**Method**

This project involves fieldwork conducted during 2019-2020, accompanying asylum seekers in their interactions with aid organizations and state institutions, and mapping government ministries, local authorities, and organizations that employ asylum-seeker mediators. This led to approximately 14 semi-structured in-depth interviews with mediators who arrived in Israel from Eritrea between 2007 and 2011. Of 18 asylum seekers identified as regularly-employed interpreters/mediators in Israel, we interviewed 14.

Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted. The questions dealt with the personal migration journey of the mediators and life without permanent status in Israel. Some of the questions examined the mediators’ employment experience and the professional dilemmas of their position, the complexity of the relationship between them, the organizations’ representatives and the recipients of the service and the implications of their position on their personal lives.

Interviewees were located and contacted through personal acquaintances and mediated by aid organizations. The purpose of the study was explained and they consented to the use of the interview materials. To maintain their privacy, we emphasized that we would use pseudonyms. Most of the interviews took place in quiet rooms in the organizations and lasted between sixty to ninety minutes. All but three interviews took place in Hebrew. The interviews were recorded and transcribed to identify salient patterns and produce themes, as is customary in qualitative studies.

These mediators work in seven organizations and one local authority in welfare, law, medicine, and mental health. The questions covered their personal immigration history, their lives as nonpermanent residents of Israel, and their work as mediators, including employment history, professional dilemmas, the complex relationships with organizations’ staffs and those they provide services to, and the impact on their personal lives. The interviews then underwent a narrative analysis to identify themes and categories. This research also employed a qualitative interpretive approach that views the subjects’ reality as a whole rather than in isolated segments. Focusing on what is invisible to the researchers—the unique subjectivity of the interviewees—this approach aims to depict their world through the cultural lens through which they view it and their place in it (Sabar & Shir, 2019).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| How many languages are spoken | How they learn Hebrew | Informal mediation | workplace | Time in Israel at the time of the interview | Age at the time of the interview | country of origin | Man/  female |  |
| 4 | Street | yes | NGO's | 9 | 26 | Eritrea | M | 1 |
| 4 | Street | yes | NGO's+ Government | 11 | 34 | Eritrea | M | 2 |
| 5 | School | yes | NGO's | 9 | 22 | Eritrea | M | 3 |
| 3 | Street | yes | NGO's | 9 | 22 | Eritrea | M | 4 |
| 3 | Street | yes | NGO's | 13 | 40+ | Eritrea | M | 5 |
| 2 | Street | yes | NGO's+ Government | 11 | 29 | Eritrea | M | 6 |
| 3 | Street | yes | NGO's | 10 | 29 | Ethiopia | F | 7 |
| 4 | Street | yes | NGO's | 9 | 34 | Sudan+ Eritrea | F | 8 |
| 3 | School | yes | NGO's | 42 | 56 | Ethiopia | M | 9 |
| 5 | School | yes | NGO's+ Government | 40 | 45 | Ethiopia | M | 10 |
| 2 | School | yes | NGO's | 11 | 40 | Ethiopia | F | 11 |
| 5 | School | yes | NGO's | 12 | 34 | Ethiopia | F | 12 |
| 3 | Street | yes | NGO's+ Government | 13 | 39 | Eritrea | M | 13 |
| 3 | Street | yes | NGO's | 10 |  | Eritrea | F | 14 |