). Especially those who undergo forced migration experience trauma and hardships along the way (Øverland, Guribye, & Lie, 2014).

In contrast to the challenges, culturally complex experiences can also be considered an enrichment, or a resource for creativity, cultural exchange and innovation. One example of this celebratory approach to diversity is Kaleidoscope, a multicultural art community that was first established in Bergen in 2004. Here, children and youth from different origins are invited to share songs and dances, led by professional artists. The project philosophy is resource-focused, recognizing differences as valuable assets (Hamre et al., 2011).

The children and young people are recruited to Kaleidoscope mainly through schools and refugee reception systems, sometimes also through health/social workers or acquaintances. The inclusion criteria to the activity are not explicit, but in practice there is an emphasis on those who are considered cross-cultural, with some non-majority background. There are, however, also “Norwegian-born and raised” participants, recruited e.g. through schools or music schools (at first, often to sing Norwegian folk tunes in traditional bunad costumes, but with time with a variety of expressions). The musical raw material from participants is arranged and choreographed into a professional performance, presented at a local concert hall. Since its origin in Bergen, the project has spread to several Norwegian and Swedish towns – either in its full version (Fargespill), or a smaller-scale alternative version (Flere farger).

The project community typically meets weekly through a (school) year, often in smaller groups at first (10-20 participants, while a full performance group may include around 100). The leaders start out with simple trust-building activities, often in a circle, learning names and getting used to doing or singing something in front of others. Gradually, the participants dare to share songs or dances that they know. The leaders gather, choose and refine these expressions for a performance, often combining different songs/dances/clapping games etc. into world music-style acts. Different locations have different emphases, with ingredients such as folk music, contemporary circus, genres like rap and joik (traditional Sámi singing), and participatory developed scenography. Some Kaleidoscope groups have prepared thematic performances and collaborated with orchestras or other artists.

I first met Kaleidoscope during preparations to start activities near me, while I was preparing a PhD project about young people who grow up with multiple cultures. The creative community provided an arena to meet with young people in situations I wanted to learn about, and the collaborators in Kaleidoscope were also interested in learning more about how it was
experienced by its participants. Due to this availability, joint energy and concurrence of interest, I chose Kaleidoscope as the empirical case for my study.

The institutional framework of this study (UiO, AUC and ABUP, cf. preface) combined an academic interest in understanding intercultural lives and development, with a perceived need within the health sector to better understand and reach young people with minority backgrounds. An emphasis on health was not part of the original intention of the initiators, as previously mentioned, who underline that this is an art project, not a social project. However, practices can be many things simultaneously; and the artistic/creative focus is not opposed to strengthening health and thriving in young people – rather to the contrary, potentially.

There has been an increased emphasis on establishing and implementing knowledge about migration and health in recent years. In a newly established research network on migration and health in Norway, the need for sharing ideas and experiences from prevention and health promotion is underlined as a public social responsibility (NFMH, 2019). This project is meant as one such contribution, through a systematic exploration of mechanisms involved and lessons to be learned from a multicultural, creative community.

While the initiators underline that Kaleidoscope is not a social project, they share stories and anecdotal indications that participants’ self-confidence and wellbeing may improve (Hamre et al., 2011). There has been some academic interest in the project over the last few years, mainly from the field of music, where Kaleidoscope has been analyzed as a cultural practice. Solomon assessed the concept critically, reading the performances as a “reassuring story white Norwegians tell themselves about multicultural Norway” (Solomon, 2016, p. 188). Camilla Kvaal conducted a PhD study of musical interaction in Kaleidoscope as hybrid music practices, and discusses the dynamics of music as an intercultural tool (Kvaal, 2018a, 2018b). These analyses will be elaborated upon in chapter 2 and discussed in chapter 6.

There are, to my knowledge, no former studies of the psychological dynamics or possible benefits of Kaleidoscope participation. The current study moves closer to the voices and experiences of the participants, so that other stories than the majoritarian one can broaden our understanding of these communities and of cross-cultural development trajectories.

1.3. Research questions
The fields of migration and developmental psychology often lack the voices of the protagonists, which would shed light on the experience, agency and resources of young people and migrants themselves (Fazel, Reed, Panter-Brick, & Stein, 2012; Omland & Andenas, 2017; Urwin, Hauge, Hollway, & Haavind, 2013). Also, more knowledge about the
factors that influence whether having a ‘different’ background turns out ‘for better or worse’ would be useful. This could help professionals and society in figuring out how to better reach and cooperate with the minority population and promote health and thriving.

Based on the state of knowledge and societal needs, I chose to frame this study of growing up across cultures within a salutogenic approach. Antonovsky’s concept of *salutogenesis* refers to what promotes health, rather than focusing on what leads to sickness and unhealth (Antonovsky, 1979, 1987). Health is understood as a process where there are always forces at work both in the direction of health, known as resistance resources – and towards un-health or disease; resistance deficits (Eriksson, 2017). The theory is contextual, seeing humans in interaction with their environment, and change and complexity as normal states of life (Eriksson, 2017). I consider this inclusive and normalizing approach fruitful when studying a heterogenous group of people who are often generalized about and problematized.

Recent decades have seen new attempts at integrating culture and psychology; considering the cultural, social and historical structuring of human psychological processes in order to grasp their complexity (Valsiner, 2012). Developmental cultural psychologist Jaan Valsiner sums this quest up by stating that “psychology needs culture to make sense of the human lives” (Valsiner, 2012, p. 3). The concept of *culture(s)* is an elusive one, and will be discussed in depth in later chapters (particularly 2.1.2.). For now, may it suffice to say that culture is not to be understood as easily definable and separable entities, but in a more dynamic manner as ways of relating to the world, oneself and others (Schuff, 2018). Cultures are also, however, referred to and applied as categories; when labelling others and identifying oneself with one or the other ingroup/outgroup. Regardless of how “real” these categorizations are, they constitute a central part of our psychosocial reality. For those who do not easily fit into them especially, these categorizations shape insider/outsider dynamics and identity opportunities. This makes growing up across cultures – crossing or defying socially recognized cultural boundaries between “us” and “them” – a specific developmental challenge.

The relevant research field includes empirical studies on migration, health and creative processes. I draw on community psychology perspectives on power, empowerment and disempowerment, societal inequalities, discrimination and participation, as well as on a cultural psychology understanding of contextual meaning-making and agency in our own development. The main research question is: *What does participation in a creative community mean for young people who grow up across cultural categories?*

I explore young people’s experiences of participating on the Kaleidoscope arena, and how this participation can contribute to salutogenesis, posing the following subquestions:
1. How can a creative project like Kaleidoscope serve as an arena for constructive intercultural identity development? (paper I)

2. How do young refugees find ways to relate to diverging cultural expectations and cross-pressures, and what part can a supportive arena play in the process? (paper II)

3. How do the young participants experience the opportunities for participation that they are offered in Kaleidoscope, and how does this impact their everyday lives? (paper III)

4. How does participation in a multicultural creative project affect the health and wellbeing of young participants? (paper IV)

1.4. Overview of research design
A mixed methods design was chosen for the project – on the most basic level, as a recognition of human complexity and the value of multiple perspectives. Combining different methods makes it possible to integrate individual and cultural levels of analysis (Bartholomew & Brown, 2012; Hammack, 2008); something I attempted to achieve by combining ethnography with individual interviews and survey data. The mixed methods design was also implemented to answer a complex research question, since the study aims at exploring both the lived experiences of children and young people, and potential health impact of creative participation – both individual trajectories and potentially more collective patterns. Arguably, an integration of different methods and interdisciplinary openness is fruitful when studying the complex interactions between migration, culture and development (Berry, Poortinga, Breugelmans, Chasiotis, & Sam, 2011; Chuang & Moreno, 2011; Fangen, Fossan, & Mohn, 2016; Fangen et al., 2011; Nastasi & Hitchcock, 2015).

The heterogeneous group of participants, with differing backgrounds, vulnerabilities and experiences, invited an open, exploratory approach and a continuous design (cf. Flick, 2008, p. 79). I am inspired by participatory action research (Kidd & Kral, 2005; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010) and related principles of cultural humility (Minkler, 2005), and tried to involve participants in influencing the research process (cf. 3.2.). At the same time, I recognize that participatory approaches do not automatically solve issues e.g. concerning the cultural embeddedness and biases of research methodologies (cf. Gobo, 2011). A reference group of experienced participants contributed with feedback on and adjustments to the research design and methods, as I will describe more fully in later chapters (3 and 4).

The sequential mixed methods design involves three methods of data collection, followed by multiple steps of analysis that were integrated towards the end of the project. The first exploration of participants’ interaction and experiences was qualitative, based on data
collected through participant observation in one location. This first ethnographic stage of the study served to get to know the project, its dynamics and participants, and was the basis for developing an interview guide and recruiting interviewees. The second stage of data collection consisted of semi-structured interviews with participants from two different project locations/communities; some veterans, others new to the project. The interviews provided insight into participant experiences, framed within stories of their life as part of Kaleidoscope.

The qualitative results informed the development of a survey designed to measure relevant variables (salutogenic factors, widely understood) over time while participating in Kaleidoscope. The intention was to test whether processes observed in and described by some participants could transfer to more general, quantitative findings with participants from several locations. The survey included quantitative as well as qualitative elements (open-ended questions). An overview of the different stages of data collection is given in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data collection stage</th>
<th>Time frame</th>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Sample/participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative stage, first exploration</td>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Participant observation</td>
<td>Kaleidoscope participants (6 years and up) in one location (N = 90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qualitative stage, elaboration</td>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>Semi-structured interviews</td>
<td>10 Kaleidoscope participants from 2 locations (adolescents and older)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quantitative stage, including qualitative elements</td>
<td>2016-18</td>
<td>Survey (repeated measures, 3 times)</td>
<td>Kaleidoscope participants from 4 locations (N = 102, adolescents and older)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Table 1: Overview of data collection methods*

1.5. Plan of foundation
After this introductory chapter, I present a more thorough background both in terms of research context and relevant cultural, community and developmental psychology, including a contextual/ecological take on the theoretical framework of salutogenesis (chapter 2). I also elaborate on the potential of participatory and creative arenas, including Kaleidoscope (2.3.).

In chapter 3, I present the methodology of the study, and how I ground my research in critical realism with a dialectic twist (3.1.). I have chosen a participatory approach, to build knowledge together (3.2.). The next chapter (4) explains the mixed methods design (4.1.), and presents the participants and strategies for data collection and analysis in all stages.

The papers are presented in chapter 5, and the findings discussed more thoroughly in chapter 6. After discussing limitations (6.2.), and suggesting implications and further research (6.3.). After a brief conclusion in chapter 7, the music continues while this thesis fades out.
2. Background and research history

I start from the point of view of cultural and community psychology, seeking to understand human development in context of the cultures, communities and societies in which we live, and the activities and meaning-making in which we take part (cf. Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Hundeide, 2003; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Vygotsky, 1978). The study aims at bringing together theories and former findings from areas such as salutogenesis and mental health promotion (Antonovsky, 1987; Langeland, 2014; Sigfúsdóttir, Thorlindsson, Kristjánsson, Roe, & Allegrante, 2008), intercultural communication (Dahl, Jensen, & Nynäs, 2006), migration and acculturation studies (Motti-Stefanidi, Berry, Chryssochoou, Sam, & Phinney, 2012), music/culture as health resources (Skånland, 2013), identity studies (Martiny, Froehlich, Soltanpanah, & Haugen, 2019; Salole, 2018; Simon, 2004) and the psychology of recognition (Falkum, Hytten, & Olavesen, 2011), by exploring an arena where they intersect.

This chapter outlines some of our knowledge about human movement through space (migration) and time (development), and some theoretical and empirical links between them. From this wide scope, I have chosen what I find to be the most relevant dimensions for understanding young people who grow up relating to several cultures today. At the end of the chapter, I address the potential for cultural health promotion, especially in the form of participatory and creative arenas for minority or migrant youth, before zooming in on one such arena, Kaleidoscope. A discussion of former research on the project and its dynamics leads up to the intended contributions of this thesis.

2.1. Humans on the move

Movement is part of the human condition, with many forms and varying levels of migration throughout history. Today, the scope, speed and consequences of migration have intensified. Moving from one environment to another can shape us psychologically, as humans live interrelated with our surroundings as physical and biological, emotional, social and cultural beings (Rogoff, 2003).

People have moved to find safety or food, to flee from danger, war or starvation. Tensions between migrants and natives, nomadic groups and permanently settled inhabitants, have been commonplace throughout history (Barth, 2008), especially after the agricultural revolution provided the nutritional basis for larger and more permanent settlements. Natural barriers such as oceans, mountains and deserts have shaped migration patterns and cultural exchange; illustrated, for instance, by how Africa developed differently north and south of Sahara (Simensen, 2004). After the emergence of the nation states of the modern world over the last
few centuries, new forms of legal barriers and human-made borders have appeared (Haugen, 2008). Towards the end of the 20th century, international and regional structures such as the European Union developed to ensure a certain degree of free movement across these borders again – at least, for the more privileged. At the other end of the privilege spectrum, refugees were to have their rights to seek asylum protected by international law, as established in 1951 by the UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (UNHCR, 1951). While it is generally easier to travel farther and faster than ever, these technological and economic opportunities are unequally distributed – every day, refugees risk their lives to cross oceans that wealthy tourists fly over with ease (Boulby & Christie, 2018).

2.1.1. Migrants and minorities – acculturation, exclusion and belonging
Migration presents people with certain common psychological tasks, such as acculturation, managing change, reestablishing life in a new environment, and finding (new) ways to belong, often in a minority position (Berry et al., 2011; Chryssochoou, 2004; Fangen et al., 2016; Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2012). These tasks can be demanding, even debilitating, but also provide opportunities for learning and the mobilization of resilience.

In cases of forced migration, the challenges are generally more difficult, as refugees face the triple burden of trauma, uprooting and reestablishment of a liveable life (Lie, 2003; Sveaass, 2000). Unaccompanied minor refugees are particularly at risk of psychological difficulties, vulnerable as they face severe developmental and life challenges without caretakers or other close family nearby (Dittmann & Jensen, 2010; Fazel et al., 2012). On the other hand, they have often coped with great obstacles and hardships during their flight as well as in their new country, which can demand both strength and bravery. Our knowledge about the coping strategies and developmental projects of unaccompanied minors is in an early stage (Omland & Andenas, 2017).

Migrants with different backgrounds – refugees, work migrants or sojourners with other stories – may all find themselves in a minority situation in their new country, potentially facing exclusion and discrimination (Chryssochoou, 2004; Fangen et al., 2011). They may share experiences of being seen as different by people who do not know their story, but may assume things about them, judging from their appearance, name or other exterior markers. These insider/outside, ingroup/outgroup mechanisms can hinder inclusion, belonging and participation (Chryssochoou, 2004). Minorities of all kinds can experience minority stress, a term which has mainly been developed within studies of sexual minorities. The minority stress model outlines how external stressors such as microaggressions, prejudice and
discrimination can combine with internal stressors such as self-doubt, rumination and fear of rejection, to shape the lived experience of people in minority situations. Those who live as multiple minorities, e.g. LGBTQ people of color, are even more likely to be exposed to stigmatization and find themselves affected by minority stress (Cyrus, 2017).

Acculturation refers to the processes of change and adaptation that take place as a result of contact between cultural groups and their members (Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2012, p. 122). Berry’s model of acculturation has been a central one in the field of acculturation psychology for several decades (Berry, 2001; Berry et al., 2011; Chryssochoou, 2004). This model presents different acculturation strategies as a combination of two independent dimensions: The degree to which one participates in one’s culture of origin, and the degree to which one participates in the culture of the host society. Maintaining one’s culture of origin is not seen in opposition to entering the host society; one does not necessarily move from one culture to another, but can move simultaneously within both (or more, for that matter). Combining the two dimensions gives four main types of acculturation: Assimilation (low participation in culture of origin/high participation in host society), segregation/separation (high on origin/low on host society), marginalization/exclusion (low participation in both cultures) or integration (high participation in both cultures). Integration has been found to be a beneficial form of acculturation both for the person’s own wellbeing, and for society as a whole (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Chryssochoou, 2004). This acculturation framework has been challenged, nuanced and modified over the years, but is still in use as a model that highlights the multidimensional and mutual aspects of adapting and becoming part of a new society.

Acculturation can be considered a specific version of more general adaptation processes central to being human. Several of these challenges could also be considered developmental tasks; finding ways to cope with changing life conditions and emerging phenomena (cf. the terminology of e.g. Omland & Andenas, 2017; Valsiner, 2000). Human development is of a cultural nature (Rogoff, 2003): We learn to be human among other humans. Our approaches to dealing with challenges and change are shaped by former experiences, but also unfold in ongoing, open processes of learning and becoming. To understand these phenomena, we need a cultural psychology that is developmental, and a developmental psychology that is cultural (Jansen & Andenæs, 2019; Rogoff, 2003; Sam & Oppedal, 2003; Valsiner, 2000).

2.1.2. Culture and development
What, then, is culture? The academic discussions about this seemingly simple term have been ongoing at least since the 19th century. Discussions frequently start with Edward Tylor’s
classical definition from 1871. On the very first page of his seminal work *Primitive Culture*, he defined culture as “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society” (Tylor, 1871, p. 1). Tylor uses ‘culture’ interchangeably with ‘civilization’, and emphasizes the (inter)subjective dimensions of culture (knowledge, belief, custom, symbols and meaning-making), while other anthropologists have focused more on objective or observable dimensions of culture (artefacts, art, archeological findings). This distinction between observable and subjective dimensions of culture has been noted also within cross-cultural psychology (Berry et al., 2011). Psychology and other fields still borrow from anthropology, which has specialized in understanding culture for longer than most.

Social anthropologists have clarified many socially shared and relational aspects of culture, explaining it as phenomena acquired through participation in a group or society, or as dynamic fields in which communication is possible (Dahl et al., 2006; Eriksen, 2010b; cf. also Tylor, 1871). The term ‘culture’ is in everyday use often applied to groups, as a social category; in labelling people as belonging to one culture or another. The participants in this current study use the term in this way. However, the concept of ‘culture’ is not to be reduced to country of origin, as it often is – as a sort of heuristic, which serves as a crude, yet periodically useful simplification. This use of the term may tempt us to believe that cultures are easily definable entities or variables; or that culture serves as a “container”, with boundaries that are assumed to be rigid and defined, in which persons live their lives (Valsiner, 2014). Contemporary theoretical insights of both cultural psychology and anthropology dispute this commonsense understanding. People are active participants in their life worlds, and acquire unique patterns of learning experiences over their life course; they do not simply “learn” a “shared” culture, but rather co-construct and internalize/externalize coordinated social/collective domains of human experience, to follow Valsiner’s (2014, pp. 38-40) use of terms. Thus, culture is better understood as processes of relating to the world and others than as a given category.

There are, however, socially recognized cultural differences and categories – often linked to countries, but also to wider (“Latino”, “European”) or more local categories (“Southern Norwegian”), or subcultures less dependent on geography (“bikers”, “Harry Potter fans”), but who share certain ways of making sense of and being in the world. Categorizing cultures in this way can be considered boundary work, as described by anthropologist Fredrik Barth in his pioneering work *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries* (Barth, 1998 [1969]), where he argued that the phenomenon of ethnicity can most appropriately be defined as “the social
organization of cultural difference”. From this relational-anthropological perspective, “the critical point of investigation from this point of view becomes the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses” (Barth, 1998 [1969], p. 15).

Accordingly, it becomes vital to understand the processes of boundary maintenance, and the difference it makes to identify someone as ‘same’ or ‘other’:

The identification of another person as a fellow member of an ethnic group (…) entails the assumption that the two are fundamentally “playing the same game”, and this means that there is between them a potential for diversification and expansion of their social relationship to cover eventually all different sectors and domains of activity. On the other hand, the dichotomization of others as strangers, as members of a different ethnic group, implies a recognition of limitations on shared understandings, and a restriction of interaction to sectors of assumed common understanding and mutual interest. (Barth, 1998 [1969], p. 15)

Readers familiar with social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 2004) may note the similarities between ethnic boundary work and social psychological mechanisms by which we treat ingroup and outgroup members differently. For instance, we tend to perceive outgroups (groups we do not consider that we belong to) as a more homogeneous mass, in contrast to seeing the self’s own ingroup as more diverse, consisting of differentiated individuals (Devos, Comby, & Deschamps, 1996). Social identity theory also highlights how these social boundaries and group identifications form part of our identities.

So even if cultures-as-groups, or ethnicities, are but imagined communities (Anderson, 2006) – also in the sense that their boundaries are negotiable and never fixed – cultural differences and categories are social realities. Such group boundaries become socially relevant to young migrants when they find themselves categorized as cultural ‘others’, as minority youth, or as multicultural or cross-cultural. With experiences from different settings across socially recognized cultural boundaries, they face the developmental challenge of navigating these differences.

The participants in this study not only talk about ‘culture’ as a category you can belong to, but also as different systems of meanings and behavior: Culture as something you have (a heritage) – and something you do (expression and interaction). This twofold understanding of culture highlights how we are both shaped by culture and continually shape it. It is both a starting point – patterns of thought and behavior we have internalized as members of a group or society – and a process – the continual creation of shared practices and shared meaning in interaction. I have formerly described culture as a substance with varying degrees of viscosity. It flows and will change, but often slowly, and with resistance, based on its origin and
direction (Schuff, 2014, pp. 6-7). To the increasingly globalized and culture-crossing people of our time, understanding culture as simply determined by one’s origin is insufficient. At the same time, entirely ignoring differences in origin and background might cover up power differences and hinder understanding. We may therefore arguably need both descriptive and dynamic approaches to culture (Schuff, 2014).

To elaborate on the notion of culture as dynamic meaning systems, I have found Bakhtin’s concept of voice helpful (Bakhtin, 2010; Urwin et al., 2013). While making sense of the world, a person’s inner dialogue includes the voices of people present, but also voices of those distant from us in space, time or socially, as long as they are deemed relevant. A young person’s negotiations with these voices are expressed in how she refers to what significant others such as parents, teachers and other experienced participants of her communities would say or think, and how she explains, agrees with or objects to that. Thinking of cultural influences as different voices in an ongoing conversation, to which the person actively responds, can also help us resist too static or passive an understanding of culture (Schuff, 2018).

Briefly returning to Berry’s (2001) two-dimensional model of acculturation (cf. 2.1.1.), we find that it reflects a descriptive concept of culture: A culture of origin to maintain, and a host culture to learn. Descriptive approaches may be pragmatically useful for some purposes, and intuitively make sense to help us sort and make sense of perceived differences. But such descriptions are cognitively similar to stereotypes, easily become too static, and are imbued with the dangers of reification and essentialization (Dahl et al., 2006; Salole, 2018). More sophisticated approaches to culture as dynamic and continually in flux can serve as an important reminder to see immigrants not only as representatives of their backgrounds.3

The dynamics of how we are shaped by while shaping culture have been explored by psychologists who emphasize the centrality of culture in development (Rogoff, 2003; Valsiner, 2000). Lev Vygotsky was an early proponent of a sociocultural understanding of development, writing between 1924 and 1934, but not translated and known among English-speaking scholars until decades later. In Mind in society, Vygotsky (1978) locates the main source of a child’s development to the social relations the child participates in. For higher psychological functions such as language, skills and meanings to develop in a child, they first

---

2 In my native Norwegian, I imagine culture as *tyktflytende*, a viscous substance (Schuff, 2015b, p. 69).
3 Creative projects like Kaleidoscope can provide practical opportunities to be not only bearers of a heritage, but active participants in the culture(s) being continually created here and now. This dynamic is not unambiguous, however, as the multicultural approach simultaneously highlights participants’ backgrounds and ‘colorful differences’. I will return to these paradoxes in the discussion.
appear in interaction with significant others, and are then internalized into the child’s intra-
psychological self-organization system. This consistent application of the socio-genetic
principle can be considered Vygotsky's main contribution (Valsiner, 2000, p. 21 in chapter 3).

Barbara Rogoff elaborates on development as transformation of participation in
sociocultural activities, in her thorough book about *The Cultural Nature of Human
Development* (Rogoff, 2003). Children learn, develop and take on new roles and
responsibilities through guided participation in dynamic cultural communities. This
participatory understanding of culture is central to the current thesis (cf. 2.2. and 3.2.).

Some scholars have tried to sum up the manifold discussions on the term culture to a
brief and more managable definition as *socially transmitted information* (Cronk, 2019; Heine,
2015). While this sums up a relevant point, cultural psychologists such as Valsiner and
Rogoff object to the term “transmitted” as all too passive. Valsiner emphasizes the active role
of the person by arguing that culture is not socially transmitted, but *co-constructed* – not
learned, but *internalized/externalized* – and not shared, but *coordinated* (Valsiner, 2014a, pp.
38-39). Similarly, Rogoff’s concept of guided participation gives the child/person a more
active role in their own development than a mere socialization or social influence perspective,
as it emphasizes mutual involvement and evolving participation (Rogoff, 2003, p. 285).

The interaction between the person and “that complex whole” of culture has a long
history of pondering within both psychology and anthropology. Psychology developed mainly
in an individualist direction over the 19th and 20th centuries, and has been criticized for
forgetting context in ways that hinder understanding (Bruner, 2009; Nelson & Prilleltensky,
2010; Orford, 2008; Schuff, 2017a; Thorsen & Toverud, 2002). Anthropology, on the other
hand, is more often considered a discipline that tends to forget individual agency (cf. the
critique of anthropological concepts of culture in Valsiner, 2000). This may, however, owe to
a superficial reading of the discipline, in which Ruth Benedict emphasized individual-culture
dynamics as early as 1935: “The desire to grasp the meaning of a culture as a whole compels
us to consider descriptions of standardized behavior merely as a stepping-stone leading to
other problems. We must understand the individual as living in his culture; and the culture as
lived by individuals.” (Benedict, 1935, p. x)

Later, Clifford Geertz made contributions that were noted far beyond anthropology, as he
moved towards a more semiotic concept of culture: “Believing, with Max Weber, that man is
an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those
webs” (Geertz, 1973, p. 4). Consequently, studies of culture cannot be “an experimental
science in search of law”, but “an interpretive one in search of meaning” (same place). This
interpretative or semiotic turn has clear parallels within cultural psychology (Shweder, 1999; Thorsen & Toverud, 2002; Valsiner, 2014a). Valsiner’s take on culture focuses on processes of semiotic mediation (Valsiner, 2000, 2014a). As we internalize and externalize meaning, it also materializes in bodies and expressions available to the senses.

Many of these cultural psychologists are ambiguous to the whole term of culture, and seem to consider the issue of defining it unresolvable. Varying definitions of culture can sometimes be found to be incompatible with each other, even when used within the same text. Jahoda (2012) concludes from this that there can be no generally agreed upon definition of culture. When we try to capture its substance, we find it is a moving target – a dynamic, emerging phenomenon (in line with a developmental approach, cf. Valsiner, 2000).

I have not yet given up on the term culture, but try to consider the age-old discussions and learn from the never-ending nuances that different perspectives bring to light. Towards the completion of this study of how we move through the world, I have arrived at an understanding of culture, still open for revision: Culture is here understood as socially co-constructed ways of relating to the world, others and oneself, developing as specific repertoires, both material and immaterial, internalized and expressed through participation in social contexts throughout the life course. These ways of relating that I call culture include both meaning-making (Bruner, 2009), what makes sense and seems right and proper for different people and situations, and how these meanings are semiotically mediated (Valsiner 2014) and materialize, e.g., in how we dance, eat, touch, and greet, or at what age young people move out from their parents’ house. Culture is thus not an entity or variable, but rather processes and practices that we experience as part of us. We co-create these practices, make them together, at the same time as they make us who we are.

2.1.3. Growing up across cultures, across borders
The discussions about culture have consequences for how we speak of cultural encounters and experiences across our lifespans. For what does multicultural, intercultural or cross-cultural even mean, if cultures cannot be considered entities or variables? Related disciplinary traditions have developed discourses that apply different words, such as intercultural or cross-cultural psychology (Berry, 2016; IPA/FIP, 2019), transcultural psychiatry (Ekblad & Kastrup, 2013), and multicultural mental health (Paniagua & Yamada, 2013). These terms are used sometimes interchangeably, sometimes with differing emphases.

By speaking of a multicultural society or setting, we imply some level of recognition of cultures in plural, and thereby, an emphasis on cultural differences – and often, on the right to
keep and express those differences. Paradoxically, multiculturalism can therefore reproduce the differences it seeks to overcome (Taylor, 1997). While a multicultural approach thus entails an emphasis on differences (and bridging them), an intercultural approach arguably emphasizes the in-between – connections, encounters, and finding common ground (Riis, 2019, p. 104). In practice, intercultural approaches encourage dynamic and complex interaction between people with different backgrounds, moving the focus from those differences to what people create together – because any encounter can potentially change us all. As much as trying to understand the ‘other culture’, the hermeneutics of becoming aware of our own changing perspectives becomes key (Riis, 2006, 2019). Several scholars have discussed how to strike the right balance between equality and difference, between recognizing our common humanity and recognizing our particular identities – what we might call ‘color-blind’ vs. ‘colorful’ approaches (Heine, 2015; Riis, 2019; Taylor, 1997, 2012; Wærdahl, 2016). Charles Taylor discusses how well-intended universality and an ethos of equality can lead to a difference-blindness that deprives people of recognition (Taylor, 1997). Riis (2019) links these two different approaches to the multicultural vs. intercultural project, and seeks to balance them, seeing that both have limitations that the other view points out. Taylor has later argued that the concepts of multiculturalism and interculturalism may be suitable for different contexts, and that the difference between them is not so much in concrete policies, but in the story they evoke about where we are coming from and where we are going (Taylor, 2012).

Rather than discussing the overarching terms further, I will turn to how we speak of the persons involved, and about their experiences of crossing borders and categories. As time and learning has passed in this project, I have moved from saying that I study cross-cultural children and youth (Schuff, 2016), to speaking of growing up across cultures, or crossing cultural categories (Schuff, 2018; Seip, 2020). A similar movement has happened in other literature, from focusing on cross-cultural children to cross-cultural childhoods (e.g. Salole, 2013, 2018). Salole defined as cross-cultural those children and young people who “have lived or live with the continual influence from two or more cultures during a significant part of their childhood” (Salole 2013:29). I have since discussed with colleagues that rather than using cross-cultural as an adjective about children, it is more precise to speak of children and young people with cross-cultural backgrounds or experiences. This clarifies that no one is only (or even primarily) cross-cultural, but the person in question will have such experiences/perspectives as one part of the always more complex whole.
This also challenges terms such as *multicultural settings* or *intercultural encounters.* Indeed, cultures cannot ‘meet’ or otherwise act, only people can (Dahl, 2013). When people meet, however, they regulate the relationship between self and other also in terms of the perceived cultural differences between them, and group belongings as they are socially defined in the context. While culture is always multifaceted and negotiated by individuals, these negotiations are likely to be experienced as more of an explicit challenge when several cultures (i.e., socially recognized cultural differences, multiple belongings) are involved. This can be understood as the internalization of socially maintained cultural borders into the self, resulting in an experience of the self as cross-cultural. Identity negotiations are also impacted by these border processes, and can lead to the formation and expression of hybrid, hyphenated or other complex/intercultural identities (Martiny et al., 2019; Schuff, 2016).

Scholars from several fields, such as social anthropology and sociology as well as cultural psychology, have tried to describe and understand identity challenges when living with multiple cultures (e.g. Chryssochoou, 2004; Eriksen, 2010a; Nguyen & Benet-Martinez, 2010; Prieur, 2004). It has been argued that children and youth who grow up crossing cultural categories have certain specific challenges and possibilities when it comes to identity and belonging (Chryssochoou, 2004; Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2012; Salole, 2018). Youth in particular are at a point in life where they are expected to work out “who they are” (Jansen, 2013; Salole, 2018), and working this out with multiple and sometimes diverging categorizations, values and expectations can be demanding.

It might also be helpful to frame these experiences as growing up while *crossing borders.* We can easily define when international state borders, legal and formal markers of difference, have been crossed. Such border crossing has implications for immigration status and rights, cf. the UN definition of refugees (UNHCR, 1951), which again impact lives and wellbeing. According to common sense language use and phenomenological experience, there may also be such a phenomenon as borders between cultures – when one encounters a noticeable and/or socially relevant cultural difference between self and other. This may be felt as curiosity or microaggression, or discovered when misunderstandings appear, what Dahl refers to as a ‘golden moment’ – essentially an opportunity for learning (Dahl, 2013; Dahl et al., 2006; Drønen, Fretheim, & Skjørtnes, 2011; Prieur, 2004; Salole, 2018).

This approach to intercultural encounters and cross-cultural experiences as potentially both rewarding and challenging can also be applied to understanding cross-cultural childhoods. The ‘children of migration’ grow up relating to several categories and cultural meaning-systems – either as migrants themselves, as children or grandchildren of migrants,
having moved between countries due to parents’ work, or for other reasons with people and
signs close to them from different backgrounds. These cross-cultural contexts are arenas that
make possible certain common experiences and dynamics, in terms of both dilemmas and
resources. Whether this contributes to vulnerability or resilience in individual lives, however,
must be studied empirically in specific cases. It is likely not to be either-or, and the goal is not
to consider if there is a positive or negative effect that can be counted or calculated; rather, I
seek to explore the qualitative and complex experiences involved.

I would argue that in many ways, cross-cultural experiences have parallels to (and often
coincide with) multilingualism. Language differences are more easily observable and
definable than cultural ones, but many of the mechanisms of translation and perspectivity, and
meaning-making within different reference systems, are related (Pavlenko & Blackledge,
2004). Studies of multilingualism have taken a turn from considering it a challenge to
applying an additive approach; from viewing minority languages as problems or noise, to
language as a right and a resource – not unlike the approach to cross-cultural development
applied in this project. In recent years, increasing attention has been given to the phenomenon
of translanguaging – complex discursive strategies that transcend individual languages, as
people combine diverse semiotic resources, creatively seeking connections and developing
new language practices (Dewilde, 2019). Translanguaging is a strategy that emphasizes the
relational over linguistic correctness, and meaning over code (Paulsrud, Rosén, Straszer, &
Wedin, 2017, p. 9). Active use of translilingual remixing strategies can indicate a strong sense
of agency and be central to finding one’s voice in a complex world (Dewilde, 2019).

Multilingualism and translanguaging overlap with multiculturalism and cultural navigation,
and owning multiple languages and cultures can broaden people’s perspectives and strengthen
positive attitudes towards diversity (Baker, 2011; Barac & Bialystok, 2012).

A few more reflections are warranted concerning the construct of growing up ‘cross-
cultural’, seeing that constructs are instruments that we should fine-tune as much as possible
to organize and nuance our understanding (cf. Carlquist, Ulleberg, Delle Fave, Nafstad, &
Blakar, 2016). Cross-cultural children and youth have only occasionally been presented as
one category, and then a very heterogeneous one (e.g. in Salole, 2013). Much of the relevant
research has used other terms and categorizations, i.e. immigrant children (Chuang &
Moreno, 2011), minority youth (Cauce, Cruz, Corona, & Conger, 2011), unaccompanied
minor asylum seekers (Dittmann & Jensen, 2010), and third culture kids (Pollock & Van
Reken, 2009). In this project, there are participants from all these different (sub)categorizes,
and therefore the overarching term growing up cross-cultural is applied to the study as a
whole, while subcategories will be identified and mentioned when such nuancing is feasible and fruitful. In line with Salole’s (2013, 2018) discussion of the term, cross-cultural is preferred instead of alternative terms such as ‘multicultural’4, since these young people not only ‘have’ multiple cultures in an additive manner, but live their lives at the crossroads of several cultures, navigating and crisscrossing them in often unpredictable ways. This reflects the border-crossing theme I presented above, and approaches that highlight the balancing act and contextual dynamics of being a young person with an immigrant background (Prieur, 2004; Selimos, 2018).

In this study, the participants all have cross-cultural experiences, but in different ways – some were born in another country, others have parents born abroad. Some were adopted, some have lived in another country for a part of their life for other reasons. Some came to Norway with their family, others alone, as unaccompanied minors. I met them all in the multicultural art project Kaleidoscope, so that our shared references were the Norwegian context and coming together with different backgrounds for “the blessings of diversity” (Hamre et al., 2011, p. 52). Many also express a connection to some other country, ethnicity, or language. Some are often identified as ‘cultural others’ by their surroundings, whether or not they identify that way themselves (cf. Chryssochoou, 2004; Salole, 2018).

Many who grow up cross-cultural, especially visible minorities, face discrimination and a lack of recognition in different settings (Chryssochoou, 2004; Salole, 2013). Some who have migrated to Norway themselves face the task of acculturation while growing up (Berry et al., 2006; Motti-Stefanidi et al., 2012). However, it is problematic to generalize among groups and individuals with different backgrounds, considering the complexity of the field of experiences I here call cross-cultural. This also adds to the methodological complexity of this emerging research field, still with knowledge gaps and methodological challenges (Chuang & Moreno, 2011; Salole, 2013). Still, based on available knowledge, several scholars recommend preventive interventions to strengthen the mental health of immigrants and their children (Abebe, Lien, & Hjelde, 2014; Chuang & Moreno, 2011).

Most of the research mentioned above, however, has been problem focused, highlighting the challenges these young people often face: discrimination, cross-pressures, adaptation demands and minority stress, and in the case of forced migration, trauma and other hardships – and the implications of these challenges for mental health. When instead a resource focus is applied, other aspects come to the fore. Cross-cultural lives can provide children and youth

---

4 One might argue that transcultural would capture transcending and non-categorical aspects even better, cf. translanguaging (Dewilde, 2019). However, this term is rare in most academic discussions I take part in.
with resources such as language skills, broad and comparative cultural insight, an expanded world view and adaptive skills, and equip them in ‘the art of balance’ (Prieur, 2004; Salole, 2018). Among the specific competencies one can develop due to cross-cultural experiences, are flexibility, perspective taking, contextualization, creativity, and translation skills (Leung, Maddux, Galinsky, & Chiu, 2008; Pollock & Van Reken, 2009; Salole, 2018). Growing up across cultures can also strengthen attitudes and interpersonal skills such as tolerance and dialogue.

Notably, strengths and challenges can sometimes be two sides to the same coin – for instance, the ability to see several sides of an issue at the same time, can also make it harder to make decisions (Salole, 2018). Third culture kids (TCK), who spend part of their childhood in countries and cultures other than their own due to their parents’ international careers (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009), have more often been studied with an emphasis on maximizing the benefits of a mobile and transcultural background. Recently, however, some scholars and practitioners have started exploring how the resources accounted to TCKs can benefit others who grow up cross-culturally as well (Salole, 2018; Selle, Østby, & Reif, 2001/2015).

The participants in this study share at least two basic kinds of experiences that I would call cross-cultural; they are cross-culturally categorized and engage in cross-cultural meaning-making. As for categorizations, they are often seen as, and expected to be, ‘culturally different’ from the majority. They frequently find themselves categorized by their country or continent of origin, or simply as a general foreigner or immigrant. They negotiate these categorizations actively, while having to reconcile to some degree with being positioned by others in limiting ways. Participants in this study also, however, talk about certain ways of thinking, acting, talking or conducting the body that are typical for certain cultures (e.g. “Africans, we are loud”) – about culture as systems of meaning and behavior. These meaning-making systems are also presented as dynamic and negotiable, e.g. in discussions with their parents about what it “actually” implies to be a young girl or boy from their country of origin. At the same time, the different expectations and demands they feel from parents, teachers, project leaders and peers cause real challenges for these young people, and at times the negotiations this requires from them is hard emotional work.

This illustrates how relational these cross-cultural experiences are; culture does not appear as some abstract force, but through the words, actions and expectations of specific others (cf. the idea of voice and culture as conversation mentioned in 2.1.2.). These young people acquire practice in negotiating and handling differences in ways globalized societies arguably need. Even if culture is a moving and constantly emerging phenomenon, it can be
slow to change and deeply seated in individuals, so that cultural and generational differences are experienced as very real and sometimes rigid by young people who live with strong cross-pressures, e.g. from conservative parents on one side and liberal peers on the other (Friberg & Bjørnset, 2019). Social control, sometimes even by force and violence, are among the most brutal forms of such cross-pressures.

To sum up, I consider that it would be misconceived to try to define the boundaries of a category of young people of a certain kind in this project. I would rather open the field to consider the diverse, border-crossing, category-challenging and meaning-negotiating experiences of quite ordinary and extraordinary young people who relate to multiple cultural categories and meaning-systems in their daily lives. A rose by any other name would smell as sweet (Shakespeare, 1597, p. 129), and each of these ‘roses’ deserve to be taken in with their very own colors, idiosyncrasies and beauty.

2.1.4. Cultural participation and creativity
From how culture was discussed above it also follows that we all continually participate in culture, relating to the world and each other in our development and everyday lives, as the cultural beings we are (Rogoff, 2003; Schuff, 2018). However, there are significant differences in the degree to which people’s contributions are acknowledged or marginalized in all societies and communities (Chryssochoou, 2018; Fangen et al., 2011). In former studies, I have observed and heard immigrants tell me about the importance of cultural participation, by which I mean the opportunity to contribute and be acknowledged as a valuable participant in cultural interaction (Schuff, 2014).

The ‘cultural’ in this term also gives associations to another use of the term ‘culture’, as a sector in society, related to arts and creativity. Different from the main understanding of the term applied in this thesis, culture as discussed in psychology and anthropology (cf. 2.1.2.), this is the ‘cultural’ referred to in economics and politics, speaking of ‘cultural industries’ or ‘cultural policy’ (Miller, 2010; Towse, 2011). It is also similar to cultural or creative activities within the arts and humanities, implied when we speak of the importance of arts and culture for health (Cuypers et al., 2011; Kilroy, Garner, Parkinson, Kagan, & Senior, 2007).

Participation in arts or the cultural sector is an observable and perhaps archetypical form of cultural participation; that yields semiotically mediated expressions of human co-creation. The studies I base the term on have indeed been related to music, dance, choral singing and other creative joint efforts within the arts (Balsnes & Schuff, 2013; Schuff, 2012, 2014, 2015b, 2019). Most creative processes are multimodal, involving an interplay between
different modes of expression (Jewitt, 2016). Kaleidoscope, the project studied in this thesis, is also a multimodal event. Most presentations of the project mainly refer to music and dance, which can be considered the two most central modes in Kaleidoscope’s hybrid expression (Kvaal, 2018a). However, the performances also include modes such as colors, light design, gestures, clapping, games, speech, costumes (including national costumes as ethnic markers), and in some locations contemporary circus elements. The music itself also includes multiple aesthetic and meaning-making resources, such as instrumentation, lyrics, silence, volume, and polyrhythmic and multi-vocal combinations. Different modes have different affordances, that is, they vary in what opportunities they offer, in what they make possible for the people expressing or perceiving them (DeNora, 2003; Jewitt, 2016). The wide range of modes and combinations affords other interaction opportunities than more exclusively verbal ways of being together, which can be particularly important to people who are learning a new language, e.g. immigrants with varying Norwegian skills. Learning to sing and move together can both complement and strengthen language learning (Brandt, Slevc, & Gebrian, 2012; Schuff, 2015b; Vass, 2018).

Even more central than the forms of expression, however, I consider the agency dimension in cultural participation: «the importance of being included – not just in the sense of being allowed into community but also in the sense of contributing and participating as active agents, being included in the giving and helping that takes place in the community» (Schuff, 2014, pp. 17-18). Even though we all participate in co-constructing culture and society, the degree to which we are given opportunities and recognition for it will vary – with the fit between entrance criteria on different arenas and our backgrounds and resources, and according to our position in power structures and networks. The more opportunities and recognition, the stronger our sense of cultural participation is likely to be.

Cultural participation in this sense can contribute to well-being and a sense of coherence, by providing room for active involvement in meaning-making. Participation in general has been theorized within community psychology as significant for living well (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010), seeing that it opens up for both social interaction and support, and for influence and empowerment in one’s own life and society at large. To experience a sense of community, one must participate with others, and have some sense of influence by doing so (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Sarason, 1974). Participation thus also has a democratic aspect and can be anchored in human rights, i.e. the right to express oneself, associate with others, and generally participate in society and in processes that affect one’s life (UN, 1966, 1989). Participation thus appears as both a right and a deed.
However, participation is at the same time a complex and even problematic concept (Kagan, Burton, Duckett, Lawthom, & Siddiquee, 2011). To untangle it, one must consider issues of power and the structures and conditions people participate within; and from the perspective of the participating person, the commitment, motivation and meaning invested in the process (Kagan et al., 2011). This goes for participation in creative practices as well. It comes in many forms, that vary in the degree of influence, commitment, interaction, community, and genuine empowerment (more on participation in 3.2.).

Creativity concerns how we bring into being “something both novel and useful” (Leung et al., 2008, p. 170). From a developmental perspective, Valsiner has claimed that “all human life is constantly novel as long as it lasts” (Valsiner, 2000, p. 2), seeing that no occurrence of an event is the exact same as another occurrence, in the open systems human life constitutes. On the other hand, one might wonder whether creative inventions are genuinely new, or more precisely new combinations of often familiar elements. Several creativity scholars have underlined that idea generation is about making connections, both in our neural networks and our life worlds (Kaufman & Sternberg, 2010; Martindale, 1995). Creativity normally depends on a certain knowledge of the field one creates within, and on that foundation, novel combinations can be built, and in turn recognized in the field.

The connections/combinations perspective on creativity is also useful for understanding that creativity is not (only) an individual skill or process, but rather occurs in interaction, in creative communities and systems (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014, pp. 47-61; Glâveanu, Gillespie, & Valsiner, 2014). Within creativity studies, the focus has shifted lately from individual to collective creativity; from seeking out that one outstanding creative genius, to exploring how team dynamics and institutional support can integrate individual skills and capacities into a whole greater than its parts (Bissola & Imperatori, 2011; Parjanen, 2012). To stimulate creativity, then, societies need to not only provide individual training and opportunities, but also to create arenas that facilitate creative interaction.

Mixed backgrounds and experiences are beneficial for creative processes, perhaps because there is a wider range of possible new combinations when several perspectives meet (Leung et al., 2008; Maddux & Galinsky, 2009). Studies have found that people with high levels of multicultural experience can achieve higher scores on creative tasks both individually and in teams. Teams with multiculturally experienced members performed better on fluency, flexibility and novelty (Tadmor, Satterstrom, Jang, & Polzer, 2012). People with an understanding of multiple meaning systems and a wide range of experiences, including being in minority, will in themselves embody combinations that are something other than the
dominant ways of a society; potentially novel and useful combinations. They are experienced in perspective shifting, living and thinking “outside the box”, continually navigating and finding their ways in different contexts and challenges (Salole, 2018; Schuff, 2016).

However, this potentially creative culture mix is not always recognized as a positive contribution. Culture mixing – expressions that cross or confound commonly acknowledged cultural categories – can also be met with skepticism, even disgust, especially when a perceived foreign culture is mixed or fused with one’s own (Cheon, Christopoulos, & Hong, 2016). This may be due to a fear of contamination of something symbolically associated with one’s self, leading to a rejection of perceived external threats while protecting ingroup identity markers (Cheon et al., 2016; Tajfel & Turner, 2004). Identity threat, ingroup-outgroup discrimination, prejudice and related social psychological mechanisms may underlie the general lack of recognition given to minorities, in tow with unequal distribution of power.

Creating together and expressing ourselves can be a part of creating ourselves as well, as it may help us materialize our identity in the making. For society in general and minorities in particular, it matters which expressions are given room and whose stories are told and heard. Identities, understood by Hammack (2008) as personal narratives, are constructed in interaction as individuals engage with master narratives and often reproduce them (Hammack, 2008). However, personal narratives in their individual expressions can also disrupt dominant discourses (master narratives). Exploring these dynamics and the negotiations involved can yield a much more nuanced and multifaceted understanding of identity and interaction in multicultural societies, than trying to map what ‘different cultures’ consist of, and thereby reducing interactive phenomena to collective patterns (Hammack, 2008). A great benefit of such a narrative approach to identity is how it integrates individual and cultural levels of analysis, connecting self and society (Hammack, 2008).

For young people who grow up crossing cultural categories and meaning fields, it matters if there is room for them to tell their stories. It also matters whether they are reduced to one or another category or expectation, or met with recognition of the complexity they navigate on an everyday basis. Humans on the move – developing and migrating, and thereby challenging common categories and perceptions of the status quo – can bring about both friction and potential. If given room, the children of migration may contribute creatively to that complex whole in which we live, and expand the horizon of what is and what may be.
2.2. The ecology of human development and living well
Humans are continually developing, not only in our early years – even though physical growth and maturation and brain plasticity are at the most remarkable then. Development concerns the emergence of novelty (Valsiner, 2000, p. 17), which can arise in the wake of internal as well as external catalyzers and the interaction between them. When we move into a new environment, e.g. due to migration, external changes can catalyze changes of mind, and developmental challenges and opportunities. Development occurs through participation in sociocultural activities (cf. 2.1.2.), as our understanding, roles and responsibilities are transformed through guided participation in our communities (Rogoff, 2003). To say it with Vygotsky (1978), our mind develops in society.

Development is thus here understood as a sociocultural as well as a biological process; changes over time that a person navigates and negotiates in interaction with the environment, rather than a process unfolding ‘inside’ the sole individual (Rogoff, 2003). This take on development underlines both the person’s own agency (in contrast to passively entering stages by age) and the importance of context (rather than assuming a universal trajectory). A contextual approach to development seeks to understand the developing person in her/his ecology, as part of multiple systems from micro to macro levels (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model of human development was developed in the 1970s, and has been referred to and refined ever since, within both developmental psychology and community psychology (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Bronfenbrenner & Evans, 2000; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010). It places the individual in the center of several concentric circles, describing the systems development occurs within: The **microsystem** includes the people and environments the person relates to directly on a regular basis; such as family, friends, school, work, neighborhood, religious communities, leisure activities and local health care. The **mesosystem** contains the relations or interconnections between a person’s different microsystems; e.g. the communication between a child’s parents and school teacher. Some young people in this study have multiple languages, religions and value systems in their microsystems, and told me about their own and others’ attempts at bridging those ‘different worlds’ – efforts located in the mesosystem. The **exosystem** consists of those people and environments that affect the person in question indirectly. A child may not see much of her parents’ work place, but will still live with the ripple effects of their work situation, from unemployment through job satisfaction to stress load. Their situation elsewhere will influence parents and their capacity to attend to their children. Neighbors, friends of the family, social welfare services and media content influencing people around the developing person may
serve as other examples from the exosystem. On an even greater scale, the macrosystem contains societal conditions and attitudes and ideologies dominating the cultural realm. These structures can influence the developing person both directly and through saturating the other system layers. Bronfenbrenner later added the chronosystem as another dimension; that is, sociohistorical conditions and change over time in all the other systems (Tudge, Mokrova, Hatfield, & Karnik, 2009).

The systems perspective highlights an interconnectedness similar to ecological systems in nature (Fernee, 2019; Johnsen et al., 2019). With the climate and nature crises of our day, it becomes noticeable how the ecosystem is left out of the classical ecological model, since the focus of Bronfenbrenner is solely on our human environment (Viki, 2019). I have therefore taken the liberty to add another layer to the model, the ecosystem – our natural environment (cf. Figure 1, which I, with a smile, have labelled the eco-ecological model). The ecosystem is global and surrounds all macrosystems, with the biosphere providing the air we breathe and the climate conditions we depend upon, the waters and the soil and all the species with whom we share the planet. It can also be specified as our local natural environment, in terms of e.g. food supply, water, weather conditions and local environmental resources and problems.\(^5\)

\(^5\) The ecosystem addition undoubtedly developed ecologically, in interaction with my environment; as a nature lover, Green politician and environmental activist, and after conversations with colleagues who work within climate/environmental psychology and wilderness therapy. It is also a perspective ripe from the global situation.
Why would the ecosystem have a place in a relational model of human development? Not only do we depend on our natural environment to live and grow and thrive, we also relate to it throughout our lives, in ways that shape and saturate both society and psychological processes. Ecopsychology emphasizes our existential dependence upon nature, and how humans alienated from nature by our modern ways of life can feel homeless and empty if they do not reconnect (Slåttå & Madsen, 2014). Contact with nature is also found to impact personal lifestyle choices, e.g. sustainable living – and for some, this contact also inspires work for political change on the macrosystem level (Weme & Madsen, 2018). The value of relating to nature has been rediscovered in contemporary outdoor and wilderness therapy. In the Nordic societies, it is common to spend time in nature for recreation, and connectedness with one’s natural surroundings is an important value for many. Inspired by this local recreational and relational approach to the outdoors, nature-based interventions are now being developed within health care (Fernee, Gabrielsen, Andersen, & Mesel, 2015).

Among the ways of relating to the world that I have referred to as culture, there are also a variety of ways of relating to nature: as sacred and useful, as a place of danger or rest, as food supply or refuge. These ways may vary from situation to situation, and throughout our lives. In the same manner, based on our experiences and how we choose to apply what we have learned, we have our own (cultural) ways of relating to all the layered systems. So, the context colors our development, while we continually co-construct our own context (and that of others). As already touched upon, the ecological model can also be applied to understanding health in context; how to live well and thrive in interaction with our environment.

2.2.1. Health and wellbeing

*Health* can be defined and studied in numerous ways, with possibly the broadest and most commonly quoted definition appearing in the founding documents of the World Health Organization (WHO): “a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity” (WHO, 1948, p. 1). The wide scope of this definition was intended to transcend the narrower focus of a traditional biomedical approach, which had emphasized biological and physical markers of illness or dysfunction, leading to the assumption that health could be defined by a lack of measurable disease or ill-health. Transcending it may be, but WHO’s definition has on the other hand been criticized for being too broad and all-encompassing, describing what may look more like utopia than health (Espnes & Smedslund, 2009).
In the current study, my focus is on the subjectively experienced dimensions of health, often referred to as wellbeing (cf. Balsnes & Schuff, 2013; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010). According to Prilleltensky (2005, p. 54), wellbeing may be defined as “a positive state of affairs in which the personal, relational, and collective needs and aspirations of individuals and communities are fulfilled.” The relational and community dimensions of this definition link it to the ecological model discussed in 2.2. I consider wellbeing in this sense to capture some of the wide scope of health referred to by the WHO, including physical, mental, and social aspects. Understood within this interpretative and phenomenological approach, studying wellbeing does not necessitate biomedical measurements, but can arguably be captured through qualitative analyses of participants’ experiences as expressed in interviews (Schuff, 2014), or in a more limited format, in survey responses.

Wellbeing can be defined in simple or more complex terms, as it contains several dimensions, and can be understood in different ways by different people. It can be conceptually linked to happiness and living a good life, or to satisfaction. In one Norwegian sample, satisfaction was associated with internal states, while happiness was to a greater degree related to external life domains (Carlquist et al., 2016). So, while I consider wellbeing mainly a subjective experience, there are also more objective or external factors linked to it. Kvaal (2018b) discusses wellbeing as living in line with oneself, but also as a potential measure of social justice, since it may express a degree of fulfilment of needs and rights. There are also cultural and contextual differences in how we assess wellbeing and related measures such as satisfaction with life (Vittersø, Biswas-Diener, & Diener, 2005).

Health and wellbeing are not only multifaceted concepts, they are also phenomena influenced by a wide range of factors, as suggested by the biological, psychological and social dimensions in the biopsychosocial model of health (Espnes & Smedslund, 2009; Sarafino & Smith, 2014). This is a multisystem perspective compatible with that of Bronfenbrenner’s ecological model (2.2.), which elaborates much more on the many layers of the social dimension. Our health can be affected by everything from biological pathogens in the form of microorganisms, via relational joys or emotional difficulties, to macro level politics and economics that affect e.g. our migrant status, wealth or poverty, health care provision, family stability and employment security (Butler, 2019).

Migration can impact health significantly, but in a variety of ways. There are health risks linked to the challenging events involved in forced migration, to trauma and loss, and to disempowerment and discrimination. Access to health care can be limited compared to native populations (Rechel, Mladovsky, Ingleby, Mackenbach, & McKee, 2013; Øverland et al.,
Adaptation to a new life and society is hard work, and mental health outcomes vary with different forms of acculturation and different degrees of social support (Oppedal, Røysamb, & Sam, 2004). But there is also resilience, reconciliation and relief in many life stories of refugees and other migrants (Lien, Dybdahl, Siem, & Julardzija, 2019; Schuff, 2013; Varvin, 2018). Practitioners and scholars within health have increasingly taken up the task, and in July 2019, a new research network for migration and health was formed in Norway (NFMH, 2019).

2.2.2. Salutogenesis: Finding the flow towards health

Health can also be explored as a process, or an ever-flowing river – as Antonovsky pictured it when he coined the term salutogenesis, on his quest to unravel the mystery of health (Antonovsky, 1987). Translated from its Latin and Greek roots, salutogenesis means ‘origins of health’. In line with this, a salutogenic approach focuses on what promotes health, rather than what leads to sickness and ‘unhealth’ (Antonovsky, 1979, 1987). Within the overarching theoretical framework of salutogenesis, this project accentuates those health-promoting factors that play out in interaction with others.

The overall understanding within a salutogenic approach is that of health as a continual process, rather than an either/or condition. The ontological and epistemological basis of the theory includes conceptualizing the person in interaction with her environment, and the chaotic nature of life (Eriksson, 2017). Daily life is constantly changing, so that trying to achieve health in terms of a balanced or homeostatic state is futile. The chaos and change means that our lives are generally in a heterostatic state – as if standing in a river, no moment like the former. Antonovsky argued that our main challenge is “to manage the chaos and find strategies and resources available for coping with the changes in everyday life” (Eriksson, 2017, p. 91). External forces interact with our internal states to move us either towards or away from the healthy side of the continuum. Risk factors and stressors – what Antonovsky termed generalized resistance deficits – pull towards sickness and unhealth; while generalized resistance resources help us in the direction of health and thriving (Figure 2).
Salutogenesis can be considered an umbrella approach to what strengthens health. I apply a cultural and community psychological approach to salutogenesis – thus, I view it in context, more specifically in the context of migration experiences, recognition and agency, power and participation. How specific life experiences can contribute to or hinder salutogenesis cannot be assumed, but must be studied empirically. Migration, for instance, can involve counteractive forces, risk factors as well as protective factors. The presence of risk factors then only underscores the importance of identifying and strengthening protective factors.

Through his empirical work over the decades, Antonovsky himself identified one specific pattern that he considered a core mechanism in salutogenesis: The person’s sense of coherence – the degree to which life is experienced as comprehensible, manageable, and meaningful (Antonovsky, 1987). Antonovsky (1987, p. 19) defined a sense of coherence as:

a global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a pervasive, enduring though dynamic feeling of confidence that (1) the stimuli from one’s internal and external environments in the course of living are structured, predictable, and explicable; (2) the resources are available to one to meet the demands posed by these stimuli; and (3) these demands are challenges, worthy of investment and engagement.

Antonovsky was concerned with health, coping and stress, concepts that have to do with the relation between demands we face and the resources we find to meet those demands (Antonovsky, 1979). The conceptual links between a sense of coherence and stress are most evident in (1) and (2).

The meaning dimension (3) has parallels within existential psychology, such as the will to meaning that Viktor Frankl wrote about after surviving the concentration camps of the Second World War (Frankl, 2014 [1969]). Frankl wrote his logotherapy and existential psychology
based on an amazement at what humans could get through, if only life still had meaning to
them. He underlined that the meaning of life cannot be defined in any general way; it differs
from person to person and from moment to moment, and concerns finding ways to answer the
tasks life puts in front of us at any point in time (Frankl, 2014 [1969], p. 98).

The importance of meaning for wellbeing has more recently been elaborated by e.g.
Gabrielsen and Watten (2009), who suggest that meaning is centered around the personal
discovery of interconnectedness. In their model of meaning and coherence, they outline
several such connections between outward phenomena (relationships, work, spirituality,
generativity) and inner needs for meaning. Whenever these connections are realized, people
can experience meaningful states of being, which will generally strengthen their wellbeing.
Gabrielsen and Watten also state that “meaning is a product of the culture one is part of”
(Gabrielsen & Watten, 2009, p. 733, my translation). Individual meaning-making processes
are thus interwoven with the cultural context and colored by the semiotic resources available
there, a point relevant for those who grow up relating to multiple meaning-systems.

A complex and culturally multifaceted developmental history may challenge one’s sense
of coherence, for instance if migration leads to experiences of discontinuity and difficulties in
reestablishing a predictable, livable and manageable life in a new context. However, relating
to different cultures can also give access to multiple sets of meaning-making resources, and
opportunities to develop translation skills and perspective-taking in complex settings (Salole,
2018). That being said, one’s sense of coherence does not only depend on circumstances.
Antonovsky developed the concept after interviewing Holocaust survivors, and much of the
literature shows examples of how people live well not because of their circumstances, but
despite difficulties.

Antonovsky himself considered the sense of coherence a fairly stable outlook or even a
personality trait. There is an ongoing discussion about when and how one’s sense of
coherence is formed, and how stable or dynamic it is. Many scholars in the field have focused
on how people’s sense of coherence can be strengthened, e.g. through empowerment or
making problems more manageable, to apply the theory within prevention and health care
(Eriksson, 2017; Langeland, 2014).

In addition to a sense of coherence, a range of other factors have been found to contribute
to salutogenesis, including social support and participation in positive activities and
communities, ego identity, coping and creativity (Langeland, 2014). Arguably, salutogenesis
can also be linked to strengthening factors such as a sense of community (Orford, 2008;
Sarason, 1974), empowerment and recognition (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010), agency (Jansen, 2013), and cultural participation (Schuff, 2014).

Classical community psychology has emphasized the importance of experiencing a sense of community since the 1970s (Sarason, 1974). Our sense of community can be sorted into four factors: 1) having membership, 2) exerting influence, 3) finding satisfaction for needs and 4) shared emotional belonging in a group (Orford, 2008). The degree to which our relation to a group or community provides belonging, influence and mutual responsibility can be analyzed qualitatively, or measured quantitatively by applying e.g. The Sense of Community Index (Chiessi, Cicognani, & Sonn, 2010). With both approaches, a strong sense of community has been linked to health and well-being (Balsnes & Schuff, 2013; Orford, 2008). The concept is related to terms such as social support and social capital, which are also linked to better health (Heinrichs, Baumgartner, Kirschbaum, & Ehlert, 2003; Jetten, Haslam, & Alexander, 2012; Kawachi & Berkman, 2000). Social capital is also vital for democracy (Putnam, 2000), with its implications for participation and power distribution.

A last salutogenic factor I want to mention here, is cultural participation (cf. 2.1.4.). A growing body of research links participation in musical and other cultural activities to strengthened health and well-being (Balsnes & Schuff, 2013; Beckmann, 2014; Cuypers et al., 2011; Skånland, 2013). Music therapy has long applied musical activities as a health-promoting practice. There is also a growing, interdisciplinary research field concerned with music and health, both in Norway and internationally (Balsnes & Schuff, 2013; Beckmann, 2014; Ruud, 2010; Skånland, 2013). The music and health perspective widens the perspective from traditional music therapy to include health effects of music also beyond therapeutic settings, addressing a wide range of musical practices and contexts, in all areas where music can be significant for developing and maintaining health in people’s lives – from refugee camps to church choirs (Ruud, 2010; Schuff, 2014; Stige, Ansdell, Elefant, & Pavlicevic, 2010). There are similar health-related practices that involve other art forms, e.g. therapeutic dance (Bräuninger, 2014; Schuff, 2012; Steiner, 2003), visual/expressive arts therapy (DeMott, Jakobsen, Wentzel-Larsen, & Heir, 2017; Kalmanowitz & Lloyd, 2016; Knill, Levine, & Levine, 2005) and writing groups (McGihon, 1996; Synnes, 2015).

What do these different creative activities have in common? They offer opportunities for expressive cultural participation, that is, some form of meaning-making with a tangible output that can be shared with others. Some theorists argue that this process should be understood not only psychologically, but aesthetically and existentially; that the act of creating, responding to and shaping the world is a fundamental human capacity (Knill et al., 2005, p.
A British initiative that studied the intersections of arts and health by comparing a range of different participatory activities, emphasize the transformative effect of arts and creativity. Creative communities or projects seems to strengthen participants by “encouraging people to manage challenges themselves, which then leads to greater health and wellbeing” (Kilroy et al., 2007, p. 9). The active position of creating and contributing is different from the dependent and needy position that patients might otherwise find themselves in. To return to salutogenic terminology, creative and cultural participation offers people opportunities to mobilize their own resistance resources, so they can move towards health.

2.2.3. Social inequalities in health
Our position in relation to health (or in the salutogenic river, to follow Antonovsky’s metaphor) is not merely determined by how we feel, find meaning or connect with our creativity – it is also closely tied to our socioeconomic position and exposure to educational, labor market, economic and social marginalization. It has been established in studies from all over the world that inequalities in health follow a social gradient: The poorer people are, the worse their average health and the shorter their lives are expected to be, while those of a high socioeconomic standing have a higher life expectancy (Marmot, 2005, 2015; Sletteland & Donovan, 2012; Westin, 2002; Wilkinson & Pickett, 2010). This is the case also in Norway, a wealthy and relatively equal country, but with increasing socioeconomic inequality (Salvanes, 2017; Westin, 2002).

The explanations of these correlations vary. Practical-material approaches focus on how the less wealthy experience poorer living conditions, poorer nutrition, frequent moving, higher conflict levels in the family and lack of opportunities and participation. Psychosocial explanations emphasize mechanisms such as social stress, learned helplessness and shame (Elstad, 1998; Espnes & Smedslund, 2009). Their different explanations are not mutually exclusive, but supplement each other, as material and psychosocial factors interact (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Sarafino & Smith, 2014). They can be integrated in a life course perspective or an interactionist model (Bøe, 2015).

Health inequalities have been examined along dimensions such as geographical location, income, education, occupation, gender, ethnicity, race, caste, and more (Arcaya, Arcaya, & Subramanian, 2015). Intersectionality has gradually been introduced into research on health inequalities as a way of understanding the complexity and interactions between different social dimensions (Fagrell Trygg, Gustafsson, & Månsdotter, 2019). The central idea of intersectionality is that many intersecting and interacting axes of social division shape how
power is distributed in a society. Awareness of these multiple axes gives a better understanding of how inequality affects people’s lives, than considering any single axis alone (P. H. Collins & Bilge, 2016). Indeed, sociology professor Tanya Golash-Boza claims that any analysis of migrants’ lives that does not consider racialized, economic and gender inequalities – or in her words, white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy⁶ – is incomplete. All these dimensions and more intersect in the structures that determine what is possible and not for migrants and their children (Golash-Boza, 2015).

In the Norwegian context, family poverty is discussed as a public health issue due to its negative impact on children’s development. The Norwegian Psychological Association has chosen mental health prevention for young people as its current main priority area (2016-2019), with an emphasis on social redistribution of resources (Sønstebø, 2015). Scholars and practitioners in health and child care discuss how children’s participation in activities can be ensured across socioeconomic differences, to strengthen their wellbeing and development (Bøe, 2015; Kane, Neverdal, & Stenberg, 2018; Salvanes, 2017). In this light, it might be vital that participation in a creative project such as Kaleidoscope is available at no cost.

2.2.4. Cultural health promotion: the potential of participatory and creative arenas
The salutogenic approach combined with an understanding of health inequalities and the intersectional dynamics of marginalization form a starting point for suggesting a participatory strategy for health promotion. I will in this thesis discuss what I consider a still untapped potential for cultural health promotion; that is, for involving people in creative communities where they can contribute to a greater whole, while processing and expressing how their lives are unfolding. As illustrated in sections 2.1.4. and 2.2.2., such cultural participation can be salutogenic, both as wellbeing boost, prevention, health promotion, and in therapy and recovery. There is an increasing interest in arts-based therapy, and a wider public health perspective should also include creative activities and cultural participation in its toolbox.

Health promotion and public health are fields that expand way beyond the health care sector, which is not “where health happens”, only (or mainly) where it is repaired. The determinants of health are found in our everyday lives and local communities, in societal structures and (in)equality, in how we relate to each other, throughout the life course and all areas of living (Davies & Kelly, 2014; Edelman, Mandle, & Kudzma, 2017; Prilleltensky, 2005; Sletteland & Donovan, 2012). Culture, both in the narrower sense as the creative sector,

⁶ She used these exact words in a plenary session at the Nordic Migration Conference at Linköping University, Sweden, in August 2018. Her 2015 book referred to here, Deported, touches upon the same themes.
and in the wider sense of ways of relating to the world and making meaning, can offer tools for processing, sharing, expressing and coping with life (Fancourt & Finn, 2019; Van Buren & Schrag, 2018).

Artists and others may protest this approach to using art in the service of health, since it can reflect an instrumental view of cultural expressions, arts and creativity. However, this approach may also serve as an acknowledgment of the intrinsic value of art, and of how deeply human creativity and meaning-making is. Creative and expressive processes may actually flow the best and serve us the most when they are not for another end, but more of a playful, aesthetic presence in the moment and in ourselves (Bateson, Bateson, & Martin, 2013; Knill et al., 2005).

Participatory and creative arenas may provide opportunities for relating and coping that strengthen wellbeing and agency, or as Kvaal writes in her analysis of Kaleidoscope, the participants’ power of acting (Kvaal, 2018b). In such arenas, participants can find themselves in a different position where other ways of being, relating and coping become possible. When creating together with others in a group or community, there is also the potential for social and emotional support and constructive identity development (Jetten et al., 2012). The health-strengthening potential of participation and creativity is the focal point of this PhD study (cf. research questions in 1.3.).

There are several practical examples of creative, participatory initiatives, also for young people with migrant or culturally complex backgrounds. An arts-based trauma-informed intervention for unaccompanied minors in Norway showed promising results, as the participants in the expressive arts group had higher life satisfaction and more hope for the future than the life-as-usual control group at the end of the follow up (DeMott et al., 2017). DeMott and colleagues took this as support for that arts and creativity may help participants in reconstructing meaning and connection with others.

Other studies in a Norwegian immigration setting show that multicultural choirs can serve as a supportive arena for immigrants, strengthening their sense of community, language learning and meaning-making (Balsnes, 2014; Balsnes & Schuff, 2013). An overview that assesses risk and protective factors for displaced and refugee children resettled in high-income countries mentions social support and participation, cultural and religious continuity as protective factors (Fazel et al., 2012).

Arts projects have also been found to strengthen empowerment in refugee camps and transit areas. Making music together in Palestinian refugee camps, Ruud and colleagues noted the hope and recognition activated in the process (Ruud, 2010; Storsve, Westby, & Ruud,
They discussed how a music project can strengthen a sense of self and belonging, give opportunities for personal growth, and give new responsibilities that allows participants to hope for a better future (Storsve et al., 2012). A range of different art forms have been practiced with refugee children, for instance visual arts therapy with children affected by the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the 1990s (Papageorgiou et al., 2000). In our current refugee crisis in the Mediterranean, there are several organizations facilitating creative activities e.g. in day centers by the dreaded Moria camp on Lesvos in Greece. There are also artists working with as well as representing the situation in refugee hotspots like Lesvos and Lampedusa – in genres such as painting, photography and kite making (Kalmanowitz & Lloyd, 2016; Ramsay, 2016). Not all these projects have been evaluated in terms of health outcomes, but a systematic review of school and community-based interventions for refugee and asylum-seeking children shows that arts-based programs and combinations of verbal and creative processing, involving a wide range of creative expressions, generate significant changes in symptomatology (Tyrer & Fazel, 2014).

A project which to my knowledge is unique in its international reach is El Sistema, a social action music program that was first established in Venezuela in 1975 (SistemaEurope, 2017). Children are offered free musical ensemble participation with the intention of promoting social development. From classical (Western style) orchestral music, a greater diversity of genres has developed over time, including folk music, choral singing and jazz. El Sistema has spread to a number of countries around the world, and reached Sweden and the Gothenburg Symphonic Orchestra in 2010. While the Venezuelan project sought out to fight poverty and inequality, the Swedish El Sistema was directed towards immigrant communities to combat segregation and marginalization patterns (Bergman & Lindgren, 2014). The project is based on community music principles (parallel with many community psychology principles) and beliefs in empowerment and democratization through musical practices, and music as a vehicle for personal and community development (Bergman & Lindgren, 2014; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Stige et al., 2010). El Sistema plays out somewhat differently in different contexts, and can serve as an arena for social inclusion in Sweden. However, the children were often positioned as representatives of the El Sistema community, which was fairly structured beforehand, and could only at certain occasions participate on their own terms (Lindgren, Bergman, & Sæther, 2016).

*Kaleidoscope*, the project that this thesis presents an empirical analysis of, is conceptually related to El Sistema in some ways, but originated in Bergen, Norway with an intercultural starting point and has spread from there to several other Norwegian and Swedish towns. I will
take Kaleidoscope as a case in point to explore the potential of cultural health promotion involving children and young people who grow up across cultures. First, I will present and discuss former research on this specific creative project that serves as my case here.

2.3. Case: The participatory and creative arena of Kaleidoscope

Academic interest in the Kaleidoscope project has mainly come from the field of music, where it has been analyzed as a cultural expression or practice.\(^7\) One might say that the two studies of Kaleidoscope I present here analyze the project from the ‘outside’ and the ‘inside’, respectively. Both Solomon (2016) and Kvaal (2018a, 2018b) look at what the encounters between differences in Kaleidoscope imply, but frame and analyze them quite differently.

2.3.1. Kaleidoscope as a majoritarian discourse

Ethnomusicologist Thomas Solomon assessed the Kaleidoscope concept critically, reading it as a “reassuring story white Norwegians tell themselves about multicultural Norway” (Solomon, 2016, p. 188). Analyzing some of the Kaleidoscope songs and performances based on video material, he shows how they can be read as expressions in a majoritarian mode, typically with a combination of a Norwegian folk tune with a melody from somewhere else representing ‘the Other’. In a majoritarian mode, the majority’s way dominates by constituting the standard measure, the taken-for-granted constant from which other expressions are considered different (Solomon, 2016, p. 195). Solomon argues that in these multicultural performances, the exotic element seems interchangeable, in principle, as long as it represents someone different that the Norwegian majority show themselves generous towards. In this critical light, the seemingly hospitable musical practice is also intrinsically arranged on the Norwegian majority’s terms. With recent critical discussions of race and racism and multiculturalism as a backdrop, Solomon criticizes both the ethnic Norwegian/whiteness of the leadership in the project, and what he calls the “Fargespill formula” of combining musical materials from the children’s home countries with Norwegian folk music. He claims that the result is a narrative of assimilation of cultural others, and that these performances as a display of Norwegian generosity tell an untrue story, in stark contrast to current government immigration policies. The government has also funded Kaleidoscope financially, and may use it as a multicultural alibi (Solomon, 2016).

\(^7\) There are also some bachelor theses and at least three master theses written about Kaleidoscope, within music, education and intercultural studies. Kvaal (2018b) presents two MA theses. I will not address them here.
Solomon deserves credit for applying a consistent critical perspective and reading the Kaleidoscope discourse in light of the wider societal situation, thereby highlighting certain tensions that are not addressed or even mentioned in the official presentations and public praise of the project. Similar critical perspectives have been presented in shorter essays and reviews in the online music journal ballade.no, commenting on the potential stereotyping and exotification, and the staging and streamlining of the children’s performances, representing in their colorful national costumes (Ifejilika, 2018; Paus, 2018). These are useful reminders of the unequal power and influence between leaders and participants – and majority and minority – phenomena which deserve scrutiny. Music is not a neutral or pure arena which goes untainted from the power structures and stereotyping at work in society. Rather, music linked to social categories such as ‘immigrant’ or ‘foreign’ easily become imbued with the same stereotypes that are otherwise associated with those categories, often within a discourse on origin and authenticity, with the risks of exotification and the representational bias that go with it (Anundsen, 2014).

The criticism was also criticized, however, and project participants themselves claimed it undermined their own perspective and contribution (Skanding, 2016), a dimension participants also discussed with me (cf. paper III). Kaleidoscope leaders have responded by nuancing and challenging Solomon’s presentation of the project, arguing that it is too limited a material to base such an overarching judgment simply on a few videos, and referring to increasing diversity both in the project staff and the performances. The few glimpses Solomon analyzes are arguably from an early stage of the project, and do not capture the variation and later developments. To understand the dynamics of the project both behind the stage and in its societal context, they invite research that is more interactive and participatory (Moberg et al., 2016; Pedersen & Moberg, 2017). From an academic perspective, music professor Tellef Kvifte criticized Solomon and his student Skanding for focusing on the product rather than the process (Kvifte, 2016). According to Kvifte, the exotification occurs not in the creation of the performances, but in the reception of them – in other words, it is Solomon’s own reading of the performances that applies an exotifying filter. His characterization of Norwegian folk music as a caricature of rural Norwegian-ness is one example of how exotification is in the eye of the beholder. The key to success in Kaleidoscope, however, is not in how the performances appear, but in the opportunities for practical interaction throughout the process (Kvifte, 2016).

The debate after Solomon’s critical analysis (Solomon, 2016) makes very clear that there are many sides to this story, as it brings different perspectives and investments to the fore.
from voices both within and outside the project. The conversation highlights how Norway as a society contradicts itself, with a combination of inclusion and exclusion practices and policies. Blaming these paradoxes in their entirety on the Kaleidoscope crew is obviously unfair, but all actors involved on the Norwegian cultural and integration scene still have a responsibility for considering how their actions may reinforce or nuance stereotypes, and contribute to reproducing or challenging power inequalities. Solomon’s analysis is a useful reminder of this, but also only one out many potentially valid perspectives on the interaction in Kaleidoscope; as there are several processes occurring simultaneously (cf. 6.2.2.).

2.3.2. Music as an intercultural tool
Camilla Kvaal studied the interaction in Kaleidoscope as hybrid music practices for her PhD in music education (Kvaal, 2018). While Solomon analyzed the product in terms of selected performances, Kvaal focuses more on the process, on backstage interaction and what is at stake for the different participants as they rehearse and negotiate in music.

Kvaal bases her analysis on ethnography, and describes how she observed different approaches and understandings of the musical material and how it should be performed. She frames these crossing affordances theoretically as negotiations about technicity, affectivity-emotivity and transindividuality (Kvaal, 2018b). In other words, the participants have differing approaches to how the music should function and what elements are most important for it to “work” (technicity), differing experiences of whether the music makes them excited or want to cry, or is loaded with other emotional qualities for them (affectivity-emotivity), and differing identifications with the music and how it can link individual and collective belonging to a greater whole (transindividuality). The transindividual dimension of her analysis is similar to what I refer to as identity negotiations (Schuff, 2016).

An analysis that sheds light on all these negotiations and interactions show how hybrid music is a matter of point of view, and a complex and dynamic relational field (Kvaal, 2018a). This arrests the myth of music as a universal language, that will automatically connect people across borders. We cannot assume that intercultural music practices necessarily unite people from different backgrounds, since there are so many different investments, experiences and ways in play. Practitioners can, however, become aware of these differences and of how participants interact in the musical field; of how practices are maintained or interrupted – and they can leave the possibility open that something new may happen (Kvaal, 2018a). It may indeed be constructive for participants simply to communicate more about crossing musical
experiences, to name expectations and pronounce questions rather than expecting each other to just ‘feel’ the music (Kvaal, 2018b).

Kvaal presents a thorough and nuanced analysis, juggling the theoretical-philosophical framework well. The question of power distribution and the minority/majority context is not addressed extensively in her work, but forms more of an implicit backdrop. This contrasts Solomon’s starker critical perspective, even though she addresses his analysis.

2.3.3. Ongoing projects
Another ongoing study is Jan Magnar Steinhovden’s PhD project at the University of Bergen, not about Kaleidoscope per se, but about music in the Ethiopian and Eritrean diaspora. His ethnographic study includes certain songs and participants from Kaleidoscope (personal communication). It is not yet published, but he has made interesting observations e.g. about the song Oromiyaa, brought from the Oromo people’s tradition into the Kaleidoscope performance. His observations that a song that is framed as generic and harmless in the Norwegian context, has a potentially explosive political message for those with an Ethiopian background, raise questions about what can happen when creative expressions are decontextualized and recontextualized. In line with Kvaal’s work, this underlines the differing interpretations of shared practice, as well as potential disputes over ownership. I have observed similar dynamics concerning Kosovo/Serbias and Israeli/Palestinian songs, as well as Christian songs, that are apparently politically and religiously potent for many participants and spectators, but are treated as ‘pure music’ in the Kaleidoscope context.

There are also development projects that carry the Kaleidoscope philosophy onto new arenas, such as educational resources and continuing education (Fargeskyen, 2019; WNUAS, 2019) and cooperation with schools of music and performing arts (Kulturskolerådet, 2019).

2.4. Current research gaps and aims of the study
Kaleidoscope has been scrutinized as musical practice and indirectly also as an integration (or diversity) project. We know less about the personal experiences of the participants beyond their musical experiences, and about the part this creative community plays in participants’ development and everyday life. Self-presentations and media coverage of the project have pointed towards social ripple effects and possible benefits of participation. This has also led to a certain interest in the project from the social and health care sectors, that cooperate with the project in some locations. However, no systematic knowledge has been established about the links between this kind of creative/cultural participation and psychosocial development.
The experiences and voices of young people with migrant or other cross-cultural backgrounds are also too often missing in migration studies, acculturation and developmental psychology (cf. also 1.3.). Hearing more from young people themselves can help society recognize their hopes and resources, and facilitate their participation, agency and thriving. There is also a need for a greater understanding of the challenges and gains from growing up crossing cultural categories, to see risk and protective factors more clearly and know more about what makes a qualitative difference.

In the current study, I seek to take up these challenges: Participating with and listening to the voices and experiences of the participants, sharing their stories and tracing patterns that may give us a richer understanding of their development. I look at what participating in a creative community like Kaleidoscope means for the participants also beyond the musical activities themselves, and what is important to them as they grow up in multicultural Norway.

The main purpose of the research project is to increase our understanding of how cultural participation and creative activities can strengthen salutogenesis in children and young people who grow up crossing cultural categories and relating to multiple expectations and meaning-systems. This is to establish knowledge relevant for psychosocial and health work in local communities, for cultural institutions and artists that embrace social responsibilities, and broadly speaking to strengthen both integration and public health in multicultural Norway. Such knowledge will hopefully make the society they grow up in better equipped to receive and empower all our children equally well.
3. Methodology

The mixed methods design was chosen as an attempt at capturing the complexity of the lives and experiences of the participants – as mentioned in chapter 1, a recognition of human complexity and the value of multiple perspectives. The methodology is grounded within a contextualist and participatory approach, informed by community and cultural psychology (cf. Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Valsiner, 2000), attempting to understand human development and meaning-making in the context of how our life worlds are continually interwoven with the fabric of society. These perspectives encourage a methodological humility and flexibility when trying to listen to the voices of potentially marginalized ‘others’ – recognizing both our commonalities and differences, and never taking for granted that my planned methods make sense in the encounters with participants (Lindner, 2001). These are ethical as well as methodological issues. While it would be naïve to think that power differences and positionality could be annulled by methodological remedies (cf. Watson & Fox, 2018), I have sought to involve the participants in the process as much as possible; through the reference group in particular, but also through ongoing informal dialogues. I have also combined different data collection strategies and made an effort to listen carefully to the voices of the participants, while considering their context, life circumstances and projects. It therefore became important to adapt the sample and strategies during the course of the project, letting the design be shaped by encounters with participants.

As a basis for the practical methodological steps, I use the first part of this chapter to establish my ontological and epistemological position. I will argue that a critical realism is an appropriate philosophical middle ground and a firm foundation from which to make this leap of exploration. From there, I discuss how I have managed practical and ethical issues.

3.1. Philosophical foundation

Like any science, psychology is a cultural and historical activity (Kvale, 2003, p. 579) and thus has its blind spots and limitations. Therein linger temptations to consider our results and solutions complete, certain and beneficial by default (Ekeland, 2009). Madsen (2014) argues that our limited capacity for processing psychology in society calls for more self-reflexive examination and an expansion of the discipline’s ethical framework. One implication of this is a need for continuous reflexivity and cultural awareness.

Research methods are similarly historical-cultural constructs that have arisen in specific local contexts. The currently dominating methods within psychology were mainly developed in Europe and the USA, but have become a type of globalized knowledge, continually
transferred to new contexts, usually without explicit awareness of their cultural embeddedness (Gobo, 2011). Taking the cultural embeddedness and limitations of psychological approaches and methods into account; how can I ensure that I develop and apply methods that are as contextually appropriate as possible, when conducting my research in a multicultural setting? In this chapter, I explore this challenge philosophically, exploring what kind of ontological and epistemological framework can form a fruitful basis for combined and culturally sensitive methods; primarily considering dialectical pragmatism and critical realism. I also argue for cultural humility as an important methodological and ethical virtue, particularly in diverse research settings (Lindner, 2001; Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). Cultural humility calls for continuous self-reflection and self-critique, as well as ongoing, respectful dialogues with the communities that are the subjects (rather than objects) of the research.

A diversity context necessitates listening, and a gradual, contextualizing approach, something I applied by starting with fieldwork, and involving a reference group and other participants in dialogue over time. I will explain why I consider such a participatory approach one of the practical and epistemological keys for contextually sensitive research (cf. S. E. Collins et al., 2018; Kidd & Kral, 2005). Mixed methods can also contribute to flexibility and context sensitivity. I will argue that critical realism is a constructive basis for developing and applying contextually sensitive methods. While dialectical pragmatism also has a lot to offer in terms of flexibility and openness for multiple perspectives, and encourages dialogue/participation, it lacks some of the critical potential of critical realism that I deem necessary, especially to handle power relations in a minority-majority-setting such as the one under study here (Archer, Bhaskar, Collier, Lawson, & Norrie, 2013). The philosophical challenges raised by diversity are not unique to multicultural settings, but have relevance for psychology and human studies in general.

3.1.1. Ontology and epistemology in a multicultural world

“There is nothing in the universe except meanings and molecules”. With this anonymous quote, Harré and Moghaddam (2012, p. 2) open their exploration of a ‘psychology for the third millenium’, in which they argue for integrating cultural and neuroscience perspectives. An ontology that recognizes meanings (ontologically subjective entities) alongside molecules (ontologically objective entities) can arguably neither be exclusively positivist/post-positivist nor exclusively constructionist/relativist (cf. Hacking & Hacking, 1999). If reality consists of such different phenomena as meaning and molecules, interaction and identities, sound waves and satisfaction with life, etc.; then we cannot expect to understand it fully by applying any
single method or way of thinking – or to understand it within any one cultural frame of reference. This entails a pluralist ontology, and I have chosen critical realism as a non-relativist framework for this thesis.

In this globalized, border-crossing age, we are perhaps more acutely aware than ever of how many ways there are of being human. Cultural diversity, when taken seriously, challenges the whole scientific “project of objective and universal knowledge of the social world” (Benton & Craib, 2011, p. 143). This raises both ontological and epistemological questions. Since our (phenomenological) world looks so different with different cultural references or ‘filters’ (Dahl et al., 2006), what can we legitimately maintain as real – and may not the phenomena that constitute reality be unto others something else than they are to us? This dilemma complicates the issue of upholding an understanding of an ontologically objective reality, while it highlights the role of ontologically subjective realities.

Berger and Luckmann (1967) addressed these issues in their seminal work on The Social Construction of Reality, arguing that “reality is socially constructed and that the sociology of knowledge must analyze the processes in which this occurs”. This approach is explicitly motivated by observing the variation between societies; as “what is “real” to a Tibetan monk may not be “real” to an American businessman” (Berger & Luckmann, 1967, p. 5). Berger and Luckmann emphasize the plasticity of humans’ relationship with their environment, a relationship characterized by its ‘world-openness’. The biological/physical dimensions of being human interact with socio-cultural dimensions throughout the life course, implying that we live as much in context-specific, phenomenological lifeworlds as in a shared (physical) reality. Berger and Luckmann conclude that an adequate understanding of humans in society must comprehend both objective and subjective reality. The perspective is dialectical: The individual member of a society “simultaneously externalizes his own being into the social world and internalizes it as an objective reality” (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). In our lived experience, then, the line between the natural and cultural, the socially constructed and the ontologically real, may appear quite blurred, if we see it at all. It is often also unclear in academic texts what exactly is socially constructed (Hacking & Hacking, 1999).

These dialectics not only apply in multicultural settings; but cultural encounters can make us more aware of different perspectives and our own way of seeing things, and of how, even when we operate in ‘monocultural’ fields, our culture/perspective is intrinsic to our being and seeing in the world. Diversity makes us more aware that we live not in ‘the world’, but in ‘a world’ (Berger & Luckmann, 1967) – or in the same world, yet in different lifeworlds, as
phenomenologically inspired cultural psychologists might say (cf. Hundeide, 2003).
Diverging lifeworlds are not only rooted in cultural differences; but in all sorts of different experiences, power relations and socioeconomic differences, borders and categories; as well as in the phenomenon of subjectivity itself.

What I find myself looking for, among objective and subjective dimensions of reality, is an ontologically intersubjective reality. Berger and Luckmann (1967) mention how “the reality of everyday life presents itself to me as an intersubjective world, a world that I share with others”. In this project, intersubjectivity informs my epistemology in the sense that I seek to understand the phenomena under study through participatory knowledge building. Intersubjectivity may be as close as we can humanly get to epistemological objectivity.

Cultural diversity challenges epistemological at least as much as ontological stands. Social epistemology understands “multiculturalism as a vehicle for envisioning alternative ends and means of organizing the production of knowledge” (Sardar & Van Loon, 2011, p. 111). Similar thoughts have also been developed within so-called post-normal science; a perspective that acknowledges ignorance and uncertainty, as well as a plurality of modes of knowledge production, values and stakes involved (finances, interests, politics). Post-normal science implies an epistemological ‘innocense lost’, as it recognizes that science and policy may well be entangled, more commonly than not. The only viable way forward is “dialogue, based on the recognition of uncertainty and ignorance… together with a plurality of legitimate perspectives and value-commitments.” (Sardar & Van Loon, 2011, p. 155) The salience of multiple perspectives opens the way for dialogue and dialectical approaches.

3.1.2. Dialectic pragmatism: Useful inspiration
An acknowledgment of intersubjective as well as objective and subjective realities characterizes the ‘multiple realism’ of dialectical pragmatism (R. Johnson & Gray, 2010). This is by many considered a viable philosophical foundation for mixed methods (Burke Johnson, 2008), and it was my starting point for this current study.

Pragmatism can be understood in many ways, but generally implies a flexible approach to methods and values guided by how questions and practical problems can best be addressed; by what works in practice (R. B. Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, de Waal, Stefurak, & Hildebrand, 2016). Thus, pragmatism allows for an ontology in which reality is understood as

---

8 I experienced this palpably as I left the Greek harbor of Igoumenitsa one recent summer, a Norwegian scholar on a train vacation with her family – while refugees that lined the fences of the harbor, and saw our ferry set out at sunrise, were in the very same physical area, but their experience and position were quite different.
multidimensional, and an epistemological flexibility that naturally suits mixed methods. Pragmatism is often considered “the most useful philosophy to support mixed methods research” (B Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, & Turner, 2007, p. 125). It avoids the incompatibility problem between quantitative and qualitative methodologies (R. Johnson & Gray, 2010), and can perhaps even incorporate both realist/postpositivist and interpretivist positions, e.g. in research cooperation in mixed-methods teams. Viewing reality as multidimensional could potentially allow integration of multiple, culturally differing understandings of the phenomenon under study. On the other hand, one might ask if pragmatism is simply the ‘anything goes’ – or, more precisely ‘whatever works’ – of science. If so, what guidance can it provide?

Pragmatism implies that our knowledge of something arises in our practical relationship with it. This could, again, be taken to mean “that what is true is what works” (Benton & Craib, 2011, p. 87). Dialectical pragmatism, however, is a refinement of this approach which emphasizes continuous dialogue to transcend the assumption of incompatibility between quantitative vs. qualitative methods – in favor of balance, compromise and intersubjectivity. Allowing for ontological pluralism, dialectical pragmatism encourages learning from differences and forming new syntheses (B Johnson et al., 2007; R. Johnson & Gray, 2010). Listening to both qualitative and quantitative traditions, as well as to different standpoints and stakeholders, thus becomes a necessity for high quality knowledge production.

In line with this, the participatory mixed methods design of the present PhD study is intended to span the multicultural setting by including different perspectives, experiences and trajectories of change – recorded in the form of both qualitative and quantitative data, and integrated in analysis. The most apparent practical consequence that dialectical pragmatism has inspired in this project is thus the ongoing dialogues with different participants and others involved, throughout to the discussion

As the project developed, however, I found a more firmly defined scientific-philosophical foundation in critical realism. While pragmatism is relativist in its approach to truth, critical realism recognizes ontologically objectivist existence. However, the two approaches both allow for constructivist/contextualist elements in their epistemology, understanding the quest for truth as socially shaped and necessarily intersubjective. I would therefore argue that a bridge between dialectic pragmatism and critical realism can be found in their relational epistemology, where the quest for truth takes form of dialogue or dialectics.
3.1.3. Critical realism: Stratified and interdependent reality

Critical realism is a non-reductionist and non-relativist philosophical foundation which is dialectic in its orientation (Bhaskar, 2008, 2010). Critical realism simultaneously recognizes the independent existence of the objects of scientific knowledge as well as the socially constructed nature of scientific knowledge (Bhaskar, 2010). I find critical realism a viable alternative and a braver approach in trying to answer the basic, though demanding questions of what is real and what we can know about the world – where pragmatism in principle leaves those questions open, and rather asks ‘what works’. Critical realism is attractive for its reflexivity and acknowledgment simultaneously of an external reality and of our (scientific) knowledge of it as a social product, always emerging and open to correction (Benton & Craib, 2011). In other words, critical realism has a realist ontology, but a more relativist/constructivist epistemology. In the critical realism as developed by Bhaskar from the 1970s onwards, reality is seen as stratified, consisting of:

- the ‘real’ level (underlying mechanisms/powers/tendencies),
- the ‘actual’ level (possible flows and event sequences),
- the ‘empirical’ level (observed events).

While a strict empiricism would only recognize the empirical level, critical realism holds that there is a reality independent of our scientific investigation of it (Bhaskar, 2010). This reality is both stratified and differentiated in open and closed systems. Psychosocial processes of mental health and wellbeing as studied in the present project operate as open systems (Valsiner, 2014a), in which “mechanisms coexist and interact with each other in contingent ways” (Benton & Craib, 2011, p. 130). All social processes are open systems (Bhaskar, 2010, p. 144).

Critical realism also provides an understanding of the interrelationship between structure and agency which can prove a very useful tool for a contextual psychology. In this view, structure and agency are two analytically distinct levels of social reality – both independent, and with causal properties: Structure can enable or hinder actions for individual agents, while agents over time construct and reconstruct the structures (Archer, 1995). Similar arguments have been made about the interplay between culture and agency (Archer, 1996); or, in cultural psychology, the integration of individual and culture (Thorsen & Toverud, 2002); relevant for understanding the people and phenomena studied here.

While the term ‘independent’ is often used about the mutual relationship between these different levels of reality – the real, the actual and the empirical – I would argue that one might just as well refer to the levels as interdependent. Underlying mechanisms on the real
level lead to flows and events on the actual level; and even though we cannot make complete observations of them on the empirical level, we see some of them and fill in the blanks with our world view, interpretative resources available to us and our other ways of relating to the world. Then we act on what we know about what we see, and our actions impact the actual level, based on what is possible with the underlying real level. So there is both independence and interdependence between the levels of reality.

In line with Johnson’s (2008, p. 204) recommendations for mixed methods, I “take a broad and inclusive view of ontology”; to avoid reductionism out of respect for the world’s complexities. I see both pragmatism and critical realism as broad and inclusive approaches, and critical realism as a step towards a clearer position: Whatever exists, our view of it is culturally shaped, positioned and limited; but yet, some knowledge of it is possible; and can be of value and potentially emancipatory.

3.1.4. What is critical about critical realism?
Critical realism reckons the world as human-independent, and our knowledge of it as human-dependent (Bhaskar, 2010). The insistence on reality’s independence implies that our interpretations and current beliefs can never be considered final, but will necessarily always be open to correction in the light of further cognitive work. This renders critical realism more ‘fallibilist’ than idealist/relativist approaches, which “insulate themselves from the possibility of being proved wrong by doing away with the idea of a knowable independent reality” (Benton & Craib, 2011, p. 122). This fallibilism proves significant when ‘reality’ seen from another (cultural) perspective gives the researcher resistance, as may often happen in diversity settings.

As mentioned above, cultural diversity complicates a view of “objective and universal” knowledge of reality, to the degree that it can lead to rejecting positivism in favor of a relativist stand. However, I agree with Benton and Craig (2011) that relativism is not an adequate response, considering the power issues in play. Imposing scientific standards that are themselves a product of a particular society (‘Modern’, ‘Western’) on other cultures is deeply problematic, as ‘modern science’ forms part of a complex apparatus of power and dominance – cf. colonial history, global inequality and marginalized groups. This calls for a more critical approach (Benton & Craib, 2011:143). Benign tolerance and the relativist epistemology that often comes with it also turn out to be inadequate when “applied to such complexes of knowledge and power. For subaltern groups, resistance to domination must include challenging the forms of knowledge which are invariably complicit in such regimes” (Benton
The commitment to reality in critical realism implies that we cannot argue our way out of an ontologically objective ecological crisis (cf. the eco-ecological model proposed in 2.2.), nor can we ask people to socially construct their way out of a marginalized position as if the structures that keep them there did not exist.

While dialectical pragmatism also has a lot to offer in terms of flexibility and openness for multiple perspectives, it lacks some of the critical potential of critical realism that I deem necessary – particularly to handle a minority-majority setting. I would argue that critical realism is a better epistemic tool than pragmatism for responding substantially to power differences and inequality; and might be more suitable for research involving migrants and minorities, as is the case here. Integrated in critical realism is a potential for emancipation (Benton & Craib, 2011; Bhaskar, 2010). Critical realism was developed in the 1970s when many social scientists were committed to Marxism; and although critical realism is not necessarily Marxist, the frameworks are compatible. In line with Marx and Habermas, Bhaskar considers knowledge of self and society a necessary, yet insufficient condition for emancipation. This knowledge takes the form of an explanatory critique which challenges common-sense understandings and reveals oppressive and false beliefs (cf. Marxist understandings of wage labor) (Benton & Craib, 2011). But again, the reality that exists beyond this knowledge of it may also have to be changed for full emancipation to follow cognitive emancipation (Bhaskar, 2010).

### 3.2. A participatory approach

To build my methodological practice on critical realism, I have worked to integrate awareness about different levels of reality and our situated understandings of them into the steps of the research process. That implies a conscious effort to embrace complexity and co-create knowledge, in a participatory approach.

In critical epistemologies common in cultural and community psychology (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Orford, 2008), participation is often considered a central epistemological-methodological tenet. Participatory approaches align well with the call for dialogue in post-normal science (Sardar & Van Loon, 2011), the emancipation deemed desirable within critical realism (Bhaskar, 2010), and the continuous listening recommended in dialectical pragmatism (R. Johnson & Gray, 2010). A related approach is co-research within the mental health field, doing research in cooperation with people with user/patient experience rather than on them (Borg & Kristiansen, 2009). This section introduces my practical approach, based on the principles of participatory action research (PAR) (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010).
3.2.1. Participatory Action Research – why and how?
The study is inspired by Participatory Action Research (PAR) as developed within community psychology (Kidd & Kral, 2005; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010). Participatory Action Research combines the experiential expertise that members of a local community have of their own life world, with the academic, systematizing skills that researchers can bring to the table (Kidd & Kral, 2005). A central idea is that the greatest potential for action and change occurs when people come together and reflect on their own situation. It is also intended as a democratizing, decolonializing and empowering way of doing research, based on the core value of social justice (Kagan et al., 2011; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010).

Throughout this research project, I have sought to apply a participatory approach, with continuous dialogue with the involved parties and participants, and specific efforts such as the assistance of a reference group of experienced Kaleidoscope participants.

A PAR design is characterized by learning through a cycle of action and reflection (Reason & Riley, 2003). In this project, this cycle materialized in the interplay between dialogue with participants and leaders in general and the reference group in particular, data collection throughout rehearsals and performances in the music project, and my own reflection process integrating the data with the literature and contemporary discussions within the disciplines of psychology and mental health. This approach was meant to stimulate an inclusive process of knowledge-building. I have also regularly discussed findings with the leaders to feed knowledge back into the music project, so that the current research can hopefully be applied in ways that will benefit future participants – thus attempting to ‘complete’ the cycle of action and reflection. The dialogue with performers/participants was meant to stimulate the exchange of different perspectives and an inclusive process of knowledge-building.

According to an ideal type PAR design, it would be optimal if the purpose of the research had been defined by participants themselves or in collaboration. In this case, the initiative was mine, as was the goal of the research. Participants and leaders of the creative community were invited to provide input, and as far as I understood, the goals of the research project and of the creative community overlap – in aiming for creativity, empowerment, togetherness and wellbeing. They did not suggest specific changes. Instead, I integrated what I heard was important to them into the research process, terminology and discussions.

The dialogical-participatory approach has also been central in managing the ethical aspects of the PhD project. In this dialogue, we meet as equal subjects with each our special
competencies – the participants with insider experiences, and the researcher with theoretical and methodical tools. In participatory research strategies it is an ethical imperative that the user involvement is real and not merely symbolic (Borg & Kristiansen, 2009). While it is important not to underestimate or cover up the differences in power, backgrounds and resources between researcher and participants, the intention of the participatory approach applied here is to contribute as far as possible towards equality, justice and empowerment in the research process (Orford, 2008).

Participation is a valued phenomenon in community psychology, both as process and goal. Participation in processes relevant to one’s life can ensure influence, ownership and rights fulfilment, and can also strengthen one’s sense of community and wellbeing. Participation is also considered a goal in itself in many areas of our societies: Social and cultural participation, children’s activities, political participation for democracy to function, educational and work force participation, and so on (Kagan et al., 2011; Schuff, 2014). Participation is not an abstract idea, but is necessarily specific, embodied and situated in particular locations (Omland & Andenas, 2019). Exploring specific social participation in everyday life empirically can shed light on important dynamics and mechanisms, like when Omland and Andenæs (2019) studied the social practices of unaccompanied refugee minors in Norway and found that peer-relations are a more central resource for them than often assumed, a potentially significant consideration for making housing arrangements.

For the individual, we can understand participation in our own life in terms of concepts such as agency and empowerment (Jansen, 2013; Rolvsjord, 2004; Selimos, 2018). As elaborated upon above (2.1.2., 2.1.4.), development unfolds as we participate in social interaction with significant others and in our communities, on relevant arenas and in relevant processes. A premise for participation is to be recognized – as someone equal and able to contribute, or at least able and worthy to be part of a community (as described in the psychology of recognition, cf. Falkum et al., 2011; Honneth, 1996). Kvaal draws on a similar term in her study of musical interaction in Kaleidoscope, focusing on handlekraft, the ‘power to act’ – our possibilities for acting within and influencing relations constructively (Kvaal, 2018b, p. 68). She also links her terminology to empowerment, as it concerns what it is possible to do or become. Kvaal discusses how music can be a vehicle for transferring or mediating a certain amount of power to act between the participants; in what we might consider moments of collective empowerment (Laverack, 2006). At the same time, musical practices are also negotiated and influenced by power structures in the setting and interaction (Kvaal, 2018a, 2018b) – as are research practices (Kidd & Kral, 2005).
From a more critical perspective, it is necessary to remember that participation is a contested term that is used in different ways by different people. Participation can mean a number of different things involving high or low commitment, varying from proactive to passive forms, and from participants being informed or consulted to actually taking part in decision making and acting on one’s own initiatives (Kagan et al., 2011). This variation also sheds light on how people may participate on the same arena, but on different terms, and with different amounts of actual influence. These differences depend on power structures and positions, and on who defines the arenas we participate on, that again, shape us and our opportunities. A teacher and her students may participate in the same classroom, but usually, the teacher has more power to structure the interaction there, even when she applies participatory or interactive didactics. The same goes for leaders and participants in Kaleidoscope. They are all on the same team, but there are many different positions concerning who structures the interaction, who can select, edit and arrange the musical material, and whose choreography they dance to.

The PAR ideal suggests extensive involvement of participants throughout the research process, in designing as well as carrying through the research. However, its realization will vary according to context and what is feasible there. Different degrees of involvement can still be considered participatory research as long as the basic intention is there (Kidd and Kral, 2005). I found that the other involved parties have often been busy with their own responsibilities – rehearsing and preparing – and that they have expected and trusted me to decide how I wanted to conduct my research myself. The participants were generally more interested in and committed to their participation in the creative activities than in the research, which is quite understandable, since that was their reason for being there – while my interest and work obligations committed me to keep the research project going alongside the creative project. I have invited input, from the practical field as well as from academic supervisors and peers. Still, these priorities and expectations from Kaleidoscope participants were a reminder that the final responsibility for my own research rests with me.

3.2.2. The reference group
Since the general dialogue with everyone involved seemed to diffuse responsibility and often strand on busyness, I recruited a small reference group consisting of experienced Kaleidoscope participants to provide more focused input to the research design and process. Four veteran participants were invited to meet with the researcher twice a year, paid by the
hour for a reasonable economic compensation for their time. I travelled to their home town, but was never able to gather all four at once, and so I met with one, two or three of them.

In the first gathering, they told me about their experience in the project, and I introduced my research plan and general research methods, before discussing the overall research design with them. At later points in time, the reference group was asked for input on the interview guide and survey questions. We also discussed some findings, analyses and ways of presenting the results, and they had the opportunity to read excerpts of article drafts.

The purpose of the reference group was to check and improve the design and specific questions used in encounters with the young participants, with young people who were participants themselves, but experienced ones. As experts on the workings of the music project, and on their own experience with it, they provided valuable input to help me understand what I might want to be looking for. They also helped check the language for difficulty and relevant word choices, which was helpful to adapt the interview and survey questions to a target group including many with Norwegian as their second language.

I had intended to meet the reference group even more often and discuss the analyses more in depth with them, but they got as involved as they found time for in their busy student lives. In other words, their interest and capacity shaped their participation (cf. Kagan et al., 2011). It is part of the participatory dynamics that the researcher cannot plan and decide on all details, since a participatory project to some degree is a joint enterprise and a product of mutual interaction. This leads to several reality checks along the way, since genuine participants are not controlled, but depended upon. Other researchers in participatory projects with young people as co-researchers have also reflected on the limitations that arise and perhaps unfulfilled potential (Watson & Fox, 2018). I find that Kidd and Kral argue well for considering the approach and mindset of the researcher key to a successful and genuine participatory process, rather than the details and procedures (Kidd & Kral, 2005) – since genuine participation logically also implies letting go of the (illusion of) control.

3.2.3. Contexts of knowledge production: Participants and other stakeholders
Having established the centrality of a participatory approach, I will now briefly reflect on who participates in the research context in a wider sense. Berger and Luckmann (1967) addressed how the social/institutional context of knowledge production affects its social construction. There are e.g. different ways of framing and presenting findings when writing for peers vs. patrons (Wolcott, 2005, pp. 41-42). Also in overcoming cultural biases in methodology, reflexivity is essential, to make clearer to ourselves and others what perspectives are in play.
(Gobo, 2011). I will now reflect more specifically upon the stakeholders involved in this particular knowledge-building project.

Inevitably, this PhD project is shaped by my own cultural background and academic context, including e.g. the health institution (ABUP) and academic institutions (Ansgar University College and the University of Oslo) on the one hand, and the cultural institutions running Kaleidoscope on the other. While these institutions’ main focus are health, knowledge and art, respectively, my research questions also reflect that I attempt to trace psychological processes with relevance beyond this specific context. My work is not an ‘evaluation’ of Kaleidoscope, but psychological theory development and establishment of relevant empirical data to explore and illustrate mechanisms and patterns – presented in a form tailored to fulfill the demands and PhD criteria of the academic world.

The emphases of the study are also shaped by the fields of cultural and community psychology within which I work, and by trends within disciplines. While music and dance are expressive creative activities probably found in all cultures, there is a current academic and clinical emphasis where I work on the health potential of music/dance/art. While I find that many of the children from other countries involved in Kaleidoscope are used to singing and dancing together as regular community activities, the structuring of such activities in a “program” or “project” like Kaleidoscope is arguably more typically Norwegian (Scandinavian/Western).

It is necessary to actively explore the contexts and cultural assumptions underlying each step of the research process; all “the points at which culture intersects major phases of the research enterprise — problem formulation, population definition, concept and measurement development, research design, methodology, and data analysis” (D. Hughes, Seidman, & Williams, 1993, p. 687). At each point, underlying assumptions and influences from different stakeholders can be examined, with possible alternative choices in mind:

The problem formulation⁹ was shaped by current emphases on links between cultural participation and health in the context of the project, and by my own research background (e.g. Schuff, 2012, 2014). Alternative problem formulations could have been centered on e.g. artistic qualities, creative process, the mixing of traditions, ownership, cultural identity/pride, integration, building multicultural community, or a range of other aspects. Methodologically speaking, an open conversation with the participants in a grounded theory-approach could have prepared the ground for an alternative, bottom-up problem formulation. However, the

---

⁹ “What does participation in a creative community mean for young people who grow up across cultural categories?” – cf. 1.3.
current research problem is intended to be open enough in that it applies the broad theoretical approach of salutogenesis, where a range of factors can be linked to health and wellbeing – while, on the other hand, it is hopefully also focused enough to provide a direction.

As for the population definition, “children and young people growing up across cultures” is a broad and heterogeneous category, with the common defining quality that they have been significantly influenced by more than one culture during their upbringing (Salole, 2013). Other possible categories are discussed in the thesis (in section 2.1.3. and paper I), such as minority youth, immigrant children, or refugee minors. These are terms used in the Norwegian integration debate and within migration studies. These latter terms are more specific, but on the other hand do not span the entire group of participants. Since Kaleidoscope participants constitute the primary sample, the sample was picked out not by the researcher but by the Kaleidoscope leaders and their partners (schools, health/social workers). The main criteria for inviting groups/classes or individuals to Kaleidoscope were culturally diverse backgrounds and fit of interests/talents to the project. Where consent was given, Kaleidoscope participants also became research participants. Alternatively, parts of the group could have been singled out for the study, e.g. by ethnicity or situation, for instance unaccompanied refugee minors. Some with this background were strategically sampled for interviews to explore their experiences more in depth (but not enough to reach the original goal of having half of the interview sample be unaccompanied minors). The overarching study population remained more inclusive.

Similarly, the research design, including concept and measurement development, methodology and data analysis, were shaped by the academic and practical contexts and my background, and influenced by the public discourse on minorities and multiculturalism in Norway. Mixed methods and presentation forms, including both stories and statistics, were strategically chosen to communicate with different stakeholders and potential beneficiaries.

I have considered alternative data forms, such as including photos (the Photovoice method) and other creative expressions, which would have added to a multimodal understanding of the processes at hand. I also considered alternative procedures, such as dialogue meetings or interviews with parents/teachers of the participants; which would have provided more contextual data from micro and meso levels. However, I had to prioritize to make the PhD project feasible, and the work load manageable.

When I brought my suggestions up in dialogue with the involved parties, I got feedback from peers and supervisors that led to methodological modifications. From Kaleidoscope participants and leaders, however, there were no objections that changed the basic methods. I
did modify parts of the fieldwork according to how participants pointed me in certain
directions by remarks such as “you should see this…”, “this is magical…”, as well as when
they questioned what was happening, e.g. “why did they add chorists to our song?” (cf. paper
I). I also modified the interview guide and survey questions along the way, where the
reference group was central in checking and commenting on the wording of questions.
Diverging interpretations were discussed and brought into the analysis, i.e. when my view as a
researcher was different from the artistic leaders’ perspectives.

These experiences make it clear to me that a participatory approach is among the best
tools I have discovered to challenge the assumptions that stem from my background – from
my national/local/academic culture, cross-cultural experiences, linguistic biases, etc. – and
build knowledge together.

3.2.4. Co-creating knowledge: Learning together
I acknowledge that my perspective is shaped by my own journey, and influenced by forces
and experiences only partially visible to myself. A researcher’s presence in the field will
affect it, a phenomenon which can bring with it a sense of anthropological guilt (Kvaal,
2018b). The perspectives of others will only partially coincide with mine, and will also only
partially be known to me – still, I am seeking to understand and listen to them, in a process of
creating knowledge.

There are both practical and philosophical challenges to a participatory approach, as I
discussed in terms of busy leaders and participants who expected me to decide what I wanted
to do, and different positions and terms for participating. These challenges, however, should
not hinder us in seeking the best practice possible; incomplete, yet continuous reflexivity and
dialogue. One might ask if only approximations are possible, as we can never transcend the
multiple hermeneutic circles occurring in (cultural) encounters (Dahl et al., 2006).

A diverse, minority-majority-setting such as the one under study here necessitates
listening, and a gradual, contextualizing approach, the way I started with fieldwork and
continued with dialogue. I also observed the local Kaleidoscope (sub)culture of interaction
patterns emerging in the creative community while they were together – as a specific
framework for meaning-making, in the larger Norwegian society and globalized world (cf.
paper I). While it is impossible to separate oneself from one’s social and cultural position,
both cultural humility and cultural relativism encourage the “stepping aside” from it, making
a conscious effort not to impose one’s own interpretations and assumptions onto phenomena
involving people with other cultural backgrounds. This is also linked to an awareness of
power structures and sociocultural positioning. Humility is a fitting term for this effort, which becomes both a methodological and an ethical virtue.

More specifically, cultural humility is a methodological attitude that implies continuous self-reflection and self-critique, as well as ongoing, respectful dialogues with the communities that are the subjects of the research (Tervalon & Murray-Garcia, 1998). Methodologically speaking, cultural humility can be logically linked to an openness to combining different methods and techniques. Tervalon and Murray-Garcia (1998) recommend mixing qualitative and action research models in multicultural settings, to complement traditional quantitative assessments. The concept of cultural humility was formulated within community health research (Minkler, 2005); but it runs parallel with the methodological cultural relativism well established in social/cultural anthropology; seeking to understand another culture according to its own logic and premises rather than comparing it to one’s own (Eriksen, 2010b).

There is not only one answer to the question of a culturally appropriate methodology; but several promising resources for a constructive process. Not all is relative, I would argue. But maybe all is relational (Gergen, 2009)? At least here, as I sought to establish contextual, intersubjective knowledge in cooperation with participants, peers and other stakeholders.

3.2.5. Ethical concerns – participation, power and integrity
The ethical baseline of the project is respect and care for the children and young people that participate, to ensure their genuine participation and their voices being heard. My approach is based on fundamental human rights, basic respect for human dignity and respect for the participants’ integrity and autonomy (NESH, 2016, p. 12). In addition to the basic consent, participation and power issues, this includes treating the participants as fairly and decently as possible, as minors and minorities and fellow humans, throughout the process, during recruitment, data collection, analysis and presentation of findings.

The project was approved/recommended by the Privacy Ombudsman for Research at Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD), and follows their guidelines for informed consent, confidentiality and design. It has also been cleared with The Regional Committees for Medical and Health Research Ethics (REK), who concluded that the project did not need further approval from them, since the health-relevant data were not collected from patients or health journals. Approval was sought in multiple steps, first for the participant observation, and later with additions to the original application for the interview and survey stages of the data collection (cf. appendix 1).
The participants in the fieldwork phase of this research project are between 7 and 22 years old, while the interviewees and survey respondents are adolescents and older, 15 years and up. Children and young people are entitled to special protection when they participate in research (NESH, 2016, p. 20). It is central to be aware of and relate to their different developmental needs and ways of understanding what they are part of. I sought to integrate this awareness in my approach to explaining my work as a researcher to the different ages groups orally, in a manner customized to differences in age and backgrounds. These conversations were to give the children the opportunity to agree to participating themselves, insofar as they understood what that meant; since the voice of the children should be heard even when there is formally parental consent required (NESH, 2016; UN, 1989). Formal informed consent was ensured from the parents/guardians of all participants under the age of 16. For one participant during fieldwork there was no parental consent; and so no notes were taken or references made to that participant in any of the data/analysis. The child was still a community participant, but not a research participant.

Informed consent can also be understood in terms of power/participation; since its purpose is to ensure that participants have power over information concerning themselves, and to assure both the freedom (not) to be involved as well as the right to participation: “Researchers shall respect their subjects’ integrity, freedom and right to participate” (NESH, 2016, p. 11). Information must thus be provided about the field and purpose of the research, its financing and how the results will be communicated and applied, and consequences of participation (NESH, 2016). Free, informed and explicit consent implies that the information should be presented so that there is no undue pressure to participate, in a culturally understandable and age-appropriate manner, and that consent should be explicit, as in the written forms collected from parents in this project.

While ethics is a central concern in all psychological research, community psychology emphasizes a less linear, more ongoing conceptualization of ethics, tied not only to procedures, but to values and principles:

At the broadest level this might mean that we should ‘do no harm’ but it also entails considering one’s own practices, being reflexive and attuned to ethics throughout the process, not just at the start of a piece of work. The participation and involvement in decision making of those affected by any issue or practice also provide an ethical safeguard. However, it is important to remember that in complex situations there are different stakeholders with different perspectives, and ways need to be found to embrace as many as possible whilst challenging those perspectives that compromise our values. (Kagan et al., 2011, p. 319)
The values that the project and its ethics are guided by, can be summed up as *human rights and dignity*, *social justice*, a respect for *diversity*, and seeking the *wellbeing* of all involved.

In Participatory Action Research (PAR), as developed within community psychology (Kagan et al., 2011; Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Orford, 2008), issues of power and participation are central ethical concerns. How can I ensure actual and not just symbolic co-operation (Borg & Kristiansen, 2009)? How can the voices of participants be heard and shared with a wider audience?

Whenever we relate to someone, we hold something of that other person’s life in our hands (Løgstrup, 1997 [1956], chapter 1). In all relationships there is a power dimension and some degree of interdependency; what one does may affect the other (Kagan et al., 2011; Løgstrup, 1997 [1956]). This is also clearly so in research-related relationships. Very generally speaking, researchers have traditionally acted as experts who have had a near monopoly on knowledge production, even in the human sciences, while informants have been ‘subjects’ or ‘objects’ of study. In opposition to this tradition, there is a current emphasis on participation and collaborative research within fields such as community psychology (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010) and mental health (Borg & Kristiansen, 2009). This leads to a co-production of knowledge, understood as a more intersubjective and democratic process. We cannot evade power in any relationship, and power can be used for better as well as for worse; yet I consider it an ethical imperative to be aware of and seek to distribute power in ways that ensure as much empowerment and equality as possible for all involved in a research project.

The participatory approach as intended to challenge unequal power distribution and promote participation in the current project. The data collection started with fieldwork (participant observation), which gives ample opportunity to get to know and listen to both participants, leaders and other people involved. I invited input from the practical field in addition to regular feedback from academic supervisors and peers. The goal was to design a research process in which we could meet as equal subjects with each our special competencies. Still, it is important not to underestimate or cover up the differences in power, backgrounds and resources between researcher and participants. The participants’ general expectation that I would make the research decisions myself may stem from viewing me as a kind of expert due to the academic context, or that they felt they could trust my abilities to conduct this research, or that the age difference made them consider such decisions the grownup’s responsibility, in addition to their business and focus elsewhere. So even with a PAR ideal throughout the research process, participants did not suggest many adjustments.
Incentives to participate in research are not uncommon, but can undermine how free and unpressured the consent is. During the fieldwork, there were no apparent incentives to participate other than my appreciation; on the other hand, it may have been considered less of an option to not participate since I was present during group rehearsals (cf. the ‘non-participating participant’ above, who participated in the music project, yet not in the research). For the interviews with the adolescents, I met them at a café where I offered to buy them a meal or something to drink – to show appreciation for their time. When some work hard beside school to be able to send money home to their families in other countries, to the degree that it is sometimes challenging for them to attend Kaleidoscope rehearsals, it becomes very clear to me that their time is very valuable and cannot be taken for granted nor wasted. Some of them may also have appreciated eating out as a small luxury that they could seldom afford, while for others, it did not seem like a big deal (several also turned the offer down). It is my impression that for most interview participants the food offered was not a central motivation to participate; but that they agreed freely to tell their story.

The reference group received remuneration for their time spent giving me input in the research process. Considering them as research assistants as much as research participants, this can in my opinion not be considered incentives, but was rather due appreciation of their valuable contributions and assistance.

A challenge to ensuring informed consent is the varied cultural and language backgrounds of the participants, and even more so, their parents. I paid attention to how information was shared, seeking to communicate in linguistically and culturally sensitive ways throughout the research process, to increase mutual understanding. I worked on simplifying the language in the consent forms as much as possible while still including all the information required by the NSD (in dialogue with their advisors), and I also added a sentence in English, Spanish and Arabic about how they could get in touch ask for a translation. In articles and presentations, I also made an extra effort to present participants and the groups they can be associated with in ways that do not lend themselves to stereotyping, which is perhaps particularly important in research on members of ethnic minorities (Ingierd & Fossheim, 2014).

Formal requirements from NSD can lead to fairly long and complicated information texts. When I presented my first draft to the teacher responsible for the one group of children, he smiled and told me that most parents would probably not read or be able to understand that much information in Norwegian. Listening to his experience from trying to communicate with parents of diverse backgrounds in home-school cooperation, I simplified the information letter
as much as possible, while still getting it approved by the NSD. The text was reduced from two pages to one, and the language simplified. I kept the letter in Norwegian, the shared language in Kaleidoscope, but also included a brief sentence in several relevant languages (Arabic, Spanish, English) that explained that they could contact me for a translation if the text was difficult to understand. Nobody asked for such a translation, so it is hard to know whether there was a translation need that my approach did not capture; or if the letter was fully understandable to all who signed it.

This example illustrates how formal ethical requirements and practical adoptions can sometimes collide, and will need to be negotiated to approximate the best solution (Kagan et al., 2011). When conducting research in other cultures than the researcher’s own background, there is a particular need for ensuring good communication and dialogue with representatives from different backgrounds (NESH, 2016); arguably also in a multicultural setting.

Taking good care of one’s participants is not a task that is completed when participants are recruited and consent acquired. Ethical reflections need to continue throughout the process. For instance, how can data collection be conducted with a readiness for handling difficult emotions or situations that may arise, e.g. with children with a history of trauma? There were instances of emotional distress during some observations. Since observations were made in a activity and/or school setting, there were someone that the children/young people knew better nearby to take care of them (teachers, social workers) – perhaps not at all times, but sufficiently available in all the instances I observed a need for this. In addition, the Kaleidoscope leaders took time to build trust and get to know participants, so that they also provided important emotional and psychosocial support in the process (this was mentioned by several participants during the interviews). Thus, much of this readiness was ensured by the network in which the research took place, rather than by me directly.

Another ethical aspect of data collection was trying to ensure that questions in both the interview guide and the survey were relevant and respectful, open, inviting and linguistically and culturally understandable for the target group – to ensure a richer understanding and avoid socially desirable answers or ‘survey fatigue’ (tiredness from too many items). The reference group was essential in the process of testing/revising questions and survey items.

The data were stored safely and protected by passwords, in the university servers. Participants were given pseudonyms or referred to without names in the presentations of data. At the end of the analytical stage, the code document that connected transcriptions to real names of participants was deleted for anonymization.
In the analysis, discussion and communication of findings, it is also important to be aware of the expectations of different stakeholders, that could potentially direct the results or how they are presented (NESH, 2016). While the funding hospital is interested in potential health benefits of Kaleidoscope participation, this may or may not be central to the participants’ own experience and interest. When there are a range of involved parties in a research projects, it is important to embrace and express this complexity, while also giving priority to certain perspectives if the basic values of the research requires it. Here, my commitment is primarily to present the voices of the participants as loud and clear as possible.

In general, research ethics need to extend far beyond formal approval from ethics committees. Ethics require relational involvement, e.g. communicating with participants about how their stories and information will be used – also in giving back to others in similar situations (Ferre, 2019; Woodgate, Tennent, & Zurba, 2017). I talked to them about what their participation was meant to contribute to, and some were directly involved in discussing how their stories would be shared (cf. paper II in particular). Woodgate et al. (2017) recommend greater participation of research subjects to develop more holistic and ethically wholesome approaches. Several participants expressed that it was meaningful for them to participate in the research since they felt it could serve a greater purpose, and benefit others.
Interlude: Rap from afar

During the first Kaleidoscope performance in the community I observed, a 16-year-old boy performed a self-written rap in Farsi, with the whole group dancing around him. He loved music, and also worked on projects with his best friend at a downtown youth center. He continued in Kaleidoscope as they were preparing for their second performance. But early one January morning the police came to his house and picked him up along with his parents and younger siblings. They were sent to Trandum Detention Center, and a few days later to Kabul – not ‘returned’, but deported (the children had never been to Afghanistan before, only their parents had).

The Kaleidoscope community reacted with shock and sadness, and dedicated their next performance to this boy. I kept researching how young people with lives impacted by migration could be given good conditions for growth – now, with one participant less. I expressed my frustration and the irony of the situation in a feature story/op-ed in the regional newspaper (Schuff, 2015a).

Five days after their deportation, he wrote this text in Kabul (in Norwegian, my translation to English). He shared it online and gave me permission to share it with others.

I live without a house
I live without a heater
I live without light
I live without money
I live without peace
I live without a friend
I live without a studio
I live without the concert with my best friend 😞
I live without kristiansand
I live without kaleidoscope
I live without my street
I live without nothing
But why do I live * i will die *
because I don’t want to live in afghanistan 😞
4. Mixed methods, participants and procedures

In the following, I will present the sequential mixed methods research design (4.1.), and the empirical case in its context (4.2.). I proceed to describe the procedures of each stage, starting with the participant observation (4.3.), and continuing through the interviews (4.4.) and survey (4.5.). For each of these stages, I am also happy to present the ‘stars’ of the project – the participants (4.3.1., 4.4.1. and 4.5.1.), as well as data collection strategies (4.3.2., 4.4.2. and 4.5.2.) and data analysis strategies (4.3.3., 4.4.3. and 4.5.3.). But first, I provide an overview of why and how I mixed methods.

4.1. The rationale and strategies for mixing methods

The rationale for choosing a mixed methods approach here is part pragmatic, part dialectical (Mayring, 2007): Pragmatic in considering the methodology adequate if it contributes to answering the research questions; and dialectical based on an understanding of knowledge building as a dialogical process, involving multiple participants and perspectives. In general, mixing methods is an attempt at forming a fuller picture of the field in question by applying mutually supplementing approaches, with complementary strengths and non-overlapping weaknesses (Todd, 2004). Applying one single method could have provided valuable insights into certain aspects of the phenomena under study, such as the social interaction between participants (ethnography), the experience and reflections of the participants (semi-structured interviews), or the more generalizable patterns in several locations over time (survey). Combining these three data collection methods provides a fuller picture that includes all the above-mentioned aspects. Such combined data may also be helpful in the process of communicating the findings to different audiences; both those who request graphs and numbers as documentation (not uncommon among policy makers and funders of cultural and prevention programs as well as research), and those who prefer compelling stories about individual experiences and moments of interaction (for instance social workers and artists, as well as the general public).

Mixed methods make it possible to link different levels of analysis, which can form part of a cultural psychological approach, to study individuals and culture as mutually interwoven: “Methods that allow for cultural analysis, such as ethnography, must be fused with those that address individual experience, such as interview and survey methods.” (Hammack, 2008, p. 224). Another good example of such a multilevel approach by mixing methods, is the international study of young migrants in Europe by Fangen and her colleagues, who combined...
life stories, interviews, statistical data and comparisons between countries (Fangen et al., 2016; Fangen et al., 2011).

The complexity of development in intercultural settings and migration processes involving children and young people is another reason for choosing a combined approach in this specific case. In line with this, Chuang and Moreno (2011) recommend triangulation and interdisciplinary openness in research in intercultural arenas, for more accurate and culturally sensitive research and theory building. To capture several dimensions of complex processes, and develop contextually sensitive methods as the project unfolded, I sought to apply a participatory and relational mixed methods approach.

Other scholars (Bartholomew & Brown, 2012; Nastasi & Hitchcock, 2015) have similarly argued that mixed methods contribute to culture-appropriate psychological research and interventions. Mixed methods are considered fruitful here due to their “potential to explore the nexus of context and psychology, capturing the uniqueness of psychological phenomena within cultures […] Analyses indicate that mixed methods is an integral means to ask complex psychological questions without imposing Western norms and ignoring contextual factors” (Bartholomew & Brown, 2012, p. 1). Contextual factors are e.g. integrated into the present study through the fieldwork conducted first, as a foundation for later interviews and survey administration. Within mixed methods, it is possible to integrate quantitative outcome-oriented methods with culturally tailored qualitative approaches; yielding a structured but still flexible methodological framework that can render the research sufficiently culturally sensitive and context-specific (Nastasi & Hitchcock, 2015).

There are countless ways to combine different methods, and it is also done for different purposes. Mixed methods is sometimes referred to overlappingly with triangulation, but Onwuegbuzie and Collins (2007) specify that triangulation is only one of several possible purposes of mixing methods. Triangulation can be understood as seeking convergence of findings by multiple methods. Other research purposes can be expansion – making a study wider in scope, or development – where researchers use results from the first method to inform the use of the second method, or complementarity, that is, examining different overlapping aspects of a phenomenon (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). In this project, my purpose was mainly development and complementarity. I therefore chose a sequential design (as supposed to a concurrent design, where the multiple methods are used at the same time). Starting with qualitative data also contributes to contextualization, and gives a basis for fine-tuning the quantitative instruments applied later – central to not only mixing, but integrating methods (Bryman, 2006).
4.2. Case in context: Kaleidoscope as local communities
The arena for this research project was the musical/art project Kaleidoscope in four different locations in Norway, starting with an ethnographic fieldwork in one of them. Each of these creative communities can be understood and studied as local cultures, as participants develop coordinated ways of relating and repertoires of meaning and interaction in the project over time together. There are also similarities between the different locations, since they started out with the same basic values and principles and with the same goal, based on the Kaleidoscope concept as it is taught and transferred from its origin in Bergen to new locations. In all locations I visited, I recognized the same central ways of speaking about each other as resources or contributors, showing respect and cherishing each other’s music and suggestions, and following other ‘Kaleidoscope ground rules’ as outlined in the book that presents the project’s philosophy and methods (Hamre et al., 2011). Participants that enter Kaleidoscope with their different ways of relating to the world, will therefore meet some of the same words, attitudes, rehearsal rituals and so on, and become socialized into Kaleidoscope – according to their own active participation, resistance or indifference.

Since the research participants were recruited among Kaleidoscope participants, I will explain briefly how the art project is organized and how recruitment is undertaken. It is organized somewhat differently in different locations, in Bergen as an independent foundation that collaborates with local authorities, schools and art institutions, with funding from public as well as private contributors (Fargespill, 2019). In Larvik, the project leadership is employed by the municipality (kommune), and organized in relation to education and prevention efforts (LarvikKommune, 2019). In Kristiansand, Kaleidoscope is based at the concert hall Kilden, as part of Kilden Dialog, the societal outreach department of the art institution. Kaleidoscope here collaborates with the school of music and performing arts (kulturskolen), the reception school and other local public schools, the university and informally with health and social workers in the municipality and at the hospital. The start-up funding came in part from the local innovation/wellbeing foundation Cultiva (KildenDialog, 2019a). In Trondheim, Kaleidoscope is a joint effort between Trondheim Chamber Music Festival (Kammermusikkfestivalen) and Trondheim School of Music and Performing Arts (Kulturskolen). The project is supported by the municipality (Kammermusikkfestivalen, 2019)

As a common feature between these different local communities, we find that Kaleidoscope is a collaborative enterprise, adapted to local circumstances and stakeholders.
Funding is sought from both public and private sources. Public funding comes from local, regional and national levels (national funding for the Kaleidoscope Foundation in Bergen).

Within these different ways of organizing the art project, local leaders are free to recruit participants in ways they find relevant. In the original location, the project leaders first found participants through the ‘reception school’ (mottaksskolen), a school which provides intensive training in Norwegian language along with the other school subjects. This is where children who come to Norway and do not know the language first enter the school system, before being transferred to their local public school when their language skills are considered sufficient (Wærdahl, 2016). This first phase of schooling for immigrant children is organized differently in different places, and was in 2015 reorganized in Bergen, and moved to reception classes at local schools. Recruitment to Kaleidoscope continued through these schools and other networks. In other locations, the project started recruiting through public schools in local communities with an international population; being allowed into their music classes. Participants have also been recruited through schools of music and performing arts, or organized as an afternoon activity for e.g. unaccompanied minors. Participants have also been recruited through teachers in adult education for immigrants, health and social workers, other musicians or teachers, or in general through ‘someone who knew someone’ – in what we might call snowball recruitment.

Different contexts and strategies as explained above will logically gather participants with quite different stories and situations. I will now present my participants among them more specifically as I go through the procedures in the three stages of data collection.

4.3. Participant observation – exploratory fieldwork
I started out by participating and observing to get to know the field and those involved. Such an ethnographic approach is recommended by several contextually oriented scholars (Case, Todd, & Kral, 2014; Geertz, 1973; Hundeide, 2003; Tanggaard, 2014). The methodological jewel of anthropology, ethnography or participant observation has also been used in psychology and other social sciences – but may arguably be underestimated and under-utilized in psychology (Gobo, 2008). Participant\(^\text{10}\) observation is a way to explore phenomena in natural social settings with as little researcher interference as possible (Fangen, 2004). It gives the opportunity to study and experience interaction and local culture – ways of relating – in practice, and to see actions and hear conversations in their natural context.

\(^\text{10\,Participant here refers to the researcher’s participation in the field as opposed to merely observing; not to the participants’ involvement that is implied in the participatory approach described above (3.2.).}\)
4.3.1. Participants in the fieldwork stage
The fieldwork was carried out in one Kaleidoscope location, during rehearsals in two primary schools and with one after-school group of young people. About 90 participants were involved, with an age range from 7 to 22 years. They were asked for informed consent themselves from 16 years and up, and parents/guardians gave informed consent for the children below that age. Information and consent was given in writing. I also talked to the participants about my role and what my notes were for. I received signed consent forms for all but one participant, and wrote my notes only about those who consented (themselves/parents).

The young participants shared the same Norwegian hometown, some born and raised there, some of them with immigrant parents, others were immigrants themselves. I did not map or count the different backgrounds, but noted that the majority of participants seemed to have backgrounds from abroad. Many were indeed invited to join the project for that reason, particularly in the youth group and one of the schools, while the other school chose to let a whole class participate rather than selecting children individually. There were Asian, African, European and Latin-American backgrounds in the group. The origins of the rehearsed songs\textsuperscript{11} also spanned widely, from Sápmi\textsuperscript{12} to Somalia, Iceland to Iraq, Uruguay to Afghanistan. A few participants had gone through difficult experiences in the past (e.g. forced migration, arriving alone as unaccompanied minors, bullying) that the leaders and teachers knew about. This was rarely a focus; rehearsals were centered around creating a safe space, playfully making friends, and having fun while creating something together.

4.3.2. Data collection – participant observation
I participated fully at first, joining exercises in a circle to get to know each other at rehearsals, and often singing along. I told the children that I was a researcher and was there to find out what was going on and to write about Kaleidoscope. They generally treated me as a type of assistant to the other adults, asking me questions or sharing their excitement with me. I also performed some simple assistant tasks such as showing them where to go when or opening doors when we got to the concert hall to practice there. As the group got closer to performance, I was gradually positioned more off-stage/back-stage, since I was not part of the performing group.

I took notes throughout the fieldwork period, which lasted for almost a year, from the startup in a town until after the first performance – February through November 2014. I

\textsuperscript{11} The participants contributed most of these songs, but some were from Kaleidoscope in the original location.
\textsuperscript{12} The lands of the Sámi people, indigenous to Northern Scandinavia – Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia.
circulated among three different groups involved in the same project, and participated in rehearsals weekly, on average. I spent more time with the group in the last intensive week leading up to the performance, and also joined the celebration/evaluation afterwards. My goal was to be able to give thick descriptions of what happened in the project community. By thick descriptions, I mean providing as much context and local/participant interpretation as possible when episodes are presented, to make it possible to explore the ‘web of meaning’ involved (cf. Geertz, 1973). I gathered situations, comments, glances and conversations as treasures in my notebook.

4.3.3. Analysis of ethnographic data
In an ethnographic inquiry, data analysis starts even while taking notes during observation; since field notes can be descriptive, exploratory, theoretical or even analytical (Fangen, 2004). Along with my descriptions, I regularly noted questions, possible connections and reflections throughout the fieldwork, and returned to these when the analysis entered a later writing stage. The field notes were then analyzed through coding, categorizing and comparisons in a reflective process of thematic coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Flick, 2008). My analysis was guided by the overall research question and particularly the subquestion about identity development; and so my attention often turned to instances and conversations that shed light on the self-interpretations of participants and potentially identity-related negotiations. The analytical work from the participant observation resulted in paper I of this thesis.

4.4. Interviews
Having gotten to know the community through fieldwork, my next step was to invite the adolescent participants to in-depth interviews. Interviews are a common and conversational way to access people’s accounts of their own experiences and life worlds, and are probably the most frequently applied qualitative data collection method in psychology (Flick, 2008; Kvale, 2008). By sitting down with participants one-to-one, I could hear what they themselves thought and how they valued and reflected upon the interaction I had observed up until then.

The meaning made in interviews is co-constructed between interviewer and participant, as Kvale points out by elaborating on the term itself; inter-views – between perspectives (Kvale, 2008). The starting points are the researcher’s curiosity, theoretical interest and questions on the one side, and the interviewee’s experience and relation to the subject on the other. From a critical realist perspective, Smith and Elger (2014) point out that while interviews give accounts of people’s agency, and glimpses into the structure that shape their
opportunities, they do not give a full account of that structure or of underlying layers of reality. This is a reminder that with a layered ontology, interviewing cannot give access to the whole picture, but should be contextualized and understood in light of a theoretical conceptual framework and other sources of insight. The emergence of events have complex and multiple roots on different levels, a reminder that can help make sense of the interplay between agency and external factors that shape how our lives turn out (C. Smith & Elger, 2014). In practice, such philosophical reflections were a motivation to not ask interviewees why things were the way they were, but rather how they experienced them – and invite them to tell their stories, that often reveal how we connect the dots from within our life worlds.

4.4.1. Participants in the interviews
The interviews were conducted in 2015-2016. I started by inviting participants from the location where I had conducted participant observation to be interviewed, asking those who were 14 years or older. This was to focus on the youth more than on the younger children, since my impression from the fieldwork was that these young people where actively reflecting on and trying to manage many of the dilemmas, opportunities and identity processes I was curious about. Eight participants agreed to be interviewed, and I conducted a pilot interview with the first one, and seven regular interviews.

Later, I also recruited interviewees from another location that I had visited, where the project had been running for longer and I could interview participants who had participated for several years. Here, I interviewed three experienced participants that can arguably be called Kaleidoscope veterans. I found that the beginners’ fresh impressions complemented the veterans’ more thorough, long-term reflection.

At the time of the interview, the participants I talked to had been part of Kaleidoscope for a period of time ranging from three months to nine years. The pilot interview gave useful input to the later interviews, but was not included in the analysis. The ten other interviewees that were included were between 15 and 28 years old, and there were seven girls and three boys. Their backgrounds were quite different, reflecting the range of multicultural and creative experiences that are considered relevant when Kaleidoscope participants are recruited. The ten participants were from ten different countries. Only one had been born in Norway, while the other nine were born abroad, in countries representing all continents except Oceania. One had come to Norway to study, two had been adopted during childhood (not as infants), two had come to Norway alone as unaccompanied refugee minors, and four had
immigrated with family. What they had in common, was the Kaleidoscope experience that meant something to them, and their willingness to talk about it.

4.4.2. Data collection – interviews
Based on the fieldwork, I developed an interview guide for semi-structured interviews, and reviewed it with the reference group (cf. 3.2.2.). The interview guide included questions about their everyday lives, background stories and Kaleidoscope experiences. I also included two card exercises about identity and meaning, to get to know a little more about the participants’ ways of relating to themselves and the world.

The first exercise was inspired by identity mapping (Märtsin, 2010). The participants were asked to write their name in the center of a large piece of paper, and then to place sticky notes with keywords in relation to their name, according to how much they identify with the concept on each card. Along with 15 predefined cards (strong, vulnerable, happy, sad, angry, safe, insecure, creative, Norwegian, multicultural, etc.), there were blank cards on which the participants could write their own keywords (which few of them did). The identity map was then photographed. There were follow-up questions about how the map had changed over time, and specifically within Kaleidoscope.

The second exercise was a simplified version of the Sources of Meaning Card Method (la Cour & Schnell, 2016). 26 small cards with statements people have made about what is important in their lives were presented to the participants (e.g., “I look for challenges”, “It is a goal for me to live in harmony with nature”, “My religion gives me strength”, “I intervene when I see injustice being done”). They were asked to sort them into piles according to whether they agree with the statements, until the participant has chosen the 5 most important cards to them. A brief conversation about the meaning of the cards followed.

While these exercises were helpful with participants in the first location, I found that the veteran participants needed much less prompting. I therefore decided to leave the interview guide aside and let the veteran interviews have a more open format, inviting the participants to tell their stories and reflect upon processes of change and what their participation in the project meant to them.

The interviews lasted from 36 minutes (beginner) to 104 minutes (veteran). The interviewees could choose to speak Norwegian, English or Spanish during the interviews. Most chose Norwegian, one chose Spanish, and one interviewee brought a friend to translate on his own initiative, so we spoke a mix of Norwegian/English/a third language through the lay translator (a former project participant herself). Such improvised interpretation may
certainly complicate communication and add another layer of interpretation/re-telling of events, and could therefore be considered to give less direct access to that participant’s thoughts. However, it also serves as an example of how these young people find pragmatic ways to communicate, how there is often simultaneous translation(s) going on, within and between people. It is also a reminder of the layered meanings, incompleteness and necessity of interpretation in all communication, which only becomes more visible in multilingual and multicultural encounters.

The interviews were recorded and transcribed, and I also took notes while we were talking. For two interviews there were technical difficulties with the recordings, so that the notes became the main source of recalling the conversations. I imported transcriptions along with notes and photos of the card exercise into NVivo software for analysis (QSR, 2015).

4.4.3. Analysis of interviews
I performed two different analyses based on the interview material; a narrative analysis of the three interviews with experienced participants (paper II), and an interpretative phenomenological analysis of the whole set of interviews (paper III).

First, reading the whole interview set, I applied an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), an analytical method designed to “explore in detail how participants are making sense of their personal and social world” (J. A. Smith & Osborn, 2008, p. 53). IPA may be understood as a specific form of thematic analysis that is informed by phenomenology and hermeneutics. Within this experiential-phenomenological approach to the data, the participants’ own understandings and life worlds are given center stage; while interpretations are always made in context. In the words of IPA pioneers J. A. Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009, p. 36), the method combines a hermeneutics of empathy with a hermeneutic of questioning. One might argue that all search for understanding requires an element of empathy – trying to approximate the perspective, experience or expression of the other, as well as an element of questioning or suspicion – seeking to contextualize and identify possible explanations beyond that which the other expresses or is even aware of. In this sense, all qualitative analytic approaches can be placed along a continuum from hermeneutics of empathy (e.g. phenomenological methods) and hermeneutics of suspicion (e.g. discourse analysis) (Eatough & Smith, 2008, p. 277). While phenomenology in general is situated near the empathic end of that continuum, IPA balances this somewhat more with a questioning and contextualizing approach (Eatough & Smith, 2008; J. A. Smith et al., 2009).
In this case, I noticed that the hermeneutics of empathy came more instantly in my first readings of the transcripts, while I made an effort to return to the interviews with more questions, comparisons and contextual awareness later in the process. Thus, I applied IPA within a contextualist approach to inquiry, underpinned by critical realism. This is to mean that I seek to “acknowledge the ways individuals make meaning of their experience, and, in turn, the ways the broader social context impinges on those meanings, while retaining focus on the material and other limits of ‘reality’.” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 81).

The practical analytical steps were adapted from Smith et al. (2009), as follows:

1. **Transcription and reflective journaling.** I took notes after interviews and during transcription. I transcribed semantically, including potentially meaningful nonverbal elements such as pauses and laughter.

2. **Initial coding.** Reading through the material, I made brief notes that served as potential codes (nodes in NVivo). These were mainly descriptive (e.g. bullying, feeling important), some theoretically informed (e.g. empowerment, cultural revitalization).

3. **Organizing codes.** I linked emerging codes together thematically, overarching or repeated themes (parent nodes in NVivo) with related subthemes (child nodes).

4. **Recoding with comments.** I then recoded all the material, coding additional sections into the emerging code structure, while adding exploratory comments (annotations in NVivo), both linguistic (e.g. pronoun shifts, verbal tense), conceptual (links with theory), and questioning (“might this imply...?”).

5. **Identifying common themes.** After gathering themes, annotations and notes for each participant, I looked for patterns across cases, and developed a thematic map.

6. **Writing and revisions.** I discussed my analysis with colleagues and the reference group, responded to peer reviews and revised the analytical text repeatedly, before finalizing it as paper III of this thesis.

During the interviews with veteran participants, I remember thinking that these were stories that should be told, for the lessons they hold. In what may be considered a case of *phronesis*; practical wisdom – selection based on listening experience (Frank, 2012) – I selected these three interviews for further analysis, for their long-term storyline and rich reflections. I conducted a narrative analysis, including a narrative synthesis, where I in dialogue with the interviewees merged their three stories into one, for didactic and anonymization purposes (cf. paper II for the rationale and process of analyzing-integrating-retelling this joint narrative).

In the discussion of the narrative analysis, I was also inspired by intersectionality as a lens through which stories and situations can be interpreted, considering the diversity within
and intersections between categories (immigrant, girl, Muslim/Christian, African, etc.) – to look for simultaneous meaning and consequences of multiple layers of identity, difference, opportunity and disadvantage (Cole, 2009). This analysis is presented in paper II.

4.5. Survey
After the two qualitative stages (observations and interviews), I prepared the final stage of data collection, a survey with both quantitative and qualitative elements. The survey was intended to build knowledge about patterns of experience and consequences of Kaleidoscope participation, when a larger number of participants in multiple locations were asked.

4.5.1. Participants in the survey
I visited four different project locations over a period of two years, from 2016-2018, to gather survey data. My goal was to administer the survey three times to each participant, throughout a year of participation in Kaleidoscope, to be able to analyze change over time. This proved difficult, since there is a high turnover rate in the project groups as well as some absence from rehearsals when I visited – so that not many participants completed all 3 survey occasions.

At the time of the survey, the four locations had approximately 400 participants in total (of all ages, 6 years and up). All participants aged 13 years and over were invited to fill out the survey. Among these, 102 responded, 1-3 times each (responses 3-6 months apart), yielding a total of 154 responses. Respondents thus constituted a high proportion of the active adolescent participants. The organizers of Kaleidoscope did not have an exact count of how many of their participants were aged 13 and up, but according to their own estimations, approximately 135 participants were within the relevant age range (summed up from all four locations). Calculating with this number as the population, considering that 102 different participants responded among 135, the response rate was 75.56 %.

Information about the study was integrated into the survey, and informed consent given in the digital form on Nettskjema.13 Parents/guardians were asked about consent for participants under the age of 15, in line with the project approval given by the Privacy Ombudsman for Research at Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). The survey was administered digitally whenever possible, supplemented with paper forms when needed (when brought to a Kaleidoscope rehearsal in an area without an internet connection). Data from the paper forms were then plotted into Nettskjema by the researcher, and the paper disposed of.

---

13 Nettskjema is a digital survey tool developed and safeguarded by the University of Oslo, available at http://nettskjema.uio.no/. It is developed specifically for safe and efficient handling of research data.
Some respondents added smileys and hearts when responding on paper, a few also marked responses on the line between categories. I noted this as active and creative responses.

The first survey occasion had more respondents than the other two (72 responses against 42 and 40 for the second and third occasion). Since participants mostly responded in the context of rehearsals, those who were more consistently active in the creative community were probably also more likely to respond, and less likely to drop out. The response time to complete the form varied from 7 minutes and 22 seconds to more than an hour. This variation can reflect differences in language proficiency, digital skills/tools and motivation. The average response time decreased from survey occasion 1 (34 minutes, 59 seconds) through to occasion 2 (29 m, 23 s) and occasion 3 (26 m, 11 s). While this may be due to habituation with the form, another possible explanation is that those who struggled more to complete the survey (spent longer time) were more likely to drop out.

Among the 102 respondents there were 61 girls, 38 boys, and 3 who left the gender question blank. The respondents’ average age was 16.7 years. 76.25 % of the respondents were born outside of Norway themselves. 81.01 % responded that their mother was born abroad, and 79.75 % that their father was born abroad.

4.5.2. Data collection – survey
Based on previous observations and interviews, I hypothesized that there is a positive relation between participation and how the young participants are doing in their daily lives, and that this creative arena is important to most participants. I therefore chose to ask about their experience in the project and how they value it, along with selected scales for factors I considered relevant. The survey consisted of
1. Questions about selected background factors (age, gender, country of birth, etc.)
2. Questions about Kaleidoscope participation (some numerical, some open)
3. Validated instruments to measure health/wellbeing in adolescents, specifically
   • Sense of Coherence, SOC-13 (Antonovsky, 1993), cf. salutogenic theory (Antonovsky, 1987; Eriksson & Lindström, 2006)
   • The Sense of Community Scale for Adolescents (Chiessi et al., 2010), in line with community psychology (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Sarason, 1974)

---

There were a few outliers where the digital form counted a time duration of several hours, with 22 hours, 16 minutes and 35 seconds as the maximum. In these cases, forms were most likely left open and unattended. Outliers with more than 2 hours of duration were excluded when average response time was calculated.
• Self-Rated Health (Breidablik, Meland, & Lydersen, 2008), cf. a contextual perspective on self-rated health (Kawachi, Kennedy, & Glass, 1999)

• Satisfaction With Life Scale (Vittersø, 2009), cf. life satisfaction studies across different contexts (Diener, Inglehart, & Tay, 2013; Vittersø et al., 2005)

In addition, I gathered data for the following items that are not yet analyzed (in the present thesis), about acculturation, ethnic identity, self-efficacy and self-determination:

• Vancouver Acculturation Index (Birman & Simon, 2014; Ryder, Alden, & Paulhus, 2000) and Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (Yoon, 2011), in line with acculturation theory (Berry et al., 2006; Ryder et al., 2000), and also with social identity theory (Simon, 2004; Tajfel & Turner, 2004)

• General Self-Efficacy (Luszczynska, Scholz, & Schwarzer, 2005), a construct linked to coping and motivation across contexts (Scholz, Doña, Sud, & Schwarzer, 2002)

• Perceived Competence Scale (CSDT, 2019b) and Perceived Autonomy Support-Leaning Climate Questionnaire (CSDT, 2019a), based on self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2012)

I applied a number of scales/items since I had widened my understanding of the complexity of the phenomena I was studying – clustered around salutogenesis, meaning, identity and wellbeing. I did not want to assume that wellbeing is one-dimensional or a matter of simple measurement. So, I tried to approach it in multiple ways, both qualitatively and quantitatively.

I discussed the questions, content and formulations, with the reference group. Based on their input I cut out some questions and made a few adjustments of the questions I had written myself. I also adjusted the formulation in one of the Satisfaction With Life-Questions to make it clearer: from “Mine livsforhold er utmerket” [In English: The conditions of my life are excellent] to “Alt ligger til rette for at jeg skal ha det godt” [approximately, The conditions are present for me to be happy]. The participants in the reference group considered the formulation strange and hard to understand, as the term “livsforhold” did not make sense to them. After hearing their comments, I also concluded that the formulation sounds fabricated in its Norwegian version, and that a more casual formulation would be preferable and also more precise (while my perception of the two English variations is the opposite; that the first is to be preferred). I also asked two 14-year-olds outside the project to go through and answer the whole survey, to provide feedback as to whether it was understandable and appropriate for their age. They said it worked well.
In hindsight, I realize that I would have fared better if I had managed to focus more clearly on fewer scales. I find that the qualitative answers added more to the complexity I was looking for than adding more quantitative scales. The survey also became too long, so that the respondents seem to have suffered from a bit of survey fatigue, which often leads to poorer response quality (DeVellis, 2016) – a telling symptom was that more of the questions towards the end of the survey were left blank.

I also observed participants’ exasperation over the lengthy survey in person and discussed it with some participants. While participants were filling out the digital survey, I was present together with local leaders/assistants to answer questions about language or practical/technical issues. The observations I made during several rounds of survey administration, helped me better to understand the participants’ responses, their relation to the questions they were asked, and to the phenomena under study (cf. discussion in paper IV). The standardized and quantitative items elicited the most frustration and joking, while it seemed that the open, qualitative questions made more sense to several participants. With their smiles and sighs and jokes, respondents taught me important lessons, as they helped me self-critically assess how I had gotten carried away while designing the survey.

4.5.3. Analysis of survey data
The many scales and questions I included also gave me a demanding analysis stage, as I attempted some demanding statistical work with complex and rather messy data. I worked in SPSS (IBM, 2017) and JASP (JASP-Team, 2018), and with both frequentist and Bayesian analyses (Kruschke & Liddell, 2018). A Bayesian approach seemed the most appropriate to make statistical sense of unruly data from complex life worlds (Kruschke & Liddell, 2018). Bayesian approaches to statistics are increasingly used in fields like health care due to their capacity to model uncertainties and integrate background knowledge as well as data from different sources (Lucas, 2004). While a traditional frequentist approach – e.g. testing a 0-hypothesis, also referred to as the ‘null ritual’ (Gigerenzer, 2004) – would seek to conclude on whether the project either works or does not work, a Bayesian analysis estimates probability density. That implies researching to what extent it is reasonable to assume patterns of connections between different variables; whether it is likely and trustworthy to consider the patterns that appear a reflection of reality.

My plan was to analyze the survey results through a linear mixed models analysis (LMM), frequently applied to repeated measures-data (Hox, Moerbeek, & van de Schoot, 2010), because of its ability to model within-subject correlation (West, Welch, & Galecki, 2006).
However, the data were not complete enough to perform those analyses. After considering different strategies for missing data replacement (Graham, 2009; Lucas, 2004), I had to give it up since I did not consider it within reasonable processing.

Among the specific analytical steps I did proceed to undertake were descriptive statistics (percentages, means, etc.), and calculating scores for each participant – from which the most directly salutogenic scores (sense of coherence, sense of community, self-rated health, satisfaction with life) were analyzed and presented in paper IV. I ran various Bayesian and classical frequentist analyses to check for correlations between variables and with time passed and number of performances. Since few participants responded at all three intended points in time, I found other ways to approach the time dimension; according to how many performances they had been part of, and years since they joined Kaleidoscope.

In my analyses and overall discussions of the data (cf. particularly 6.1.), I make use of abduction, trying to apply words in new ways and draw links that give plausible explanations as to what is going on. Charles S. Peirce presented abduction as a third mode of inference besides deduction and induction. Abduction has been explained as inference to the best explanation, or reasoning “from effect to cause” (Niiniluoto, 1999). It can also be understood as moving somewhere in-between bottom-up inductive reasoning and top-down deductive reasoning (Valsiner, 2014b). I consider it a creative form of reasoning; a sort of treasure hunt of the imagination, but not at random – rather, loyal to the empirical level, while also creatively curious about the actual and real levels below.

From this review of methods, participants and procedures, I will now proceed to summarize the findings and discussions in the articles (5.), before discussing them in relation to each other and the research project as a whole in chapter 6.
5. Summary of papers

In this chapter, I summarize the four articles included in this dissertation, presenting the main findings from all three stages of data collection:

I. Supporting Cross-Cultural Identity Development: Vulnerability, Resources, Creativity,
II. Navigating Cultures. Narratives of Becoming Among Young Refugees in Norway,
III. Recognition as a catalyst for agency. Experiences from an intercultural art project for young people, and finally IV. Better Together. Creative Participation with Young Migrants.

5.1. Paper I: Supporting cross-cultural identity development

The first article described the Kaleidoscope project and the interaction that takes place there, based on fieldwork. The main research question was how a creative project like Kaleidoscope can serve as an arena for constructive intercultural identity development.

The article summarized some main state-of-knowledge insights about growing up with multiple cultures, and especially how this influences identity development. Young people growing up across cultures have very different backgrounds, but all relate to different cultural frames of reference, values and expectations while they find their way towards adulthood. This can yield both challenges and resources, and contribute to vulnerability and/or resilience in individual lives, depending on a range of other factors, circumstances and choices. Feeling different can be hard for children and young people with a complex background often categorized as ‘other’, while facing the developmental task of fitting in. At the same time, their experiences can provide them with resources such as language skills, comparative cultural insight and translation abilities, flexibility, creativity and an expanded world view.

I explain identity in terms of self-interpretation, as our relationship with ourselves. Based on Simon’s (2004) integrative self-aspect model of identity (SAMI), I present identity as multifaceted and contextually activated, including both individual and collective identity aspects, which can be salient at different times. While anchored in physical, memory-based, psychological and social continuity, identity is also inherently dynamic and will be influenced by migration and other significant life changes, and by being in minority. In a minority situation, the minority-related or ‘different’ self-aspect will often be accentuated by ourselves and others, and collective identification is more likely to become salient. This can be experienced as quite limiting (e.g. being seen as “just a foreigner”), but can also boost resistance or a sense of belonging between minority members. Young people growing up cross-culturally typically face certain challenges and possibilities when in relation to identity. They are often expected to be able to answer to what their “actual” or “pure” identity is (“But
where are you actually from?”), while a straightforward answer to that question may not exist. Instead, they may develop a hyphenated or hybrid identity, a flexible identity, or what has been termed a multicultural or integrated intercultural identity. In sum, the literature suggests that being allowed room for complex forms of identity strengthens the wellbeing and development of young people with cross-cultural or minority backgrounds. In contrast, reductive demands to be ‘one or the other’ may lead to an encapsulated marginality, inner conflict and alienation. Finding room and strategies for integrating their intercultural experiences, on the other hand, can create a more constructive marginality.

Kaleidoscope is an arena where identity, in terms of cultural background or ethnicity, is explicitly emphasized and processed in the creative interaction. Indeed, placing “different identities” center stage and appreciating them is the starting point for the Kaleidoscope concept (Hamre et al., 2011). I observed patterns of positive reinforcement and playfulness that the participants seemed to enjoy and often thrive in, and watched many of them participate more actively and confidently as the project year progressed. Leaders make their acknowledgment of differences and complexity explicit during rehearsals and encourage participants to share what they can uniquely contribute, and to show each other respect.

In my analysis, I identified three main categories: resources, vulnerability and creativity. The resource tenet – that everyone has something to contribute with, often exactly that which is ‘different’ – is practiced and expressed in recognition from the project leaders and other participants, as well as from family and friends, teachers, other artists and directors, and the media. This is an arena where their expertise in being both-and, not either-or, is valued.

At the same time, identity also proved to be a vulnerable issue. Participants could be sensitive to categorizations and simplifications, such as being directly identified with the country of origin of their parents as their own (“I am not from there, my parent is”). There were ongoing negotiations about who to be and how to categorize, both verbally and nonverbally, and often, jokingly (“you want us to do foreigner stuff”).

These negotiations show that these young people find creative ways to resist and challenge categories, while both embracing and expanding them at times. Participants were able to negotiate identities, and their input was generally received and listened to by leaders and others, creating an arena where it is possible to co-define themselves. The creative process itself also gave opportunities to keep developing the identities they were asked to express, for instance when new and old expressions were combined into something surprisingly “cool” that they had not thought possible.
Paper I was published in *FLEKS – Scandinavian Journal of Intercultural Theory and Practice*, in a thematic issue about ambivalence in multicultural societies.

5.2. Paper II: Navigating cultures

In the second article, I present the story of Nadia, about how she actively negotiates and becomes ‘herself’ in her varying settings; how she handled conflicting expectations from parents and community, and moved from being torn between them to standing firm in who she wants to be. Nadia’s narrative was synthesized from interviews with three young girls who came to Norway as refugees, in dialogue with the participants themselves. In this close reading of their narratives, I trace individuation processes in a cross-cultural landscape, asking: How do young refugees find ways to relate to diverging cultural expectations and cross-pressures, and what part can a supportive arena play in the process?

Finding herself in a demanding outsider position after migration, Nadia tells of a growing conflict between her mother’s and majority society’s expectations to a girl from her origin. To navigate these diverging demands is hard emotional work, and some dilemmas seemed impossible to resolve. In Kaleidoscope, she found an arena where she was met with interest and friendly curiosity, where she did not have to “explain herself”, but was given room to find her own voice. The support she found in her “happy place”, as she calls Kaleidoscope, helped her through times of personal crisis. Over time in this supportive creative arena, Nadia found resources in herself and her environment to negotiate diverging voices and categories and balance her cultures more confidently. Navigation concerning e.g. clothing, interaction with the opposite gender, time use and educational choices is described as increasingly manageable, and less burdensome than before.

An important lesson from this narrative is that the challenges and opportunities experienced by young refugees stem from both minority and majority voices, and the interaction between them. Society can facilitate constructive cultural navigation by providing safe, participatory and supportive arenas, by listening, and allowing young refugees to be the subject of their own story. Finding a certain freedom of movement within a supportive arena was a key to living well among these tensions, integrating diverging voices into her narrative and thus, as Nadia puts it, “becoming herself”. The links between individual and culture here emerges less as a question of categories and more as an ongoing conversation.

Paper II was published in *Human Arenas*, a SAGE journal for cultural psychology.
5.3. Paper III: Recognition as a catalyst for agency

How do the young participants experience the opportunities for participation that they are offered in Kaleidoscope, and how does this impact their everyday lives? The third article explores these questions based on interviews with participants from two different Kaleidoscope locations.

The interviewees often contrast their experiences from within the project with experiences elsewhere, experiences of feeling different, stupid or excluded, at school or in society in general. On a macro level, young people with migrant backgrounds often find themselves in-between or on the margins of cultural categorizations, and at risk of social and economic marginalization. These challenges are reflected (to varying degrees) in the interviewees’ accounts.

When they speak of Kaleidoscope, a different dynamic emerges. The multiple forms of recognition offered to the young participants in the project – recognizing them as contributors and as agents – open up a ‘different space’ which gives new opportunities for who they can be and what they can create together with others. Here, they are insiders. In what constitutes a catalytic setting, participants can navigate different cultural meaning-systems, learn, build relations and develop their voice over time.

A potential pitfall in the project is that the emphasis on cultures of origin can lead to stereotyping and reifying cultural differences. The young people’s half-joking resistance to these mechanisms should be encouraged, and participant voices given genuine room. Another dilemma integrated in the creative process is that while some are praised, others may feel left out or pressured to perform. The generally positive resource approach can also have instrumental undertones; as a resource, you are something that someone else (the project, society) can make use of. A step beyond such external recognition of the other’s usefulness is to recognize the other as an agent, a voice to be reckoned with. While not as explicit as the recognition-as-resource, there is also potential for recognition-as-agent in the project, when participants are encouraged to raise their voice and express themselves creatively together.

Interviewees generally express that participation in the project means a lot to them. Recognized as valuable contributors in a creative community, they actively take the space they are offered and develop their own agency and resistance. Rather than a quick-fix, the endurance of the community over time is central to its participants, to grow confident enough to voice their agency. Participatory and creative projects can contribute to the empowerment and wellbeing of young people growing up across cultures, by providing time and space and freedom of movement.
The article is summarized visually in Figure 3, with the different space that this community of recognition constitutes framed as fertile soil for agency and multifaceted growth. Paper III is being published in *Annals of Cultural Psychology*, in an issue with the title “Cultural Psychology in Communities: Tensions and Transformations”.

![Figure 3: Visual summary of paper III](image)

5.4. Paper IV: Better Together: Co-Creating Salutogenesis with Migrant Youth
In the fourth article, I analyze the survey data from four different project locations, and look for qualitative and quantitative links between creative participation and salutogenesis: How does participation in a multicultural creative project affect the health and wellbeing of young participants? In a salutogenic perspective, health is understood as a continuum, where we all live with forces that support as well as forces that challenge our wellbeing. To promote health, for instance in the context of migration, it is essential to mobilize resistance resources e.g. in the lives of migrants. The paper also discusses how adults who relate to these young people can draw lessons from this, and facilitate or co-create salutogenesis by interacting with participants over time.
The descriptive statistics show that a majority find project participation meaningful and important. 3 out of 4 participants (75.5 %) considered the project important to them (somewhat/agree/strongly agree). Almost as many (72.2 %) says it helped them grow as a person, and 71.1 % learned something new. 72.8 % would like to continue in Kaleidoscope for a long time.

The participants were also asked how they identify with Norway and other countries, rating their agreement with the following statements from not at all to completely: I feel Norwegian, I feel attached to another country, I feel multicultural. A much larger proportion of participants identify as very or completely multicultural (58 %) than as very or completely Norwegian (33 %) or attached to another country (32.6 %). This indicates an identity pattern that is more multiple and complex than singular.

In terms of correlations between participation over time and salutogenic scores (sense of coherence, sense of community, self-rated health and satisfaction with life), it proved difficult to find clear tendencies. No correlations were statistically significant, or made for clearly probable models in Bayesian terms. Rather, there were generally high scores also on the earliest measurements, and among beginners. When sorted by years of participation, both the sense of community and sense of coherence showed an upward tendency over time. However, a clear correlation probability could not be documented, possibly due to few respondents in the categories who had participated the longest.

Analyzing the qualitative answers, I formulated four overarching themes: General satisfaction, creative activities, participation and community, and importance in hard times. Many participants responded that they like “everything” about the project, and would change “nothing” if they could (89 statements in the open answers, among the 154 survey responses). The participants generally express that they are happy to be part of Kaleidoscope, often in strong statements such as “Kaleidoscope means everything”, and “without Kaleidoscope, I could not have lived in Norway”. The participants specify that it is important to them that they can ‘be themselves’ here, to feel included and important, and that they experience personal growth: “Kaleidoscope has made me a better and more extrovert human being with a much brighter outlook on life” – and “after a while in Kaleidoscope I became brave”. Along with this increasing confidence, participants also underline how much they have learned about each other, and to respect each other with different cultures, languages and religions.

The creative activities in themselves are essential to many participants. When asked what they consider the very best in Kaleidoscope, dancing is mentioned 102 times, and music/singing 93 times in the open answers. They enjoy expressing themselves creatively,
and singing and dancing together with others who share that joy. The creative activities are often linked to positive emotions like fun, joy, freedom and togetherness. Participants often mention the performances as peak experiences; highlights of intense joy and fun.

The community dimension of the project means a lot to many, and emerged as a third central category. Several say that they have learned “to be social” here, and they have made good friends, some for the first time. The community is also compared to family and home, as participants call it “my second home” and “a big multicultural family.” In these sharing and caring processes, the participants have learned about how they can belong and contribute in a community – and “that you don’t have to be perfect to make people happy.”

In the final qualitative category, some significant themes of simultaneousness and the complexity of wellbeing emerge. Kaleidoscope is described as an arena where joy is possible, even when other things may be difficult. Many mention how important this arena was right after arriving in Norway, and others talk of it as a refuge from difficulties or despair: “If it had not been for Kaleidoscope, I surely would have been depressed”. A participant with long-term health challenges, who responded to the survey at all three occasions, emphasizes more and more for each response how much Kaleidoscope meant to her, helping her through difficult times, giving joy in everyday life, providing her with someone that is cheering for her through the illness. “Kaleidoscope has always meant a lot to me. But after I fell seriously ill a while back, it has meant everything,” she concludes in her third response. These findings may imply that to young people in demanding situations, whether as newcomers to a society, outsiders or chronically ill, a warm and creative community like this one may matter even more.

The simultaneous presence of difficulties and meaningful fun make for a good fit with the model of salutogenesis, where forces that build and undermine health (resistance resources and resistance deficits) are at work at the very same time. The resistance resources that the participants describe as most important to them are, in short, being creative and being together – and perhaps most of all the combination; being welcomed as a valued participant and friend into a community where something beautiful is co-created.

To create such communities that facilitate salutogenic processes, professionals and other adults will need patience and presence. The support that the young migrants and multiculturals themselves value the most stems from the relational, creative and long-term aspects of the project. Paper IV is under review and not yet published at the time of writing.
5.5. Brief reflections on additional data

In addition to the four articles included in the dissertation and presented here, I have discussed material and perspectives from this PhD project in other texts in Norwegian: *Identitet i kulturmøter* [Identity in Cultural Encounters] (Schuff, 2017b), *På skattejakt i forskjellsfellesskapet* [Treasure hunting in a community of difference] (Seip, in review) and *Fargesterke forbilder* [Colorful Role Models] (Seip & Kinunda Afriyie, in review).

There are also data, particularly from the survey, that have not been discussed in the papers summarized above. The survey data about acculturation, ethnic identity, self-efficacy and self-determination (cf. 4.5.2.) have only been through a preliminary analysis, and could potentially be analyzed and presented more in full later. No particularly clear patterns or statistically significant changes were detected concerning ethnic identity/host culture identity scores. So far, I chose instead to focus on the qualitative answers and narratives about identity, to go more in-depth and explore more complex and multifaceted processes than I found to be captured by the Vancouver Acculturation Index or the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure. While two-dimensional measures were an improvement from one-dimensional ones, more complexity is still warranted. Both acculturation and identity formation in young people can best be understood in context, as developmental pathways (Birman & Simon, 2014; Sam & Oppedal, 2003).

I also invited the participants to suggest changes and improvement to Kaleidoscope, both in the interviews and open-ended survey questions. In general, a blank field or “nothing, it is perfect as it is” were common answers. Some suggestions are summed up in paper IV: More new songs and dances and rehearsals, more sharing the spotlight and giving more participants solo opportunities, more structure and discipline. Those who emphasized that people need to be taught to arrive on time may find some encouragement in that some other participants, when asked about their most important lesson from Kaleidoscope, answered just that – they had eventually learned to be on time! Among other suggestions not mentioned in the articles, some participants ask that newcomers must be supported better in the project, so that they have “more to offer”. Others emphasize that it is important not to be left too much to oneself after that initial warm welcome. Some veterans ask for increased responsibilities and challenges as they grow older, an opportunity progression that seems to be developed more fully in some locations than others.

Beyond its specific contents, the feedback points to the general potential of participation, representation and involvement as ongoing processes. Asking for suggestions from participants can contribute to tailoring Kaleidoscope to local needs and creativity.
6. Discussion
In the following, I will connect and discuss some main lessons in light of the context and theoretical, philosophical and methodological perspectives presented above. I also make some abductive moves (c.f. 3.2.4.), looking for best explanations, creatively connecting the dots (Niiniluoto, 1999; Valsiner, 2014b). For the critical realist, the discussion moves between empirical observations (the empirical level), possible sequences of events (the actual level) and underlying mechanisms (the real level) to understand our multidimensional world.

6.1. Contributions
As proposed contributions of the thesis, I will now draw up six lines of thought. I then move on to discuss limitations and implications of these contributions.

6.1.1. Simultaneousness
A common thread through several findings is the presence of many simultaneous processes, and seemingly contradictory identities or phenomena: The both-and rather than either-or in these young people’s lives. I find them belonging to and moving between different categories; seriously negotiating while joking; playful and ambitious; feeling like outsiders, but together; pressured, but happy and free.

The salutogenic framework captures this simultaneousness well in the health continuum, where multiple forces affect us at the same time in the ‘river’ that is our life – or our development, to integrate the developmental perspective, which would imply that health and wellbeing are emerging phenomena throughout the life course. It may often prove difficult to summarize these contradictory forces in an average expression of “how well” one is doing all in all, as e.g. Self-Rated Health asks respondents to do – when life is not either-or or somewhere in-between, but both wonderful and demanding. The young participants in this study share their stories about how they tackle and enjoy life, for better and for worse, and their heights and depths are often quite simultaneous: Moments of joy in the midst of depression, finding social support and that hug they needed when others rejected them, struggling at school while excelling at Kaleidoscope. Also, when dealing with illness and mental issues, in fact, particularly then, they found sources of hope, health and wellbeing in the community – in their ‘happy place’.

The recognition of multiple simultaneous processes is also one answer to the academic and musicological debate about Kaleidoscope as either show-off, token multiculturalism (Paus, 2018; Solomon, 2016) or an authentic and successful celebration of young, vibrant
diversity (Kvifte, 2016; Pedersen & Moberg, 2017). There are at least two sides of the story; we can look at interactions and experiences on the microlevel, which have been found to be overwhelmingly positive in my material; while also reflecting upon the project's position in the larger social-political context and the paradoxes of Norwegian integration discourse. I have tried to address both, by contextualizing the experiences and interaction I have seen close up. As a society, we contradict ourselves, with simultaneous constructive/destructive practices and policies, and inclusion and exclusion mechanisms at work at the same time. I addressed this in the opinion column I wrote when one of the participants was suddenly deported (Schuff, 2015a). I consider Kaleidoscope on the constructive side – but it is so sorely needed, and can make such a difference for many, precisely because of the lack of recognition and space for being different in the larger society.

That the same project can be read so differently as the debate shows, may also be a symptom of how fine the line is between recognition and stereotyping, between constructive and exotifying approaches to the moving target that is culture. There is no defined solution to that challenge as of yet; but being aware of some common pitfalls and keeping moving can help us strike the balance, at least in our best moments.

It has been argued that academia suffers from ‘sorting mania’, a strong tendency towards categorizing and separating the one from the other. This may also stem from a more universal human tendency to structure our thinking in contrasts and oppositions (Lévi-Strauss, 1966). We categorize to make life more manageable, a central mechanism in stereotyping and why we keep generalizing about groups of people; it is simply easier to navigate that way (Chryssochoou, 2004). But when reality appears to us as a simultaneous, complex, interwoven, dancing, colorful mess – then what? Then we need to listen in and dance along, until we find concepts and frameworks that give room for simultaneousness.

6.1.2. What to do with diversity?
A related theme is how to deal constructively with the differences we experience between us. Is it better to emphasize and celebrate them, as the Kaleidoscope approach encourages? Or do they, should they, not matter? Can we find ways to acknowledge both that we are the same and that we are different, at the same time? There are clearly pitfalls on both sides (Riis, 2019; Taylor, 1997, 2012).

Emphasizing (cultural) differences will strengthen the categories or even divides between people, that initiators of diversity projects normally want not to matter too much. There is a paradox of implicit stereotyping in the way multiculturalism embraces diversity. The discussions of the problematic term ‘culture’ itself also complicate any process of defining
cultural differences, or trying to grasp what a certain culture ‘contains’ (cf. 2.1.2.). With the dynamic nature of culture in mind, such questions cannot really be answered.

At the same time, how can felt differences, colors and nuances in ways of being human be given room? Norway’s often-mentioned egalitarian values may lead to an inclination to contain diversity, repressing differences that matter and leaving little room for being different (Wærdahl, 2016). Writing from a school setting, Wærdahl (2016) argues that well-intended teachers that consider their Polish pupils “not different” from the Norwegian pupils, may end up rendering them invisible as immigrants and can disguise specific challenges relevant to them, also limiting their access to their own potential resources for navigating their everyday lives. She mentions different expectations from their parents and a minority religious background as examples of differences that make a difference.

An awareness of the potential pitfalls on both sides can remind us to keep moving between recognizing and transcending difference. Our common humanity co-exists with our different life worlds, inviting a dialectical approach that never leaves out either of the two aspects. This movement may, as Riis (2019, p. 104) suggests, lead from a multicultural to an intercultural approach, opening our view to what people create together.

Questions of which differences are made relevant in different contexts touch upon issues of intersectionality. On the Kaleidoscope arena, the clear and explicit emphasis is on cultural differences and ethnic identity (cf. paper I). A few other dimensions of difference were mentioned during observations or interviews, such as gender, age and education. Less visible differences in this setting include e.g. class/economic differences, power, disabilities, sexuality and gender identity. Kvaal noted a similar pattern in her study (Kvaal, 2018b, pp. 224-225). May such a clear focus on the ‘cultural’ markers of difference end up as what we might call a one-dimensional diversity?

Interestingly, the same department of the concert hall that houses Kaleidoscope in one of its locations, Kilden Dialog, also created a performance called Spor (Traces), which highlights another diversity dimension – disability and neurodiversity (KildenDialog, 2019b). High school students with and without disabilities, on and off the autism spectrum, create a scenic performance together with professional artistic leaders and the local symphonic orchestra. There has not been any research conducted on Traces as of yet, but from what I have seen and how the institution presents it, there are some similar dynamics with Kaleidoscope. Both projects join young amateurs that represent diversity in collaboration with professional artists, and draw on the energy of bringing life into art and art into society. The format joins together and turns the spotlight to differences they want to overcome, in the same somewhat
paradoxical manner. Yet the differences appear in a context which also connects participants in a greater whole, with an evident common humanity, while living through different situations and circumstances. These contrasts, and the art created in the spaces and links between participants, have moved both the young people themselves and the adults that co-create with them, audiences and reviewers. This goes for Kaleidoscope as well as Traces. Taken together, the two projects may supplement each other, give room for more of the human spectrum, and provide a fuller expression of diversity in the cultural/public sphere.

6.1.3. Navigating together
Another reason to find ways to acknowledge differences is that power is unequally distributed in any society; and generally, minorities have less of it – and more of a need to “explain themselves” in many settings, as one of my participants said. I found that participants find creative and proactive ways of navigating the potentially marginalizing gaze of others. These young people are often navigating together rather than bowling alone (cf. Putnam, 2000). They mutually lean on each other for what Putnam or Bourdieu might call social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986); in this case, resources for resisting and navigating the structures and stereotypes they encounter – often through sharing experiences, joking and playing with categories and stereotypes (paper I, III). The practice in multiple perspective taking that these young people get in their everyday lives, including Kaleidoscope perspectives, give them a cognitive flexibility and ability to contextualize (particularly apparent in Nadia’s reflections, paper II) that is vital for their navigation.

Returning to the ecology of (intercultural) development (cf. 2.2.), social-cognitive structures such as expectations and stereotypes form part of our environment, on an ideological level in the macrosystem, in direct interaction within our microsystems, and in the exo- and mesosystems in-between. Attitudes to immigration have become more positive in Norway over the last few decades, and a majority of the population consider immigrants an enrichment to society (StatisticsNorway, 2019a). However, people in Norway still face quite different attitudinal environments due to e.g. origin. A recent survey from Norway shows that 1 out of 5 consider it impossible for a Swedish-born person to “become Norwegian”, while as many as 39 percent consider it impossible for a Somali born person (Tyldum, 2019).

Thus, there are quite different landscapes of potential acceptance or exclusion for the participants in this study. They still find some commonalities in related experiences of entering new environments and finding out how to both fit in and stand out just enough. I observed that also participants born and raised in Norway at several occasions associated the
migration experiences of others with their own experiences of moving within Norway; from place to place, or from rural to urban settings. Differences in backgrounds and skin color may of course shape these experiences differently, but they could still identify with the shared developmental tasks of finding ways to be and belong in new settings while growing older.

6.1.4. Voice: Finding it and singing out loud

The concept of voice is an easily evoked metaphor in a project which involves so much singing. In different ways, all four articles presented above touch upon some aspect of voice: Finding one’s voice is a matter of identity formation (paper I), as our voice is closely linked to our body, breathing and identity, and can be understood as a personal expression of who we are (Balsnes, 2014; Balsnes & Schuff, 2013). In paper II, I suggest understanding cultural influences as voices to which the person actively responds, in line with Bakhtin’s concept of the voices that constitute a person’s inner dialogue (Bakhtin, 1981) – including the voices of people present, but also voices of those distant from us in space or time, when deemed relevant. I illustrate this with Nadia’s inner negotiations with her mother, as well as leaders, teachers, and others, and how she explains, agrees with, or objects to those voices – a narrative that shows how her ‘culture of origin’ does not consist of one single voice, but is rather an ongoing conversation that she herself takes active part in (paper II).

This line of thought supplements the culture definition proposed in the theoretical background above well (2.1.2.). Culture can then be described as socially co-constructed ways of relating to the world, others and oneself, developing through participation in certain ongoing conversations. These are not only verbal conversations, but also embodied and otherwise mediated interaction. We internalize and externalize the specific repertoires that become ours in these conversations with different voices we hear and respond to throughout the life course.

In paper III, developing and raising one’s voice is related to emerging agency. It was interesting to hear how participants themselves would link the concept of using their physical-audible voice with an emerging sense of self and agency, and voice in the metaphorical sense of having a say or daring to stand up for something. One participant tells her story about how she was shy and hated her voice, but the leaders and the community supported her and told her they liked her voice. “Eventually, you learn to believe them… So, it helped my self-confidence. Not just singing, but standing up for myself as well.” (from paper II). I have also observed participants who barely spoke their name out loud when they first entered the group, but who developed into solo singers on a big stage some months later. Raising one’s voice is
also mentioned in paper IV, and is linked to genuine participation and influence. Participants who after a while in Kaleidoscope suggest changes and demand representatives in decision making also illustrate how voices become louder and clearer through participation over time.

The idea that a person has a certain ‘authentic’ voice deep inside that needs to come to the fore for them to ‘be themselves’, however, is too simple. As Bakhtin’s dialogic imagination reminds us of, we do not only have one inner voice, but whole conversations (Bakhtin, 1981), or a polyphonic choir, if you will. Our voice(s) will also change and mature over time, in a developmental perspective. Finding one’s voice is therefore not so much a matter of unveiling a ready-made core, as it is an ongoing emergence and becoming. Voices can also take after other voices. I often heard participants adopt the language use of the leaders, and speak in line with official Kaleidoscope philosophy as found in the books and on the web page and other presentations of the project, a phenomenon that Kvaal (2018b) also pointed out from her observations. The longer they had been in the project, the more thoroughly socialized into ‘Kaleidoscope-speak’ they seemed. That does not imply that this was not their own voice, rather that it became their own – and the same participants also appeared to be increasingly bold in making suggestions and questioning things “They’ll hear it from me. I raise my voice all the time,” one of them said, laughing with a big smile.

6.1.5. Agency as freedom of movement
Agency is related to voice, as a phenomenon driven by the person and concerning their freedom and influence in their own life. Borrowing from the dancing that is so central in Kaleidoscope, I suggest that agency can be conceptualized as freedom of movement. This also captures the ways several participants talk about Kaleidoscope as a space or a place – a “happy place”, for instance, “the only place I can dance”, or in other ways a place with room for being and expressing themselves. Then again, a space wide and supportive enough to provide freedom of movement, both mentally and physically, can be considered a healthy and liberating place to be (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Sletteland & Donovan, 2012).

Freedom of movement is here a freedom from cross-pressures, overly demanding expectations, and reductive or “too narrow” categorizations. Returning to the dangers of reification and exotification on the majority’s terms; these mechanisms can be highly limiting when participants are positioned as mere representatives of their backgrounds, or as a token for diversity in Norway (Anundsen, 2014; Solomon, 2016). The African artists in Norway that Anundsen studied, on the other hand, also actively make an effort to create something that is theirs: In the midst of a dominating discourse on origin, they invested their agency in creating
practices as reconfigurations of the whole of their experiences (Anundsen, 2014). Since we can never reach a final answer to what someone’s “authentic” or “genuine” agency or voice is – as we are always emerging and still figuring ourselves out – a good approximation to strengthen agency is to allow room for movement and co-construction where people meet.

The somewhat abstract ideas of agency making room for complexity can very well be translated into creating actual, physical arenas for young people to meet and create together. Arenas where they can be both-and-more, where they are not just from somewhere else, but going somewhere together, somewhere still unknown – participating and becoming. The creation of such arenas hinges upon the fine balance of recognizing both human sameness and differences, and leaving the other free to co-define what sameness/differences are to be activated in the present situation. It is, as other forms of dancing, a matter of practice.

6.1.6. The perks of playfulness
From the outbursts of fun and excitement I observed during my fieldwork, through the giggles of interviewees and the smileys drawn onto the survey, there is a common thread of playfulness running through my research project and the Kaleidoscope communities. Towards the end of this learning process, the centrality of laughter and playfulness for both creativity and wellbeing remains with me, even though the papers did not analyze it separately.

Play is activity that is typically intrinsically motivated, freely chosen, pleasurable, nonliteral (that is, with a certain element of make-believe), and it actively engages the player/person (F. P. Hughes, 2009, pp. 4-5). It has long been considered central to human development (Barnett, 1990; F. P. Hughes, 2009; Vygotsky, 1967), learning and creativity (Bateson et al., 2013). While often associated with children, playfulness and humor can evoke positive emotions and make people happier and healthier throughout the life course. After childhood, arts and creative activities may become an important playground for many, which is culturally acceptable (cf. play as a culturally structured activity in Van Oers, 2012). The arts can create a space for “a different quality of being; to escape circumstances, to enable people to enter ‘a safe bubble’ and ‘imaginal space’ where there is the potential for upliftment and enjoyment.” (Kilroy et al., 2007, p. 29) This imaginative space forms part of the transformative potential of the arts in general – here, another world is possible.

This was not a theme I deliberately set out looking for. However, after analyzing how these young people’s quest for identity and becoming ‘themselves’ (paper I and III), it appeared to me that there are also opportunities to lose oneself in the flow of the moment when the Kaleidoscope community is at its most playful. Playing can allow for self-
transcendence, since these intrinsically motivated, pleasurable activities are typically not
directed towards achievement, profit or any other external goal. Therefore, as players we are
free to let go of ourselves and our own agenda – and find each other in our common silliness.
Participants’ faces opened as they joked and tickled each other. Several of them told me about
moments in the middle of dancing or in the spotlight on stage, when they “forgot everything”.
Surely, being part of this community is not all play, it is also hard work, rehearsals and
perseverance. To practice and perform requires work, but to play is freedom.

A playful approach can also be a counterforce to the pressure young people today
encounter on many arenas in their lives, to succeed in school, health, sports, looks and
popularity. Early on in the fieldwork, I heard leaders emphasize that here, it was completely
fine to make mistakes. As I mention in paper III, a participant learned in Kaleidoscope that we
can make others happy without being perfect. Since play is nonliteral and has an aspect of
make-believe, also when Kaleidoscope participants present colorful tableaus in their
performance, it lets us try out ways of being and interacting without putting ourselves at direct
risk. Room for imperfection and mistakes also gives room to grow.

Play may also serve as a coping strategy. When participants jokingly negotiate ethnic
categories and stereotypes, their playful resistance also helps them manage potential
stereotype threat without appearing as angry or threatening back. Instead, as they turn
categories upside-down and laugh at them (paper II), and when everyone laughs together at
how they are going to do “foreigner stuff”, they refuse and undermine the power the
stereotyping could have otherwise had over them (cf. paper I). They even joke about the
survey questions, making the researcher laugh and challenging her power to define which
boxes they may tick (paper IV).

A similar reflection applies to laughter as a way to cope with or release unease. Laughter
and humor “benefit both the sender and receiver by spreading positive emotions that promote
stability, decrease negativity, moderate stress, and strengthen group identity and cohesion.”
(Taber, Redden, & Hurley, 2007, p. 358) When Nadia (the protagonist of paper II) looked
through a transcript of her interview later in the process, she saw my notes on laughter in
certain places. She then smiled and commented on how typical it is for her to laugh when
talking about difficult things. our choice of responses may sometimes come down to “fight,
flight, or laugh”, to quote Simone (2012, p. 1).

The creative and multimodal playfulness is also a supplement to verbal interaction. This
serves an inclusive function particularly in environments where participants have varying
language proficiency. And while a common strategy in Western societies is to talk about
mental health to ameliorate difficulties, there are also times when what we need is to play our way through (Hart, 2017). Rather than talking about their potential problems, these young people are included in active and playful participation. Rather than offered a goal-directed health project, they are here to create together, and have fun doing it. As a participant who was also a patient put it, in the excitement before a performance: Participating here was one of the “perks of being a patient”.

6.2. Limitations
In qualitative and mixed methods research, the quality of the work can be judged by the trustworthiness of the presented findings, by reflexivity and integrity, by their transferability and their usefulness in real life – a community action perspective with a touch of dialectic pragmatism (R. Johnson & Gray, 2010; Kagan et al., 2011). I have tried to be clear about factors that can help the reader assess the trustworthiness of the present work, and will in the following discuss its limitations.

First, a general limitation of any research finding in a critical realist perspective, is that it is by necessity a social and historical construction, and that we have no direct access to the real and actual levels of reality; we must sense and interpret what we can observe and experience on the empirical level, and reason from there to the underlying layers. That implies that any result or finding is preliminary, incomplete and always up for revision.

Second, no researcher is free of bias, since we are all positioned and have internalized certain academic and sociocultural ways of seeing the world and not others. This work can therefore not be separated from my perspectives and personality. In qualitative, contextual and constructivist approaches, the goal is not to eliminate our positioning, but to be aware of it and use it as a tool for insight: With my eyes, my background, and my singing and dancing body, this is what I found (cf. the centrality and inevitability of our pre-understanding, in Gadamer, 1975, p. xxxi). Other researchers with other cognitive and emotional histories, other languages and semiotic resources, socialized into other theoretical and practical approaches, would find and present something else, and add to our intersubjective pool of knowledge. I approached this project with a friendly curiosity and excitement, since Kaleidoscope resonates with positive creative and community experiences I have had. This sympathetic pre-understanding may have eased my way into the project, and facilitated a sense of team spirit and mutual understanding with many of those I met in the field. It has also given me access to experience some of the energy, tensions and excitement myself, particularly during the participant observation. After playing, dancing and singing along, having laughed and cried, I
have felt and not only thought about how these things matter to participants. On the other hand, this closeness could well get me carried away and make me less receptive for critical perspectives and diverging experiences from the main narrative about ‘one happy family’. To manage these challenges, I have consciously worked on maintaining self-reflexivity, e.g. by journaling throughout the project years. I have also repeatedly chosen to look for tensions and contradictions, to sit down with those who were sitting by themselves, to note those who were not smiling with the others, and so on. And lastly, but importantly, I have discussed my work from the planning stage through to the final writing stage with other academics, colleagues, practitioners and students, inviting and hearing a range of critical perspectives. These ongoing conversations have helped me become aware of my perspectives and allow them to be challenged. The time that has passed since my first observations, and the combination of different methods, are also factors that contributed to the necessary analytical distance. The survey responses did not bring tears to my eyes like observing nervous children nailing their first performance did – even though survey responses could still get me excited, for instance about the young wisdom in some open-ended answers.

A third limitation is tied to the choice of methods, since alternative approaches that were not applied could have provided other insights. A grounded theory approach was considered early on in the project, and would have left the contents of the study more open – and up to the participants to define (J. A. Smith, 2015). I entered and followed through the project with a participatory attitude (Kidd & Kral, 2005), but had hoped for more of both the participatory and the action elements of participatory action research. A more articulated action research strategy could have given other insights and, not least, led to project development within Kaleidoscope and related activities. A lesson I take with me to future projects is to plan for more realistic involvement processes for participation and action.

On another note, there is also a limitation in the fact that I chose to combine as many methods as I did; which I suspect contributed to my underutilization of the survey data in particular. A way to avoid this, could have been to have worked in a team, or to be more selective and concise when developing the survey. When discussing the project with peers, some have commented that the qualitative data from observations and interviews would have sufficed for a PhD project – and they might be right. A more selective approach with fewer methods and items would also have given me the opportunity to refine those I chose even more. However, I chose to gather data from more locations and participants in the survey, which added to the scope of the findings; though I have not yet fully made use of all the data. The survey material did not provide as solid a foundation for documenting change over time.
as I had hoped for, since respondent continuity through the three occasions was a challenge. The developmental dimension was better illuminated by the qualitative analyses, tracing the narratives of long-term participants (paper II) and repeated open-ended answers (paper III). Still, these limitations point to a certain degree of uncertainty in the statistical findings, that should be taken into account when considering implications and planning further research.

On another critical note, the complexity of the case makes it hard to conclude about exactly which factors play which role in the meaningful, positive experience most participants have in Kaleidoscope. Is it the music or the dancing? Is it participating actively, being invited to contribute, and recognized for it? Is it the warm community and the relational support? Is it the opportunity to be creative together with others, processing and expressing life so that it moves both the actors themselves and those of us who watch? Is it the contrast to a less inclusive society at large? It may be all of these, or more general aspects such as shared experiences and a change of environment. Different experiences of communal sharing have, across cultures, been found to evoke positive emotion (“being moved”) accompanied by bodily sensations and increased devotion (Zickfeld et al., 2019). Trying new things and entering new arenas can in itself boost wellbeing in young people (Fernee, 2019), so the perceived effect does not necessarily stem from one specific activity. Other activities, such as joining a sports team, a choir or going out into nature, may have had similar percussions in participants’ lives (Balsnes & Schuff, 2013; Fernee, 2019).

Finally, even with the survey and over 200 involved participants in total, the findings are not readily generalizable, since they are contextual and based on a specific case. Still, I want to provide some lessons of a more general or transferable value than just a description of one specific setting. While Kaleidoscope as a case may be unique, as are its participants, the goal is to arrive at transferable knowledge (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Transferability depends on the fittingness of the context under study to other contexts. What I have hoped to make transferable includes the mechanisms and methods that have shown themselves fruitful – such as recognition, trust building, room for creativity and complexity, approaches to diversity, and the sharing of experiences that facilitates navigation. Such mechanisms and methods can be disseminated to new locations, as Kaleidoscope has already started to do; as well as to other kinds of settings. Hopefully, my current explorations of what constitutes a catalytic setting for the empowerment and wellbeing of young people growing up across cultures, may have value in a wider theoretical and societal perspective.

While the process has been long and complex, and there may have been simpler paths to the goal of completing this research project, I believe I can say that I appreciate every detour
and bump in the road. Many of the lessons learned have come from exactly those detours, and in unexpected situations; for instance, when I observed participants filling out the survey and understood that I needed to take note of what they expressed outside the digital form as well. Another example is how some of the interviews called for their own article (paper II), which I had not planned for, but it dawned on me as I sat listening to participants’ stories.

I conducted this research mainly on a part-time basis, alongside teaching and other responsibilities, which means that it has taken several years (2014-2020). The lengthy process can also be considered a strength, since it gave me the opportunity to invest in getting to know these young people over time, and see both them and the Kaleidoscope project develop over the years. Through long-term data collection and processing, I noted both their and my own maturation over time.

6.3. Implications
The findings presented here are to increase the understanding of children and young people growing up with different backgrounds, crossing categorizations and navigating stereotypes, and living in simultaneous life worlds. If applied, this knowledge can improve their living conditions by inspiring the creation of arenas for inclusive and creative interaction, and other means of recognition and empowerment. Empowered and integrated immigrant youth will in turn be a resource for society at large.

6.3.1. Implications for the academic field
The present work has both general and specific implications for related areas of psychology. I will mention some theoretical as well as methodological implications.

Theoretically, this thesis has proposed a further development or refinement of certain terms and models, such as navigating cultures and crossing categories (cf. 2.1.2., 2.1.3., 6.1.1., 6.1.3. and 6.1.4.), as well as adding the ecosystem to an eco-ecological model for our time (2.2. and figure 1, based on Bronfenbrenner). The eco-ecological model coincides with an ontology of interconnectedness as proposed e.g. by Fernee (2019). Such developments point in a direction where nature and culture can be explored as interconnected and interdependent, rather than as opposites. The dancing bodies I observed and danced with in Kaleidoscope, for instance, are not either-or, but both nature and culture, moving together. A truly contextual psychology needs to understand humans in our natural and cultural environments, as simultaneously as possible. I want to further this premise more thoroughly in my future work, since I only partially applied it in this current PhD project. I believe that
psychology in general has a great potential for improvement in the (re)integration of nature and culture in our human ecology.

Concerning cross-cultural development, more specifically, this thesis adds to our understanding of the resources, challenges, experiences and agency of children and young people growing up across cultural categories and meaning-systems, an increasingly common developmental environment. The findings illustrate the usefulness of a salutogenic approach, a holistic model which can help us avoid unwarranted problematization or pathogenization of groups that are assumed to be vulnerable. These contributions might inspire and be followed up by explorations of diversity sensitive approaches and applications, much needed in a multicultural society, for instance within the health sector (Ulland & DeMarinis, 2014) and within education (Wærdahl, 2016).

Methodologically, the lessons from the participatory approach applied in this research project implies the need for finding ways to make time and opportunities for co-research, and for checking relevance for the persons under study. As discussed in the fourth article, one implication of the analysis is the need to spend time with people, rather than just measure their state at a selected point in time – to become equipped to understand them and contribute to their wellbeing. In a time characterized by demands for effectiveness and New Public Management, that is a challenge for researchers and practitioners alike. This mirrors the distinction between the paradigmatic mode and the narrative mode in the writings of Bruner (2009); the need for more holistic approaches to someone’s life and story to make sense of it (the narrative mode), and not just comparisons and categorizations, i.e. diagnoses (the paradigmatic mode). There are no shortcuts to the most central aspects of what mattered most to the participants in this study: Being listened to, given an arena to try new things, learn and express themselves freely, and experiencing patient support and maturation over time.

6.3.2. Implications for practice
The importance of relational support over time and opportunities to be active and creative, the subject of one’s own life, also has implications for the practice field. Participants said that this creative community kept them going and perhaps even saved their lives (paper II, IV), so it is worthwhile to build inclusive arenas that can provide this kind of support and engagement.

The implication mentioned above (6.3.1.) that concerns time and patience to make room for long-term growth processes, is a challenge not only for practitioners, but as much for policy makers within the health and social system. When relationships and opportunities to master and mature over time mean so much to young people, and probably to people in
general, it is highly problematic how overloaded the health and social sector is, with professionals practically always on the run. That also implies a need for restructuring society’s health efforts towards prevention as a shared community responsibility, with more salutogenic activities and communities, preferably from early on in life, available to the wider population – a public health approach (Sletteland & Donovan, 2012).

Both writing and reading this current work can be one way to listen to someone else’s experiences and different perspectives. Such encounters, both in person and in writing, are a vital part of knowledge development in increasingly diverse societies. Open-minded meetings with otherness also makes it clearer for us what our own positions and perspectives are, and challenges us to continue listening and walking alongside others for continual learning and expansion of our horizons. We may call this diversity learning, those processes of acquiring new knowledge and insights that depend on differences between us; that would simply not be possible if everyone present agreed and had the same background and position in the world. Kaleidoscope leaders touch upon this when they talk about the creative expressions that can only arise where people who are different come together (Hamre et.al., 2011) – what we along the same vein can term diversity co-creation. Again, an intersectional approach that includes an open range of potentially relevant differences (beyond ethnic and cultural backgrounds) will expand the possibilities for diversity learning, as we may just find that we are all different, somehow. The same goes for diversity co-creation, as it is both preached and performed in Kaleidoscope. A practical help to approach diversity, rather than superficially cheering for it or trying to contain it (cf. 6.1.2.), may be to look for what we have to learn whenever we encounter a different perspective from our own familiar one.

The current findings highlight the potential for cultural health promotion. The study is rooted in a practical context, and several institutions and partners that are involved are interested in learning about and applying the findings of the current research. The knowledge resulting from this PhD project is being shared locally, nationally and internationally with health and social workers, cultural institutions, and teachers and students at different levels, through dialogue seminars, presentations and written material. The communication of findings is hopefully contributing to the further development and enhancement of ongoing and new art projects, and use of similar creative methods elsewhere.

The regional implementation that is already arranged for can provide a pattern for further knowledge dissemination and implementation, nationally and beyond. The methods, mechanisms and meanings presented here as something that mattered to and strengthened the wellbeing of children and young people who grow up across cultures, can also be applied in
other settings, such as schools, community/youth centers, schools of music and performance arts, and in local public health strategies. A cooperative art project such as Kaleidoscope invites local cross-sectional collaboration in line with the recent coordination reform in the Norwegian health system, that emphasizes local health promotion and prevention efforts that can take place in municipalities and local communities (Romøren, Torjesen, & Landmark, 2011). Creative and participatory projects might provide a promising option, both as health promotion for children and young people on a more general level, but also as a more targeted intervention for young people in transitions, minority situations, treatment or rehabilitation. Such lessons and tools should also be integrated into relevant educational programs, to equip professionals within health, social services, education and arts for diversity.

6.3.3. Suggestions for further research and development
Further research and development is warranted concerning how the mechanisms and lessons presented here can be transferred into other settings, so that we can create more spaces with health-strengthening freedom of movement in our society. Future studies could also explore other dimensions of the interaction involved in participatory creative communities, such as socialization into local values, or shared and self-transcendent emotions, e.g. excitement, gratitude or the social-relational emotion *kama muta*, that sense of being moved – together (Zickfeld et al., 2019) – how room is made for expressing emotions and learning affect awareness and regulation together, also potentially through musical activities.

These aspects can be explored further in the development of cultural health promotion. I want to keep writing about the potential “perks of being a patient”, honoring the quote from the excited participant who had joined Kaleidoscope on a recommendation from her psychologist. If involvement with the health care sector could, more frequently, give access to creative, inclusive and playful arenas, that might just create new and salutogenic dynamics.
7. **Concluding reflections**

A simple coming together of people, with all the colors they bring with them, and the colors they create as they meet – has now been described and analyzed in thousands of words. By now, Kaleidoscope feels somewhat like an old friend. I hope that those of us who know Kaleidoscope can introduce this friend to others that may need someone to lean on, or somewhere to be part of a greater whole. But the lessons learned here can go a long way, also onto other arenas and communities, with other names and other differences, but similar patterns of playful, participatory creativity.

Continuing participation in each other’s lives is demanding and time-consuming, and may not always be feasible for those who work with minority youth, marginalized groups or mental health. And even though it is a happy place for many a young participant, Kaleidoscope cannot level the playing field or power balance in all domains of participants’ lives. The good times with music and friend does not protect them from being deported or discriminated against, or for that matter, from heart-ache, failed tests or climate change. Still, we have seen here an example of how a creative community might matter, and how it might work to have different local institutions collaborating, and the young people themselves activated to contribute and co-create their own better life. By sharing worlds, young participants and the grownups that work with them are creating new worlds – in which more people can thrive.

The way I have seen it, I find that salutogenesis is a matter of co-creation: The forces and resistance resources that move us towards better health are found not only in ourselves, nor only in our environments, but in the interaction and in the ordinary magic created between us. We become ourselves through participation in communities, learn more together, and find who we are and can become.

Towards the end of this long-term project, I sit back and enjoy the relief, the gratitude and the lessons learned. And I trust that the singing and dancing continues.

Can you hear it? Turn the page.
Postlude: Can you hear young people sing?

_Vil du følge med meg hjem_
_Vil du være min venn_
_så skal jeg blive din_

_Will you walk me home_
_Will you be my friend_
_And I’ll be yours_

These are lyrics from the Kaleidoscope song _Munira’s dance_, where a folk song from Uyghuristan is joined with a Norwegian/Swedish folk tune. “The lyrics sum up the Kaleidoscope project”, Hamre et al. (2011, p. 93) write in the book presenting this and many other songs. There is more music and dances available on several digital platforms, and I encourage readers to sample the creative energy of Kaleidoscope themselves. Start from [www.fargespill.no](http://www.fargespill.no) or search for Kaleidoscope/Fargespill where you stream music or videos. Maybe you can even meet a live ensemble near where you live?

To these songs and dances and ever-emerging displays of playfulness, and to the young people participating, in the creative processes as well as in their own open-ended development: Let us keep listening.
8. References


Barac, R., & Bialystok, E. (2012). Bilingual effects on cognitive and linguistic development: Role of language, cultural background, and education. *Child Development, 83*(2), 413-422.


Gabrielsen, L. E., & Watten, R. G. (2009). Meningsbærende tilstander og deres relevans for forståelsen av det gode liv [States that are saturated with meaning and their relevance in understanding subjective well-being]. Tidsskrift for Norsk Psykologforening, 46(8), 731-737.


Kane, A. A., Neverdal, S., & Stenberg, O. (2018). Barns rett til en forsvarglig levøvelse av skjønn i NAV og barneverntjeneste [Children’s rights to an acceptable standard of living- practicing assessments in welfare and child protection services.]. Fontene forskning, 1(11), 17-29. doi:https://hdl.handle.net/10037/14488


Lie, B. (2003). *The triple burden of trauma, uprooting and settlement: a non-clinical longitudinal study of health and psychosocial functioning of refugees in Norway* (PhD, Dr. med.). Psychosocial Centre for Refugees, University of Oslo, Oslo.


Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (2000). *The only generalization is: There is no generalization*. *Case study method, 27*-44.


Schuff, H. M. T. (2015a). Barnas beste - bare når det passer oss? [The child’s best interest – only when it suits us?] *Fædrelandsvennen, 22.03.15.*


Educating music teachers in the new millennium (pp. 69-88). Oslo: Norwegian Academy of Music.


Appendix

NSD approval
- for all three data collection stages

Information about the fieldwork
- for participants
- for parents/guardians

Information about the interviews
- for participants
- for parents/guardians

Interview guide

Survey
- Full, first survey
- One additional question posed on the second and third occasions
TILBAKEMELDING PÅ MELDING OM BEHANDLING AV PERSONOPPLYSNINGER

Vi viser til melding om behandling av personopplysninger, mottatt 02.10.2014. Meldingen gjelder prosjektet:

40130  Salutogenese hos barn og unge med krysskulturell bakgrunn (pilot)
Behandlingsansvarlig  Angar Teologiske Høgskole, ved institusjonens øverste leder
Daglig ansvarlig  Hildegunn Marie Tønnessen Schuff

Personvernombudet har vurdert prosjektet, og finner at behandlingen av personopplysninger vil være regulert av § 7-27 i personopplysningsforskriften. Personvernombudet tilråd at prosjektet gjennomføres.

Personvernombudets tilråd forutsetter at prosjektet gjennomføres i tråd med opplysningene gitt i meldeskjemaet, korrespondanse med ombudet, ombudets kommentarer samt personopplysningsloven og helseregisterloven med forskrifter. Behandlingen av personopplysninger kan settes i gang.


Vennlig hilsen

Katrine Utaaker Segadal

Lis Tenold

Kontaktperson: Lis Tenold tlf: 55 58 33 77

Vedlegg: Prosjektvurdering
Prosjektvurdering - Kommentar


Det behandles sensitive personopplysninger om etnisk bakgrunn eller politisk/filosofisk/religiøs oppfatning, jf. personopplysningsloven § 2 punkt 8 a).

Personvernombudet legger til grunn at forsker etterfølger Ansgar Teologiske Høgskole sine interne rutiner for datasikkerhet.

- slette direkte personopplysninger (som navn/koblingsnøkkel)
- slette/omskrive indirekte personopplysninger (identifiserende sammenstilling av bakgrunnsopplysninger som f.eks. bosted/arbeidssted, alder og kjonn)

Prosjektet gjennomføres i samarbeid med Avdeling for barn og unges psykiske helse (ABUP), Sørlandet Sykehus HF. Ansgar Teologiske Høgskole er behandlingsansvarlig institusjon. Personvernombudet forutsetter at ansvaret for behandlingen av personopplysninger er avklart mellom institusjonene. Vi anbefaler at det innågs en avtale som omfatter ansvarsfordeling, ansvarsstruktur, hvem som initierer prosjektet, bruk av data og eventuelt eierskap.

TILBAKEMELDING PÅ ENDRINGSSKJEMA
Prosjekt 40130 Salutogenese hos barn og unge med krysskulturell bakgrunn
Fra: Lis Tenold Lis.Tenold@nsd.no
Til: Hildegunn Schuff
u 05.11.2015 09.50

Hei

Viser til mottatt endringsskjema 02.11.2015.

Vi registrerer at det skal gjennomføres intervju med 12 ungdommer/unge voksne som har deltatt i første del av prosjektet. Det gis skriftlig informasjon og innhentes samtykke for deltakelse. For ungdom under 16 år innhentes samtykke i tillegg fra foresatte.

Personvernombudet finner å kunne godkjenne endringene.

Vennlig hilsen
Lis Tenold

Fra: Marianne Høgetveit Myhren <Marianne.Myhren@nsd.uib.no>
Sendt: 27. september 2016 15:38
Til: Hildegunn Schuff
Emne: Fwd: Prosjektnr: 40130. Salutogenese hos barn og unge med krysskulturell bakgrunn

Bekreftelse på endring
Vi viser til endringsskjema registrert 17.09.2016, samt påfølgende korrespondanse på telefon og e-post.

Inkludering av ny metode
Vi har nå registrert at prosjektet utvides til å inkludere en spørreundersøkelse som blir sendt ut tre ganger i løpet av et år.

Informasjon og samtykke

Personvernombudet forutsetter at prosjektopplegget for øvrig gjennomføres i tråd med det som tidligere er innmeldt, og personvernombudets tilbakemeldinger.

Vi vil ta ny kontakt ved prosjektstull.

Vennlig hilsen/Best regards
Marianne Høgetveit Myhren
Seniorrådgiver | Senior Adviser
NSD Personvern | Data Protection Services T: (+47) 55 58 25 29
Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet

"Salutogenese hos barn og unge med krysskulturell bakgrunn"

Bakgrunn og formål
Fargespill er et kunstprosjekt som begeistrer mange, og som forsker er jeg interessert i hva det kan bety for barna og ungdommene som er med. Jeg skal forse på dette i et forskningsprosjekt finansiert av Ansgar Høgskole og Avdeling for barn og unges psykiske helse ved Sørlandet Sykehus HF.


Du får spørsmål om deltakelse i denne studien fordi du er med som deltaker i Fargespill Kristiansand, og den deltagende observasjonen vil i utgangspunktet omfatte Fargespill som helhet.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?
Jeg vil følge prosjektet med deltakende observasjon, jeg er til stede på mange øvelser og samlinger, og tar notater derfra. Dette er for å se hvordan Fargespill fungerer, og prøve å lytte til og se etter hvordan deltakerne opplever det å være med, og hva de får ut av det. Dette gjøres med alle Fargespill-deltakerne til stede, men jeg bruker bare individuell informasjon og sitater fra de som har gitt samtykke.

Når det senere i prosjektet blir aktuelt å samle inn data på andre måter, vil det bli informert og bedt om samtykke for det separat. Denne tillatelsen gjelder kun den deltagende observasjonen.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?

I alt som skrives og publiseres av forskningen vil deltakerne anonymiseres, altså ikke framstå med sitt egentlige navn. Hvis enkeltpersoner likevel kan gjenkjennes ut fra sin historie eller sin rolle i Fargespill, vil dette avklares med den det gjelder og foresatt/verge når deltakeren selv er under 18 år.


Frivillig deltakelse
Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som hels trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker samtykket, vil alle opplysninger om deg bli anonymisert. Om du deltatt eller ikke, eller senere velger å trekke deg, får ingen innvirkning på ditt forhold til Fargespill, skole, myndigheter, behandlere eller andre.

Dersom dere har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med forskeren, Hildegunn Schuff, på tlf. 98819111 eller schuff@ansgarskolen.no. Dette skjemaet leveres til forskeren, gjerne gjennom skolen.

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS, som gir råd og godkjenninger for å sikre etisk ansvarlig behandling av persondata i forskning.

Vennlig hilsen
Hildegunn Schuff, forsker

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien

Deltaker over 18 år

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og samtykker til å delta:

Signatur deltaker: ____________________________ Dato: ____________________________

Prosjekt deltakers navn

Vennlig hilsen
Hildegunn Schuff, forsker
Forespørsel om deltakelse i forskningsprosjektet
"Salutogenese hos barn og unge med krysskulturell bakgrunn"

Er teksten vanskelig å forstå? Kontakt Hildegunn Schuff for muntlig/oversatt informasjon: Tlf. 98819111 schuff@ansgarskolen.no
Is this text difficult to understand? Contact Hildegunn Schuff for an oral translation:
¿Es difícil entender el texto? Póngase en contacto con Hildegunn Schuff para traducción oral:
هل هناك صعوبة في قيم النص؟ الحصول على ترجمة/شفافية المعلومات:
Hildegunn Schuff

Bakgrunn og formål
Fargespill er et kunstprosjekt som begeber mange, og som forsker er jeg interessert i hva det kan bety for barna og ungdommene som er med. Jeg skal forske på dette i et forskningsprosjekt finansiert av Ansgar Høgskole og Avdeling for barn og unges psykiske helse ved Sørlandet Sykehus HF.
Du får spørsmål om deltakelse i denne studien fordi du er foresatt/verge for en deltaker i Fargespill Kristiansand, og den deltakende observasjonen vil i utgangspunktet omfatte Fargespill som helhet.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?
Jeg vil følge prosjektet med deltakende observasjon Jeg er til stede på mange øvelser og samlinger, og tar notater derfra. Dette er for å se hvordan Fargespill fungerer, og prøve å lytte til og se etter hvordan deltakerne opplever det å være med, og hva de får ut av det. Dette gjøres med alle Fargespill-deltakerne til stede, men jeg bruker bare individuell informasjon og sitater fra de som har gitt samtykke.
Når det senere i prosjektet blir aktuelt å samle inn data på andre måter, vil det bli informert og bedt om samtykke for det separat. Denne tillatelsen gjelder kun den deltakende observasjonen.

Hva skjer med informasjonen som samles inn?
I alt som skrives og publiseres av forskningen vil deltakerne anonymiseres, altså ikke framstå med sitt egentlige navn. Hvis enkeltpersoner likevel kan gjenkjennes ut fra sin historie eller sin rolle i Fargespill, vil dette avklares med den det gjelder og foresatt/verge når deltakeren selv er under 18 år.

Frivillig deltakelse
Det er frivillig å delta i studien, og du kan når som hels trekke ditt samtykke uten å oppgi noen grunn. Dersom du trekker samtykket, vil alle opplysninger om deltakeren du tidligere samtykket for bli anonymisert. Om dere deltar eller ikke, eller senere velger å trekke samtykket, får ingen innvirkning på deltakerens forhold til Fargespill, skole, myndigheter, behandlere eller andre.
Dersom dere har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med forskeren, Hildegunn Schuff, på tlf. 98819111 eller schuff@ansgarskolen.no. Dette skjeemat leveres til forskeren, gjerne gjennom skolen.
Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitskapelig datatjeneste AS, som gir råd og godkjenninger for å sikre etisk ansvarlig behandling av persondata i forskning.

Vennlig hilsen
Hildegunn Schuff, forsker

Samtykke til deltakelse i studien

Prosjektdeltakers navn

Deltaker under 18 år (samtykke fra forelder/verge)

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og samtykker til å la prosjektdeltakeren delta:

Signatur foresatt: ___________________________ Dato: ___________________________
Informasjon om deltakelse i intervjue i forskningsprosjektet "Kulturell deltakelse og kreativitet som helseressurser hos barn og unge med krysskulturell bakgrunn"

Bakgrunn og formål

Fargespill er et kunstprosjekt som begeistrer mange, og som forsker er jeg interessert i hva det kan bety for barna og ungdommene som er med. Jeg studerer dette i et forskningsprosjekt knyttet til Universitetet i Oslo, og finansiert av Ansvar Høgskole og Avdeling for barn og unges psykiske helse ved Sørlandet Sykehus.


Du får spørsømlig om deltakelse i intervjue fordi du er med som deltaker i Fargespill Kristiansand, og din opplevelse av det er interessant for forskningsprosjektet.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?

Jeg vil intervjue deg individuelt, og intervjue vil vare omtrent 1 time. Intervjuet vil bli tatt opp på band for at jeg skal få med meg alt du forteller. Dette blir senere skrevet ned. Lydopptakene vil være i forskerens besittelse under hele prosjektperioden, og vil slettes når prosjektet er ferdig.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?

Intervjuer materialet vil bli behandlet konfidensielt, og bare være tilgjengelig for en lukket forskergruppe. Det nedskrevne intervjue lagres med passordsbeskyttelse i anonymisert form, det vil si uten navn, og at jeg oppbevarer navneliste adskilt fra øvrige data og notater.

I alt som skrives og publiseres av forskningen vil deltakerne anonymiseres, altå ikke framståt med sitt egentlige navn. Hvis enkeltpersoner likevel kan gjenkjennes ut fra sin historie eller sin rolle i Fargespill, vil dette avklares med den det gjelder, og foresatte/verge når deltakeren selv er under 16 år.


Frivillig deltakelse

Intervjuet er basert på frivillig deltakelse. Som intervjuedeltaker kan du velge å avstå fra å svara på spørsømlig, og du kan trekke meg fra prosjektet når som helst, uten å oppgi noen grunn. Om du deltar eller ikke, eller senere velger å trekke deg, får ingen innvirkning på ditt forhold til Fargespill, skole, myndigheter, behandler eller andre.

Dersom du har spørsømlig til studien, ta kontakt med forskeren, Hildegunn Schuff, på tlf. 98819111 eller schuff@ansvarskolen.no.

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning. Norsk samfunnssvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS, som gir råd og godkjenninger for å sikre etisk ansvarlig behandling av persondata i forskning.

Vennlig hilsen
Hildegunn Schuff, forsker

Samtykke til deltakelse i intervjue

Prosjekt- deltakers navn (skriv tydelig)

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og samtykker til å la meg intervjue:

Signatur deltaker: ____________________________  Dato: ____________________________
Informasjon om deltakelse i intervju i forskningsprosjektet
"Kulturell deltakelse og kreativitet som helseressurser hos barn og unge med krysskulturell bakgrunn"

Bakgrunn og formål
Fargespill er et kunstprosjekt som begeister mange, og som forsket er jeg interessert i hva det kan bety for barna og ungdommene som er med. Jeg studerer dette i et forskningsprosjekt knyttet til Universitetet i Oslo, og finansiert av Angar Høgskole og Avdeling for barn og unges psykiske helse ved Sørlandet Sykehus.


Du får spørsmål om deltakelse i intervju fordi du er med som deltaker i Fargespill Kristiansand, og din opplevelse av det er interessant for forskningsprosjektet. Siden du er under 16 år bes foresatte om samtykke.

Hva innebærer deltakelse i studien?
Jeg vil intervju deg individuelt, og intervjuet vil vare omtrent 1 time. Intervjuet vil bli tatt opp på bånd for at jeg skal få med meg alt du forteller. Dette blir senere skrevet ned. Lydopptakene vil være i forskerens besittelse under hele prosjekterioden, og vil slettes når prosjektet er ferdig.

Hva skjer med informasjonen om deg?
Intervjumaterialet vil bli behandlet konfidensielt, og bare være tilgjengelig for en lukket forskergruppe. Det nedskrevne intervjuet lagres med passordbeskyttelse i anonymisert form, det vil si uten navn, og at jeg oppbeverer navneliste adskilt fra øvrige data og notater.

I alt som skrives og publiseres av forskningen vil deltakerne anonymiseres, altså ikke framstå som et egentlig navn. Hvis enkeltpersoner likevel kan gjenkjennes ut fra sin historie eller sin rolle i Fargespill, vil dette avklares med den det gjelder, og foresatte/verge når deltakeren selv er under 16 år.


Frivillig deltakelse
Intervjuet er basert på frivillig deltakelse. Som intervjudeltaker kan du velge å avstå fra å svara på spørsmål, og du kan trekke meg fra prosjektet når som helst, uten å oppgi noen grunn. Om du deltager eller ikke, eller senere velger å trekke deg, får ingen innvirkning på ditt forhold til Fargespill, skole, myndigheter, behandlere eller andre.

Dersom dere har spørsmål til studien, ta kontakt med forskeren, Hildegunn Schuff, på tlf. 98819111 eller schuff@angansskolen.no.

Studien er meldt til Personvernombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS, som gir råd og godkjening for å sikre etisk ansvarlig behandling av persondata i forskning.

Vennlig hilsen
Hildegunn Schuff, forsker

Samtykke til deltakelse i intervju
Deltaker under 16 år

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prosjektdeltakers navn</th>
<th>Foresattes navn</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien, og samtykker til at deltakeren lar seg intervjuet:

Signatur foresatt: ________________________________ Dato: ____________________
Intervjuguide
"Kulturell deltakelse og kreativitet som helsesressurser hos barn/unge med krysskulturell bakgrunn"

Tusen takk for at du er villig til å delta i dette intervjuet.
- Presentere informasjonskriv og samtykkekjema
- Sette fram lydoptakter og avklare bruken
- Har du noen spørsmål før vi begynner?
Så vil jeg bare understreke at det ikke finnes rette og gale svar her – men at dine erfaringer og tanker er viktige, og det er dem jeg er ute etter. Du er eksperten her. – Intervjuet vil vare i omtrent en time.

Kan du fortelle meg hvordan en vanlig uke ser ut for deg?
Hva er en god dag for deg? Hva er det beste du vet å holde på med?
Hva vil du bli når du blir voksen?

- SoMe-kortøvelse – en øvelse om hva som er viktig for deg

Hva svarer du når noen spør «hvor kommer du fra?» (kulturell bakgrunn, hvor er foreldrene fra)

- Identitetsøvelse med gule lapper: Natture adjektiver/stikkord i forhold til ditt eget navn på et A3-ark. Vi samtaler om vurderingene underveis, og jeg tar bilde av resultatet.

Fortell om da du kom til Norge (hvis relevant, migrasjonshistorie – om livet før, flukt/reise) – eventuelt: Hva vet du om da foreldrene/mor/far kom til Norge?

Hvordan fikk du først høre om Fargespill? Hva tenkte du da? Hvorfor ble du med?
Hvordan var det i begynnelsen å være med? Har det forandret seg nå som du har vært med lengre?

Hvordan har du vært å være med i Fargespill? Hva har det betydde for deg?

Hvordan er det å være deg når du er på Fargespill? Er det forskjellig fra hvordan det var å være deg før du ble med i Fargespill? Fra hvordan det er å være deg andre steder?
(Får være ‘begge deler’? Bruke andre sider av deg selv?)

Har du delt noen sanger/danser/leker? Laget/skrevet noe stoff selv? Sunget/danset solo?
Hvordan var det? Eventuelt: Hadde du ønsket det? (hvorfor/hvorfor ikke)

Hva har vært høydepunktet for deg i Fargespill?

Hva har vært det verste/minst bra? Mest slitasjéne? Nøie du ønsket annerledes?

Hva betyr de andre som er med i Fargespill for deg? Lederne? Har du fått venner gjennom Fargespill?

Hvordan opplevde du forestillingen? Og responsen (i salen, etterpå)?


Har du lyst til å fortsette i Fargespill? Hvorfor/hvorfor ikke?

Tusen takk for din tid og ditt bidrag til å forstå dette bedre.
The interviews will consist of a combination of a conversation, semi-structured by an interview guide, and an identity/meaning mapping task in two stages, inspired by Märtsein (2010) and la Cour and Schnell (2016):

1. *The Sources of Meaning (SoMe) Card Method*: 26 small cards with statements of things that people have said are of great importance in their lives are presented to the participants, who are asked to sort them into piles according to which statements they agree with, do not agree with, or do not have a clear opinion about. This process is followed by a conversation about what sources of meaning in life the participant finds important, following the SoMeCam-procedure.

2. *Identity mapping*: The participants are asked to write their name in the center of a large piece of paper, and then to place cards with different key words (mainly adjectives) in relation to their name according to how much they identify with or feel the concept on each card relates to who they are. There will be 15 predefined cards, and 5 blank cards on which the participants can write what they choose. The process of placing the cards will be traced auditivevly (recorded) as well as visually (photographed).

Follow-up after placing the cards according to identification with them:
- Do you think you would have placed any of the cards differently before you joined Fargespill? How?/- Tror du at du ville ha plassert noen av lappene annerledes før du ble med i Fargespill? Hvordan?
- Do you hope to place the cards differently in the future? How?/- Er det noen lapper du håper du kan plassere annerledes i framtida? Hvordan?

References


Spørreskjema for Fargespill-deltakere

Informasjon om spørreundersøkelsen
Dette spørreskjemaet er en del av forskningsprosjektet "Kulturell deltakelse og kreativitet som helsesrossurer hos barn og unge". Prosjektet studerer hva det betyr for deltakerne å være med i Fargespill. Forskningsprosjektet er knyttet til PhD-utdanningen ved Universitetet i Oslo, og finansieres av Ansgar Teologiske Høgskole og Avdeling for barn og unges psykiske helse (ABUP) ved Sørlandet sykehus.

Du er invitert til å være med i spørreundersøkelsen fordi du deltar i Fargespill, og det er interessant for forskningsprosjektet hvordan du opplever det og hvordan du har det. Vi vil be deg fylle ut skjemaet tre ganger på et år mens du er med i Fargespill. For å koble sammen svarene dine fra de tre gangene ber vi deg fylle ut e-postadressen din. Den vil senere bli slettet. Alle svarene oppbevares og behandles anonymisert.


Hvis du har spørsmål om studien, ta kontakt på schuff@ansgarskolen.no. Tusen takk for at du vil delta!

Fyll ut din e-postadresse her. Det innebærer at du samtykker til å fylle ut skjemaet og delta i forskningsprosjektet som forklart over.

Om deg

Hvor mange år er du?

Sett kryss på det som passer om din livssituasjon.

- [ ] Går på skole
- [ ] Har sluttet på skolen
- [ ] Vurderer å slutte på skolen
- [ ] Vurderer å begynne på skole
- [ ] Har deltidsjobb
- [ ] Har heltidsjobb
- [ ] Bor med foreldre/foresatte
- [ ] Har flyttet hjemme fra
- [ ] Bor på mottak

Kjønn

- [ ] Jente
- [ ] Gut
- [ ] Annet/vil ikke svare
Sett ett kryss for hver linje, etter hvor godt du synes utsagnet stemmer for deg.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stemmer ikke = 1</th>
<th>Stemmer helt = 7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1    2    3    4    5    6    7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg er i god fysisk form</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg er fornøyd med utseendet mitt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg er en aktiv person</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg er mye sammen med venner</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg ser lyst på framtida</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg har et godt forhold til familien</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg kjenner meg selv godt</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg er glad i musikk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg er glad i å danse</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg har framtidsplanene klare</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Om Fargespill**

Når begynte du i Fargespill? Skriv årstallet du ble med. 

Hvor mange Fargespill-forestillinger har du vært med på?

- [ ] 0 (ingeni ennå)
- [ ] 1
- [ ] 2
- [ ] 3
- [ ] 4
- [ ] 5 eller flere

Hva liker du best med Fargespill?

Hva er du minst fornøyd med i Fargespill?

Hva har vært høydepunktet for deg i Fargespill?

Hva er det viktigste du har lært i Fargespill?
Sett ett kryss for hver linje, etter hvor godt du synes utsagnet stemmer for deg.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Helt enig</th>
<th>Verken enig eller uenig</th>
<th>Helt uenig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fargespill er viktig for meg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg har lært noe nytt i Fargespill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Det er kjedelig å være med i Fargespill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg har fått dele noe som er viktig for meg i Fargespill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Å være med i Fargespill har forandret meg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Etter at jeg ble med i Fargespill, er det meste som før</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I Fargespill har jeg blitt flinkere til å synge og danse</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Å være med i Fargespill har bidratt til at jeg har vokst som menneske</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg vil gjerne fortsette i Fargespill lenge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hvor er du født?</th>
<th>○ Norge</th>
<th>○ Annet land</th>
<th>Hvilket land:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hvor er din mor født?</td>
<td>○ Norge</td>
<td>○ Annet land</td>
<td>Hvilket land:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvor er din far født?</td>
<td>○ Norge</td>
<td>○ Annet land</td>
<td>Hvilket land:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Har du bodd i andre land enn Norge?</th>
<th>○ Nei</th>
<th>○ Ja</th>
<th>Hvis ja, hvilke land?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Helt</th>
<th>Veldig</th>
<th>Ganske</th>
<th>Litt</th>
<th>Ikke i det hele tatt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeg føler meg norsk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg føler meg knyttet til et annet land enn Norge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg føler meg flerkulturell</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Nå kommer noen spørsmål om din etniske tilhørighet. Etnisk tilhørighet handler om hvor man kommer fra og hvem man opplever at man hører sammen med. Det er du selv som kan si hvilken etniske gruppe du identifiserer deg med, og det er fullt mulig å føle at man hører til i flere etniske grupper. For eksempel kan man ha foreldre med ulike etnisiteter, eller komme fra et land og bo i et annet, og høre til i begge.

Forstå du hva som menes med etnisk gruppe? ○ Ja ○ Omtrent ○ Nei

Hva regner du som din etniske gruppe, eller dine etniske grupper? (skriv en eller flere)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Veldig unenig</th>
<th>2 Litt uenig</th>
<th>3 Verken enig eller litt enig</th>
<th>4 Litt enig</th>
<th>5 Veldig enig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeg har brukt tid på å prøve å finne ut mer om min etniske gruppe, som f.eks. historie, tradisjoner og skikker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg har en sterk opplevelse av å høre til min etniske gruppe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg forstår ganske godt hva min etniske tilhørighet betyr for meg</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg har ofte gjort ting som hjelper meg å forstå min etniske bakgrunn bedre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg har ofte snakket med andre for å lære mer om min etniske gruppe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg føler en sterkt tilknytning til min etniske gruppe</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg føler sterk tilhørighet og vennskap på tvers av etniske grupper</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg føler sterk tilhørighet til der jeg bor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg føler sterk tilhørighet til Fargespill</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg føler meg som en verdensborger</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Hva regner du som din opprinnelseskultur, kulturen du kommer fra?**

- [ ] Norsk
- [ ] Annen, skriv hvilken: ____________________________
- [ ] Flere enn en kultur, skriv hvilke: ____________________________

Hvilken av kulturen du kommer fra har betydd mest for deg? ____________________________

*(Svar på spørsmålene under om opprinnelseskultur ut fra denne)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Sterkt unenig</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9 Sterkt enig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeg deltar ofte i tradisjoner fra min opprinnelseskultur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg deltar ofte i typisk norske tradisjoner</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg ville være villig til å gifte meg med en fra min opprinnelseskultur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg ville være villig til å gifte meg med en norsk person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg har glede av musikk fra min opprinnelseskultur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg har glede av norsk musikk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg synes ofte vitser/humor fra opprinnelseskulturen min er morsome</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg synes ofte norske vitser/humor er morsome</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg trives godt sammen med folk fra min opprinnelseskultur</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg trives godt sammen med norske folk</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvordan er helsen din for tiden?</td>
<td>Dårlig</td>
<td>Ikke helt god</td>
<td>God</td>
<td>Svært god</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Her er en del spørsmål om ulike sider av livet. Sett kryss ved det tallet som best uttrykker det du mener eller føler.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spørsmål</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Føler du i bunn og grunn at du ikke bryr deg om hva som skjer med deg?</td>
<td>Sjelden eller aldri</td>
<td>Svært ofte</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Har det hendt at du har blitt overrasket over hvordan personer du kjente godt oppførte seg?</td>
<td>Aldri</td>
<td>Alltid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Har det hendt at du har blitt skuffet over personer du stolte på?</td>
<td>Aldri</td>
<td>Alltid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fram til nå har livet ditt hatt:</td>
<td>Ingen klare mål</td>
<td>Veldig klare mål</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Føler du at du blir urettferdig behandlet?</td>
<td>Svært ofte</td>
<td>Svært sjelden eller aldri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvor ofte føler du at du er i en uvant situasjon og ikke vet hva du skal gjøre?</td>
<td>Svært ofte</td>
<td>Svært sjelden eller aldri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Å gjøre det du vanligvis gjør til daglig er en kilde til…</td>
<td>… glede og tilfredsstillelse</td>
<td>… smerte og ensomhet</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Har du svært motstridende følelser og tanker?</td>
<td>Svært ofte</td>
<td>Svært sjelden eller aldri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hender det du har følerer inne i deg som du ikke ønsker å ha?</td>
<td>Svært ofte</td>
<td>Svært sjelden eller aldri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mange, selv sterke mennesker, føler seg som tapere i visse situasjoner.</td>
<td>Aldri</td>
<td>Svært ofte</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvor ofte har du følt det slik?</td>
<td>Svært ofte</td>
<td>Svært sjelden eller aldri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over- eller undervurderte betydningen av det</td>
<td>Svært ofte</td>
<td>Svært sjelden eller aldri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvor ofte føler du at det er lite mening i de tingene du gjør til daglig?</td>
<td>Svært ofte</td>
<td>Svært sjelden eller aldri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vurderte det riktig</td>
<td>Svært ofte</td>
<td>Svært sjelden eller aldri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Svært ofte</td>
<td>Svært ofte</td>
<td>Svært sjelden eller aldri</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Hvor fornøyd er du med livet for tiden? Vælg alternativet du synes beskriver deg best (ett pr. linje).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Veldig uenig</td>
<td>Litt uenig</td>
<td>Verken enig eller uenig</td>
<td>Litt enig</td>
<td>Veldig enig</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

På de fleste områder er livet mitt sann jeg helst vil ha det.
Alt ligger til rette for at jeg skal ha det godt.
Jeg er tilfreds med livet mitt.
Så langt har jeg fått de viktige tingene jeg ønsker i livet.
Hvis jeg kunne leve livet om igjen, ville jeg nesten ikke forandre på noe.

**Sett ett kryss for hver rad:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stemmer</th>
<th>Stemmer ikke</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeg opplever Fargespill som et godt sted å være.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk i Fargespill deler ikke de samme verdiene.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>De andre ungdommene i Fargespill og jeg har felles mål.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg er blitt kjent med de fleste som er med i Fargespill.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg føler meg hjemme i Fargespill.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veldig få i Fargespill kjenner meg godt.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg bryr meg om hva de andre i Fargespill synes om det jeg gjør.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg har ingen innflytelse over hvordan Fargespill blir.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hvis det oppstår et problem i Fargespill, kan vi som er her løse det.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Det er veldig viktig for meg å være med i Fargespill.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Folk i Fargespill trives generelt ikke så godt sammen.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeg tror jeg vil være med i Fargespill i lang tid fremover.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helt</th>
<th>Ganske</th>
<th>Ganske</th>
<th>Helt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>godt</td>
<td>godt</td>
<td>riktig</td>
<td>riktig</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jeg klarer alltid å løse vanskelige problemer hvis jeg bare prøver hardt nok.
Hvis noen motarbeider meg, så kan jeg finne måter å få det som jeg vil på.
Det er lett for meg å holde fast på planene mine og nå mine mål.
Jeg føler meg trygg på at jeg vil kunne takle uventede hendelser på en effektiv måte.
Takket være ressursene mine vet jeg hvordan jeg skal takle uventede situasjoner.
Jeg kan løse de fleste problemer hvis jeg går tilstrekkelig inn for det.
Jeg beholder roen når jeg møter vanskeligheter fordi jeg stoler min evne til å mestre dem.
Når jeg møter et problem, finner jeg vanligvis en løsning på det.
Hvis jeg er i knipe, finner jeg vanligvis en utvei.
Samme hva som hender er jeg vanligvis i stand til å takle det.
**Vennligst svar på hvor godt følgende setninger stemmer med sann du har det i Fargespill.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stemmer ikke</th>
<th>Stemmer noe</th>
<th>Stemmer helt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jeg føler meg trygg på min evne til å lære meg sangene/dansene i Fargespill.

Jeg kan få til sangene/dansene jeg skal være med på i Fargespill.

Jeg klarer å nå målene mine for min opptræden i Fargespill.

Jeg opplever at jeg er i stand til å takle utfordringerne jeg møter i Fargespill.

**Hvis du går på skole:**

Vennligst svar på hvor godt følgende setninger stemmer med sann du har det på skolen.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stemmer ikke</th>
<th>Stemmer noe</th>
<th>Stemmer helt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jeg føler meg trygg på min evne til å lære meg det jeg skal på skolen.

Jeg kan få til skolearbeidet.

Jeg klarer å nå målene mine på skolen.

Jeg opplever at jeg er i stand til å takle utfordringene jeg møter på skolen.

**Disse spørsmålene handler om hvordan du har opplevd samarbeidet med lederne i Fargespill. Ledere/instruktører har ulike stiler, og vi vil gjerne vite mer om hvordan du har opplevd dine møter med instruktørene dine. Svarene dine er konfidensielle. Vennligst svar så ærlig og nøyaktig du kan.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helt enig</th>
<th>Verken enig eller ucnig</th>
<th>Helt ucnig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jeg opplever at lederne i Fargespill gir meg valg og muligheter.

Jeg føler meg forstått av lederne i Fargespill.

Lederne har vist tillit til at jeg kan gjøre det bra i Fargespill.

Lederne har oppmuntret meg til å stille spørsmål.

Lederne i Fargespill lytter til hvordan jeg vil gjøre ting.

Lederne i Fargespill prøver å forstå hvordan jeg ser på ting før de foreslår en annen måte å gjøre noe på.
Hvis du kunne forandret på noe i Fargespill, hva ville det vært?

Er det noe mer du vil fortelle om hva Fargespill har betydd for deg?

Tusen takk for hjelpen!
The survey was administered at 3 occasions at each location (a total of 12 administrations). In the survey form for the 2nd and 3rd occasions, one question was added to the survey as presented above and asked after "Har du bodt i andre land enn Norge?" ["Have you lived in other countries than Norway?"] This additional question invited participants to answer about how they came to Norway, if they were not born in the country:

Hvis du ikke ble født i Norge, hvordan kom du til landet?

☐ Alene, som enslig mindreårig asylsøker  ☐ Sammen med familie  ☐ Annet

Forklar gjerne mer om hvordan du kom til Norge her:
This is a reviewed article

Supporting Identity Development in Cross-Cultural Children and Young People: Resources, Vulnerability, Creativity

Hildegunn Schuff
Ansgar Høgskole/ABUP, Sørlandet Sykehusi
schuff@ansgarskolen.no

Keywords:
cross-cultural children and young people
resources
vulnerability
creativity
participation
salutogenesis
identity development
complexity
culture and health
Abstract

Children and young people with cross-cultural backgrounds are significantly influenced by multiple cultures during their upbringing. They face the ambivalence and challenges of regularly dealing with multiple cultural frames of reference, norms and expectations, and often experience particular identity challenges. One might say that much of the ambivalence of modern intercultural societies may show up as internalized ambivalence in these "children of migration".

This article explores cross-cultural identity development. The aim is to further our understanding of how the identities of cross-cultural children and young people can be supported and their resources activated. This can both strengthen their resilience and well-being, and be of great value to society at large. Psychosocial/cultural interventions and creative projects in cross-cultural settings are potential arenas for this type of cultural health promotion. One example is the multicultural music project Fargespill (‘Kaleidoscope’).

In a case study of Kaleidoscope, I describe and discuss how these participatory creative activities work, and ask how they may foster the development of constructive cross-cultural identities. Participant observation was conducted in Kaleidoscope throughout a year. In the light of theoretical perspectives from social and cultural psychology, the article analyzes identity issues and possibilities within this empirical context.

Supporting cross-cultural identity development in a constructive manner is here operationalized as allowing, increasing and acknowledging identity complexity. The findings are categorized under the headings of resources, vulnerability and creativity. The project leaders make an effort to establish trust and a safe, supportive space. They apply a participatory method, in which the participants are seen as resources and their strengths and contributions are emphasized. In some situations, the vulnerability that may be caused by potentially being stereotyped is apparent, and identity definitions and complexities need to be negotiated. There are explicit expectations concerning creativity in the Kaleidoscope process, and the crossing of different cultural expressions, old and sometimes new, leads to the final creative product of the performance.

To summarize, identity complexity is given space to play out, relating to both origins and current participation in culture in construction here in Norwegian society. Thus, at its best, Kaleidoscope sets the stage for a flexible and playful performance of identity. This may be one path towards appreciated and integrated intercultural identities.
In our globalized day and age, with ever increasing mobility across national and cultural borders, more and more children and young people are significantly influenced by multiple cultures during their upbringing. Whether they are immigrants or refugees themselves, the children of expatriates or of parents from different countries, they face the ambivalence and challenges of dealing regularly with multiple cultural frames of reference, norms and expectations. One might say that much of the ambivalence of modern intercultural societies may materialize as internalized ambivalence in these “children of migration”.

Leading a cross-cultural life gives rise to various forms of negotiated hybrid identities. It often brings with it the challenges and burdens of being in a visible or invisible minority position, and can also cause vulnerability in relation to health. On the other hand, the complexity of these children’s and young people's experience also endows them with particular multicultural competencies and flexibility that may enable them to act as cultural interpreters, who are much needed in modern globalized societies.

The aim of this study is to further our understanding of how the identities of cross-cultural children and young people can be supported and their resources activated. The findings have the potential both to strengthen these children's and young people's resilience and well-being, which would also be of great value to society at large. Psychosocial/cultural interventions and creative projects in cross-cultural settings are potential arenas for this type of cultural health promotion. One example is the multicultural music project Fargespill ('Kaleidoscope').

This article will explore cross-cultural identity development. In a case study of Kaleidoscope, I describe and discuss how these participatory creative activities function, and ask how they may foster the development of constructive cross-cultural identities.

**Background: Young Cross-Cultural Lives**

*Children and young people with cross-cultural backgrounds* constitute a heterogeneous category, and all have their unique life stories with varying degrees of challenges. The common denominator of cross-cultural children and young people is that they “are living or have lived in – or meaningfully interacted with – two or more cultural environments for a significant period of time during childhood” (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, p. 31). They share certain common dilemmas and experiences. They will have to relate, with varying degrees of regularity, to different cultural frames of reference, values and expectations. The question whether this contributes to vulnerability or resilience in individual lives, however, can only be answered through empirical studies in specific contexts.

Cross-cultural children and young people have only occasionally been studied as a single category. Much of the relevant literature uses other terms and categorizations, i.e. *immigrant children* (Chuang & Moreno, 2011), *minority youth* (Cauce, Cruz, Corona, & Conger, 2011), *unaccompanied minor asylum seekers* (Dittmann & Jensen, 2010), and *third culture kids* (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). Kaleidoscope, the project studied here, included participants from all of these different categories. Accordingly, the general term *cross-cultural children and young people* will be applied to the group as a whole, although subcategories will be identified and compared when such nuancing is feasible and fruitful.

Immigrants in general and refugees in particular are statistically speaking vulnerable in terms of both physical and mental health. A review of studies of immigrants’ mental health in Norway between 1990 and 2009 concluded that “in the majority of the studies, the immigrant populations, specifically adult immigrants from low and middle income countries, have been found with a higher degree of mental health problems compared to Norwegians and the general population” (Abebe, Lien, & Hjelde, 2014, p. 60). Similar tendencies have
been identified among young people. In the “Young in Oslo” survey (Øia, 2007), adolescent girls from immigrant backgrounds reported more mental health problems than Norwegian majority girls. In addition, Alves et al. (2014, p. 49) recently reported an “overrepresentation of children of immigrants among the emotionally distressed”. Several of the health-risk factors involved (less social support, lower family income, more powerlessness) are related to socioeconomic marginalization and inequality rather than cultural factors (Dalgard, Thapa, Hauff, McCubbin, & Syed, 2006; Ekblad & Kastrup, 2013).

Migration can provide a new beginning, but is also a psychosocial challenge, especially in cases of forced migration (Sveaass, 2000). According to Lie (2003), refugees carry “a triple burden of trauma, uprooting and settlement”. While traumatic experiences and multiple negative life events in the past present a burden to many refugees, their current life situation also often adds to the health challenges they face; especially factors such as acculturative stress, discrimination, poor social support and poor socioeconomic conditions (Abebe et al., 2014). Teodorescu, Heir, Hauff, Wentzel-Larsen, and Lien (2012, p. 316) suggest a “cumulative relationship between pre-resettlement traumas and post-resettlement stressors in the mental health of refugees”.

Unaccompanied refugee minors are likely to be in a particularly vulnerable position due to migration-related discontinuities and lack of family support during developmentally important stages of their lives. However, our knowledge of the mental health challenges faced by unaccompanied minors and the help they need is still quite limited (Dittmann & Jensen, 2010).

After migration, refugees are forced to reestablish a sense of meaning and recreate a coherent narrative of their lives (Sveaass, 2000). To varying degrees, this also applies to other immigrants. Identity processes and acculturation become central tasks, with an impact on psychosocial adjustment. Another important factor is how the majority population of the host country receives immigrants (Chryssochoou, 2004). Frequent encounters with prejudice, intolerance and discrimination can add up to a challenge for immigrants’ health, identity and experienced opportunity and participation (Prieur, 2004). Many cross-cultural children and young people, especially those from visible minorities, face discrimination and a lack of recognition (Chryssochoou, 2004; Salole, 2013).

Feeling “different” can be a general challenge for the wider category of cross-cultural children and young people, as they have to switch between different cultural expectations and frames of reference, while also transitioning through developmental stages where fitting in can be considered a central task. This can lead to both external and internalized cross-pressures and role conflicts (Salole, 2013). Some of the most dramatic examples of the diverging expectations of family versus those of society are cases of honor-related extreme control, including parental pressure, violence and forced marriage (Bredal, 2011; Paulsen, Haugen, Elvegård, Wendelborg, & Berg, 2011).

Variations in the degrees of psychosocial adjustment between young immigrants of different origins makes it hard to generalize about them as a single group. For instance, one study of young immigrants who had come to Norway from Muslim countries showed that they did not have poorer mental health in general than their majority Norwegian peers (Oppedal and Røysamb, 2007). There are certainly gaps and methodological challenges in this field, and the need for differentiation between groups and individuals with different cross-cultural backgrounds adds further complexity (Chuang & Moreno, 2011; Salole, 2013). Still, based on the knowledge available, several researchers recommend preventive interventions to strengthen the mental health of immigrants (Abebe et al., 2014; Chuang & Moreno, 2011), including the cross-cultural “children of migration” in focus here.
Most of the aforementioned research, however, has been problem focused. Other dimensions and opportunities may open up if a resource-oriented focus is applied. Cross-cultural lives may equip children and young people with resources such as language skills, broad and comparative cultural insight, an expanded world view (Salole, 2013), and adaptive skills, as well as equipping them in ‘the art of balance’ (Prieur, 2004). So-called third culture kids (TCKs) – children who spend part of their childhood in countries and cultures other than their own, due to their parents’ international careers (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009; Salole, 2013) – have more often been studied from a resource-oriented perspective, with an emphasis on how to maximize the benefits of a mobile and transcultural background (cf. Pollock & Van Reken, 2009). This perspective is perhaps not surprising, as these TCKs often live in relatively privileged circumstances. Recently, however, some scholars and practitioners have suggested and started to explore how some of these TCK resources can benefit other cross-cultural children and young people as well (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009; Salole, 2013; Selle, Østby, & Reif, 2001/2015).

Recent findings also suggest cognitive and linguistic benefits related to maintaining multiple cultures and languages (Barac & Bialystok, 2012; Filippi, Leech, Thomas, Green, & Dick, 2012; Nguyen & Benet-Martinez, 2010). Cross-cultural and multilingual people have also been found to score higher on creative tasks (Leung, Maddux, Galinsky, & Chiu, 2008; Maddux & Galinsky, 2009). In themselves, these people embody combinations that are something other than the dominant culture and language in a society (Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004), reflecting one definition of creativity as “bringing into being something that is both novel and useful” (Leung et al., 2008, p. 170). With their experience of shifting between different frames of references, cross-cultural people are used to living and thinking “outside the box” – continually observing, adapting and finding solutions that fit various situations and challenges (Salole, 2013).

Kaleidoscope – a case study

*Kaleidoscope* is a multicultural music project that was started in Bergen in 2004, initially to explore the creativity that may arise from resistance and diversity (Hamre et al., 2011). Kaleidoscope has since been established in several Norwegian towns, with annual performances in many locations. The Kaleidoscope method lets children and young people from different cultural backgrounds share their musical resources (songs, dances, and rhymes) with professional musicians and choreographers. Through these participatory, creative activities, a colorful music/dance performance is created and performed on a local stage. The initiators emphasize that Kaleidoscope is not a “social project”, but an art project, and that when participants are viewed as resources, that is what they become (Hamre et al., 2011).
Theoretical perspectives: Meaning, identity and complexity

I start from the perspective of social and cultural psychology, understanding human beings as “compulsive meaning-makers” (Valsiner, 2014, p. 8). In other words, we cannot but try to make sense of our worlds, each other and ourselves through cultural interaction.

It is possible to consider cultural meaningfulness, identity development and health as elements within the overarching theoretical framework of salutogenesis (Antonovsky, 1979, 1987) – that is, a focus on what strengthens and promotes health, rather on what leads to sickness and ill-health. Social support and inclusion in salutogenetic activities and communities, as well as a range of other factors such as ego identity, coping and creativity, have been found to strengthen salutogenesis (Langeland, 2014). Antonovsky himself emphasized the importance of having a sense of coherence – experiencing comprehensibility, manageability, and meaningfulness in life (Antonovsky, 1987). In other words, as compulsive meaning-makers, we thrive on meaning.

As we also try to make sense of ourselves in meaningful ways, issues of identity arise. Identity is a term widely used in contemporary texts, both academic and popular, to address a range of phenomena from micro level (i.e. self-presentation in social media, body image) to macro level (i.e. identity politics in multicultural societies). Popular as the term is, however, it often goes undefined and its meaning remains rather vague (Prieur, 2004).

In this article I define identity in social psychology terms, as self-interpretation – a “social-cognitive process whereby people give coherence and meaning to their own experiences, including their relations with the physical and social environment” (Simon, 2004, p. 45) – involving a varying number of self-aspects. Our self-interpretation is shaped by interaction with our surroundings, and in turn influences our mental processes and behavior.

Simon (2004) presents his Self-Aspect Model of Identity (SAMI) as an attempt at summarizing the social psychology of identity. Relevant research traditions include explorations of the self, especially in North American psychology (self-concept, self-continuity, self-esteem, self-realization, self-compassion, etc.), and of social identity, especially in European psychology (group belonging, ingroup vs. outgroups, etc., most prominently known through the Social Identity Theory of Intergroup Relations, see Tajfel & Turner, 2004). In the SAMI model, these two strands are represented by the dynamics between individual and collective identity. Collective identity is self-interpretation focused on one socially shared self-aspect, while individual identity is based on a complex configuration of self-aspects (Simon, 2004, pp. 49-50). Whether individual or collective identity is most salient will vary situationally and according to the position and context of the person. According to optimal distinctiveness theory (Brewer, 2003), individuals need both belonging and distinctiveness, and thus, an optimal point of distinctiveness on a continuum between personal and social identity is necessary to satisfy this need for a type of identity balance (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2014).

Thus, identity – while anchored in physical, memory-based, psychological and social continuity – is also inherently dynamic. Our identity will continually be influenced by situations and changes in our circumstances, a phenomenon well-known from migrant experiences (Schuff, 2013; Sveaass, 2000). When we are in a minority, the minority-related self-aspect will often be accentuated by ourselves and others, and collective identification is likely to be activated. This is often experienced as quite limiting. The potential for individual, complex identities is still present, however; we are always more than our most salient identity aspects in any given moment. If people who are normally identified with their minority status are given other arenas, met with other expectations, or given the...
opportunity to play out other self-aspects – then these other aspects can be activated and strengthened, and possibilities open up for a positive and broadly anchored identity development.

One of the reasons why identity issues are important is their impact on health and wellbeing. There is a growing cross-disciplinary body of research that demonstrates the impact of identity (e.g. in relation to membership of, and inclusion in, social groups) on health (Jetten, Haslam, & Alexander, 2012).

Cross-cultural identities

It has been argued that cross-cultural children and young people have particular challenges and possibilities when it comes to identity (Salole, 2013). Scholars from several fields, such as social anthropology and sociology, as well as cultural psychology, have tried to describe and understand the identity challenges that may arise from living with multiple cultures (Chryssochoou, 2004; Eriksen, 2010; Nguyen & Benet-Martinez, 2010; Prieur, 2004). The identity opportunities that have been outlined include:

- “Pure” identity: Cross-cultural children and young people are often met with expectations that there is a “final” answer to the question, “But where are you actually from?” This question, however, usually calls for a complex answer in the case of cross-cultural children and young people (Salole, 2013). Nonetheless, they may in some cases choose to cultivate one “pure” identity, often as a reaction to the rejection of more complex identities or to marginalization. In extreme cases this may be linked to radicalization and extremism (Chryssochoou, 2004).

- Hyphenated identity: Belonging to both or all cultures a person can trace their origins to, e.g. identifying as Norwegian-Pakistani, Norwegian-Chilean or Norwegian-Somali (Eriksen, 2010), in an additive manner.

- Hybrid identity: When aspects drawn from various cultural backgrounds and influences merge into a new whole that is different from any of them (Eriksen, 2010). Subcultures among immigrant young people, e.g. gangs, may develop customs and interactional patterns that are neither typically Norwegian nor in accordance with their parents’ cultural values and practices (Prieur, 2004).

- Flexible identity: This alternative highlights situational variation (Eriksen, 2010); e.g. identifying and behaving as “more Norwegian” at school and “more Somali” at home. Norwegian-Chilean children may participate in typical Norwegian after-school activities and go to bed early on weekdays, while staying up much later than their Norwegian peers on a Saturday night for an intergenerational ‘fiesta’.

- Multicultural identity: Exposure to and internalization of two or more cultures; and “having strong attachments with and loyalties toward these different cultures” (Nguyen & Benet-Martinez, 2010, p. 4)

- Integrated intercultural identity: This pattern of identification will allow the cross-cultural person to choose to be complex and multifaceted also in terms of cultural identity – to be “all of the above, and more” (Salole, 2013).
Several scholars, using varying and often overlapping terms, have argued that for cross-cultural individuals, complex forms of identity (hyphenated, hybrid, flexible, multicultural, integrated) are related to better mental health and psychosocial adaptation than a reductive, singular cultural identification (Berry, Phinney, Sam, & Vedder, 2006; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind, & Vedder, 2001; Sam & Oppdal, 2003). Immigrant young people who identify with and master both their culture of origin as well as the host culture (with an integration profile, in acculturation terms), have been found to have better psychological and sociocultural adaptation outcomes. Accordingly, immigrant young people “should be encouraged to retain both a sense of their own heritage cultural identity, while establishing close ties with the larger national society” (Berry et al., 2006, p. 303).

Whether or not cross-cultural children and young people get the opportunity to balance, adapt and negotiate their different self-aspects, may therefore be a key issue in their development of a positive cross-cultural identity. Cross-cultural children and young people may experience cultural marginality in the sense that they “construe their identities at the margins of two or more cultures and central to none” (M. J. Bennett, 2004, p. 8). Bennett (1993) suggests that this marginality may be either encapsulated or constructive. If a person is not allowed flexibility, and is, e.g. forced into a “pure” identity by family or society, an encapsulated marginality might be the outcome. This is experienced as alienation and inner conflict. On the other hand, if these young cross-cultural individuals find strategies for integrating their intercultural experiences, in exploratory and stimulating environments, they may experience a constructive marginality “in which movements in and out of cultures are a necessary and positive part of one’s identity” (M. J. Bennett, 2004, p. 8). The development of flexible, complex identities and constructive marginality seems to depend on acknowledgment of cross-cultural experiences, and the activation of skills and values from one’s different cultures (Oppdal et al., 2008; Salole, 2013; Schandy, 2013).

Based on the identity theories presented above, what does it mean to support cross-cultural identity development? I will here operationalize this concept as allowing, increasing and acknowledging identity complexity. When it comes to identity, there is arguably strength in complexity as well as in flexibility. High self-complexity has been found to be a resilience factor in times of crisis (Simon, 2004). A strong and dynamic ego identity has also been linked to salutogenesis (Langeland, 2014) and to resilience (Borge, 2007).

Simon’s (2004) self-aspect model implies that individual identity is characterized by the salience of higher complexity, while collective identity is more one-dimensional or focused on a single, shared self-aspect. Collective identity may provide social belonging and be necessary to make collective action possible. On the other hand, individual identity may counteract intergroup conflict and be understood as linked to values such as freedom and flexibility. In contemporary Western societies, individuality and individual identity are cultural and ideological ideals (Simon, 2004).

However, neither of these two forms of identity are more or less “good”, healthy or essential to the person than the other, according to Simon – they are rather two sides of the same coin, more accurately understood as engaged in mutual interplay than as opponents (Simon, 2004). In the case of cross-cultural children and young people, who are often positioned as members of minorities, the tendency will typically be that their complex individual identities are often not activated and acknowledged. Thus, a fruitful starting point to support constructive cross-cultural identity development is to allow and nurture a flexible interplay between individual and collective identities – and the integration of a range of self-aspects and backgrounds into an acknowledged, complex identity.
Methods and material

Participant observation was conducted in Kaleidoscope in a Norwegian town from February to November 2014. I attended rehearsals at least biweekly throughout the period, and stopped by daily during the last intense week leading up to the performances in October. Through participant observation, identity was explored in terms of identity negotiations observed during interaction. Close to 100 children and young people participated in the project. Their ages ranged from 7 to 22, with some participating for shorter periods of time but most for the entire period. The sample thus consisted of participants in Kaleidoscope in the first year of the project (2014) in the specific location in question. The children were recruited from two local schools in culturally mixed neighborhoods. The young people were invited mainly through the municipally run group for unaccompanied refugee minors, but also through the local hospital's child and adolescent mental health services and the local municipal cultural school (kulturskolen). Most of the participants had a cross-cultural background, as immigrants or children of immigrants, while there were also some children and young people of Norwegian origin. The intention is to stage annual performances, with some new participants joining the project each fall. In addition to the young participants, the fieldwork involved the three music professionals who led the project (a singer/voice teacher, a musician and a choreographer, respectively), and at times, some other teachers and social workers. The participants soon treated the observer as a type of assistant/teacher during rehearsals and performances.

The research materials also include written sources that have become relevant during the course of the fieldwork, in particular the book "Kaleidoscope", which presents the project, (Hamre et al., 2011) and related web pages (Fargespill, 2015; KildenDialog, 2014). This triangulation implies that the materials as a whole draw on the perspectives of participants and of project leaders as well as on the interaction between them, as observed and interpreted by the researcher.

The field notes and other materials were subjected to a qualitative content analysis, involving coding, categorizing and comparisons (Flick, 2008) in a process of thematic coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Guided by my research question concerning identity development, I looked for findings that could shed light on the self-interpretations of participants and the spaces that were opened up for the development of such identity processes. By comparing and interpreting my observations in the light of the theories outlined above, I identified three main categories – resources, vulnerability and creativity – and the analysis was subsequently organized under these headings.

Ethical considerations

The project has been approved by the Privacy Ombudsman for Research at Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD), and follows their guidelines for informed consent (from participants, and the parents/guardians of minors), confidentiality and design. The ethical baseline of the project was respect and care for the children and young people that participated, with the explicit intention of ensuring their genuine participation and their voices being heard (cf. Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010). The achievement of these goals was promoted through a continuous dialogue with the participants and others involved (leaders, teachers, social workers, as well as the author's research networks). Particular attention has been paid to communicating in linguistically and culturally sensitive ways throughout the research process. For instance, the letters requesting informed consent contained a note in several languages inviting recipients to request a translation or more information, and were supplemented by oral communication. I have also endeavored to present the participants and the groups and ethnicities they are associated with in non-stereotypical ways. This is
Findings and analysis

The creative activities that take place within the Kaleidoscope project relate to identity right from the start, in the sense that a basic premise for the Kaleidoscope concept is that the cultural and ethnic identities of the participants are diverse – this is “all the world on one stage” (Fargespill, 2015). This basic premise is expressed in Kaleidoscope’s objective, which is “to create an arena for mutually enriching cultural encounters where different identities and cultural/artistic competency are brought to the fore and appreciated” (KildenDialog, 2014, p. 1, my translation and emphasis added).

The young participants sense the project’s implicit emphasis on their otherness, as became apparent during the first session in one of the schools. Having gathered the children around and presented themselves, one of the leaders asked: “Do you know what we want you to do now?” A young pupil of African origin raised his hand, and when she pointed to him, replied loud and clear: “You want us to do ‘foreigner stuff’” (In the original Norwegian: ‘såne utlendingsting’.) This caused some laughter among both the children and the adults. The same leader then – with a smile – proceeded to explain how the project leaders believed that what the children could bring to this project, based on their backgrounds, the songs and dances and games they knew from different parts of the world, was of great value and would help create a unique performance.

This exchange can be understood in several ways: the focus on the children’s origins could on the one hand be seen as expressing stereotyping and exotification, as was elegantly expressed by the young participant who realized that in this context he was considered interesting as a foreigner. On the other hand, it could be seen as a celebration of diversity, a point made explicitly by the Kaleidoscope leaders both in writing (e.g. Hamre et al., 2011; KildenDialog, 2014) and in conversation. In this sense, the exchange also provided a perhaps rare opportunity for the cross-cultural participants to express and be acknowledged for their minority or non-Norwegian self-aspects. In the process, the children and young people could “see each other more clearly” for who they were, as one of the leaders put it in the course of a field conversation about the exchange.

In this exchange, there was a clear emphasis by the project leaders on the participants’ status as resources in themselves. In addition, there was a subtext concerning the vulnerability of potentially stereotyped minorities, and explicit expectations of creativity to come. In other words, the cross-cultural identities of the participants were simultaneously linked to the dimensions of resources, vulnerability and creativity. These three phenomena often appear together, but will be presented separately for the purpose of the following analysis.
The initiators of Kaleidoscope emphasize their resource-oriented focus when describing the project:

*Kaleidoscope* is exclusively resource-oriented. We who created the concept are as dependent on the performers as they are on us. We perform with these children and youngsters because no one else is capable of doing what they do.

(Hamre et al., 2011, p. 12)

The creative activities take place within a framework that features several markers of high quality. Each Kaleidoscope project is led by professional musicians and choreographers (rather than by therapists or other “helpers”), and is performed in large, prestigious cultural institutions. As a result, the participants’ status as important resources and valuable contributors is not only recognized verbally, but also institutionally and professionally.

The initiators of Kaleidoscope express their belief in the identity-strengthening potential of this approach by stating that the participants, when regarded as assets, can establish a new image of themselves rooted in their experience of mastering something, in the feeling of being valuable to others rather than just being victims. If you are perceived as a resource, you become a resource.

(Hamre et al., 2011, p. 12)

Arguably, this process of being seen as, and beginning to see oneself as, a resource has been observed in the case of several participants during the time from the start of the project until the first performance. A teenage girl, who would barely say her name out loud at the first rehearsal, took center stage at the concert hall nine months later, in front of hundreds of spectators, and sang a solo verse. A young man, who had arrived in Norway as an unaccompanied refugee minor and who now works hard to support his distant family financially, and who rarely made it to rehearsals on time, smilingly performed spectacular dances during the performance. Children who had often interrupted the rehearsals at school surprised their teacher by staying fully focused for the entire hour of the performance. Their teacher called it “a miracle”.

How were these processes facilitated? The project leaders worked intentionally to establish trust and a safe, supportive space through the application of a participatory method. During the early rehearsals, the leaders took time to learn participants’ names; to sing birthday songs in several languages simultaneously on participants’ birthdays; to play and sing simple songs together; and to do simple physical warm-up activities in a circle. Little by little, more and more participants dared to share some of their own songs and dances in the group: a lullaby here, a clapping game there. Such expressions, especially traditional folk music and dance, were received warmly by the leaders, who referred to them as “treasures”. Most of the children and young people seemed to become increasingly comfortable in the rehearsal setting, and to enjoy getting to know the leaders, as well as each other. After a few months, several participants had started to hug the leaders when they met or parted.

The relationships and sense of community that developed during the first year of the project can be seen as resources in their own right, with the potential to contribute to positive self-
interpretations and the strengthening of interdependent identities. As the group worked towards a common goal, there was a growing sense of togetherness, with friendships developing and participants giving each other mutual support. When the time of the performance finally arrived, one of the young people exclaimed emotionally to her relatively new friends “All of you have to continue in Kaleidoscope!” – meaning that she wanted them to stay with the project for the next performance, planned for the following year. The three different groups of participants (who came, respectively, from two schools and a youth group) had mostly rehearsed separately throughout the year. As the date of the performance neared, however, the participants came together for rehearsals during the intense period leading up to the performance. During this period, there was an increasing tendency for the participants to bond across internal group boundaries as well. Younger children gave older participants admiring looks, and the older participants joked with and cared for the younger ones, often commenting on their cuteness as they sang and danced. The “oneness” of the group was also embodied in musical and choreographic synchronization during the performance, such as when all the participants shouted “Fargespill!” together, lifting their voices as the “Kaleidoscope community”.

In this emerging Kaleidoscope community, cultural and ethnic differences were routinely acknowledged and valued. This occurred most explicitly through songs and dances, but also more generally through discussions of cultures of origin (or for some, their parents’ cultures of origin). The older participants shared stories about cultural peculiarities and intercultural encounters, and these were received with laughter and understanding. Some of the ethnic Norwegian participants described how they had moved – within Norway – several times during their childhoods, and compared their experiences with those of participants from immigrant backgrounds: “It’s different, of course, but I also find it hard to answer when people ask where exactly I’m from,” said one girl during a rehearsal break. Participants of all ages admired each other’s “ethnic” costumes. Kaleidoscope costumes are always the participants’ own clothes, preferably national costumes or some other clothing that expresses their own or their parents’ origins. Alternatively, the participants may wear “something nice in bright colors”.

The project leaders also specifically recognized the participants’ unique contributions both during rehearsals and in pre-performance pep talks. “We need what every one of you brings to the group,” the leaders would say. The leaders were also consistent in responding warmly and appreciatively when a participant shared a song or made a suggestion. On the day of the performance, one leader told the performers: “Kaleidoscope would not have become what it is today without each and every one of you. And what you have to give really moved people today. I am so immensely proud of all of you.”

Generally the participants also seemed very excited and proud at the time of the performance, smiling, cheering and congratulating each other. Some said that their parents were happy to see them take part, with some parents even being moved to tears by songs from their home countries. A few of the participants also expressed gratitude specifically for the opportunity to express the minority aspects of their cultural identities. “I didn’t think I would get to express the Sámi part of me here in southern Norway, but here I get the opportunity. I really enjoy it,” one girl said.

In addition to recognition from the project leaders and each other, the participants were acknowledged by their families, friends, teachers, other artists and directors, as well as the media. The project and a number of participants were portrayed in a long feature article in the regional newspaper, and this was something that the participants seemed very excited about. The performance in October attracted a full house. When the group reconvened almost a month later, the participants shared the post-performance feedback they had received.
received. One participant had heard that the artistic director of the whole arts complex had loved it. Smiling broadly, she also told the others about an episode in which she herself had been a recognized celebrity: “This little boy came up to me at a bus stop, and told me he had seen me at Kaleidoscope!”

**Vulnerability**

Cross-cultural children and young people are often vulnerable in that they are likely to feel different and be seen as minorities. In particular, they are often categorized by others in reductionist ways that do not do justice to the complexity of their identities. During the Kaleidoscope process, identity negotiations took place in ways that expressed a certain level of sensitivity to stereotypes and simplification. Many of the children recruited from the two schools had been born in Norway and had one or two foreign-born parents. During the early rehearsals at one of the schools, the project leaders sometimes asked children “Which country are you from again?” Several times, some of the children would then reply with some determination: “I am Norwegian! My parents are from Eritrea,” or “my mother is from Thailand, I was born here,” and so on. After a few similar exchanges, the leaders adjusted their choice of words with these children in particular, addressing the issue of origin in a more nuanced way (e.g., “Could you bring some clothes from the country that your father or mother is from next week?”). In other words, as an outcome of these negotiations, identity complexity was increasingly recognized and verbalized as the project progressed and the participants and leaders got to know each other.

At first sight, vulnerability is rarely an explicit focus in Kaleidoscope, as the leaders practice the strongly resource-oriented approach described above, repeatedly emphasizing the participants’ strengths and positive contributions. In their book, Kaleidoscope’s initiators, who work mainly with recently arrived refugee children and young people, explain

> We focus on their resources, not their tragedies. It’s very important for people who come here and have maybe experienced difficult things to given an alternative to being a victim. (...) Having said that, we come pretty close to our performers. So it can feel natural for them that they tell us about their backgrounds, and then it’s important that they do. For us, too. Their stories give our performances perspectives they wouldn’t otherwise have had.

(Hamre et al., 2011, p. 34)

Thus, even though the participants’ vulnerabilities and troubling experiences are not put center stage, this context makes the positive, colorful musical performances even more remarkable.

The participant group is also vulnerable in some very practical ways, and some participants need extensive follow-up by the project leaders. For various reasons, it has been challenging for some participants who are not rehearsing within a school context to show up consistently and on time for rehearsals. Some have little or no experience of this type of event, and are not used to attending a regular schedule of cultural/musical rehearsals. Some have work- and/or family-related responsibilities, or skip rehearsals during exam periods. Several participants dropped out of the project before the performance. In some cases this was because they had moved and left the school that was involved in Kaleidoscope (an inner-city school with high student turnover). Others dropped out due to cooperation problems with their parents. And most dramatically, one of the young people was suddenly deported with his family to Afghanistan since their asylum application had not
been granted. This turn of events was received with shock and sadness in the youth group, and also shook the project leaders.

Most of the participants, however, not only stayed with the project until the performance, but were also intent on continuing for the next year. There was obviously a good deal of variation between the experiences and involvement of these participants. For example, two girls from the same country of origin suggested the same song, but only one was chosen to teach the others and be the lead singer. Another participant asked the researcher-observer on several occasions, right up until the week of the performance, if he could be lead the singer for a song that he had known since he was a little boy. Another lead singer had already been chosen, however. It is likely that some participants receive more attention and recognition, and experience the mastering of new skills that may in turn strengthen their self-confidence and several aspects of their identity, while others feel somewhat left out. The project leaders try to solve this dilemma by emphasizing how all participants are equally important, whether they are singing along from the back of the stage or dancing brilliant solos.

Issues of ownership over the songs also came up, although not often. A girl, who had spent a lot of time with the participant group from her school rehearsing “their” song, mentioned to the researcher that she thought it strange that two professional singers were going to sing along with them during the performance. These professional singers had only rehearsed with the children during the final week before the opening performance. The girl told me, “They sing it wrong. They don’t know how to pronounce the words properly. My class, we’ve practiced this song for so long already, we know it well.” She and a friend had been the experts for this song, using their knowledge of the language and melody to teach their fellow pupils. Now the involvement of professionals, with the intention of enhancing the musical quality of the act, seemed to have estranged the participant somewhat from her own song. The leaders of Kaleidoscope generally argue that such adjustments are necessary in order to ensure uniformly high quality, which ultimately will benefit all the participants in allowing them to experience participation in an outstanding and spectacular event (Hamre et al., 2011).

Creativity

Kaleidoscope aspires explicitly to high-quality creativity. The projects are designed to be creative from the outset, leading to new and original performances. A key element of the creative process is the frame-shifting so typical of cross-cultural individuals, and here one might say that it also takes place at a group level. While assembling the musical material, the project leaders and participants move between different cultural traditions, scales and rhythms. These become creative expressions in that they are unique and new in the setting of a Norwegian stage, and new in the ways they are combined and rearranged.

The first few months of the project were focused around getting to know each other and building trust – commonly recognized as fertile soil for creativity – so that the children and young people would feel safe enough to share songs, games and dances with the leaders and the rest of the group. Simple, creative exercises in a circle (“say your name with a movement, and the rest of us will repeat it”) prepared the ground for more expressive sharing later on. The ‘Kaleidoscope rules’ (cf. Hamre et al., 2011, p. 59), which include respecting each other and being positive and focused during rehearsals, were established in the group early on. The leaders emphasized that “we listen quietly to each other” and never laugh at each other’s contributions. The leaders also frequently reminded the participants that “nothing is wrong here” and that all contributions were valuable.
With regard to the musical material for the performance, however, the project leaders mainly worked with traditional folk music and dances. During rehearsals, they might ask for “something your parents or grandparents would sing to you when you were little” or “how you would dance at a wedding in Afghanistan”. When participants shared songs by individual contemporary artists, these were also listened to but rarely considered ‘performance material’. Kaleidoscope’s initiators consider folk music to be a “defining element” of the project, arguing that these old songs have survived through the centuries because “they speak to us all. Some of them survive the test of time – it has to do with quality” (Hamre et al., 2011, p. 35). The researcher/observer also noted that the project leaders spoke enthusiastically about how well elements of folk music from different parts of the world can be combined. This is due to the fact that they share the same basic scales (most often a pentatonic scale).

Folk music and dances were also seen as closely linked to identity, perhaps in a more profound way than newer musical expressions. The project leaders commented on how beautiful it was to see the young participants express themselves with these songs, and leaders and participants alike seemed to share excitement about the diversity of distinctive musical and cultural traditions. While the children and young people also expressed pride in sharing their folk music at times, they appeared not to differentiate as much between traditional and contemporary music when it came to their involvement and identification. Songs they knew the words of and presented as “theirs” were just as often newer songs. Nonetheless, there were several episodes when participants told the project leaders how their parents or other older friends or relatives with the same ethnic origin had been very moved by hearing a traditional tune from home.

Some of the material was composed by the participants themselves, including a rap in Farsi, and a Sámi joik. The composers/performers expressed great satisfaction in expressing themselves in such a personal way.

Most of the acts included in the performances involved several songs and/or dance moves from different cultures: lullabies from Somalia, Uruguay, Norway, and Sweden; or songs about animals from Chile, Estonia and Norway. The 10th anniversary performance in Bergen ended with a Palestinian and an Israeli song combined. This mix of different cultural expressions is central to Kaleidoscope’s creative processes, yet can sometimes be challenging. During one rehearsal, a group of participants was asked to teach the others an Afghan dance they had demonstrated earlier. Meanwhile, the project leaders switched on music from the Middle East. After trying for a short while to fit familiar steps to new music, one of the dancers stopped and exclaimed: “I can’t do this! It just all becomes a ‘salad’!” One of the Kaleidoscope leaders was quick with a good-humored response: “Well, salad is healthy, right?” The participants smilingly continued trying to match their steps to the music.

Several months later, the same participant explained that the mix he had found confusing at first now made sense: “I thought it was impossible, but it turned out really cool”. This is an example of how the participants in Kaleidoscope grow accustomed to cultural complexity as the creative processes unfold. There were also examples of participants whose parents came from different countries sharing songs or dances from both of them; embodying their cross-cultural life stories through creative interaction.

While there is an emphasis on diversity and the creative combination of differences, through the Kaleidoscope process the participants also develop a distinctive sense of community, togetherness and equality. Everyone is allowed to contribute on an equal footing from the outset; friendships are formed; leaders and participants hug and laugh together; and by the time of the performances, the participants are telling each other “never quit Kaleidoscope”.

Hildegunn Schuff, Supporting Identity Development in Cross-Cultural Children and Young People
This reflects the claim made by the initiators of Kaleidoscope that “it’s the combination of sameness and difference that makes our Kaleidoscope encounters so rich.” (Hamre et al., 2011, p. 52). Both sameness and difference are embodied as all the participants sing and dance together, while the ways in which they move and sing express different physical ways of being in the world (cf. Bourdieu, 1986 on habitus including embodied cultural capital), shaped by distinctive traditions and experiences. Among these experiences, the ongoing Kaleidoscope experience might in itself influence their ways of being in the world in the present and future.

**Discussion: Setting the stage for identity development?**

Kaleidoscope is about identity – about expressing who we are. (…) In Kaleidoscope we see people who are just like you and me, in spite of differing colour, ethnicity, social class and life stories. We see this because the performers get the chance to show their humanity.

(Hamre et al., 2011, pp. 56-57)

This ‘Kaleidoscope philosophy’ emphasizes the participants’ common humanity, as well as more specific commonalities: their shared creative project towards a common goal; mutual respect; simply having fun together. From the perspective of social identity theory, this could be understood as forming a *common ingroup identity* (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2014) within Kaleidoscope. Recategorization from a set of different group identifications or ingroup/outgroups (“Norwegians”, “Afghans”, “Chileans”, etc.) to one larger, common ingroup (“Kaleidoscope participants”/“young creative people in Norway”) may reduce bias and promote group integration. This was observed in practice as the forming of friendships and group cohesion throughout the process.

At the same time, while the participants are “all the same”, differences are clearly acknowledged and valued, in line with optimal distinctiveness theory. Another analytical perspective on this dialectic is to apply both a descriptive and a dynamic concept of culture: culture as something the participants *have* (descriptive and referring to origin(s) and cultural differences), and culture as something they *do*, together, understood as a dynamic communicative process in flux (Dahl, 2013; Schuff, 2014) – of which Kaleidoscope may be an almost archetypal example. Even though the descriptive concept of culture has been subjected to particular criticism, e.g. for tending towards stereotyping, Dahl argues that we need both of these concepts of culture if we are to be optimally equipped for intercultural communication, and to grasp cultural differences, as well as cultural change and flexibility. I would also argue that it is useful to keep both concepts in mind in order to understand cultural identities as something simultaneously rooted and dynamic. This approach aligns well with the different complex cross-cultural identities outlined above, particularly hybrid, flexible and integrated intercultural identities.

In Kaleidoscope, these ‘rooted dynamics’ are expressed in practice when the participants sing their own songs, from their own or their parents’ cultures of origin, and also experience them being mixed with expressions from other cultures, combining with other elements into a new whole (and possibly, a hybrid identity): this is culture in the making. In Simon’s (2004) terms, the participants get to express multiple self-aspects in this context, linked to all of the cultural, social and individual dimensions that make up who they are. Many participants also seem to learn to enjoy the cross-cultural “salad”, an aesthetic of diversity, in a new way through personal experience.
I have previously argued, based on an earlier study of a multicultural gospel choir (Schuff, 2014), that the experience of cultural participation – that is, the opportunity to contribute and be acknowledged as a valuable participant in cultural interaction – may contribute to well-being and health. This current study appears to indicate that this type of participation may also be central to identity expression and the development of a positive, complex identity for cross-cultural children and young people.

Kaleidoscope is based on a participatory method which has much in common with empowerment perspectives. Such perspectives typically emphasize increased participation in the processes that influence one’s own situation and well-being, and moving from victimhood towards becoming a resource oneself (Nelson & Prilleltensky, 2010; Rolvsjord, 2004). This is also reflected in the Kaleidoscope leadership’s axiom: “If you are perceived as a resource, you become a resource.” (Hamre et al., 2011, p. 12) This statement, intentionally or not, mirrors the classic Thomas theorem of sociology; “If men define situations as real, they are real in their consequences” (Thomas & Thomas, 1928, p. 572).

Identity theories within social psychology also commonly emphasize the power of perceptions, expectations and interactions in shaping identity. Given other expectations and room for expressing other self-aspects, one’s identity can develop and grow in complexity (Simon, 2004).

In Kaleidoscope, this potential increased complexity can be analyzed as interactions between a series of apparent contradictions: resources/vulnerability; origin/contemporary community; traditions/new creative expressions and mixes; and, as already mentioned, sameness/difference. Contradictions that are otherwise often a challenge become a resource in this particular setting. Flexible and integrated intercultural identity strategies allow these apparent contradictions to exist in participants’ self-interpretations.

It seems that these dynamics of complexity may also provide fertile ground for creativity, i.e. the juxtaposition of vulnerability and resources, of old and new expressions. Logically speaking, if creativity has to do with the production of something new or original, expressions or content carried over from one culture to another will then often be new and original in that new context. Anheier and Isar argue that diasporas and other settings in which different cultures and people meet and “struggle for space and speak across cultural languages are some of the most creative sites in the contemporary world” (Anheier & Isar, 2010, p. xii). Thus, a cross-cultural arena such as Kaleidoscope may be a good place to look for creativity as both an artistic resource and a health resource.

Creativity has been considered a protective factor or process in resilience groups for refugee children (Waaktaar & Christie 2000), and has also been considered a health resource within salutogenic research and theory (Langeland, 2014), and in rehabilitation (Batt-Rawden & Tellnes, 2005). The experiences depicted in these studies are in some ways similar to what happens in Kaleidoscope, although Kaleidoscope may have a particularly explicit resource/quality focus, due to its position in cultural institutions that produce performances on a professional stage.

In Kaleidoscope, the content of the interaction is based on creative arts and multimodal expressions. Music, dance and other embodied modalities can be particularly meaningful when it comes to exploring and expressing cross-cultural experiences, which are often embodied, unconscious and may evade verbalization (Salole & Van der Weele, 2010). Experiences from art therapy with unaccompanied refugee minors have been similarly positive (Schriever, 2011).

One point to keep in mind is that the positive term creativity, if used uncritically, may disguise how “in cultural collision of this kind, questions of identity, recognition and power
are always ‘in play’." (Anheier & Isar, 2010, p. xii). Although the identity negotiations in Kaleidoscope take place in the friendliest of atmospheres, there is nonetheless a context of power differences that requires the project leaders to exercise responsibility and empathy. Thus it has been reassuring to see that the leaders are often understanding of the participants’ reactions and sensitivities, e.g. to stereotyping, and adjust their categorizations of the participants accordingly.

Concluding reflections

Kaleidoscope is a colorful celebration of diversity that has generated considerable excitement. It celebrates the cultural identities and backgrounds of its participants, who have an opportunity to express aspects of themselves for which they rarely find appreciation in Norwegian mainstream society. It may seem safe to conclude that participation in Kaleidoscope strengthens the participants’ identity development.

Even so, this is not the full story. Emphasizing one self-aspect, i.e. that relating to the participants’ minority backgrounds, may actually limit identity development in the sense that it ties people to that one self-aspect, and pushes their individual complexity – their full range of self-aspects – into the background. This touches upon issues of stereotyping and power differences, with regard to definitions, control and ownership, throughout the process. This implies that a great deal of responsibility rests on the professionals and other adults involved. Cultural and interpersonal sensitivity, as well as openness to complexity, will be key factors for successfully handling these relational and identity processes in a fruitful and ethically sound manner.

In this case study, the interactions between the project leaders and participants included many examples of mutual sensitivity and openness. As the project developed, the danger of stereotyping was partially erased by an opposite dynamic: the participants showed each other more self-aspects as they got to know each other, sang each other’s songs, took part in what became new musical/dance expressions, and formed friendships in a creative community that also allowed them to bring something new to the table – under careful professional guidance. This allowed space for identity complexity to play out, both in relation to the participants’ origins and their current participation in culture in construction here in Norwegian society.

Accordingly, Kaleidoscope at its best sets the stage for a flexible and playful performance of identity, and this may be one path towards appreciated and integrated intercultural identities.
References


Barac, R., & Bialystok, E. (2012). Bilingual effects on cognitive and linguistic development: Role of language, cultural background, and education. *Child Development*, 83(2), 413-422. http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2011.01707.x


Hildegunn Schuff, Supporting Identity Development in Cross-Cultural Children and Young People


http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/97804707773437


I wish to thank Lill Salole at Krysskultur for her valuable comments and input to this manuscript.

I prefer “cross-cultural” to “multicultural” in this case, since one could argue that the former term highlights the often criss-crossing and flexible trajectories of lives among cultures, while the latter could be understood as if a person’s cultures were clearly distinguishable and quantifiable. Cf. also Salole (2013) for a similar argument.

Øia (2007:124) states that first-generation immigrants and those from mixed backgrounds (one Norwegian parent and one foreign-born parent) seem to experience more mental distress. No significant differences were found between Norwegian young people and Norwegian-born young people with immigrant parents.

In addition to the Kaleidoscope/Fargespill concept and trademark, a smaller-scale version known as Flere farger (More colours) has been developed, suitable for smaller communities/locations with fewer resources.
ARENA OF MOVEMENT

Navigating Cultures: Narratives of Becoming Among Young Refugees in Norway

Hildegunn Marie Tønnessen Schuff1,2,3

Received: 30 October 2018 / Revised: 5 December 2018 / Accepted: 7 December 2018
© Springer Nature Switzerland AG 2018

Abstract
Young migrants face specific developmental challenges and multiple cultural expectations. This study aims at providing insight to such challenges and strategies to navigate them. The article presents a narrative analysis of a young refugee’s story about entering Norwegian society, based on interviews with three girls, whose stories were merged into one in dialogue with the participants themselves. Nadia’s story describes her demanding outsider position after migration and the growing conflict between her mother’s and majority society’s expectations to a girl from her origin. After some time in a supportive creative arena, Nadia found ways to negotiate diverging voices and categories and balance her cultures strategically and confidently. Challenges and opportunities experienced by young refugees stem from both minority and majority voices. Society can facilitate constructive cultural navigation by providing safe and supportive arenas, listening, and allowing young refugees to be the subject of their own story.

Keywords Narrative · Becoming · Young refugees · Creative arenas · Negotiations

Youth is a time for becoming. As our bodies grow and change, we listen and learn, imitate and resist, and interact and negotiate our way towards adulthood, becoming “ourselves” in our specific lifeworlds. This becoming of the young is always a cultural process (Erikson 1968; Valsiner 2000; Rogoff 2003), interwoven with the psychosocial contexts in which we live.

With increasing numbers of refugees in the world today, many young people find themselves crossing borders while growing up. Norway is currently a country with net immigration (StatisticsNorway 2018). In addition to South-North and East-West migration within Europe, recent years have seen a relatively high influx of asylum seekers from war-torn countries, with a peak in 2015 (Bygnes and Erdal 2017; Brekke and Staver 2018). The 2015 “crisis” was followed by stricter immigration policies and a more polarized public debate about immigrants, in Norway as in other European countries.

Young migrants pursue their developmental projects in the context of these transnational fluctuations, often facing skepticism and potential marginalization, while dealing with multiple cultural norms and expectations (Salole 2018; Fangen et al. 2011). These challenges, and strategies to handle them, are important to understand for all who meet
young people with refugee experiences. In this article, I tell a young refugee’s story, tracing her subjectivation and analyzing how she navigates in a cross-cultural landscape. By navigation, I refer to how a person negotiates with and adapts to the opportunities and demands of their changing surroundings.

To explore this cultural navigation, I present a close reading of interview narratives from three young girls who came to Norway as refugees. In dialogue with the interviewees, I merged the three stories into one. So here, I tell Nadia’s story—about how she actively navigates and becomes “herself” in varying arenas, how a specific creative arena provided latitude for this navigation, and how she moved from being torn between conflicting expectations to standing firm in who she wants to be.

After migration, refugees must reestablish a sense of meaning and recreate a coherent narrative of their lives (Sveaass 2000). Negotiating experiences of continuity and change is a key task of any migrant, as they engage in biographical agency (Selimos 2018)—narrative decision-making when facing transitions, to make sense of who they are in the world. The narratives of young migrants shed light on how they cross not only geographical and political, but also biographical and relational boundaries, entering new societies as well as adulthood (Fangen et al. 2011).

First, I present some approaches from cultural and narrative psychology that will serve as analytical tools. After describing the methods by which this narrative and analysis came about, I present the story as a whole, considering it a tool for understanding in itself. I then return to apply the analytical concepts and discuss what we can learn from Nadia’s story.

**Background**

While migration affects an increasing number of young people, the experiences and agency of young migrants have been fairly invisible in migration studies as well as in studies of childhood and youth (Omland and Andenas 2017; Selimos 2018). A contextually informed developmental psychology can contribute to understanding transitions in both youth and migration.

**Development: Participating and Becoming**

A developmental approach investigates the emergence of novelty (Valsiner 2000). While developmental psychology in its conventional forms has been criticized for producing normative and universalizing discourses of development, a strength of the discipline is its emphasis on the temporal dimension, change, and transformation (Hauge 2009).

Within a cultural psychological approach, development is not just something that happens to a person, e.g., stages by age. While we must relate to our changing biology as well as shifting contexts, we also actively participate in our own development, finding meaningful ways to constitute ourselves as the person we are and want to become. This participation can be explained as forming and pursuing developmental projects (Omland and Andenas 2017), as young people negotiate what growing up means for them, drawing on meaning systems and practices available in their communities. In poststructural terms, this can be referred to as subjectivation, processes through which subjects, always embedded in discourses, position themselves and acquire a sense of self (Hauge 2009).
Meaning and Narratives

Meaning, in the sense of relating to something beyond ourselves, can be considered a fundamental aspect of human existence (Frankl 2014 [1969]). Meaning-making is central as young people set directions for their lives, learning from and protesting against more experienced participants in their cultural communities, like parents or teachers (Rogoff 2003). Immigration can affect processes of meaning-making and value transmission, often increasing the distance between adolescents and their parents (Chryssochoou 2004).

A central way of constructing meaning is through the creation and exchange of narratives. Narratives are organized interpretations of a sequence of actions (Murray 2008) that show how we position ourselves in relation to our experiences. Narration can be considered a way to handle and make sense of otherwise chaotic and ambiguous events of which life consists (Murray 2008; Jansen 2013). Since fleeing one’s home and country is usually a poignant example of the uncertainty and chaos of much human experience, this need for reestablishing some meaning and order out of chaos is central in some interventions for refugees (Eisenbruch et al. 2004).

Narratives are also central to development, as they offer resources for making sense of growing up or growing older, and the construction of personal narratives provides meaningful integration across the life course (Hammack 2008).

A central component of narratives is agency, that is, a person’s ability and opportunity to act. Jansen and Haavind (2011) showed in a study of young people in residential care how narrative configurations provide different subject positions, with a stronger or weaker sense of agency. At the same time, narratives contextualize the individual, as personal narratives tend to draw on master narratives for their ideological content. In this way, narratives can bridge individual and cultural levels of analysis (Hammack 2008).

Culture, Boundaries, and Navigation

The concept of “culture” cannot be reduced to country of origin. Rather, culture is here understood as ways of relating to the world and others, according to certain internalized repertoires, based on our experiences from social environments through the life course. These ways of relating that I call culture include both meaning-making (Bruner 2009), what makes sense to us and seems right for different people and situations, and how these meanings are semiotically mediated (Valsiner 2014) and materialize, e.g., in how we dress, move, touch, and greet, or when young people move out from their parents’ house. Culture is thus not a given entity or variable, but rather practices that may feel part of us, at the same time as they make us who we are. This approach emphasizes “doing culture,” in a similar way to what gender scholars refer to as “doing gender,” to achieve a dynamic, non-categorical understanding (Hauge 2009).

There are, however, socially recognized cultural categories—often linked to countries, but also wider (“African,” “Western”) or more local categories (“Northerners”), or subcultures independent of geography (“hipsters”). Labeling cultures can be considered boundary work. Anthropologist Fredrik Barth explains ethnicity as the social organization of cultural difference. Thus, the critical point of investigation “becomes the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses” (Barth 1998 [1969], p. 15). In this boundary maintenance, people are identified either as belonging to the same group and “playing the same game”—or as ethnically “other,” highlighting assumed limitations of shared understandings that often restrict interaction.
So even if ethnicities are but imagined communities (Anderson 2006) and their boundaries are negotiable, cultural differences can be experienced as socially relevant and quite real. Young migrants often find themselves categorized as cultural “others” or multicultural. They may also internalize these boundaries, forming cross-cultural identities. Development in a cross-cultural lifeworld brings challenges and competencies of its own, for those who grow up navigating different norms and shifting insider/outsider positions (Salole 2018)—which makes for a lot of boundary work.

Some scholars suggest that navigation into adulthood in an increasingly complex and fluid world is a developmental challenge for all youth in contemporary pluralist societies, not only for those in minority positions: They all need to learn to relate to people with other backgrounds, understand different codes, and relate to different worldviews (Larson et al. 2011). Still, young migrants and other potentially marginalized groups can experience cross-pressures as particularly difficult. Well-run youth programs can create safe spaces where young people can address these challenges. Larson et al. (2011) encourage listening to the youth’s experiences of these programs, to understand their complex worlds and support their developmental projects.

Contextualizing the Study

The experiences and aspirations of young migrants in Scandinavia have been explored in some qualitative studies. A large-scale European study of young migrants (Fangen et al. 2011), innovative in its combination of qualitative interview data and comparisons between societies, shed light on the many facets of exclusion and belonging that these young people grapple with. One of the study’s concluding recommendations is to honor these young migrants’ wishes to contribute. In an interview study in Norway some years prior, Prieur (2004) found young people with immigrant backgrounds striving to balance different demands. Gender, bodily conduct, and family are areas in which expectations from majority society often differ the most from their cultures of origin. Immigrant status does not lead to any given trajectory in itself, but the young people actively negotiate their own contextually meaningful ways forward.

More recently, Shapiro (2017) described how Syrian refugee families in Denmark recreate everyday life in exile, emphasizing how young people’s agency is interwoven with their families’ collective agency. Omland and Andenas (2017) show how the developmental projects of young Afghan boys in Norway are often directed at both countries, to help their families back home—and make a livable life in their new society.

In a theoretically related study from Canada, Selimos (2018) analyzes how refugee youth engage in biographical agency to transform their migration experiences into meaning and aspirations. The main narrative pattern is a movement from precariousness and feeling stuck in their countries of origin, to hope and opportunity in Canada (Selimos 2018). Education is considered a key to opportunities, in Canadian and Scandinavian contexts alike.

The three interviewees in the current study came to Norway as refugees with their families from neighboring African countries. I met them as participants in the multicultural music project Kaleidoscope (“Fargespill” in Norwegian). In Kaleidoscope, professional musicians and choreographers work with children and young people with different cultural backgrounds, many of them recently arrived in Norway. Together, they create a performance based on songs and dances that the children know, combined to a world-music-style celebration of diversity. According to the project philosophy, “everyone is a resource” (Hamre et al. 2011). The concept was developed in Bergen in 2004 and has since spread to several towns across Norway and Sweden.
Methods and Material

The material for this narrative analysis forms part of a mixed-method PhD study that follows young Kaleidoscope participants over time, through fieldwork, interviews, and a survey. The overarching aim is to explore what participating in this creative community means for the youth. Here, I explore this through a narrative reading of three interviews, presenting stories that contextualize Kaleidoscope participation in the life of young refugees.

Participants, Data Collection, and Selection

I asked three experienced participants to tell me about themselves and their Kaleidoscope experiences in an open interview. At the time, they had been in the project for 8–10 years.

The three know each other and have overlapping experiences: being girls, having migrated from the same part of Africa, and negotiating expectations from minority and majority environments in Norway. While each of their life stories is clearly unique, there are similarities in the core plot. When I have talked to them together, they often nod and confirm each other’s experiences.

I found the material from these three interviewees to be rich and helpful for exploring long-term processes and reflections. Their strategies seemed worth investigating to understand cross-cultural development and the everyday navigation of young refugees. My appraisal of these stories as relevant was based on *phronesis*, practical wisdom gained through experience (Frank 2012). Listening to these young refugees during the interviews, my experience was that “the stories chose me,” as Frank (2012) describes in his presentation of dialogical narrative analysis. This phronesis is not just a hunch out of the blue; however; it is based on what has been learned during fieldwork, on an understanding of the context, and what stories may be needed in the wider culture. In Frank’s words, it is “a cultivated capacity to hear, from the total collection of stories, those that call out as needing to be written about” (Frank 2012, p. 43). This craft builds on listening experience and specific value commitments. I started out committed to an inclusive society, developmental opportunities for all, and respect for the complexity of lived experience. From these values, I chose to voice challenges and strategies of young refugees in Norway, a society with such a strong ideology of equality that actual differences in privilege and opportunity are not always recognized.

Narratives are of great epistemological utility in cultural psychology, since they let us “view person and culture as coconstitutive” (Hammack 2008, p. 238)—linking agency and context in human development. But can a merged narrative from three different lives stay true to the individual stories? Let me clarify that narratives are not a tool for gaining access to the “one true account” of events, but allow a researcher to participate constructively in the intertextual dialogue about the meaning of these events (Clandinin 2006). The merged narrative here can be understood in light of this, as a co-created version of someone’s story, that I have written in dialogue with the participants themselves. All the events and experiences described in the narrative are true to what the interviewees have told me and were compatible enough to combine since the core plot is similar. Also, and importantly, we decided together to present the story in this way.

Dialogue and Ethical Considerations

The participants signed an informed agreement as approved by the Privacy Ombudsman for Research at Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). The project follows the NSD’s
recommendations for informed consent, confidentiality, and design. Beyond that, the ethical baseline of the project is respect and care for the young participants, with the explicit intention that their voices be heard (cf. Nelson and Prilleltensky 2010). All quotes follow the original interview transcripts, which I translated from Norwegian to English.

Based on a participatory approach, seeking to involve participants as substantially as possible in the research process (Kidd and Kral 2005), I had an ongoing dialogue with the interviewees. While the life story interviews were conducted in one afternoon each, I communicated with them several times over the course of 2 years. We discussed my idea of sharing their narratives, either separately or joining them to one. We agreed that I would present it as one story for several reasons: for didactic purposes, seeing that narratives also have a rhetorical value (Clandinin 2006), and we considered the presentation of one single story as helpful for readers and listeners to follow and remember. A second factor is that merging the stories strengthens anonymity, since personal episodes can be presented authentically, without allowing direct identification. The interviewees have been publically visible for so long in a well-known art project that most other anonymization strategies might have been easy to decipher for the local audience.

Another reason is that the stories are related—not assuming that girls from neighboring African countries share “the same story,” but individual narratives do to some extent reflect their context in terms of cultural references and collective narratives (Jansen 2013). I met these three young persons in the same environment, in the same Norwegian town, and they clearly have some related experiences and talk about “girls like us.” While the merging of stories introduces a risk of undermining the uniqueness and complexity of each story, I have sought to keep all the unique elements and combine them around a shared core that all three of them can identify with—where they nod in recognition, so to speak. Importantly, I would not have presented it in this way if they had not wanted it themselves. Collaborative approaches to research can lead to different and unfamiliar modes of knowledge production that are valuable precisely because of that “otherness” (Eriksson 2018).

**Merging the Narratives: Practical Steps**

After transcribing the three interviews, I organized the text into a narrative for each participant by arranging extensive quotes more chronologically or thematically. This part of the process had a wide scope, as I attempted to include everything the participants emphasized as important to them and for who they had become. I added short summarizing statements in between the quotes, to link them into a story. The participants each read their own story and gave feedback. They generally recognized and approved of this written version of their story. They merely commented on details, a formulation here, and something that had changed in their lives since we talked. I did not change any of the original quotes due to this, since they methodologically speaking were snapshots of how they expressed themselves at the time, but rather left out a few sentences they were not comfortable with.

When the participants gave me a green light to merge the narratives, I joined the three into one common story. It started as a cut-and-paste process where I gathered the related parts of their stories (coming to Norway, school experiences, joining Kaleidoscope, tensions at home). In the process, I had to make some choices where their stories diverged, choosing one family constellation, religious affiliation, etc. and leaving out those aspects from the other stories that
would not add up. After this editing process, the participants then read through and approved of the synthesized narrative.

Finally, I abbreviated the story for this article, selecting quotes for their relevance to the research question concerning navigation. I considered the central points of tension in the narrative and how that tension was resolved. What caught my attention the most was how the protagonist moved from being confused and conflicted to confidence. From there, I developed the analytical themes in the discussion. The participants have also had access to the final version of the story included in this article.

We named our protagonist Nadia. I will now recount her story, largely in her own words (indented). The presentation is intentionally polyphonic (cf. Tateo and Marsico 2018; Bakhtin 1981), by which I mean that we co-created the story on purpose, as I chose to include the three participants’ voices through extensive quotes as well as my own narration in the short subtitles and descriptive interludes connecting the quotes (somewhat like a voiceover or off-camera commentary in a documentary). This is how I orchestrated our voices, to borrow from Bakhtin’s (1981) vocabulary about polyphonic novels. Also inspired by Gergen’s (2009) layered writing, I join my own words with those spoken by my interviewees to create a “chorus” of a text. Gergen’s perspective on relational being is also a theoretical inspiration to understand stories as not exclusively “yours” or “mine,” but as relational: We make sense of “what happened” in social negotiation. Our experiences and memories are not prior to relational life, but are “born within relationships” (Gergen 2009, p. 95), like when my questions invited these versions of the interviewees’ stories. The co-created narrative is still recognizable to the participants, as validated through dialogue with them. This is an attempt at a polyphonic, “syncretic” methodology, functionally equivalent with the world it aims to understand (Tateo and Marsico 2018).

Presenting Nadia’s story as an organized whole might also be an unusual methodological choice. I base that choice on how narratives provide insight to a person’s development (Hammack 2008) and on the didactic considerations above. The intention is also to convey the outcome of the merging process described above more transparently to the reader, since the polyphonic narrative is presented in its entirety, before my more explicit analysis follows. Now, let me tell you Nadia’s story.

Nadia’s Story

Not Welcome

As a young teenager, Nadia fled a war-torn African country with her family. Coming to Norway was a shock. When she saw people sitting quietly by themselves on a bus, she wondered if the king had died:

I didn’t know what Norway was. When I first came, I seriously thought the whole country was in national mourning. It was very confusing, nobody said hello to me, and I come from a country where everyone greets everyone. So I felt really, like, not welcome.

School was also challenging after migration:

In my country, I was one of the best in my class. You get used to a lot of praise... And then I came here – it was a big transition. I felt it, knew that now I was the most stupid in
my class. That process of learning everything over again, like in kindergarten – it was exhausting. We knew nothing in Norway. I knew several languages but couldn’t use any of them here. It was very difficult. I didn’t make a lot of friends.

**Invited in**

A few months after arriving in Norway, she joined Kaleidoscope through her introductory school.

I went to a performance there, and I heard a song from my home country, a song I knew when I was a child. It was very touching, and I definitely wanted to find out what this project was. I went straight to the leader afterwards, and told her “I have to join!”

The leaders appreciated and encouraged her contributions right away.

Kaleidoscope was fun, and it was not like at school. There, I was not the most stupid one. *(laughs)* In the other classes, everything was about what you don’t know, right? I had to learn Norwegian, the Constitution Day… well, let us teach you. But in Kaleidoscope, it was like, can you teach us? Then I could be a resource, instead of being, like, someone with problems, you see?

While she did not always feel welcome elsewhere, Kaleidoscope was different.

People talked to me, saw me, and like, were interested in me, in a very different way. Because on the outside I felt, almost – I wondered if they were all police or something. Because everyone would always ask, oh, what’s your name, where are you from, are you going back some day… Like, after a while I knew which questions were coming. But in Kaleidoscope, it wasn’t the same questions… but a different kind of questions, that were about you as a person.

The opportunity to participate fully from the start was important.

I felt that I didn’t need to have perfect Norwegian skills to join the rehearsal. I didn’t have to be, like, entirely Norwegian either. I could just be myself, and have fun with others that also didn’t know Norwegian, right? So I didn’t spend that much energy explaining myself.

**Emerging Conflict**

After coming to Norway, tensions arose between Nadia and her mother.

For the first few years, I wore a hijab. It’s not like I used a hijab in my home country. But when I got here, [my mother] brought a hijab to the airport, because I came without one. That’s when I started wearing it. I wasn’t forced or anything, but I had to, like, because my whole family wears a hijab. I am the first who doesn’t wear a hijab, and the first who is into music and dance.

She finds her mother’s demands unreasonable but tries to understand her reactions.

I think it was difficult for her. She didn’t think about how Kaleidoscope makes me happy. She thought “now that she has come to Norway, she thinks she can do
whatever…” That’s the conflict that started every time I came home, from school or rehearsals, as soon as I get in the door.

Nadia eventually decided to take the hijab off, against her mother’s will.

I felt it was unfair to go on stage with a hijab and sing… It’s like, they say – you can do what you want, but you must follow your parents’ rules and stuff. And when I turned 18, I felt – OK, I decide, and so I took it off. And she thought it’s because of Kaleidoscope… Because they say you can do what you want. But it wasn’t because of Kaleidoscope, it was because of me.

Nadia is Muslim herself, but in a different way than her mother:

I believe I have a good relationship between me and God, so… I just understand it differently. I know what the Quran says, too. It says that when you are 15, you can decide for yourself.

Other issues that her mother considered haram (forbidden in Islam) were dancing, singing, and spending time with boys. She was less strict with Nadia’s brother and became stricter after migrating.

In our culture, we have singing and dances everywhere, for weddings, birthdays, everyday work, like, everything. She used to sing those songs… but when she got here, it was like: “Well, singing is haram.” …We argue about things like having boys as friends. And my aunts and uncles always say that all her friends used to be boys.

Nadia’s mother has never seen her perform in Kaleidoscope.

I try all the time to give her a ticket, but she says “why should I see my girl dance on stage?”… When we are on the bus, if she sees someone she knows, she would actually leave her seat, right – and pretend she doesn’t know me. I am not her daughter. That really impacted me.

When she was seen on the streets with Kaleidoscope friends, including boys, there could be trouble.

My culture of origin is really tight-knit, people tell each other things, right? So someone had gone to my mother and told them that it wasn’t good for a girl, right, to be doing that… And then my mother said I had to quit Kaleidoscope. And the Kaleidoscope people said, “you have to come to practice tomorrow! It’s hard for us if you don’t, then we can’t use your song…” Then I find myself at a crossroads, right? It was really frustrating.

She recounts an episode where her mother saw her outside the performance venue and told her to come home right away, while the leader told her to come back inside and continue rehearsing.

Then I was angry with both my mother and the leader, you know? (laughs) That was my most negative experience in Kaleidoscope. I just stood there, like – no, I can’t quit, but I want to quit, but… It was exhausting.

**Struggling**

The difficulties at home affected Nadia in high school.
My teachers saw a change. I used to be, like, good, my grades were good. [One teacher]
asked “what is it, do you have problems, I can help” and stuff. I told him, and then I
went to see one of those school psychologists, for a year and a half.

Her mother thought her study program was too hard for a non-Norwegian and made her
switch.

They said I had to. So I dropped out of school, started the other program the year after,
and I hated it… I hated it so much that I dropped out that year, too. It wasn’t what I
wanted. I didn’t go to school, I didn’t take tests, I didn’t like to be there.

Kaleidoscope gave relief when other areas in life were challenging.

There was a lot of fighting at home, misunderstandings. It was simply not nice to be at
home. But then I came to rehearsals. And for those two hours I could forget all my
problems, right? And have fun and just talk and laugh. Time passed really quickly. And I
could be really, really happy when I was at Kaleidoscope. And the next rehearsal is
something to look forward to… Something good, like, to unwind. Two hours where you
are not ‘un-Norwegian’.

In this period in her life, Nadia suffered from depression.

With this big conflict with my mother… I am at home, depressed, on my bed. I have
dropped out of school. The only thing I couldn’t do, was to quit Kaleidoscope. Because
when I come here, I am myself. Like, I am the happy girl that I am, who likes to dance
and sing and does everything to make her own everyday life better. But when I am at
home, I am another girl, who is depressed, who doesn’t know what to do in life.

She refers to those years as the worst in her life.

I have tried so much. And I couldn’t see, like, what is the point of living? Really? Why
am I here? Why am I alive? So I even tried to take my own life… I was so depressed, I
just had to stop, like, I couldn’t take it anymore... But what I say now, is thank goodness
I didn’t end my life at that time. I’m grateful that I am not dead.

Her Happy Place

Nadia talks about teachers and Kaleidoscope leaders as important support through her
difficulties. The therapy she received at school was okay, but had limited effect:

Well, it helped a bit, like – let’s say from eight to four. Then I get home at four o’clock,
and it starts over. So it was, like, going over and over and they said things… It helped a
little, but the problem is what happens at home. I take all that with me everywhere. It was
hard to carry it around. Like, I don’t sleep at night, and in the morning, I can’t wake up.

Nadia kept coming to rehearsals, even when she dropped out of school:

I show up twice a week and sing and dance. I haven’t missed anything of Kaleidoscope.
Because even if… I just felt that Kaleidoscope was my happy place. And home, school
and all that is not.

The effort it took to go to rehearsals was worth it:
The hardest part was getting up out of bed, really. But when you get here, they don’t let you be sad or anything. They do everything they can to make you happy again. And the leaders, I have told them, they know my story. The hugs they give me, saying, it’s going to be OK – that was huge for me at the time. It kept me going and helped me see that there was light on the other side.

Sharing

She was very nervous before her first Kaleidoscope performance.

It’s very scary. I was backstage, and they came over and told me “you can do it!” So I went up, and when I sang the first word, it all went away. It was just me and the music. It felt great!

These experiences of mastery have proven helpful in school as well.

Kaleidoscope is important because – first of all, you present yourself, like, who you are. And secondly, it actually helps you get the contact you want with people. Like on stage, you look straight up, at people in the audience. And that has helped me at school, with presentations and stuff. Since I got used to that many people, I’m not afraid of the ten students there.

Nadia enjoyed sharing songs and dances from home. She also shared one from a neighboring country, historically the “enemy,” and the group who killed her father. Despite her doubts about singing “their” song, it turned out to be a highlight and moved her to tears. Once, returning home after recording a music video for one of “her” songs, she found herself locked out of her house by her mother.

We got so much support and everything – I think that sitting there until three in the morning that night, it was worth it for that video.

Sharing cultural expressions in Kaleidoscope means a lot.

That’s the most important thing when you’re not where you used to live. It’s important not to forget your culture, and teach it to others, not just for your own people, but for everyone. Culture is, like, a big deal. So it was great to be in Kaleidoscope, because you teach those cultures... we teach each other. It’s, like, the culture we have that keeps us close, connects us. We are different countries, different cultures, but have dancing and music in common. We become one big family.

Questioning Categories

Nadia has gotten used to being categorized.

When you come here, I tell you: Forget those conflicts, like Tutsi and Hutu and Kurdish… Here, you are just an immigrant. That’s all people see. When I got here, the first identity I got, I suddenly became an African. And I’m obviously African, but that is not how I would introduce myself. (laughs) Not even as my nationality. Of course, that’s a bit closer. But there are also different ethnicities. If someone had asked me when we got here, “who are you”, I would state my father’s tribe and my mother’s
tribe. But nobody asks about that. It’s like, you’re African… but that is so wide! It’s not me. It’s not close. When you make me an African, it feels distant.

She has noted that her identification changes with shifting contexts.

After living here for a decade, I notice that when I am with Norwegians, I’m an immigrant. And with people from my home country, I am very Norwegian… And I can choose, really. I can choose some Norwegian norms and traditions that I appreciate, and some from my country, the best of the best! The problem is, will I be accepted? Will that identity be accepted by the others?

**Balancing Cultures**

In the creative arena of Kaleidoscope, Nadia has learned new ways of relating to people.

When you are from my country and you are with a grownup, you do not look them in the eye. It’s disrespectful. So when I first sang, I was, like, down here… and [the Kaleidoscope leader] was like, “look at me, up here!” She made me look up.

She explains how she navigates by considering what both her cultures offer:

Balancing both cultures – the way I do, like, one foot in and one foot out… For instance, from my home country, if we’re sitting here and a grownup enters, I have to get up and give them my seat. Because that is respect. I have that with me. In my home country, you can’t say what you think. But in Norway, you can say it. And I have that with me, too. Like – I have my culture, and I have Norwegian culture, too. So I have like a balance between the two. All cultures are imperfect. So you can take what you think is wrong, but what you think is right, too. That’s what I do with both cultures. So it’s really not that difficult for me.

By referring to selected aspects of each of her cultures, Nadia can navigate strategically:

For instance smoking, drinking, things like that – everybody does it. When you’re young, you want to try, and see how it is and all… I don’t want to do that. So even if all my friends drink and smoke and go party, even if you may, like, feel like doing that, but you say no, no, this isn’t for me. I just take that away. And I have the culture of my home country where drinking is so wrong.

Participating in Kaleidoscope has strengthened her confidence.

I feel that Kaleidoscope challenges me to be myself. Because you don’t have to feel it’s a shame or stupid to be different, in a way. That gives self-confidence. If Kaleidoscope hadn’t encouraged that it’s good to be who you are, I may never have dared to sing in front of people. Because I know, especially since studying, how people from Africa are seen. (sighs) Often it’s, like, uncivilized and barbaric and all, right? But when Kaleidoscope says it is OK… Most of the songs are straight from my dear Grandfather, so I have happy memories and they mean a lot to me. So I have no problem singing them to myself, but sharing them all over Norway, that’s different.

She is now more relaxed about who she is.
Before I joined Kaleidoscope, I was very, very confused. About my identity, where am I from, how can I take care of my culture… I grew up in a family where culture is really important to us, right? But I was very confused when I got to Norway. Then I thought, like, when you come here, you have to become entirely Norwegian. You must forget about your language, everything you have learned, right? But then I joined Kaleidoscope, and then I could be both. I stressed less after a while.

**Together**

Her Kaleidoscope peers became important, especially those who were also new in Norway. Over time, participants with different backgrounds learned to handle differences better.

When I first started, there were lots of clashes between cultures and people who didn’t understand each other. We have, like, a bit of character, that I see among many African girls in Kaleidoscope. A lot of energy, right, that makes the Norwegians a bit afraid, so they back out, you know?

She goes on to say that the Latin-Americans in the group are “more African” than Europeans and the Norwegian leaders are “as African as us,” referring to loudness or liveliness. Despite the differences, their common creative project brings them together.

Now, there are rarely conflicts. Like, people who didn’t want to be together because they had ethnic conflicts in their countries… But we really depend on being together to achieve something. And on stage, it’s fine. Then we are like this (joins hands), with the music and dancing.

She gives the leaders credit for conflict management and understanding. One leader has been particularly supportive, far beyond the project itself:

“How are you, is your mother still strict with you…” She knows each participant individually. I never say no when she asks me to show up. Not many do. “We need you” – that’s the attitude you are met with in Kaleidoscope.

Together with peers and leaders, she believes in herself.

I was shy, and hated my voice. Then the leaders said: “You have a nice voice”. When you get that kind of support from everyone in here – eventually, you learn to believe them. Then you believe in you, too. So it helped my self-confidence. Not just singing, but standing up for myself as well.

**Standing Up for Herself**

Over time, she found ways to navigate conflicting expectations.

If I had not wanted to sing and dance, and the Kaleidoscope leaders made me do it, and my mother said don’t, then it would have been difficult. But since I want to be part of this, it isn’t. Kaleidoscope is a part of me. Music and dancing are a part of me. If I quit, it would be just like I had lost a part of myself, so I can’t do that.
She had others (family and leaders) talk to her mother, hoping that might help, but to no avail. Nadia felt more confident to speak up after turning 18 and with Kaleidoscope and others supporting her.

The solution was just that I had to confront my mother, in a way. And say that I have to be part of Kaleidoscope. I’d die without Kaleidoscope. (laughs)

Finally, Nadia chose a third study program in school.

Since I got to Norway, Kaleidoscope and this study program are the only choices that I have made, and that I have really liked a lot.

Her mother did not agree with her new choice of study program, but Nadia is much happier with it.

I am doing much better now! My mother is the same as before, but I am in a different place. Now I think more about taking care of myself, because there is no one else that can take care of me more than me. I just want to finish school and go out and work and, like, get my own life. And I have started saying what I think and standing up for myself.

**Opportunities Ahead**

Nadia thinks her participation here will be useful for the future.

When you are in Kaleidoscope, it can help you get a job, too. You can put it on your CV, and almost everyone in this city knows about it. Then they will see that you are, like, more active and involved, and it can increase your work opportunities.

She wants to show society positive sides of immigration.

When you read about immigrants in the media, there is so much negative stuff. So, I think it is great that Kaleidoscope contributes to showing the positive way of immigration, that they are not only problems, they also do good things… I like when people see the other side.

She gives an example from a performance in a home for the elderly:

It’s one of those priceless things. When you stand in front of the elderly, and you can tell that they have been bored for a while, and then you sing an old Norwegian tune, and they lift their gaze towards you… that’s a really lovely feeling. This last time, one of them told us: “Do you know what, it doesn’t matter that you are a foreigner, you’re so good at this!” (laughs loudly)

**Moving on**

Nadia says she learned to keep moving and “laugh every day” in Kaleidoscope.

We all carry different stories, experiences and trauma with us. But there’s something about being at Kaleidoscope – beyond the singing and music and stuff – something
about being close to other people, right? Like, now we’re just going to laugh and smile together. That’s what we do.

Nadia thinks “most people” would benefit from joining a project like this, especially when struggling:

It has helped me. It gives you hope – like when you are depressed: You will not always stay in that place. Life goes on, and eventually, you will manage, too.

Discussion

I now return to discussing what I understand as navigation in this narrative.

Welcome Here: a Point of Departure

Nadia describes her arrival in Norway as difficult: It was hard to understand people’s manners; her knowledge was not applicable here; she felt stupid and different. She went from a competent insider to an unknown. This outsider experience is described as exhausting, underlining the hard work it entails to enter a new and strange space. She felt stuck and confused in this in-between position, where she did not know how to fulfill expectations from neither culture.

As a contrast, she felt welcomed into a friendly space in Kaleidoscope, where she heard familiar music and could participate fully from the start. In this creative arena, there was room for her. They listened to her in ways that helped her like her own voice, and it grew stronger. Through the musical and embodied dialogue, she entered into creative attunement with others (Vass 2018), less dependent on verbal language fluency than in many other arenas. Within this safe space, she could start negotiating new, possible subject positions.

Her new practices here are reflected in how she now speaks of herself: As a resource, not a burden, someone who shares, learns, knows who she is—and can juggle different categories with a smile. Movement towards another, better place might be central to the often-remarked resilience among newcomer immigrant and refugee youth (Selimos 2018). Nadia occupies her place with increasing confidence and rejects rejection by claiming belonging in Kaleidoscope, a “big part of her.”

Navigating Diverging Voices

In the creative arena that welcomed her, Nadia describes an increasing freedom of movement: She looks up, lifts her voice, makes choices, and stands up for herself—all while “balancing cultures.”

When she talks about “culture,” there seems to be at least two underlying notions: culture as social categories and as different meaning systems. Cultural categories involve demanding boundary work. Nadia finds herself categorized by others as African/foreigner and is met with expectations of being “culturally different.” She challenges these limiting categorizations, but deals with them as needed.

She also, however, talks about certain ways of acting or talking that are typical for certain cultures (“African girls” have “a lot of energy”). “Culture” in this sense, as different meaning/
behavior systems, is also presented as dynamic and negotiable, i.e., in her discussions with her mother about what it “actually” implies to be a young girl from her country of origin. Still, the different demands from parents and others cause conflicts, and the negotiations this requires are hard emotional work.

To understand this notion of culture as meaning systems, Bakhtin’s concept of voice might be helpful (Bakhtin 2010; Urwin et al. 2013). While making sense of the world, a person’s inner dialogue includes the voices of people present, but also voices of those distant from us in space or time, when deemed relevant. Nadia’s negotiations include ongoing discussions with her mother, as well as the voices of leaders, teachers, and others, and how she explains, agrees with, or objects to those voices. Thinking of cultural influences as voices to which the person actively responds can help us avoid too static or heterogeneous an understanding of culture. Nadia’s narrative shows that her culture of origin does not consist of one single voice, but is rather an ongoing conversation with different voices from, e.g., her mother, aunts, and uncles, the Quran, and herself.

Nadia appreciated how her culture was valued in the project, a welcome exception to struggling to acquire “Norwegianness” as fast as possible elsewhere (“‘two hours where you are not un-Norwegian’”). Here, she found an arena where multiple cultural expressions were valued—in a musical sense and with a general appreciation of diversity. This gave her room to “be both,” not either-or. In her own navigation, Nadia expresses clearly that she sees good things in both cultural systems available to her and that both are “not perfect.” It seems to be one of her developmental projects to integrate this diversity in herself, choosing from both cultures. She actively uses this range of different norms and interpretations (e.g., right/wrong concerning alcohol or dancing) to legitimize her personal choices. Being in an environment where multiple cultural backgrounds are explicitly valued seems to facilitate this freedom of movement between different voices.

Moving between cultures or discussing with diverging voices can still be exhausting. This became particularly clear in Nadia’s account of the conflicting demands from her mother and the Kaleidoscope leaders. These cross-pressures were emotionally taxing and frustrated and disempowered her, even to the point that she links it to her depression and suicide attempt. Still, she was encouraged by singing and dancing with her friends and the leaders’ hugs. As her self-confidence was nurtured in this supportive environment, she kept negotiating with her mother and eventually emerged determined about what she wanted and ready to stand up for it. So, she “simply” confronted her mother. Behind this confrontation, however, lie years of struggle and emerging agency.

Navigating Categories: What Is Possible for an African Muslim Girl in Norway?

Her mother’s wishes for Nadia are clearly gendered, in the sense that they are related to what it means to be a girl from her country of origin. Nadia’s brother did more as he pleased, as a boy, while the place of a girl is more restricted. This surfaces in conflicts about clothes (hijab wearing), how she conducts her body (dancing, singing), and who she socializes with (boys and girls together). Nadia acknowledges that her mother’s wishes are different from the dominant ways in majority society. She does not, however, accept her mother’s view on what it means to be a “good girl” from their origin as the only possible one. In fact, she uses her mother’s own history to highlight other options: mentioning her childhood friendships with boys and how her religious ways changed after migration. By emphasizing the singing and dancing in their home country, she also points to other possible positions available within their culture.
Navigating Identity, Becoming “Herself”

Nadia speaks repeatedly about “being herself,” not having to explain herself (in the Kaleidoscope community) and standing up for herself. This theme of emerging identity is generally considered a central developmental task for young people (Erikson 1968; Gardiner and Kosmitzki 2011). In the case of Nadia, she tells a story of moving from confusion about who she was and how she was to uphold her cultural origins in a society which did not value them, to a place of greater clarity, where she could “be both” and “be herself.” This can be understood as a narrative about subjectivation, about becoming (more clearly and confidently) the subject of one’s own story.

Nadia’s story illustrates how one does not become oneself on one’s own, but in dialogue and interactions with others. The voices of others that she includes in her narrative—parents and other relatives, teachers, leaders, friends, and representatives from majority society—are often in tension, providing both resistance and support for her own projects. This may present a challenge in tackling the developmental task of identity, but also a learning opportunity. Relating to diverging expectations during identity formation, e.g., being in some form of minority, may invite more active identity exploration and self-awareness (Gardiner and Kosmitzki 2011), as Nadia’s reflections also show.

Traditional acculturation theories describe processes of moving from one culture (of origin) to another (host culture) and strategies to combine or integrate them (Heine 2015; Chryssochoou 2004). Young people like Nadia, who grows up regularly moving between different values and expectations, show that this is not necessarily a journey from a culture to another, but an ongoing navigation process among different ways of relating to herself and the world. Finding a certain freedom of movement within a supportive arena was a key to living well among these tensions, integrating diverging voices into her narrative and thus becoming herself. Identity here emerges less as a question of which categories she “actually” belongs to and more as an ongoing conversation.

Narrative Navigation

In sum, the metaphor of navigation provides a promising lens to understand the everyday adjustments and choices people make in relation to their varying contexts. I would also argue that narratives can be a fruitful mode for analyzing and understanding such navigation. The developmental tasks Nadia faces are not essentially different from those of other young people, but her
experiences of a particularly notable gap between different voices (or cultures, or categories) may still be a story worth telling. Young people considered majority Norwegians, ethnically speaking, but who belong to some subculture, may have similarly poignant stories to tell, e.g., about navigating between a strict religious group and a secular and liberal majority society.

Narratives about navigating minority/majority worlds can challenge majoritarian modes of representation, such as the dominant narratives about Norway as a tolerant, anti-racist, and peace-loving society, innocent in relation to colonialism, according to popular self-images (Gullestad 2002, 2003). Ethnomusicologist Thomas Solomon (2016) has criticized Kaleidoscope for functioning as a majoritarian mode of representation in this vein. He found that the Kaleidoscope music and performances position Norway’s internal others as exotic elements welcomed into this Norwegian “goodness,” “in a way that confirms a majority Norwegian self-image of being a country that treats its minorities well” (Solomon 2016, p. 197).

With this criticism in mind, it becomes important to explore and communicate what happens behind the scenes—both in an art project like Kaleidoscope (cf. Kvaal 2018) and in society in general. Then, we can discover different and simultaneous processes and projects in play and acknowledge different, but equally valid experiences of living in the same society—narrative by narrative.

**Limitations and Implications**

A close reading of the narrative of a young refugee has made it possible to explore her experiences of navigating cultures and becoming “herself”—her subjectivation—since such an analysis brings meaning-making and negotiations with different voices and expectations to the fore. The understandings presented here have been developed in cooperation with the interviewees, applying a flexible and interpretative approach. The findings cannot be generalized in a straightforward sense, but are meant to give insights about relevant developmental tasks and strategies when growing up with multiple cultures, insights that can inform theory, practice, and further research.

While the specifics of Nadia’s story are personal and idiographic, the navigation approach and tracing negotiations in narratives may prove fruitful for further youth and migration research. The way her freedom of movement is affected by gender, ethnicity, and other types of positions in society can be explored further with research participants of varying backgrounds. Analyses of how people navigate specific categories also bring up issues of intersectionality: how we are positioned not according to one, but multiple axes of social differentiation (Collins and Bilge 2016). Another lesson from Nadia’s story is that an arena that provides recognition and support—here, a creative project—can make a big difference for a young person and her developmental projects.

The findings point to how challenges and opportunities experienced by young refugees can stem from both minority and majority voices, as illustrated here by the strictness of a parent and the alienating categorizations dominating the discourse in the host society. The approach presented here highlights the importance of listening and of inviting youth to tell their story, be it in research or program development. Such invitations can nurture empowerment, by recognizing young people’s voices and participation in their own development, and present narratives society needs to hear.

**Concluding Reflections**

Nadia’s story of becoming is one of movement; she is now in a different place than before. This movement has resolved some of the cross-pressures she struggled with, as she found
space and used the resources available to her there to stand up for herself. The process leading up to this freedom of movement, however, was exhausting and brought her close to giving up—even on life in general.

The narrative presented here shows Nadia internalizing, opposing, and integrating different voices, from both the cultures she calls her own. Finding a safe and welcoming arena where there was room for her to negotiate these differing voices and “be both” made this development possible. While responding to diverging voices in her own increasingly clear voice, Nadia finds her way as the subject of her own story. This work of becoming is her own, yet society can facilitate it by creating arenas that provide minority youth with recognition, community, and freedom of movement.

Acknowledgments The author’s employers, Ansgar University College and Sorlandet Hospital, finance the PhD study that this article is based on. I thank the Kaleidoscope participants for sharing their experiences and Prof. Nora Sveaass, Ass. Prof. Mona-Iren Hauge, and Prof. António Barbosa da Silva for valuable comments in the writing process.

Compliance with Ethical Standards The participants signed an informed agreement as approved by the Privacy Ombudsman for Research at Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). The project follows the NSD’s recommendations for informed consent, confidentiality, and design. Beyond that, the ethical baseline of the project is respect and care for the young participants, with the explicit intention that their voices be heard (cf. Nelson and Prilleltensky 2010).

Publisher’s Note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

References


Selimos, E. D. (2018). ‘I am doing a double thing. It is for me and it is for her’ exploring the biographical agency of newcomer immigrant and refugee youth. *Young, 26*(4), 332–347.


Affiliations

Hildegunn Marie Tønnessen Schuff\textsuperscript{1,2,3}

\begin{itemize}
\item Hildegunn Marie Tønnessen Schuff
\begin{itemize}
\item schuff@ansgarskolen.no
\end{itemize}
\end{itemize}

\textsuperscript{1} Department of Psychology, Ansgar University College, Fredrik Fransonsvei 4, N-4635 Kristiansand, Norway
\textsuperscript{2} Sørlandet Hospital, the Mental Health Ward for Children and Youth, Kristiansand, Norway
\textsuperscript{3} Department of Psychology, University of Oslo, Oslo, Norway
Paper III
Paper IV