“I CAN ASK QUESTIONS”

- AN ERITREAN PERSPECTIVE OF BUILDING A NETWORK IN GRONINGEN –

Monica Moorlag

S2579383

University of Groningen

Faculty of Spatial Sciences

Population Research Centre

m.moorlag@student.rug.nl

Supervisor: Hinke Haisma

17-08-2018

ABSTRACT

Since 2015, the so-called refugee crisis has been high on the agenda of the European Union. In recent years the number of Eritrean refugees, who have fled their country because of the recent regime, has increased. In Groningen, Eritreans are the second largest group of refugees. The research focuses on how Eritrean status holders build a new network in the city of Groningen and what is the influence of initiatives, such as Humanitas. Building a network is an important part of integration.

I use social network theory to conceptualise how Eritrean immigrants build their network. Concepts as connectivity, which is the amount of relations, tie strength and social support, are used to gain more knowledge about this network. Interviews, starting with a mental map, were held with 6 males and 6 females. Also a key informant was interviewed.

For the analysis, both deductive and inductive coding was used. The themes that emerged from the data are: perceptions of the Netherlands, urban and rural areas, meeting places or opportunities and person/actors in the network and the position of women. The theme barriers and experiences has several subthemes: language, time management, neighbours and reserved.

These different themes provide insight into how the Eritreans experience building a network in Groningen. There should be enough attention for opportunities to improve their Dutch, since this is an important factor of integration. In addition is understanding the culture and background of the Eritrean status holders important, since this would also improve the connection and the integration of Eritreans in the Netherlands.

Keywords: connectivity, tie strength, Eritrea, refugees, social support

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to give a special thanks to Humanitas and Vluchtelingenwerk for their cooperation and making rooms available to conduct the interviews.

Without the group of Eritrean status holders this research would not have been possible, and I am grateful for their collaboration and openness. I am also grateful that several participants helped out with other interviews as an interpreter.

At last I would like to thank my supervisor Hinke Haisma for the feedback and help during the process. Also, my friends Joëlle Soepenberg and Lotte Cruiming, who providing me feedback.

INDEX

Abstract 1

Acknowledgements 2

1 Introduction 4

2 Theoretical framework 9

2.1 Connectivity 10

2.2 Tie Strength 10

2.3 Social support 11

2.4 Initiatives 12

2.5 Conceptual model 13

3. Methodology 15

3.1 Study design and Recruiting of participants 15

3.2 Instruments for data collection and Data analysis 15

3.2 Place of interview and translation 16

3.3 In-depth interviews and mental maps 16

3.4 Positionationality 17

3.5 Ethics 17

4 Results 19

4.1 Overview participants 19

4.2 Overview of the themes 19

4.3 Perceptions of the Netherlands 20

4.4 Urban and rural areas 21

4.5 Actors in their network and analysation of the mental maps 22

4.6 Meeting places and opportunities 24

4.7 The position of women 25

4.7 Experiences and barriers in the building of a network 26

5 Discussion 33

5.1 Who are the actors in the network of the status holders from Eritrea? 33

5.2 In which way are these networks structured? 33

5.3 In which way experience the status holders social support from their network? 34

5.4 What initiatives are there for refugees and what is their role in building a network? 34

5.5 In which way differ the experiences between men and women? 35

5.6 Limitations 35

6 Recommendations 37

7 Literature 38

Appendix 1- consent form 41

Appendix 2- interview guides 43

Appendix 3 – code book 48

1 INTRODUCTION

Around the world, millions of people are on the move, with very different backgrounds, destinations and reasons. A specific group of migrants are called refugees. From this group the flow to Europe has increased since 2015 and is called the “Humanitarian refugee crisis”. It is an issue high on the agenda of the European Union (Juneman et al., 2017). From this stream of refugees between 2013 and 2015 in the Mediterranean area, 20% originates from Eritrea (Mengiste, 2018). A part of this flow of refugees has reached the Netherlands and there has been an increase of the number of refugees in the Netherlands. Eritreans are, after the Syrian, the largest group of refugees right now in the Netherlands. Estimated is that in 2017 about 20,000 persons with Eritrean roots were living in the Netherlands. Of these persons 12.554 have asked for their first asylum in the period between 2014 and 2016 (Ferrier et al., 2017).

Figure 1- Map of Eritrea (Source: Ontheworldmap, 2018)

The issues why the Eritreans flee their country

started some years earlier than the period that Europe started experiencing the presence of these refugees. Eritrea is a country in the Northeast of Africa, as can be seen in figure 1, and has about 4 million inhabitants. It is known as one of the most refugees producing per capita (Conell, 2016).

Eritrean refugees have fled their land because of the war. Around 2004 the estimation of the number of refugees from Eritrea was 190,000. The war has been going on for almost 30 years and the situation is still unstable (Assefaw, 2006). In 1991 Eritrea had officially gained independence of Ethiopia. However, in 1998 the conflict started to worsen. This had to do with problems about defining the borders. In 2001 the conflict formally ended, but there is still a 'no peace/no war' situation going on and living in peace is not possible in Eritrea (Belloni, 2018). Since the independence there has been an authoritarian regime in Eritrea, with Isaiah Afewerki as president for 25 years. His political party, the People's Front for Democracy and Justice (PFDJ) is the only political party which is allowed. There is no democracy, no freedom of speech or freedom of religion. Only 1% of the population can use the internet. Newspapers, radio and television are regulated by the government (Ferrier et al., 2017; Amnesty International, 2018). Besides that, the current regime uses the fear for a new war to put persons from the age of 18 and older in military camps. This instead of investing in the economy, which resulted in an impoverishing of the people in Eritrea (Belloni, 2018). Eritreans who leave the country still have the obligation to pay 2% of their income to the government. Eritreans who would ever want to come back or still have family in Eritrea feel the more pressure to pay this (Ibid). Eritrea is on 179th place on the Human Development index. The total number of countries included is 188 (Ferrier et al., 2017).

Some characteristics of the Eritrean group might explain several of the problems faced by this group. In their childhood, Eritrean children spend time in a broken family, because their father is absent a large part of the year, since he has to serve in the army. The oldest child especially has to be the caretaker of the family. Their education is jeopardized because of this (Pharros, 2016). When being 16 or 17 years old they have to take a test and when they fail, they immediately go to the earlier mentioned military camp. When they pass they are able to study, but the study choice is made under pressure. After their study they still have to go to the military camp (Ferrier et al., 2017). As a consequence of the war, many people had to join the army for the period of 2 years. However, in practise this is often up to ten years or even longer (Belloni, 2018). For the recent group of refugees this is the main reason to flee the country. Other reasons are economic, the rising food prices, political dissatisfaction, religious persecution, limited opportunities for education (Ferrier et al., 2017). Besides that is an important part of the Eritrean culture collectivism. In the study of Hofstede, one of the characteristics of culture is the fact that there is a division between collectivistic and individualistic cultures. In collectivism what the group wants is more important than your own opinion. This is very different from the individualistic approach of the western societies, where honesty and being able to cope with criticism is more important. Gender roles are more traditional compared to the Netherlands (Ferrier et al., 2015; Pharros, 2016). Interesting for research is how these characteristics specifically work out and what is needed for the Eritreans to integrate (Hofstede, 1984;). The group of Eritrean asylum seekers is a rather young group. About three third of the group is younger than 30 years old

and 7 out of 10 are men. What is remarkable is that this group contains many persons who are so called single underaged refugees. Requests of family reunion are often rejected because of lack of documents or because the refugees are unable to prove family connections (Ferrier et al., 2017; Pharros, 2016).

This group of Eritreans arrived at the Netherlands after a long journey. There is a difference between asylum seekers and refugees. Namely that refugees have a grounded reason to leave their country and that asylum seekers still have to prove that they deserve this status (Juneman et al., 2017).

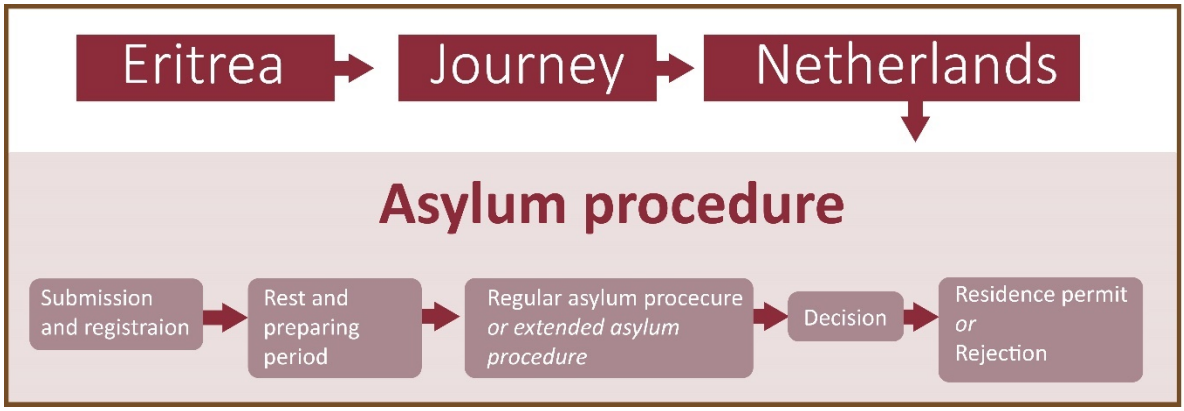

Figure 2 – Asylum Procedure

The procedure asylum seekers go through is often a very long process. The regular process is fourteen days. The asylum seeker lives at several different locations during this period. Before the procedure an asylum seeker receives six days to rest and to prepare for the conversations with the Immigration Service (IND). Besides that there is a medical check to see if the asylum seeker needs extra attention during the conversations. Then the official part starts. This is an about four to eight days period with two conversations. The asylum seeker is allowed to get advice from a lawyer. In these two conversations the identity of the asylum seeker is set. When there is more time needed to check the background of an asylum seeker the process takes much longer: up to several years (Dupont et al., 2005). When an asylum seeker is classified as a refugee, he or she gets a temporary residence permit and they are called status holders (Juneman et al., 2017; Vluchtelingendata, 2018). The research is about these so called status holders. These persons are able to get their own house, start working or are able to follow education. This group has been chosen because these persons are able to undertake activities and therefore are able to build a new life. Also these persons have been in the Netherlands for a longer period and therefore they have more knowledge of the Dutch language or have been able to learn English (Vluchtelingendata, 2018).

The current conditions in the countries of origin and experiences of the past make it likely that the refugees are staying for a long period of time in their new countries and therefore it is good to integrate (OECD, 2016). The concept of integration is still somewhat vague. There are different

opinions on what this means. Assimilationists have the opinion that for integration it is necessary to leave your own culture behind and adapt totally to the new culture. The multiculturalists however argue that it is also possible to keep some aspects of your own culture and only adapt to a few new cultural aspects. To make integration durable three dimensions need to be right: the legal, the economic and the cultural or social (Favell, 1998; Goksel, 2018). Building of new networks is an important part of the integration process, since they can help them find all sorts of information. So did Mexican migrants in US receive support in understanding the medical system in the US (Ralston et al., 2012). It is also important to have a network of relevance, because having social relations is very important for the mental and physical wellbeing of a person. Loss of close relations can lead to a depression. It is even stated that not having close relationships is worse for the health of a person than it is to drink, smoke or being obese and lack of exercise (Santini et al., 2015).

The Dutch government recently decided that there needs to be a change in the current policy for integration and participation. In the current system it takes too long to integrate and it is, in addition, not efficient. Since the group of migrants is highly diverse, a more robust and adaptive system is needed. An evidence based approach will hopefully lead to a faster participation, preferably with paid work for the integrator (Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid, 2018). As said before in Groningen the Eritrean Status holders are the second largest group after the Syrian refugees. They also state that the integration is not always efficient. New strategies are more customization, more cooperation and to start as soon as possible. Key elements are language lessons and voluntary work (Gemeente Groningen, 2017). On top of that, the “Kennisplatform integratie & samenleving” (i.e. “Knowledge platform of integration and society”) published a report on the integration process of Eritrean refugees who seem to have more trouble with integration. To find out why this group has more trouble with integration would be interesting for research (Ferrier et al.,2017). All these thoughts taken into consideration the next research question has been made:

Research question: In which way do Eritrean status (>18) holders experience building a new network in the city of Groningen?

The main question will be answered with the following sub questions:

1. Who are the actors in the network of the status holders from Eritrea?
2. In which way are these networks structured?
3. In which way experience the status holders social support from their network?
4. What initiatives are there for refugees and what is their role in building a network?
5. In which way differ the experiences between men and women?

In the following chapter the theoretical background of the research is described. After that the methodology is explained in chapter 3. Chapter 4 will present the results. The next chapter will be an discussion and this research will end with recommendations for further research in chapter 6.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are different ways to look at networks. There is the egocentric approach and the sociocentric approach. The egocentric approach means the network is taken a look at from the viewpoint of an individual person. The sociocentric approach also looks at the other views of persons in the network, this would need a lot of data. Since the sociocentric looks more at a specific group and their interactions; the network is more or less defined at the beginning of the research. This research is more about the network of several persons, as it is about one network in particular (Hirdes et al., 1998, West et al., 1999). Besides, Eritreans deal with complex situations because of their past. Therefore the egocentric viewpoint is more useful, to really understand what their personal experiences are (Santini et al., 2015). The research makes use of the Social network theories. This theory is built up from nodes and ties. The nodes represent the persons and the ties are the connections between the persons. The first theory was from Granovetter, and has through the years been used by other researchers and they have added other characteristics of networks (Granovetter, 1974; Santini et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2017; Xun et al., 2017). More research has been done about refugees and networks, but since this was a different group, under other circumstances and with another culture, this research about Eritrean refugees will add interesting results (Keown-Bomar, 2004).

Different theories and concepts will help gain more understanding about networks. Below the concepts connectivity, tie strength, social support and social connectedness are explained. (Granovetter, 1974; Santini et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2017; Xun et al., 2017). Connectivity is more often studied in a quantitative way, however Xun et al. (2017) used interviews to study connectivity. This is more used to have an overview of the network. The other concepts such as tie strength and social support are more frequently studied in a qualitative way since it is about feelings and perceptions. These concepts are also more about the function of a network (Santini et al., 2015; Liu et al., 2017, Xun et al., 2017).

To have an overview of a social network, concepts such as the formal structure of social relationships can be used: the size, composition, contact frequency, boundedness etc. To find an answer to the first sub question these concepts are used to get an overview of what the network of the status holders looks like (Santini et al., 2015). Besides that the researcher will make a difference between different categories in the network: that is, a difference between friends, family members and colleagues. Also there can be taken a look at what part of the network each group contains in the total network (Santini et al., 2015).

2.1 CONNECTIVITY

The connectivity of a network is about the amount of ties between persons in the network. When having more ties among the different hubs, the network is more resilient and will not fall apart easily. This is shown in figure 3. Connectivity is a concept which is often used when the social media network is being explored. Interesting is what the influence of social media is on this aspect of a network. In some countries, for example China, more value is given to fewer meaningful relations compared to having a lot of contacts which are less meaningful. This can have consequences such as that the way social media works does not match with the culture (Xun et al., 2017). The Eritrean culture is also different from this type of connectivity, since it is a more collectivistic culture. In this culture the role of the group is very important. This makes that the concept of connectivity is interesting to study (Hofstede, 1984; Ferrier et al., 2017).

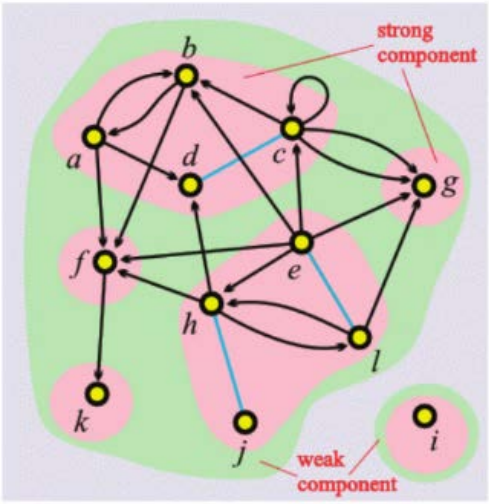

Figure 3- connectivity (Source: Doreain et al., 2014)

2.2 TIE STRENGTH

This part of the theory is studied with the tie strength theory of Granovetter (1974). In his theory he identifies differences in the strength of ties. The strength of the ties can be measured by the amount of time which is invested in the relationship, the amount of information which is transferred between two persons and the emotional intensity of the relationship (Tuti'ca et al., 2015). Also the number of times persons met each other is mentioned (Lui et al., 2017). Granovetter's ideas mainly comes from networks related to the working field. He argued that mainly weaker ties more often resulted in a new job than strong ties. The way Granovetter sees networks is in a way that it consist of several cliques of friends who know each other and that there are so called bridging ties (Granovetter, 1974). Weak ties seem more often to be a so called bridging tie between two networks, as can be seen in figure 3 on the next page.

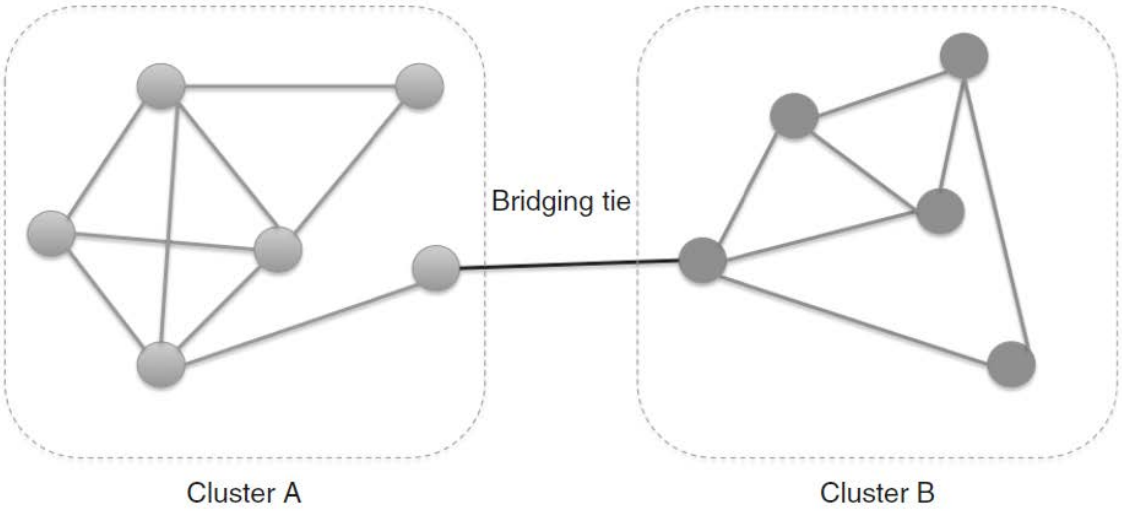

Figure 4- Bridging tie (source: Liu et al., 2017)

This person who is a little further from the central person is likely to gain other knowledge than the person very close to the central person. This new knowledge can for example lead to a new job (Lui et al., 2017). Different researches are done to understand how the strength of ties can influence decisions (Keim et al., 2013; Mulder et al., 2014). Strong ties are close friends and relatives. Stronger ties are often more related to concepts such as social support, which will be discussed later. Ties that were less strong, such as acquaintances, were mainly seen as a source of social learning. This could be the case through a conversation but also through observation. Grandparents, uncles and aunts were also seen as less important ties, when related to the decision making in family formation (Keim et al., 2013).

2.3 SOCIAL SUPPORT

Another part of a network is the social support which is gained from the social network. There is a difference between the actual support and the experienced support. This is also explained as a difference between perceived and received support. As perceived support can be explained with emotional support such as someone being there to show sympathy or giving advice in difficult situations. The received support can be explained with instrumental support such as financial support or help with situations which contain physical help (Santini et al., 2015). Migrants are in need of a specific type of support, because they still have to figure out the new country. An example is when trying to find out which kind of medical help they need and how this works in their new country. Immigrants ‘who have been in the country for a longer period of time’ can help newly arrived immigrants with this type of information about their new home (Ralston et al., 2012).

2.4 INITIATIVES

The setting of a place shapes the integration process and can therefore differ in a different place. Besides that is it dependent on the opportunities available for the refugee (Platts-Fowler et al., 2015). Urban areas are characterised in population size and density, which give it a different way of life. Some even state it as an urban way of life (Legates, 2011). However there are differences between urban and rural, it is good to be aware of stereotypical views of this way of life. It is therefore difficult to precisely state in which way the urban life and rural life is different (Woods, 2005). In the city of Groningen there are different initiatives for refugees to help them integrate. Examples are Humanitas, Groningen verwelkomt vluchtelingen, Kennisnetwerk, WIJ teams of the city of Groningen, Vluchtelingenwerk (Humanitas, 2018; Jasmijn, 2018; Groningen verwelkomt, 2018; Vrijwilligers Groningen, 2018; Wij Groningen, 2018; Vluchtelingenwerk, 2018).

The initiatives can be seen as the bridging tie between two separate networks as was seen in figure 3. In this research there will be discussed what role these initiatives have in the further development of the status holders. Cluster A can be seen as the network the participant already built and cluster B is the addition to his or her network (Liu et al., 2017). This tie is often seen as a weaker tie, so for example not a family member or someone from the same nationality, but someone who is somewhat out of the close network of the person. This person especially can give new ties because this person knows more other contacts (Granovetter, 1974; Ralston et al., 2012).

“Humanitas” has different projects to help vulnerable people. One of their projects is focussed on refugees. The Humanitas project for refugees is about helping the status holders with the integration. In this project a status holder is connected to a Dutch person. This person helps the status holder with paper work, the search for a job or with the search for a school for the children. They could also help a status holder with learning the Dutch language (Humanitas, 2018). This person can be the bridging tie between two networks, as has been discussed above (Liu et al., 2017).

“Groningen verwelkomt vluchtelingen”, which means Groningen welcomes refugees, is an organisation which tries to help refugees feel welcome. One part of the project is similar to the Humanitas project. Also persons are connected to a local person, but more to do activities with. Also there are group activities organised where local people and refugees can meet. On their webpage they also give information about where the refugees come from and where they have gone through before coming to the Netherlands (Groningen verwelkomt, 2018).

“Kennisnetwerk multicultureel Groningen” wants to be active for the participation and integration of all persons in the province of Groningen. Not exactly clear is what their strategy is and if they also have projects in the city of Groningen. More research needs to be done on this initiative (Vrijwilligers Groningen, 2018).

Then there are the so-called “WIJ teams” of the city of Groningen. For different parts of the city of Groningen there are teams which help with the organisation and living in these neighbourhoods. The WIJ team of Selwerd, one of the neighbourhoods in Groningen, has different opportunities for persons who want to learn the Dutch language. On different moments during the week a person can join these sessions. Besides that there is the so called Language Cafe. In this cafe it is possible for migrants to meet each other and Dutch people, also to learn the Dutch language. This is an opportunity for migrants but also for Dutch persons to get in contact with each other (Wij Groningen, 2018).

Especially for women the initiative “Jasmijn” has developed. They organise different activities, for women from different backgrounds, to meet with each other. These activities can differ from walking, being creative or activities focussed on language (Jasmijn, 2018).

Another organisation for refugees is the so called “Vluchtelingenwerk”, which means refugees employment. This is an organisation with departments all over the Netherlands. In Groningen their role is smaller than in other cities (Vluchtelingenwerk, 2018).

Not only initiatives can be important to build a network but also churches can function in building a new network. Religion takes a central place in Eritrea. In the country itself there are two religions allowed, namely certain dominations in Christianity and Sunnite Islam. About halve of Eritrea is Christian and the other half is Muslim. Other religions are forbidden. The Eritrean status holders are likely to have one of these religions. It could also be possible that the person has fled because they had another religion (Ferrier et al., 2017).

The research is conducted in the city of Groningen, which is an urban area. There are, as seen in the previous part, different initiatives in the city, which help the status holders to integrate. This amount of initiatives might not be present in a village (Humanitas, 2018; Jasmijn, 2018; Groningen verwelkomt, 2018; Vrijwilligers Groningen, 2018; Wij Groningen, 2018; Vluchtelingenwerk, 2018).

2.5 CONCEPTUAL MODEL

The conceptual model contains the different theories and concepts explained in the theoretical framework. Since the research is about building a network the form of the conceptual model is close to an actual network. The different actors presented here, will be identified and an answer will be found for research question one.

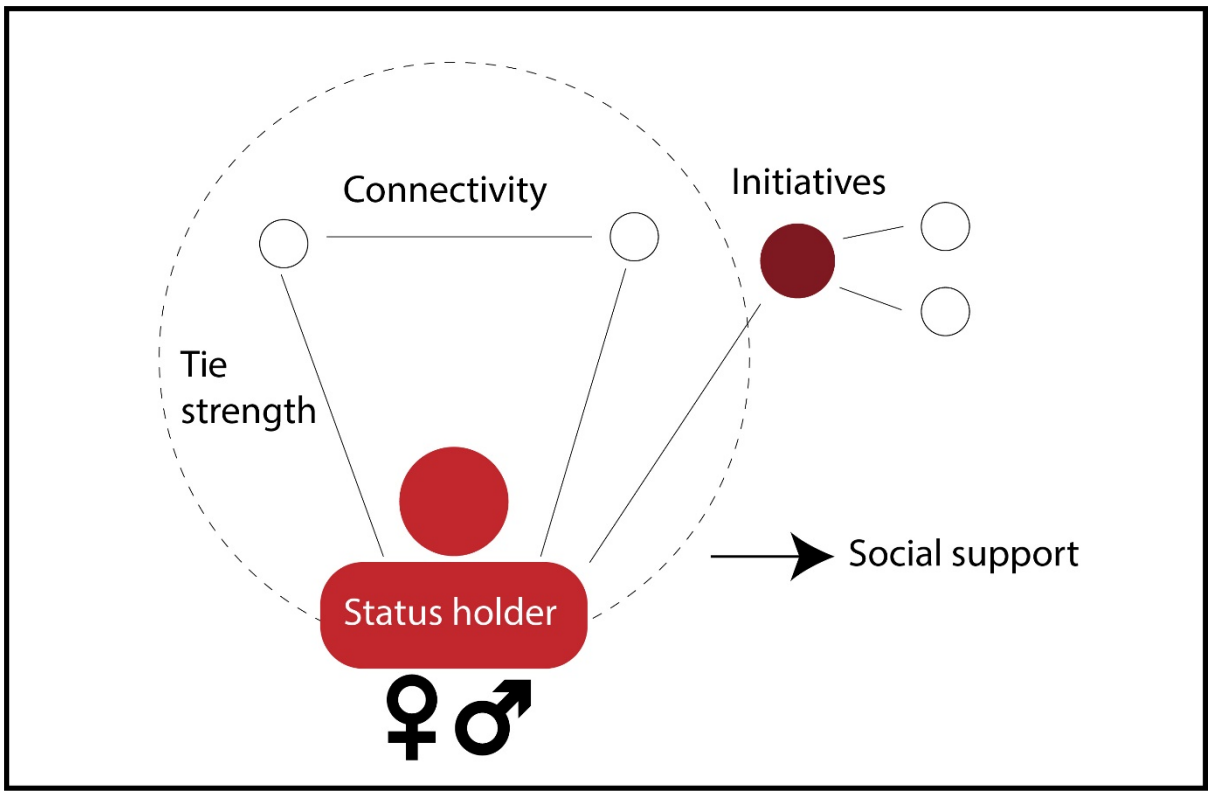

Figure 5– Conceptual model

As can be seen in the conceptual model, there is an egocentric approach to research the network. That is why the person in the middle is the central point of the conceptual model. It is about the experiences of this person (Santini et al, 2015). The gender of the status holder is also taken into account, that is why the symbols are below the status holder. This will be discussed in the last research question (Ferrier et al.,2017).

Different ties from the status holder to other actors in the network are seen. There is also a tie to the initiatives. Here the status holder can meet a new person who could be a bridging tie to new people. This relates to the second research question (Liu et al., 2017). The tie strength is the strength of the relationship between the status holder and the other actors. This is displayed in the conceptual model (Granovetter, 1974; Tuti'ca et al., 2015). The connectivity is between the actors of the network and is displayed above in the conceptual model (Xun et al., 2017). In this research an idea is given of the structure of the status holders, but besides that it describes in which way this network as a whole gives social support and social connectedness to the person (Santini et al, 2015).

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 STUDY DESIGN AND RECRUITING OF PARTICIPANTS

To gain a deeper understanding of the building of networks of Eritrean status holders, a qualitative method, in-depth interviews, is chosen. This method is useful since it is about complex issues, which contain different cultures and beliefs. Interviews will suit the best to answer the research question, since participants can freely talk about personal experiences. In a group discussion it is possible that they would speak more in the advantage of the group, since it is a collectivistic culture (Hennink et al., 2011; Hofstede, 1984; Ferrier et al., 2015; Pharros, 2016).

As has been stated before the target group of this research are the so called Status holders (Vluchtelingenwerk, 2017). The age category for this research is people older than 18. This age is chosen because from 18 and onward the participants are legally not part of their family any longer and therefore are in another category (Ferrier et al., 2017). Also the gender of the person is taken into account. The distribution among the group of Eritrean persons in the Netherlands is 7 men out of 10 refugees (Ferrier et al., 2017). But since the recruitment can be selective, 6 male and 6 female participants will be included (Hennink et al., 2011).

The method of recruiting participants is a combination of approaching gatekeepers, making use of networks and the snowballing method. The gatekeeper is a person who can give access to the group of status holders, this could be a person who works with the status holders or helps them integrate. It is important to get into contact with this person because this person is able to give permission to get in contact with the status holders. In addition, this person can be of importance in convincing the status holders to participate in the research. The other method is to ask around in a network whether someone knows an Eritrean status holder. When the first contacts are made, the snowballing method can follow. This means that the first status holders knows more status holders and gives contact information of these new status holders. In this way the participants are recruited. During the recruiting it became clear that this is a difficult group to approach. Without making use of a gatekeeper the group of Eritreans would not have been reached. Because the participants knew the gatekeeper, the researcher was able to gain enough trust for their participation (Hennink et al., 2011).

3.2 INSTRUMENTS FOR DATA COLLECTION AND DATA ANALYSIS

The instrument for data collection is the interview guide, which can also be found in appendix 2. This interview guide is based on the concepts of the conceptual model. After the interviews took place, they will be transformed into textual data by making a verbatim transcript. These transcripts will be analysed with the use of several codes. These codes will help to understand the structure of the interviews. Besides that it will help to objectify the interviews and to come up with a more general conclusion (Hennink et al., 2011). The method for analysing the data is a combination of deductive

and inductive. Inductive analysis means that the textual data is analysed afterwards and that in different stages codes are developed. First the analysation is very close to the original text and after that subcategories are made. After this the comparison with the theories are made. So this means that concepts such as connectivity, tie strength, connectedness and social support are studied afterwards. This method is chosen because it is a more flexible method. Another advance of this method is that also parts not derived from the literature can be studied. When using only a deductive method these parts could easily be overlooked (Hsieh et al., 2005). The interview guide however can also be adjusted a little during the interviews when something interesting came up, which was not yet mentioned. In this way also new data is created (Hsieh et al., 2005; Fontana, 2007). This as a part of the grounded theory, in which there is a circular process of analysis (Hennink et al., 2011).

3.2 PLACE OF INTERVIEW AND TRANSLATION

The interviews take place in a public place. This is a neutral place and therefore the participant and the interviewer can feel comfortable there. However it should be a public place where there are no distractions or noises to influence the interview. The home of the researcher was not suited for the interviews and the researcher did not want to invade the privacy of the participants. Therefore this is not chosen as an option for the place of the interviews. Almost all of the interviews took place in the building of Humanitas, a place they came more often and would feel comfortable in. A private room was rent for an hour to have the conversation in private without the noise of other people. One of the interviews was in the building of Vluchtelingenwerk, also in a private room. (Hennink et al., 2011). When needed a translator helped out with the interviews. Several of the participants who were able to speak both languages served as a interpreter. Not only can this person help with the language, but this person is also able to be an interpreter of cultural mores. This will help to save time and to reach the group of participants on another level (Fontana, 2007). This is probably also a person the participant feels comfortable with. However it does influence the outcomes of the interviews. This is something that needs to be taken into consideration (May, 2002).

3.3 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS AND MENTAL MAPS

In-depth interviews are created with a semi-structured interview guide (Hennink et al., 2011). Different interview guides are created for the interviews with the refugees and for the interviews with the institution. The starting point of the interviews is a mental map. At the start of the in-depth interview of the participants are asked to make a mental map of their network. This method is used to gain more insight into the view of the participant with only little influence of the researcher (Trell et al., 2010). Besides that might it help to overcome language barriers, which could exist (Ferrier et al., 2017). The mental map will mainly be a starting point in the interviews, but could also be studied afterwards. The participant will explain what is meant by different parts of the mental map. The choices of including or excluding of different aspects will be explored during the interview (Trell et

al., 2010). The participant will draw a mental map first of the people they know in Groningen. On the side they can also add people they know outside of Groningen, since this can also be of importance to understand the network in Groningen.

3.4 POSITIONATIONALITY

It is good to keep in mind that the gender of both the interviewer and the participant have influence on the data collected. This because both men and women are part of a cultural system in which there are differences between the roles of the different genders (Fontana, 2007). Related to this is the fact that positionality of the researcher is something to take into consideration. For example aspects such as gender and culture. The identity of the researcher shapes the interactions the researcher will have with the participants. In this research the researcher is Dutch and is female. These are both characteristics which have influence on how the researcher understands something the participants say, but also how the participants see the researcher and what they are willing to tell. The fact that the researcher was Dutch may have influenced the interviews in a way that Dutch people are more used to talk openly and that this is something which is more difficult for Eritrean persons. Besides that the Eritreans might not always be aware of what is known by a Dutch person about Eritrea and the Eritrean culture, so therefore they might have not told specific details which could have been of useful for the understanding. The fact that the researcher is a woman might have influenced the interviews with the females in a positive way, since they felt free to talk about female subjects. Something else what influenced the outcomes was the fact that the researcher was fluent in Dutch, whereas the participants were still learning Dutch. They sometimes excused themselves for the fact that their Dutch was not good enough. The researcher assured them that it was not a problem and that they could take the time and words they wanted to express themselves (Clifford et al.,; Hennink et al, 2011). Besides that is it of importance how the researcher presents herself. So she has to dress properly (Hennink et al., 2011).

3.5 ETHICS

Ethical considerations need to be made when conducting the research. One of the points to take in consideration is the privacy of the participants. Since there are going to be interviews, I need to make sure that names and specific knowledge are not included in the research, as it would lead to a specific person. Besides that I will make clear to the participants what is expected of them and that they can pause or quit the research any time they want. They do not have to share information they do not want to share. The participants will sign a consent form to approve with the research. This form is checked by a supervisor and is displayed in appendix 1 (Hennink et al., 2011).

Since it is a fragile group it is important to keep specific ethics in mind (Van Liempt et al, 2009). Different concepts need to be considered when thinking about these specific ethics. Vulnerability is one of these concepts. Refugees are a vulnerable group, but what this means exactly needs to be

thought about. Why have these people come in this situation and are there differences in the extent of vulnerability between individual members of this vulnerable group? In addition, the term "do no harm" needs to be taken into consideration as it is important in doing research. When doing the research this is a very important thought. The research should add something to the community and they should not be harmed. At last should power relations be taken into consideration. The researcher does have some kind of power over the participants and has the ability to tell the story of the refugees. So the research could be something powerful, since it gives refugees the possibility to let their voice be heard, but it is up to the researcher to translate this voice in a proper way (Block et al., 2013). To make sure the ethics are taken into consideration questions which might be sensitive are asked permission for beforehand. Also, sensitive questions are not asked when they are not necessary. The questions are mainly about their lives now, and not about their traumatic experiences in the past (Van Liempt et al., 2009).

4 RESULTS

In this part the findings of the research are presented, they are structured in themes. Firstly an overview is given of the participants. After that the results are presented in themes which emerged from the data.

4.1 OVERVIEW PARTICIPANTS

This overview gives more information about the participants. They were of the ages between 19 and 36, but they all had the same path to follow when coming in the Netherlands. After receiving a status for five years and becoming a status holder the Eritreans would receive a home and go to classes to learn Dutch. Other activities besides this differ among the participants, but they all had to learn Dutch and after that study. The just mentioned other activities are voluntary work, visiting. Not only Eritrean status holder were interviewed, but also a key informant from Humanitas, who work with the status holders, to gain more insight and to receive another perspective.

Table 1 – overview participants

Participant	Gender	age	Time in Netherlands***	Time in Groningen***	Level of Dutch**
1	Male	28	<2 years	<2 years	B1/B2
2	Male	34	2-4 years	<2 years	B1/B2
3	Female	24	2-4 years	2-4 years	A2/B1
4	Female	28	2-4 years	2-4 years	B1
5	Male	36	2-4 years	<2 years	B2
6*	-	-	-	-	-
7	Female	20	2-4 years	<2 years	A1
8	Male	22	2-4 years	<2 years	A1/A2
9	Male	24	2-4 years	2-4 years	A2
10	Female	19	2-4 years	<2 years	A1
11	Female	28	2-4 years	2-4 years	B1
12	Male	22	<2 years	<2 years	A1/A2
13	Female	23	2-4 years	<2 years	A2/B1

* Participant 6 is the key informant, therefore no further information is given about this participant

**The levels of Dutch are divided into 6 categories. A1 is the lowest and C3 is the highest (Rijksoverheid, 2018).

*** Different categories are made for the time in the Netherlands. <2 year is the lightest colour, 2-4 years is the darkest colour.

4.2 OVERVIEW OF THE THEMES

In this overview the different themes are inserted. For each column, a concept is given. This overview gives more insight into which concepts are represented in each part. Some themes however emerged from the data and are not easily linked to a concept. This is done because use has been made of the grounded theory (Hennink et al., 2011). These themes are therefore labelled as other. In this way it is

also more clear which themes are more drawn from the data and which themes are closer to the concepts.

The themes emerged from the data are: perceptions of the Netherlands, urban and rural areas, meeting places or opportunities and person/actors in the network and the position of women. Most of the themes are alone. There is however one theme which has several other subthemes. This is barriers and experiences in building a network with the following subthemes: language, time management, neighbours and reserved.

Table 2 – Themes emerged from the data

Themes	Tie strength	Connectivity	Gender	Social support	Other
Perceptions of the Netherlands					
Urban and rural areas					
Actors in their network and analysis of mental maps					
Meeting places and opportunities					
Position of woman					
Barriers and experiences in building a network					
-Language					
-Time management					
-Neighbours					
-Reserved					

4.3 PERCEPTIONS OF THE NETHERLANDS

One of the first questions of the interview, was how the status holders experienced the Netherlands so far. This was a somewhat more starting question, but also from this question interesting results are received. Even though it is not possible to directly relate it to a concept of the conceptual model, these perceptions can influence the way a network is built. Besides that it gives more of a background to the other results.

A thought that was mentioned many times was that the Netherlands as a country is perceived as safe and the freedom of speech is very special for Eritrean person, since they did not at all experience that in Eritrea (Ferrier et al., 2017; Amnesty International, 2018).

One male expressed himself about the Netherlands as following:

Male, 36

"The Netherlands are wonderful actually.. in terms of safety.. in terms of freedom of speech.. that is good.. I can also built my future.. I find that wonderful"

What is interesting in this quote is the fact that you have to keep in mind that their past shapes how they are today, and that their past will influence the way they act. The second thing he mentioned is that he is able to build his future. This was also mentioned by more participants, that they were able to study in the Netherlands and that they were able to learn from Dutch people.

Some things were also very new to the Eritreans. They are not used to the fact that it is possible to have no religion, since everybody in Eritrea does have a religion (Ferrier et al., 2017; Amnesty International, 2018). Also openly being homosexual was not known before, and they have still to get used to that.

However not all perceptions were positive. Some did not really like the weather in the Netherlands. This was more often mentioned by females. The weather is seen as too cold and too unstable. Also somewhat more serious problems were faced, such as discrimination in school. Most status holders however mentioned that the Dutch people were nice and helpful. One woman expressed that she had seen in another country that people were not willing to help her in the way Dutch people did.

For this theme the concepts of connectivity and tie strength are of importance. Feeling save in a country can be seen as a foundation to build new relations. So it does have an influence on the amount of connections people are willing to make and the depth of these relations. However since there was also mentioned that they experienced discrimination, these perceptions do not only have a positive effect on connectivity and tie strength. In addition something could be said about gender, since it seems that the comment about the experiences of weather was mainly made by women.

4.4 URBAN AND RURAL AREAS

In some of the interviews participants mentioned that there is a difference between urban areas and the countryside. Both in the Netherlands, such as back in Eritrea, they endured differences. They experienced that people from the countryside were different in their contact in the streets, both in the Netherlands and in Eritrea. This is in accordance with what has been stated by Platts-Fowler et al.

(2015), that the setting of a place has implications for the integration process, since making contact with people is different.

The difference between city and countryside is also came forward in the responses (Woods, 2005; Legates, 2011). In Eritrea there is, according to a participant, another culture. Also the gender differences are larger in the countryside. Therefore the culture difference between the Netherlands and Eritrea is bigger for someone from the countryside.

Interesting is the fact that not only the urban area of Groningen has an influence on the contact with people, but also the fact if people are from an urban or rural area back in Eritrea. There is a difference between the habits on the countryside and in the cities. One difference is that Eritreans from the city often had more education compared to those from the countryside. Also the way people interact is different. One female mentioned the fact that people in the bigger cities of Eritrea also did not greet each other. She also saw this in Groningen, this compared to Dutch villages where people did greet each other.

Female, 29

"…yes… I think I live… I am from… I born in Asmara.. is capital city of Eritrea.. so.. that is… for me is less shy.. for a lot of people are from the village.. so that is different.."

The difference between rural and urban areas has influence in the tie strength. The experience of tie strength is different on the countryside and in the city in the Netherlands. Besides that does this difference influence the experiences of building a network, since people from the city in Eritrea are able to adjust easier in the Netherlands.

4.5 ACTORS IN THEIR NETWORK AND ANALYSATION OF THE MENTAL MAPS

To have an overview of the network and to understand it, first it is needed to know who are in the network of the Eritreans? In this part there will be given an answer to that question. The start of the more in-depth part of the interview was a mental map. On this mental map, visualized in figure 5, the participants drew the persons in their network and questions were asked about the relation with these people.

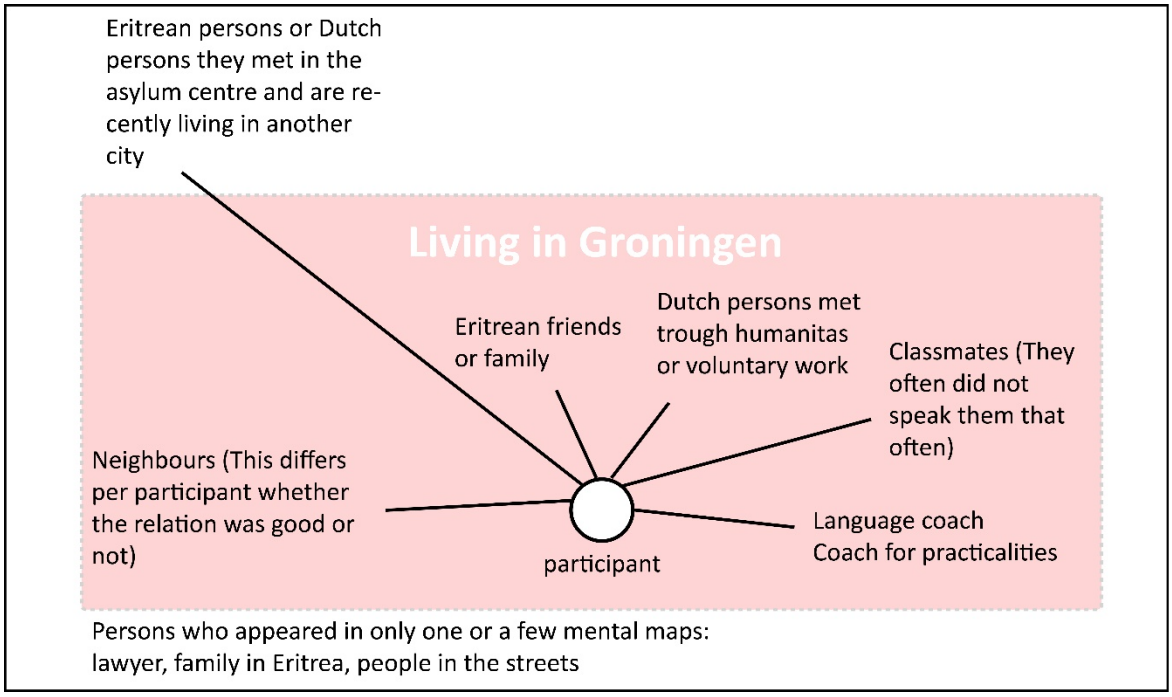

Figure 5 – Mental map

Different persons in the network are people they met during their journey to the Netherlands, people they met in the asylum centre. These could be both Dutch persons who visited them in the asylum centre or Eritrean persons who were also refugees. The Eritrean status holders did sometimes end up in the same city, but they could also end up in another Dutch city across the country. Therefore did some of the status holders have to start their network from scratch in Groningen. Friends they made in the asylum centre could only be visited occasionally, but contact remained with mobile phone and Facebook.

Other people were met through Humanitas. When arriving in Groningen all of the participants went to Humanitas, since this organization does helps the refugees in Groningen. In other cities this is mainly Vluchtelingenwerk, which means refugee help, but in Groningen Humanitas takes this responsibility. When coming to Humanitas they receive a language coach and a coach to help them with practicalities. These coaches appeared on almost all of the mental maps. They can also come to Humanitas, and talk to someone, if they have any questions or received a Dutch letter they do not understand.

Another group often mentioned were classmates. All of the participants had Dutch language lessons. Most of them went to the Alfa college, a few also followed a course at the Hanze, university of applied science, or at the University of Groningen. Their classmates are from different nationalities. Mainly the classes were a mixture of Eritrean and Syrian students. In some classes there were also other nationalities. Mentioned was that they did have contact with the Eritreans in their class, but not that much with the Syrian, because of a language barrier. All of the participants did have to study

again, for the language, but also because even when they did have a diploma it was not comparable with a Dutch diploma in that discipline.

Another group is people they met through voluntary work. Some of them did find this and were for example an interpreter for other Eritreans. But they also did voluntary work in the field they wanted to work in later in life. Many Eritreans wanted to do more practical jobs. So, for example, several of the woman wanted to be a hair dresser and one male wanted to become a mechanic.

A specific actor, which came up in many conversations, is their neighbours right now, so their Dutch neighbours. When this theme was mentioned they told whether they had a good or bad relation with their neighbours. More about neighbours is in a section below about this theme.

It is interesting to note who are not in the network or on the mental map. Family was mentioned by several participants, but most of the time only a few family members were mentioned. Some also did not mention it at all, but did have people in their network who felt like family.

When taking a look at the conceptual model, all of the concepts are seen in this theme. The tie strength is different between the different actors. For example most participants mentioned the tie strength with their classmates was not that high.

Xun et al. (2017) stated that Chinese people, who also have a collectivistic culture, add value to having less contacts who are more meaningful compared to having many contacts who are less meaningful. This did not clearly come forward in the conversations with the Eritreans. They mostly said they wanted to meet many new contacts. However, not clear from this research is if their connectivity, so the amount of ties, is very different from Dutch people. In addition it was not specifically asked what type of contact they valued more.

Also does it come forward which people know each other. Social support was mentioned when the participants told which person was most important for them. This could be a husband or wife, a close friend with an Eritrean background, but also a Dutch person they received support from.

4.6 MEETING PLACES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Interesting in building a network is how the participants meet new people and how they have met the people they already know. In this part there is a description of these places and opportunities. Humanitas is a place which was mentioned by all of the participants. Here they received guidance and met their coach for practicalities and their language coach. To practise their Dutch they did went to a café for language. Another meeting place was the church. In Eritrea everyone has a religion, Christianity or Islamic (Pharros, 2016; Ferrier et al., 2017; Amnesty International, 2018). A part of the Eritreans is Christian and those went to a church in the Netherlands. Here they would meet new people and invite them for the traditional coffee of Eritrea. To make this coffee takes some time and

this time could be used in a way to really talk with people and get to know them. The participants who were Muslim did not mention a specific meeting place for their religion.

As already mentioned in the previous part, their school and voluntary work were also opportunities to meet new people. Many went to Alfa college, but some also went to Hanze or the University of Groningen. Also sports were an opportunity for meeting new people. So, these are all more structural meeting places. In the theoretical framework different initiatives and organisations for refugees are mentioned. Some of these initiatives and organisations were not really known among the participants. These specific initiatives are therefore not always seen as a bridging tie (Liu et al., 2017).

In Eritrea the way of meeting new people happens more spontaneous, for example on a party or gathering or through your friends. They are not really used to going to a specific activity to meet new people.

Male, 28

"Yes then yes.. many people.. when I want to meet Dutch people.. then I have to go to my hobby.. Or to the library, but in the library everyone is working on their own study.. […] .. You cannot meet new people in the library, everyone is working on their own study.. it is not easy".

In this part the tie strength is different between for example people they met in Humanitas and people they met in school. The tie strength of Humanitas was often higher. The initiatives contribute to higher connectivity of the network, because through these initiatives people meet new people.

4.7 THE POSITION OF WOMEN

Something what also came up in the interviews, was the position of women. Interesting was the fact that the theme of differences between males and females was only a subject in the interviews with the females, and this was not mentioned by the males.

In behaviour there were also differences. Males seem to take more initiative to get in contact with new people. For example, two of them mentioned that they would approach people on the street to talk with them and practise their Dutch. Another male would go to a supermarket to drink coffee with Dutch people. The women did not mention something like this. However, it cannot be concluded that they just did not mention it, or that they did not do such a thing. Besides that it was clear that during the interviews the males spoke more openly and freely. This could also have to do with the fact that the males did speak more Dutch and that with two interviews with woman a male interpreter was present.

Gender roles are more traditional in Eritrea (Ferrier et al., 2015; Pharros, 2016). One woman mentioned that gender roles came forward in the way they cooked. That women cook dinner for the men when he comes home from a day of work. Also the women know how to cook traditional Eritrean foods, but the men do not always know this.

Female, 24

"Yes, women make.. for example when I have, for example I have work.. my husband also.. for example when we come home, he is sitting down.. I go.. cooking.. yes, it is different, in the Netherlands it is: we cook together, right?"

This quote does not only show that woman cook more often, but this also shows that they are more the caretaker in a family. However are these gender roles also shifting, not only by those who arrived in the Netherlands, but also back in Eritrea.

The key informant also mentioned that there is a possibility of domestic violence in the marriages, although it is not known in how many cases. The women however now know that it is possible to ask for a divorce in the Netherlands. Therefore they get divorced. This shows that the woman has more power when being in the Netherlands. However also mentioned was the fact that to Eritreans it seems like men and women in the Netherlands are completely equal. This is not always the case, but since the difference with Eritrea is that big it seems to them as if this is true.

To go back to the conceptual model, it becomes clear that gender takes a big role, since it is part of the theme. In addition, the tie strength and connectivity is influenced when being a woman. The more traditional gender roles do influence the contact Eritreans have sometimes result in the fact that women stay more at home or look after children, which could result in lesser contacts but also in being more reserved in contacts. However what is mentioned earlier, these more traditional gender roles are becoming less traditional, so to state something about this should be done carefully.

4.7 EXPERIENCES AND BARRIERS IN THE BUILDING OF A NETWORK

The themes above were more deductive of nature. This section is a theme with inductive codes among which other themes are structured. It is about what the status holders have experienced when they built their network and how their contact with people is. The different themes are language, time management, cultural aspects and a realistic fear.

This situations do not always have to be seen as bad or barriers, but can also create interesting situations.

4.7.1 LANGUAGE

The first thing mentioned, and also mentioned many times, was the fact that there is a language barrier between the Eritrean people and the Dutch people. This does not only mean that the step to approach a Dutch person, compared to an Eritrean person, is larger, but that the contact with a Dutch person is also different. Mentioned was that some were afraid to make mistakes in the Dutch language. They would feel shy until they knew they were able to speak it fluently. Several participants also excused themselves for not being able to speak fluently Dutch.

Still many were learning the Dutch language and some of the interviews were with an interpreter. The language Tigrinya, the most spoken language in Eritrea, does not look like the Dutch language. It also has a different writing as can be seen in figure 5, to have an impression.

They also mentioned that because of the language barrier they have different kind of conversations. One male explained that he did not feel himself able to express himself in Dutch as well as in Tigrinya, and that therefore it felt as if he did not have enough knowledge. Even though he knew many things, he was not able to tell about them in Dutch.

A few males approached people on the streets to practise their Dutch. One male would drink coffee in the supermarket to talk with people. Others would go to the language cafes for practising Dutch.

Name	IPA	e	u	i	a	ie	ɨ/-	o
pa	p	ፐ	ፑ	ፒ	ፓ	ፔ	ፕ	ፖ
ba	b	በ	ቡ	ቢ	ባ	ቤ	ብ	ቦ
pha	p'	ፀ	ፁ	ፂ	ፃ	ፄ	ፅ	ፆ
ma	m	መ	ሙ	ሚ	ማ	ሜ	ም	ሞ
fa	f	ፈ	ፉ	ፊ	ፋ	ፌ	ፍ	ፎ
va	v	ቨ	ቩ	ቪ	ቫ	ቬ	ቭ	ቮ
wa	w	ወ	ዉ	ዊ	ዋ	ዌ	ው	ዎ
ta	t	ተ	ቱ	ቲ	ታ	ቴ	ት	ቶ
da	d	ደ	ዱ	ዲ	ዳ	ዴ	ድ	ዶ
tha	t'	ጠ	ጡ	ጢ	ጣ	ጤ	ጥ	ጦ
tsa	ts'	ጸ	ጹ	ጺ	ጻ	ጼ	ጽ	ጾ
na	n	ነ	ኑ	ኒ	ና	ኔ	ን	ኖ
sa	s	ሰ	ሱ	ሲ	ሳ	ሴ	ስ	ሶ
za	z	ዘ	ዙ	ዚ	ዛ	ዜ	ዝ	ዞ
ra	r	ረ	ሩ	ሪ	ራ	ሬ	ር	ሮ
la	l	ለ	ሉ	ሊ	ላ	ሌ	ል	ሎ
ca	ʧ	ቸ	ቹ	ቺ	ቻ	ቼ	ች	ቾ
ja	ʤ	ጀ	ጁ	ጂ	ጃ	ጄ	ጅ	ጆ
cha	ʧ	ፏ	ፏ	ፏ	ፏ	ፏ	ፏ	ፏ

Name	IPA	e	u	i	a	ie	ɨ/-	o
nya	ɲ	ኘ	ኙ	ኚ	ኛ	ኜ	ኝ	ኞ
sha	ʃ	ሸ	ሹ	ሺ	ሻ	ሼ	ሽ	ሾ
zha	ʒ	ዠ	ዡ	ዢ	ዣ	ዤ	ዥ	ዦ
ya	j	የ	ዩ	ዪ	ያ	ዬ	ይ	ዮ
ka	k	ከ	ኩ	ኪ	ካ	ኬ	ክ	ኮ
kwa	kw	ኰ		ኲ	ኳ	ኴ	ኵ	
ga	g	ገ	ጉ	ጊ	ጋ	ጌ	ግ	ጎ
gwa	gw	ጐ		ጕ	ጓ	ጔ		
qa	k'	ቀ	ቁ	ቂ	ቃ	ቄ	ቅ	ቆ
qwa	kw'	ቈ		ቊ	ቋ	ቌ	ቍ	
kxa	x	ኸ	ኹ	ኺ	ኻ	ኼ	ኽ	ኾ
kxwa	xw	ዀ		ዂ	ዃ	ዄ	ዅ	
qha	ʁ'	ቐ	ቑ	ቒ	ቓ	ቔ	ቕ	ቖ
qhwa	ʁw	ቘ		ቚ	ቛ	ቜ	ቝ	
hha	ħ	ሐ	ሑ	ሒ	ሓ	ሔ	ሕ	ሖ
ʿä	ʕ	ዐ	ዑ	ዒ	ዓ	ዔ	ዕ	ዖ
ʾä	ʔ	አ	ኡ	ኢ	ኣ	ኤ	እ	ኦ
ha	h	ሀ	ሁ	ሂ	ሃ	ሄ	ህ	ሆ

Figure 6 – Tygrinya script (Omniglot, 2018)

Male, 34

"Yes, well.. for integration language is the.. I always say.. language is the key for integration.. we have to learn good Dutch.. then we can know more.. how the people live here.. so.. in school, yes, we go to school.. but that is not enough.. we go home from school directly.. but we speak mainly Tygrinya.. we have no contact with you, so, how are we able to improve our Dutch? "

Also their language coach could help them improve their language. Not only is language an important part of the test for integration, it also helps them in contact with Dutch people. One male expressed the importance of learning the Dutch language and to practise this enough.

It is clear that speaking the same language will improve the tie strength between actors, but there were also participants who were very close with Dutch people, even though there was a language barrier (Granovetter, 1974). Social support was also gained from both Dutch and Eritrean people. One participant mentioned that he achieved a lot of support from a Dutch man and that they would cry together when he was not feeling all right.

4.7.2 TIME MANAGEMENT

Another difference between the Eritrean and Dutch culture which is important in building networks is the difference in time planning. The biggest difference in this is the fact that in Eritrean culture time is less strict. According to them the time planning in the Netherlands is very strict, since they are not used to having a time planning. Making use of an agenda is something they really had to learn. One participant told that the concept of having free time, was new to them. To have special time to relax and do nice things is not something they are used to, since they do not really plan their time or activities.

First of all they had to get used to the fact that for every activity is a specific time and that being on time for an appointment is valued in the Netherlands. At the ending of an interview one participant mentioned that this is something which is good to know for Dutch people who are in contact with Eritrean people. To have some patience and to understand that this is something they still have to get used to.

Also something different in meeting with Dutch people is that you cannot just come by without an appointment. In Eritrea this is very normal. People just come by without notifying the other person you are coming. They just step by a friend or family. When someone comes to you it is very rude to say that you do not have time. So you always make time when an Eritrean person comes over. Besides that you always have food available and offer that to an Eritrean person.

Other things according to time which were mentioned were that for a mother with a child the time was short. So she had to invest a lot of time to her son and when she was not following the Dutch lessons she wanted to spend time with her child. For her is was not possible to invest in extra time to talk with Dutch persons to practise Dutch for example.

Also were the other participants sometimes busy. Visiting friends in other cities was something only for the holiday. So, some friends they met in the asylum centre, but were placed in another city could only be seen sporadically.

Not all of the participants said they were busy. If they then also were not busy or did just not mention it, is not clear. For many Eritreans, especially the younger ones, it is important to have some sort of daytime activities. To have some structure in their week. Therefore the volunteer work and lessons are good for them, not only to learn, but also to have a more structured week.

This theme seems to be mainly about connectivity. Since they way they manage time mainly has influence on the amount of people they meet. Issues with appointment making could cause the fact that meetings among Dutch and Eritreans are less regular.

4.7.3 NEIGHBOURS

A theme, already shortly mentioned in the part about actors is neighbours. But since this theme of contact with Dutch neighbours came up in many conversations this actor has also a theme apart from that. This theme is a good example of both the language and time management differences between Dutch and Eritrean people, which will become clear in the quotation below. When their neighbours were mentioned, they told whether they had a good or bad relation with their neighbours. Some explained that, in Eritrean culture, your neighbours are important persons in your network. That they are like family, and that you see or talk to them almost every day. That is quite a difference experience in the Netherlands. Approaches with neighbours did in the first place not always end well. Some still do not really talk with their neighbours. One male however was able to improve the relationship with his neighbour.

Male, 22

" **Interpreter:** He.. a day he invited his neighbour.. at his home.. but the neighbour could not understand.. what is the invitation… he was confused, so.. that is the problem.. he did not understand the invitation.. why did he invite him.. sometimes.. but he tried to… to get to know him.. but the neighbour asked him.. what the invitation.. what the reason was of the invitation..

Participant: Yes, he said: what do you mean? [laughter] okay, sorry I guess this is a mistake

…[…]…

Participant: After that I have.. I have.. spoken to him more often.. okay, I know him, but he also comes to my house.. I also go to him.. yes.. it is.. better"

What is seen is that the tie strength with neighbours is a lot less strong than they are used to. Both the difficulty with language and time management come forward in this quote. The participant is used to just dropping by, but Dutch people are more organised. The language also seems to be a barrier in

their first contact. Interesting about this quote is that now the relationship is probably even better than between two regular Dutch neighbours, so the tie strength is stronger (Santini et al, 2015).

4.7.4 RESERVED

Something that came forward in almost all the interviews was that Eritrean people differ in many ways from the Dutch people and that therefore they had or still have to adjust to that. One of the differences is that Eritrean people are more shy, or reserved. They are able to answer a question, but have difficulty with speaking freely and asking questions to others. This is a difference compared to the Dutch, who are much more direct in conversations.

Male, 34

"Yes. Well.. I can ask questions here… I can ask questions.. I can ask, yes.. people can say, this is possible or not.. that is normal.. yes [laughter].. when I was.. in my country.. that is a little bit difficult.. I cannot ask you freely questions.. yes.. but.. here.. often I can.. everything is possible here.. almost [laughter]"

This is also expressed in the fact that they are not allowed to talk about food. They cannot talk about what they ate earlier that day. Different reasons were given to explain this reservedness, but not all the participants did know themselves why they acted that way. So it is not clear if all Eritrean persons do experience it in this way. In their culture, or tradition it is respectful not to look directly into the eye of the person you speak with. This is even more true when the person is older. This is the opposite of the Dutch way. In some way this is part of the collectivistic culture in which the opinion of the group is more important than the individual's opinion. The Netherlands are more individualistic, where people value that you give your opinion and speak up for yourself (Hofstede, 1974). This goes as far as expressed in the saying in Tigrinya: 'kaluot zegedu ahlifom iyom', which means something such as: others have experienced worse. This shows that they do not always speak their mind, even if they are not doing fine (Pharros, 2016).

So, some of the ways how the Eritrean people are, are related to their culture, but also some characteristics have more to do with the their past and the regime they have lived under. A way in which this not being able to talk about things is that they cannot talk about food. They were not able to tell what they had the day before for dinner. Also were they not allowed to eat in the streets. This was only possible at home. This shows that in their daily activities they were restricted in what to do and say and what not. Something that was also mentioned by one of the participants is that they do not speak openly because of their childhood.

Something told by the key informant was that this fear or stress they experience, is not only a thing that comes from their past, but that this fear is real, even when they are in the Netherlands. Diaspora of the government are present outside of Eritrea and they have to pay taxes to the government. They are threatened on the streets to pay this. In Groningen such a story has not been heard of yet, but this has happened in the bigger cities. They are able to be threatened because this has implications for the Eritrean if they are willing to ever go back to Eritrea. But when they still have family in Eritrea, they also have to be afraid. This was also mentioned by Ferrier et al. (2017).

Male, 28

"You see, in our country it is different, first of all we have the culture and secondly we are not able to speak openly.. because of the government.. it is not possible.. when you say what you want you could be arrested.. and because of that we have some sort of stress"

[…]

"Yes I have to change.. what you feel in here [points at himself].. is.. stays with you.. it takes time to change.. "

This makes a difference when talking to Eritrean people in the street. When they meet an Eritrean person they have to speak with them. In the first place because it is rude not to talk to another Eritrean person, but there is also some kind of check. This to make sure it is not a spy of the government. This reality does not improve the opportunities to get in contact with new people. In this case especially the tie strength between Eritreans.

Not only do they experience fear and stress, but also do they feel anger. One male expressed that they often have stress because of personal problems and that therefore they can sometimes react angry. This is not part of the culture, but only because of the problems they face. Another characteristic of Eritrean status holders is the fact that they are governable, since for a long time they did not have a choice, but now they suddenly have so many that they follow decisions of others.

This being reserved has also implications for how their network develops. The Eritreans who are interviewed were already more open and would have had a different network than those who still have difficulty with connecting to Dutch people. It is difficult to understand how this being reserved exactly works and how to deal with it.

Key informant

"That with some people it is something they hide behind, but that you than also stay.. in the own culture and that.. it is not that I am against that, but you do see that those people are not happy and that they do not pass the language test and that they call each other and help each other and are busy in their own language.. fear to the outside world and that I see that there are people like: yes, that is present but I also do want to have contact with other people.. yes.. [these people] seem to be feeling better. And they also seem to pick up language and culture quicker. But that is a choice."

A question to ask is if it is necessary for Eritreans to connect with Dutch persons. Total assimilation is not always needed to integrate, but some sort of adaptation is needed to be part of the Dutch society (Favell, 1998; Goksel, 2018). Mentioned by several participants was that when you want to learn Dutch, but also understand the Dutch people only lessons are not enough. Therefore contact with Dutch persons is important. Also mentioned by the volunteer was the fact that it seemed that Eritreans who had the courage to step outside of the network of Eritreans and also connect with the Dutch seemed more happy.

This theme has especially influence on the tie strength. When being more reserved it is difficult to have very deep relations. Some feelings or topics are not to be spoken about. This mainly because of a fear that is felt because of the past, but also a still existing realistic fear.

5 DISCUSSION

In this research there is searched for an answer on the question: In which way do Eritrean status holders (>18) experience building a new network in the city of Groningen? The theoretical framework of this question was displayed in the conceptual model. The several concepts of this model were used to present the first themes of the results namely; perceptions of the Netherlands, urban and rural areas, actors in the network, meeting places and opportunities and the position of woman.

The themes emerged from the data are: perceptions of the Netherlands, urban and rural areas, meeting places or opportunities and person/actors in the network and the position of women. The theme barriers and experiences in building a network had the following subthemes: language, time management, neighbours and reserved.

The main question is divided into the following sub questions:

5.1 WHO ARE THE ACTORS IN THE NETWORK OF THE STATUS HOLDERS FROM ERITREA?

Figure 5 shows an overview of actors who appeared in many mental maps. What is interesting about these actors is the fact that, apart from some family members or a partner, most of the actors in their network they have only met since the time they arrived in the Netherlands. So the actors in their network are still quite new in their network. Their network would therefore probably still evolve in the following years. People participants would like to add were mainly Dutch people to practise their Dutch with, but also people to help them find work.

5.2 IN WHICH WAY ARE THESE NETWORKS STRUCTURED?

'Structure' in this context refers to way in which the network of participants could be divided into several subgroups. So, for example, people met through a particular organisation. Also it was seen that there were groups of Eritrean friends, these were not met through a particular organisation. On their mental map many participants made a division between Dutch and Eritrean persons they knew.

Now in this research is chosen for a egocentric approach. The interactions of the actors of the network would probably have been more rich when use had been made of the sociocentric approach, since this approach has a focus more on a network and all of its interactions in comparison to the viewpoint of only one person. The structure would in that case have been more clear, because with knowledge from others in the network more subgroups and structures could be identified. This was however with the time available not possible. In this research are now the experiences of different people with different networks taken into account, which gives a broader view.

An interesting part about the structure is the fact that they know mainly Eritrean people or if they also have a network of Dutch people. As mentioned in the results, it is sometimes needed to step out of the Eritrean network to connect with the Dutch people. Also is the structure of the Eritrean part of the

network different from the Dutch part, since Dutch people are more individualistic compared to the collectivistic culture of the Eritreans (Hofstede, 1974).

A person from Humanitas was often also known by others. Their own language coach or someone who visited them in the asylum shelter was only known by the participant. So there was overlap between the different networks presented in this research. This person could also be a bridging tie.

5.3 IN WHICH WAY EXPERIENCE THE STATUS HOLDERS SOCIAL SUPPORT FROM THEIR NETWORK?

Eritreans being reserved did sometimes also mean that they would not share all of their feelings with friends or family. Their feeling of social support could also be influenced by this fact. However, they mentioned they receive support from each other and from Dutch people. As one participant mentioned he was able to cry together with a Dutch man from which he received a lot of support. Language and cultural implications do not always seem to be a barrier in receiving support from Dutch people.

What also needs to be taken into account is the fact that their network is still developing, so that therefore the support they receive will probably increase in time when they make more contact and deepen their friendships. Also as mentioned by one participant, he wanted to improve his Dutch to be able to help other people, since now he felt as if he was mostly receiving help. This since migrants often need a special type of social support, because they still have to figure out the rules and system of the new country (Ralston et al., 2012).

5.4 WHAT INITIATIVES ARE THERE FOR REFUGEES AND WHAT IS THEIR ROLE IN BUILDING A NETWORK?

The theoretical framework provides an overview of the initiatives which are available for refugees to connect and to meet new people. All of the participants were familiar with Humanitas, but many of the other initiatives were less known by the refugees or not mentioned at all. It seems that they did not always use all the initiatives available for refugees in the city.

What is also possible is that since they are more shy and have more difficulty with starting a conversation, they have trouble with participating in activities. However in Eritrean culture they are more used to meeting people just through their community and not especially with a specific initiative. As one participant mentioned he was aware that to meet Dutch people, or for him: the Dutch way of meeting new people, is through an activity. What also seems more common is the fact that, when they have met people, that they invite them into their house for traditional coffee or dinner. So the inviting of people is very important in making contact.

To come back to the conceptual model, it is questionable if all of these initiatives can be seen as bridging ties. Humanitas was often an example of a bridging tie. However as seen before there are other options for bridging ties. So did several participants have another Eritrean person, who was

more fluent in Dutch and lived here longer, as a bridging tie. This bridging tie does not always have to go through an organisation, but can also we achieved from their already existing network. Not only did this person introduce them to new people, but this person could also help them with issues according to the Dutch system. This is similar to the experiences of the Mexican migrants who received information about the medical system in the US (Ralston et al., 2012).

5.5 IN WHICH WAY DIFFER THE EXPERIENCES BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN?

What is seen in the results is the fact that there are more traditional gender roles between men and women. This means that the woman do stay at home more, especially when they have children. This has implications for the people they meet. In addition, the men seemed to be more open and more able to introduce themselves to new people. This could also evolve from the fact that gender roles are still more traditional (Ferrier et al., 2015; Pharros, 2016).

The division in male and female in the Netherlands is now 7 men out of 10 Eritreans (Ferrier et al., 2015; Pharros, 2016). Some women did come through a family reunion. This also has implications for their network. So did one male already have contacts in the Netherlands because he lived here for some time. His wife arrived later on and became part of his network. This is a difference experience compared to building a network on your own.

5.6 LIMITATIONS

Some limitations might have influenced the outcomes of the research. The first limitation is that the interviews were held in Dutch and that this is not the native language of the participants. Therefore they could not always understand the questions properly and had difficulty with expressing themselves. Besides that there is a cultural difference. A third limitation in the interpretation is that for some of the participants there was an interpreter present, he could have influenced the results. Especially in the interviews with the females this could have had an influence. The impact however is not always seen as negative but could also be positive. Since the interpreter and the participant sometimes knew each other and therefore the interpreter was able to understand the background of the participant and could fill in gaps the participant forgot to talk about. Also when discussing some themes they would come up with new examples what would not have happened when the interpreter was not present.

The persons who were interviewed were all persons who were able to speak some Dutch and wanted to participate. The people who had more fear or anxiety were, for that reason, not reached. This were also people who were at the edge of the network of Eritreans and are therefore a specific group within the population of Eritreans in Groningen. Even though their story might have been different from Eritreans who are still more inside the Eritrean network, they were also able to tell about the Eritreans who have more trouble with stepping outside their network into the Dutch world.

A theme which came up during the interviews was that they have difficulty with talking about things and are more reserved. It is therefore not clear if they told everything during the interviews or if they were able to talk about feelings.

The last limitation could have been the choice for interviews instead of group discussions. Group discussion could make talking about some difficult topics somehow easier, since they are able to talk in a more abstract way and would not really feel as if they talk about themselves. How this would work out is of course not sure, it could also be the case that these sensitive topics are more difficult to speak about when there are others present. This was also the reason why interviews were chosen in this research (Hennink et al., 2011).

6 RECOMMENDATIONS

What is seen in this research is that language, to learn the Dutch language, is crucial for building a network and in a further extend, to integrate in the Dutch society. More research could be done into how learning the Dutch language can go as quickly and smoothly as possible. Where are the problems specifically when learning the Dutch language with an Eritrean background. This could help teachers to improve their strategies in teaching Eritrean status holders.

But what was also seen that some implications with building a new network go deeper that just language. That is also has to do with culture and their past. What is interesting to gain more insight is what will trigger the status holders to also become part of the Dutch network and what will help them to integrate. To improve both of these issues it is of importance that there is enough contact between Dutch and Eritrean people. Humanitas and the different language cafes are already of great importance for this connection. Interesting would be to see which organisations could besides organise events which would fit the Eritrean persons.

This research now has mainly focussed on the Eritrean experience. But for a connection it is also important how Dutch people interact with Eritrean persons. During this research it became clear that not all Dutch people know about Eritrea and the current situation. There could also be done more research about the view of Dutch people on the Eritrean status holders and how they can help each other. For Dutch people who get into contact with Eritreans it is good to know something about their background. In addition it is important to understand that Eritreans have another way of time management and that they can be somewhat reserved. These characteristics could be confused with disinterest, which is not the case.

At last there could be done more research about which role Eritreans, who are for a longer period of time in the Netherlands, play for Eritreans who have just arrived in the Netherlands. What is already seen is the fact that they helped each other out with the language when serving as an interpreter of others. Interesting would be to know if they could also help out in other ways and how they could serve in assisting in the integration process of Eritreans.

7 LITERATURE

Amnesty International (2018). Amnesty international official report. The state of Human Rights 2017-18. Volgnummer. Plaats van publicatie: Amnesty International

Assefaw, B. (2006). *Conflict and the Refugee Experience : Flight, Exile, and Repatriation in the Horn of Africa.* Hampshire: Ashgate Limited Publishing

Belloni, M. (2018). Refugees and citizens: Understanding Eritrean refugees' ambivalence towards homeland politics. *International Journal of Comparative Sociology,* 00(0), 1-19

Block, K., Riggs, E., Haslam, N. (2013). *Values and Vulnerabilities, The Ethics of Research with Refugees and Asylum Seekers*. Toowong: Australian Academic Press

Clifford, N., French, S., Valentine, G. (2010). *Key methods in Geography*. Second edition. London: Sage publications

Connell, D. (2016). Refugees, Migration, and Gated Nations: The Eritrean Experience. *African Studies Review*, 59 (3), 217-225

Doreian, P., Batageli, V., Ferligoi, A., Keizar, N. (2014). Understanding large temporal networks and spatial network: Exploratoin, pattern searching, visualization and network evolution

Dupont, H. J. B. H. M., Kaplan, C.D., Verbraeck, H. T., Braama, R. V., van de Wijngaart, G. F. (2005). Killing time: drug and alcohol problems among asylum seekers in the Netherlands. *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 16, 27–36

Ferrier, J., Kahmann, M., Massink, L. (2017). *Handreiking voor ondersteuning van Eritrese nieuwkomers bij hun integratie- Jullie Nederlanders hebben voor alles een systeem*. ISBN 978-90-5830-831-3. Utrecht: Verwey-Jonker Instituut

Favell, A. (1998). *Philosophies of integration: Immigration and the idea of citizenship in France and Britain.* New York: Springer.

Fontana, A., Prokos, A.H. (2007). *The interview: from formal to postmodern*, California: Left Coast Press

Gemeente Groningen (2017). *Vluchtelingen, Asielzoekers en Statushouders*, 6071573, Groningen: Gemeente Groningen

Goksel, G.U. (2018). *Integration of immigrants and the theory of recognition. "Just Integration"*. Cham: Springer International Publishing AG

Granovetter, M. (1974). Granovetter Replies to Gans. *American Journal of Sociology,* 80(2), 527-529

Groningen verwelkomt (2018). *Groningen verwelkomt vluchtelingen*. Visited on 16-03-2018 via http://www.groningenverwelkomt.nl/nl/

Hennink, M., Hutter, I., Bailey, A. (2011). *Qualitative research methods.* Sage: London

Hirdes, J. P., Scott, K. A. (1998). Social Relations in a Chronic Care Hospital: A Whole Network Study of Patients, Family and Employees. *Social Networks*, 20,119-133

Hofstede, G. (1984). National Cultures Revisited. *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*,

Hsieh, H., Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis. *Qualitative health research*, 15 (9), 1277-1288

Humanitas (2018). *Maatschappelijke begeleiding vluchtelingen*. Visited on 14-03-2018 via https://www.humanitas.nl/afdeling/Groningen_Stad/activiteiten/maatschappelijke-begeleiding-vluchtelingen/

Jansen, B.J. (2015). 'Digging Aid' : The Camp as an Option in East and the Horn of Africa. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 29(2), 149-165

Jasmijn (2018). *Multicultureel Vrouwencentrum te Groningen*, visited on 16-03-2018 via https://www.jasmijn.info/

Juneman, A., Fromm, N., Scherer, N. (2017). *Fortress Europe? Challenges and Faillures of Migration and Asylum Policies*. Wiesbaden: Springer Fachmedien

Keim, S., Klarner, A., Bernard, L. (2013). Tie strength and family formation: Which personal relationships are influential?. *Personal relationships*, 20, 462–478

Keown-Bomar, J. (2004). *Kinship networks among Hmong-American Refugees*. New York: LFB Scholarly Publishing LLC

Korac, M. (2003). Integration and How We Facilitate It: A Comparative Study of the Settlement Experiences of Refugees in Italy and the Netherlands. *Sociology*, 37 (1), 51-68

Legates, R. T., Stout, F. (2011). *The city reader*. Fifth edition. London: Routledge

Liu, W., Sidhu, A., Beacom, A.M., Valente, T.W. (2017). Social Network Theory. *The International Encyclopedia of Media Effects*, 1-12

Mengi, T.A. (2018). Refugee Protections from Below: Smuggling in the Eritrea-Ethiopia Context, *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 676, (1) 57-76

May, T. (2002). *Qualitative research in action*. London : SAGE Publications Ltd

Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid (2018). Hoofdlijnen veranderopgave inburgering, 2018-0000117315, Den Haag: Ministerie van Sociale Zaken en Werkgelegenheid

Mulder, C. H., Smits, A. (2013). Inter-generational ties, financial transfers and home-ownership support, *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, 28 (1), 95-112

OECD (2016). *Making Integration Work: Refugees and others in need of protection*, OECD Publishing

Omniglot (2018). *Tigrinya*. Visited on 29-6-2018 via https://www.omniglot.com/writing/tigrinya.htm

Ontheworldmap (2018). *Eritrea*. Visited on 16-07-2018 via http://ontheworldmap.com/eritrea/

Pharros (2016). *"Van ver gekomen" een verkenning naar het welzijn en de gezondheid van Eritrese vluchtelingen*. Utrecht: Pharros

Platts-Fowler, D., Robinson, D. (2015). A Place for Integration: Refugee Experiences in Two English Cities. *Population Space Place*, 21, 476–491

Ralston, M. L., Esca, X. (2012). Networks Matter: Male Mexican Migrants' Use of Hospitals. *Population Res Policy Rev*, 31, 321-337

Rijksoverheid (2018). *Aanbevolen richtlijnen*. Visited on 8-7-2018 via https://www.communicatierijk.nl/vakkennis/r/rijkswebsites/aanbevolen-richtlijnen/taalniveau-b1

Santini, Z.I. Koyanagi, A., Tyrovolas, S., Mason, C., Haro, J. M. (2015). The association between social relationships and depression: A systematic review. *Journal of affective disorders*, 175, 53-65

Trell, M.E., & van Hoven, B. (2010). Making sense of place: exploring creative and (inter)active research methods with young people. *Fennia*, 188 (1), 91–104

Tuti'ca, A., Wieseb, H. (2015). Reconstructing Granovetter's network theory. *Social Networks*, 43, 136–148

Van Liempt, I., Bilger, V. (2009). *The Ethics of Migration Research Methodology: Dealing with Vulnerable Migrants*. Brighton: Sussex Academic

Vluchtelingendata (2018). *Toelichting van definities.* Visited on 14-03-2018 via https://www.vluchtelingendata.nl/inzichten/toelichting-van-definities/

Vluchtelingenwerk (2018). *Welkom bij vluchtelingenwerk Noord-Nederland.* Visited on 4-5-2018 via https://www.vluchtelingenwerk.nl/noordnederland

Vrijwilligers Groningen (2018). *Kennisnetwerk multicultureel Groningen*. Visited on 16-03-2018 via https://www.vrijwilligersgroningen.nl/nieuws/439/over-kennisnetwerk-multicultureel-groningen

West, E., Barron, D. N., Dowsett, J., Newton, J. (1999). Hierarchies and cliques in the social networks of health care professionals: implications for the design of dissemination strategies. *Social Science and Medicine* , 48, 633-646

Wij Groningen (2018). *Taal*. Visited on 16-03-2018 via https://wij.groningen.nl/wij-in-de-wijk/wij-selwerd-paddepoel/taal/taal

Woods, M. (2005). *Rural geography*. London: Sage

Xun Lin & Hua Huang (2017). Connectivity and college students' participation in micro-charity: a qualitative study in China. *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, 22(4), 419-429

APPENDIX 1- CONSENT FORM

Informed consent

My name is Monica Moorlag and I came to you to conduct a study that is part of the master Population Studies of the Population Research centre of the University of Groningen. The research is about the experiences of Eritrean status holders when building a network in Groningen.

The interview may take around 50-60 minutes. In conducting the interview, we would like to take notes and record your responses if you kindly allow. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any point without giving any reason. However, we value your opinion and views that you will share with us. There is no right or wrong answer. If you feel uncomfortable with any question, you can let us know and can choose not to answer that question.

For my thesis, I will anonymise the information that is obtained during the interview. The information you share will be confidentially and your privacy will be guaranteed.

I would really appreciate it if you want to spend some of your time for this research.

Do you agree to participate in the research?

YES **NO**

When the participant agrees the form can be signed and the interview can continue.

Name of the respondent: **Signature of the Respondent:**

Interviewed by: **Signature of the Interviewer:**

Checked by:

Supervisor's name: **Date and Signature:**

Dutch version

Geïnformeerd consent

Mijn naam is Monica Moorlag en ik zou graag dit interview houden als onderdeel van mijn onderzoek. Dit onderzoek is onderdeel van de master Population studies aan de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. Het onderzoek gaat over de ervaringen van status houders uit Eritrea bij het opbouwen van een netwerk in Groningen. Dit wordt gedaan door middel van interviews. Deze interviews beginnen met het maken van een mental map, aan de hand hiervan zal het interview verder gaan.

Het interview zal ongeveer 50-60 minuten bedragen. Ik zou graag het interview opnemen en notities maken als u hier toestemming voor geeft. Uw medewerking is volledig vrijwillig en u kunt stoppen op elk moment zonder reden. Maar ik waardeer uw input en mening, daarom hoop ik dat u mee zou willen doen aan het onderzoek. Er zijn geen goede of foute antwoorden. Wanneer u zich niet comfortabel voelt bij een vraag, geef dit vooral aan.

De informatie die wordt verkregen door dit interview zal niet met iemand anders worden gedeeld en uw privacy zal worden gewaarborgd.

Ik zou het erg waarderen wanneer u uw tijd zou willen besteden aan het meedoen aan dit onderzoek. Gaat u hiermee akkoord?

Ja **Nee**

Wanneer de deelnemer instemt kan het formulier ondertekend worden en kan het interview plaatsnemen.

Naam van de participant: **Handtekening van participant:**

Geïnterviewd door: **Handtekening van interviewer:**

Gecontroleerd door:

Naam van begeleider: **Datum en handtekening:**

APPENDIX 2- INTERVIEW GUIDES

INTERVIEW GUIDE ERITREAN STATUS HOLDER

SHORT INTRODUCTION

Thank you very much for attending to this research. In short it is about how status holders from Eritrea experience building a new network in Groningen.

signing the consent form

INTRODUCING QUESTIONS

Age:

Part of Eritrea:

Can you tell me for how long you have been in the Netherlands now?

How do you experience the Netherlands so far?

MENTAL MAP

First we will start with making a mental map. This is a drawing, in any style you like, to show me how you see your network. You can include any person you want, but at least include the persons who live in Groningen.

making the mental map

MORE IN-DEPTH QUESTIONS

Overview

Can you describe for me which persons you included in the mental map?

Can you describe for me why you included them?

Tie strength

What do these persons mean to you?

Which persons do you feel most connected with? /Who are your best friends?

How often do you meet with these persons? (In person/ text / call / mail)

For how long have you known these person?

Social support/ connectedness

When you do not feel so well, who would you turn to?

Why would you choose this person?

When you don't understand something for example paperwork or something about the Dutch system, who would you turn to?

Why would you choose this person?

Connectivity

How are the person in your network connected with each other? Do they know each other?

Is it okay if I ask questions about your country of origin (Eritrea)?

Are there persons in your country of origin in your network? Do you keep in touch with them?

Are there differences in the contact between Eritrean people and Dutch people?

What should Dutch people know when having contact with Eritrean people?

THE INFLUENCE OF INITIATIVES

What kind of initiatives do you participate in?

Who have you met through this initiative?

What kind of activities organised for refugees do you participate in organised for refugees?

What kind of other organisations do you have met people through?

Can you describe for me how you meet people through other organisations?

How often do you meet these people you've met through all these activities/organisations?

CONCLUDING QUESTIONS

Which persons would you like to add to your network?

Is there anything else you would like to add, which we haven't discussed yet?

Do you have any questions left?

Thank you very much for the interview!

It is possible that the status holder is more fluent in Dutch. Therefore there is also made a translation in Dutch. When the status holder is able to speak Dutch this interview guide will be used.

Welkom! Heel erg bedankt dat u mee wilt doen dit onderzoek.

ondertekenen formulier

INTRODUCERENDE VRAGEN

Voor hoe lang bent u al in Nederland?

Hoe bevalt het hier tot nu toe?

Kun je kort omschrijven hoe je tijd hier ongeveer verlopen is?

Leeftijd:

Deel van Eritrea:

MENTAL MAP

We beginnen het interview met het maken van een tekening van uw netwerk. U mag op dit papier, in welke stijl of vorm dan ook, uw netwerk tekenen. Wilt u in elk geval uw netwerk in Groningen hierop afbeelden? Daarbuiten mag natuurlijk ook, maar Groningen is het belangrijkste.

tekenen van mental map

Overview

Kunt u voor me omschrijven welke personen hier getekend zijn?

Familie // vrienden // kennissen // coach // buren // (vrijwilligers)werk

Kunt u voor me omschrijven waarom deze personen zijn getekend?

Kunt u omschrijven wat voor nationaliteit de mensen in uw netwerk hebben?

Tie strength

Wat betekenen deze personen voor u?

Met welke mensen heeft u de sterkste band? Wie zou u omschrijven als vrienden? Waarom?

Hoe vaak ziet u deze mensen? En op welke manier (in person/ berichtjes / bellen/ mailen)?

Social support/ connectedness

Wanneer het even niet zo goed gaat, met wie gaat u dan praten/afspreken?

Waarom zou u deze mensen kiezen?

Wanneer er iets is wat u niet begrijpt, bijvoorbeeld papierwerk of hoe bepaalde dingen werken, naar wie zou u toegaan?

Waarom specifiek deze mensen?

Connectivity

Hoe zijn de personen in uw netwerk onderling met elkaar verbonden? Kennen ze elkaar?

Met welke mensen uit Eritrea heeft u nog contact? Waar bestaat dit contact uit?

In welk opzicht verschilt het opbouwen van een netwerk in Nederland van dat in Eritrea?

Hoe verschilt het opbouwen/onderhouden van een netwerk met Nederlanders van Eritreeërs?

Wat is belangrijk voor Nederlanders om te weten in contact met Eritreeërs?

De invloed van initiatieven/ organisaties

In wat voor soort activiteiten gaat u weleens meegedaan?

Vrijwilligerswerk // bibliotheek // Humanitas // link050 // Groningen verwelkomt vluchtelingen //

Welke nieuwe mensen heeft u ontmoet door deze activiteiten?

In wat voor soort activiteiten die waren georganiseerd voor vluchtelingen heeft u weleens meegedaan?

Welke nieuwe mensen heeft u ontmoet door deze activiteiten?

Kunt u voor mij omschrijven of u door andere organisaties nieuwe mensen heeft ontmoet?

Hoe is het contact met deze mensen die u heeft ontmoet door deze activiteiten organisaties? (Hoe vaak/ type contact)

AFSLUITENDE VRAGEN

Welke personen zou u nog graag toevoegen aan uw netwerk? Waarom?

Is er nog iets wat u zou willen bespreken wat nog niet besproken is?

Heeft u nog vragen?

INTERVIEW GUIDE KEY INFORMANT

This interview will most certainly be with a Dutch person, therefore the interview guide will also be in Dutch.

KORTE INTRODUCTIE

Welkom, heel erg bedankt dat u mee wilt doen aan dit onderzoek!

ondertekenen formulier

DEEL 1

Wat houdt uw werk precies in? Wat is uw functie?

Kunt u kort omschrijven voor wat voor organisatie u werkt?

Hoe lang werkt u al voor deze organisatie?

DEEL 2

Waarmee helpt u de vluchtelingen?

Wat leren de vluchtelingen als ze hier komen?

Hoe ontmoeten de vluchtelingen nieuwe mensen door deze organisatie?

Welke nieuwe mensen ontmoeten de vluchtelingen hier?

Hoe is het contact met deze nieuwe mensen?

Ontmoeten ze door deze contacten weer andere mensen?

Wat zijn volgens u de grootste barrieres voor het opbouwen van een 47omfort voor deze specifieke groep?

Wat leren vluchtelingen hier wat ze kunnen gebruiken voor het opdoen en onderhouden van contacten?

CONCLUDERENDE VRAGEN

Is er nog iets wat u zou willen toevoegen?

Heeft u nog verdere suggesties?

Hoe ziet u de toekomst van de organisatie?

CODE BOOK

Code	Description
Perceptions of the Netherlands	
Freedom of speech	The freedom and freedom of speech is very special and new to the status holders
Weather	The weather is not always perceived as good. It is cold and unsure.
Discrimination	One participant mentioned that discrimination was happening at school
Urban and rural areas	
Difference countryside and city in Eritrea	On the countryside and in the city, there are differences in the culture
Difference countryside and city in the Netherlands	One participant mentioned that there is a difference in the experience in the streets. In a village people greet each other and in Groningen nobody does.
Born in a city	One participant mentioned she was less shy because she was from the city
Meeting places/opportunities	
Library	This was mentioned by several participants, but they never used this space to meet new people, since everybody is focused on their own studies
Voluntary work	Many status holders did some kind of voluntary work to improve their Dutch and to learn more about the Netherlands
Language bar/pub (taalcafé)	This is a place where status holders can go to practise their Dutch with Dutch persons.
Asylum centre	People, both Dutch people who visited the asylum centre and Eritrean people who were also refugees in the asylum centre
Church	The status holders who are Christian and go to a church do meet new people in their church.
Sports / soccer / running	Some status holders practised sports and did meet new people through this. Sports was also mentioned as a good activity for Dutch and Eritrean people to get in contact with each other.
Hanze	A few participants did the program on the Hanze for newly arrived people.
Rijksuniversiteit Groningen	A few participants studied language lessons on the Rug.
Alfa college	Almost all of the participants went to the alfa college for language lessons. Later on they also had other lessons here.
Humanitas	Through Humanitas the status holders met their coaches, but also other Eritreans.
CAK	An organisation which helps with the translation of laws and regulations.
Approaching people in the street	Some status holders approached Dutch persons in the street to practise their Dutch.
Introduce properly	One participant was very aware that when he wanted to approach people he had to introduce himself properly. Otherwise people would question the fact why he had approached them.
Activity	One participant had the idea to share Eritrean and Dutch culture on an event // when the Eritrean know there is an activity, they would come more easy
Gathering	Woman gather together as part of an initiative to meet with each other and receive language lessons. But also to do nice things.

Persons in their network	
Asylum centre	People, both Dutch people who visited the asylum centre and Eritrean people who were also refugees in the asylum centre
Language coach	Every status holder receives a Dutch language coach to practise Dutch
Coach for practicalities	This is a person who helps the status holders with practical issues. It differs how the contact is with this person. Some only meet with them in Humanitas. Other's also go to each other's homes and become friends.
Mismatch	It is possible that there is a mismatch between the coach and status holder. The coach sometimes wants to keep the relation more formal.
Neighbours	Neighbours are very important in Eritrea and are received as family. The contact with neighbours was often mentioned.
Lawyer	One participant also included a lawyer in the network.
Family	Some participants mentioned family living in another city in the Netherlands.
Good help for me	This is a description of a Dutch man who meant a lot to one of the status holders
Eritrean person as a role model	An Eritrean person who already knows more of the Dutch language and culture is sometimes seen as a role model. Also this person is able to introduce him or her to new people.
Depth of friendships	Not all friendships are as deep as talking about feelings, the government or their past
Certificate not comparable	One participant did follow education in Eritrea but his certificate and knowledge was not comparable with the dutch system
The position of woman	
Male female division	The division between males and females is more traditional compared to the Netherlands. However this is changing. An example is that the woman cooks.
Divorce	In the Netherlands it is possible for woman to get a divorce. This was not possible in Eritrea. It is not clear how many cases this appears
Violence	It is possible that a man is violent to a woman. It is not clear for how many cases this appears.
Experiences and barriers in building a network	
Language	
Language	In many ways was expressed that the Dutch language is a difficult language
Other type of conversations	The type of and subject of conversations is different
Time planning	
Always make time for Eritrean people	When an Eritrean person comes to your house, it is not possible to say that you don't have time for them
Always have food available for Eritreans	When an Eritrean person comes over, you always have food available to give to them
Appointment making	Eritreans are not used to making appointments. They just drop by their friends or family without noticing them in advance.

Not being on time	Since in the Eritrean tradition there is not really a strict time planning, many Eritrean persons are not on time when having an appointment.
Time planning/ using a planner	When coming here they had to learn how to work with a time planning or planner
Free time	In Eritrea the status holders were not used to having free time. This has also to do with the fact that they do not really plan their time
Time is small	Being busy. This was mentioned by mainly woman that they were busy with school, but also with taking care of their children.
Holiday	This is appropriate time to visit friends and family who live outside Groningen. During a normal week there is not always time to do this.
Short time	Only being here for a short period of time
Short time	One participant mentioned he was still building his network, since he was not for a long period of time in Groningen. But he was sure that with enough time it would all work out.
Daytime activities	It is important, especially for the younger status holders, to have something to do during to day and to have some structure in their week
Reserved	
Reserved	Eritrean people are more reserved and would not ask many direct questions in a conversation. They would also not give their opinion directly.
Shyness	Eritrean people are shy and have difficulty with starting a conversation.
No eye contact	It is not respectful to look someone in the eye when talking to them. Especially when this person is older.
Compliance	When not being used to having a choice all the time, the Eritreans are governable. They buy the same clothes and furniture as their friends or family.
Anger	Eritrean people can react angry because of personal problems. // they do not want to talk or see other people when they are angry// not the case for every Eritrean person, some also react calmly
Anxiety	There is still anxiety in the status holders because of their past.
Stress	Many Eritreans experience stress because of personal problems.
Pride/stubborn	Eritrean persons have some sort of pride and therefore can be seen as stubborn in a situation.
confident	According to a participant have Dutch persons more confidence than Eritrean persons and therefore they speak more freely
Other culture	One participant mentioned that Eritreans have a different culture and that therefore their contact is different
Apologize	Many times the participant would apologize for not speaking Dutch that well
Not eating in the street	In Eritrea it is not allowed to eat in the streets. Besides that it is not allowed to talk about food.
Not talking about food	It is not allowed to talk about food. Now being in the Netherlands it is possible, but this feels sometimes still a little strange.
A realistic fear	The stress or fear they feel does not only relate to their past, but also to threat in their everyday life.
Anger	Eritrean people can react angry because of personal problems. // they do not want to talk or see other people when they are angry// not the case for every Eritrean person, some also react calmly
Anxiety	There is still anxiety in the status holders because of their past.
Stress	Many Eritreans experience stress because of personal problems.