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DAY-CARE ADMISSION AND TURKISH MOTHERS IN FINLAND

**Exploring the determinants of day-care admission related
decisions of immigrant Turkish mothers in Finland**

ABSTRACT

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Integration of the immigrants is one of the issues that Finland has been dealing with for some time. It has been receiving media attention and thus, some public debates are circulating. Recent debates have been concentrated also on integration and labour market participation of immigrant women, their challenges and responding public policies. According to the researches, one of the challenges is childcare responsibilities. Therefore, day-care admission of immigrants' children must be explored accordingly.

In this thesis, I focus on Turkish-born immigrant mothers who reside in Finland and who did not admit their children to day-care services within three years after the birth. I attempted to shed light on the reasons of not admitting the children under 3 years old to day-cares among the target group. The reasons of their day-care choices that keep the child at home first 3 years and the process of child related decision-making in their families is the axis of this qualitative research which is built upon problem-centred interviewing and qualitative content analysis.

Findings of the research illustrated that day-care related decisions mostly were made by women. Therefore, the preferences and concerns of Turkish mothers played pivotal role in decision-making. The preferences and concerns in which constitutes the determinants of day-care decision, were revealed as Turkish language education of child at home and norm of the community that they had engaged in Finland.

Keywords: Immigrant women, Day-care, Labour market participation, Integration

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1. INTRODUCTION

Day-cares, as “early childhood education and care (ECEC)” components, are crucial part of a well-functioning society in the world as well as in Finland. They provide systematic service for upbringing, educating and caring the children under the mandatory school age. The impact of the participation in a high-quality day-care on children’s development is undeniable. Especially, for the disadvantaged, -in this case immigrants’ children-, the positive impact of day-care admission is the strongest (Tervola, 2018). Despite the strong impact, also some negative effects were observed, especially in the case of toddlers (Brilli, 2013; Melhuish, 2015).

Day-care admission is important not only for children but also the parents, especially mothers. With this regard, labour market participation or, more generally, the integration of immigrant women and/or mothers in Finland have been receiving media attention lately. In two articles that were articulated on YLE website in 2020 and 2021, it was stated that how immigrant women struggle greatly with participating in labour market (YLE, 2020) and how the day-care choices of immigrant mothers as well as their home care allowance take-ups, lead to predictable consequences of future of their children and of mothers themselves (YLE, 2021).

The consequences of the day-care related decisions of the immigrants in Finland have been subjected by several researches and reports (CEDAW, 2014; THL, 2021; OECD, 2018; Tervola, 2018; Yaesmin, Hasamat, Brozowski, Kirchner, 2021). These researches and reports constituted the background of this thesis.

In order to be able to comprehend day-care admission related consequences, social background of the day-care choices of immigrant mothers need to be investigated further. Therefore, a path from a wider perspective into specific target group of this thesis research, which are Turkish-born immigrant mothers who reside in Finland, will be chased.

The purpose of this thesis was to develop an understanding on day-care admission related decisions of immigrant Turkish mothers in Finland. The significance of these decisions, as demonstrated in previous studies, is the fact that they have short and long-term consequences on mothers' integration to Finnish society and participation to labour market in Finland (see Previous Studies section). Therefore, this thesis aimed to investigate the reasons behind the decision that lead children of immigrant Turkish mothers in Finland stay away from early childhood education and care (ECEC) until they are 3 years old.

The work-life partner of the thesis was Familia ry. Throughout the research, I was in close contact with my supervisor in Familia ry and I shared my plans and papers with her. She thankfully assisted in theoretical level through online discussions.

2. THEMATIC FRAMEWORK

This thesis is grounded on three themes which are day care, labour market participation of women and integration.

2.1 Day care

Day-cares are crucial part of early childhood education and care (ECEC). In Finland, early childhood education and care is designed and organized within Early Childhood Education and Care Act (540/2018). According to the act, ECEC is defined as “systematic and goal-oriented entity that consists of upbringing, education and care, with a special emphasis on pedagogy” (ECEC Act 540/2018, sec.2). The provision of ECEC is performed through three types of day-cares. Centre-based activities in ECEC centres, family-based day-cares in family day-care premises and open ECEC in a suitable place. Day-care provision is organized by municipalities, joint municipal authorities or independent service providers in Finland. In the section 3 of the Act, the aims of the ECEC are stated. These aims are, briefly, to promote the well-being, lifelong learning, parity and gender equality of every child while implementing the equality in education, to carry out versatile pedagogical activities, to develop child’s interpersonal and interaction skills and to recognise the child’s needs. On the other hand, day-care availabilities are vital not only for children regardless their age, but also for mothers. Women’s participation into labour market and, in case of immigrant women, entire integration state (or progress) can be promoted by the presence of day-care services. In 2002, European Council set targets in order to achieve reaching high-quality standards of day-care accessibility, availability and affordability concerning enhancing the labour market participation of women in European Union member countries. These targets were called Barcelona objectives. According to set objectives, 33% of the children under 3 years old were aimed to be admitted to

day-cares in order to enable women to participate in the labour markets (European Commission Report, 2018).

By 2010, 72% of the children under 3 years old were NOT admitted to day-cares in Finland, whereas, by 2020, this ratio is almost %61 (see Figure 1). As illustrated, a continuous momentum of day care admission is visible, especially after 2011. Despite growing ratio of day-care admission in Finland, home-care allowances as well as immigrant mothers' preferences are at the centre of public debates as to what extent they impact the day-care admissions (Ellingsaeter, 2012).

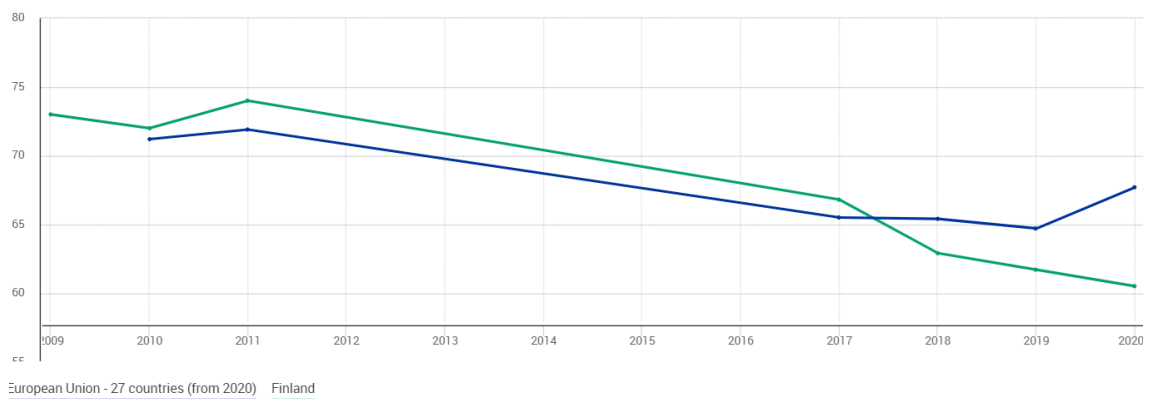


FIGURE 1: Day-care participation of children under 3 years old in Finland compare to average of EU countries, Eurostat, 2020

Moreover, the ratio of day care admissions of children under 3 years old is clearly indicated in OECD Education at a Glance Report, as well, as it is demonstrated in Figure 2. OECD outcomes overlaps and verifies the Eurostat outcomes (see Figure 2).

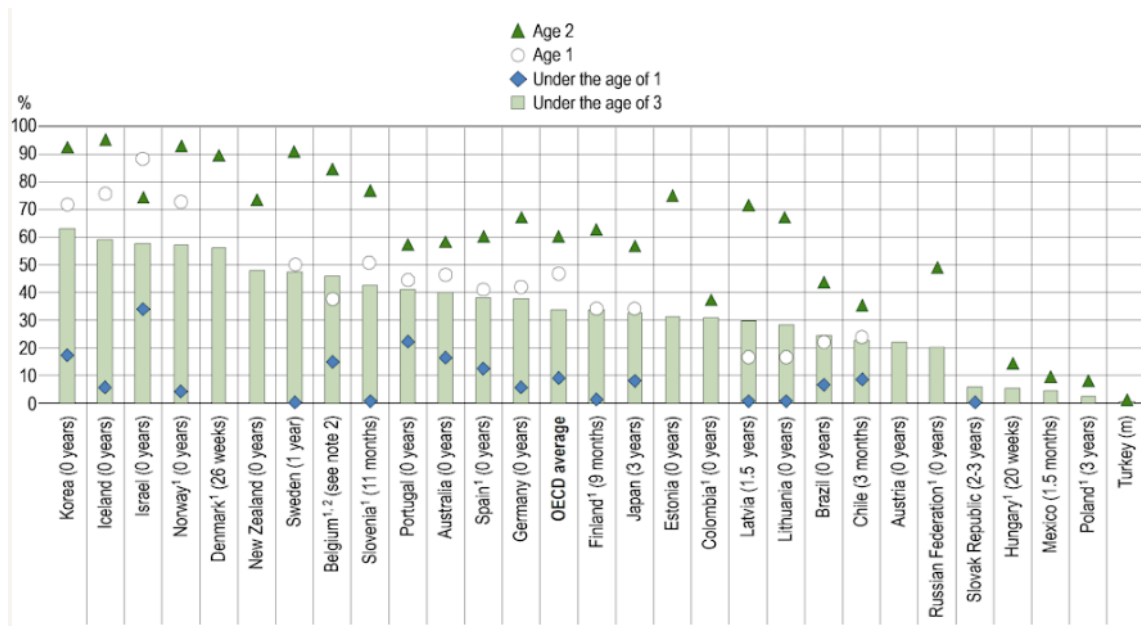


FIGURE 2: Enrolment rates of children under the age of 3 in ECEC, by age, OECD, 2018

According to Ellingsaeter, home-care allowances are also detrimental effects on labour market participation of women regarding gender equality as well as development of day-care system (Ellingsaeter, 2012). Particularly, since the implementation of home-care allowance in 1985, one of the major concerns has been the integration and labour market participation of immigrant women. With home-care allowances, the immigrant women have option to stay away from the labour market or social life for long period of time and keep their children out of day-care system (Ellingsaeter, 2012). According to Tervola, gender roles play an essential role in such day-care related decisions and home-care allowance take-ups.

Thus, day care choices can be viewed as active representations of gender in according to Tervola (2018). Day care choices also extend to some extent in which they may impact the labour market participation opportunities or the level and quality of gained market positions since home care responsibilities of child is time-consuming and requires intensive work if the mother is in charge relatively most of the child care. Not only labour market participation, but also language learning and integration into social life can be hindered with given circumstances.

2.2 Labour market participation of women

Labour market participation of women is mainly driven by the value of women's market wages versus the value of their non-market time (Winkler, 2016). Labour market participation by women varies considerably across countries. To understand this international variation, one must further consider differences across countries in institutions, non-economic factors such as cultural norms, and public policies. Such differences provide important insights into what actions countries might take to further increase women's participation in the labour market (Winkler, 2016).

Women's labour market activity makes women more economically valuable to their families and to society. While women's labour market participation rates have risen in many countries, rates remain quite low in some countries and regions. In some countries, like the US, after a steady rise, rates have plateaued since 1990. Given societal benefits such as greater economic growth, governments have a compelling interest to undertake policies to encourage women's labor force participation. Parental leave and childcare subsidies are two such examples (Winkler, 2016). Moreover, the labour market participation of women has been considered as one of the solutions that responds the public finance and labour supply problems as consequences of ageing societies (Burniaux, Duval and Jaumotte, 2004). The market failures and policy distortions play a crucial role on the welfare of women and their labour market activities (Jaumotte, 2004)

Women perform a substantial amount of unpaid work within the household, but it is paid work that translates into increased bargaining power in the household and raises families' standard of living as a whole (Winkler, et. al.). The UN Millennium Goals laid out in 2000 underscored the crucial role of women's paid labour market activity in enhancing economic development. These goals included "achieve universal primary education" (which is crucial, in that education is a key determinant of labour market participation) and "promote gender equality and empower women." The latter was to be achieved by increasing women's

paid labour market activity, eliminating the gender gap in primary and secondary education, and increasing women's political participation. (Winkler et. al.)

In Figure 3, it is illustrated that the labour market participation of women between age 20-69 in Finland is 75%, whereas of men is 78% (Statistics of Finland, 2022).

Population by labour force status by Sex. 20 - 69, Activity rate, %, 2022M02.

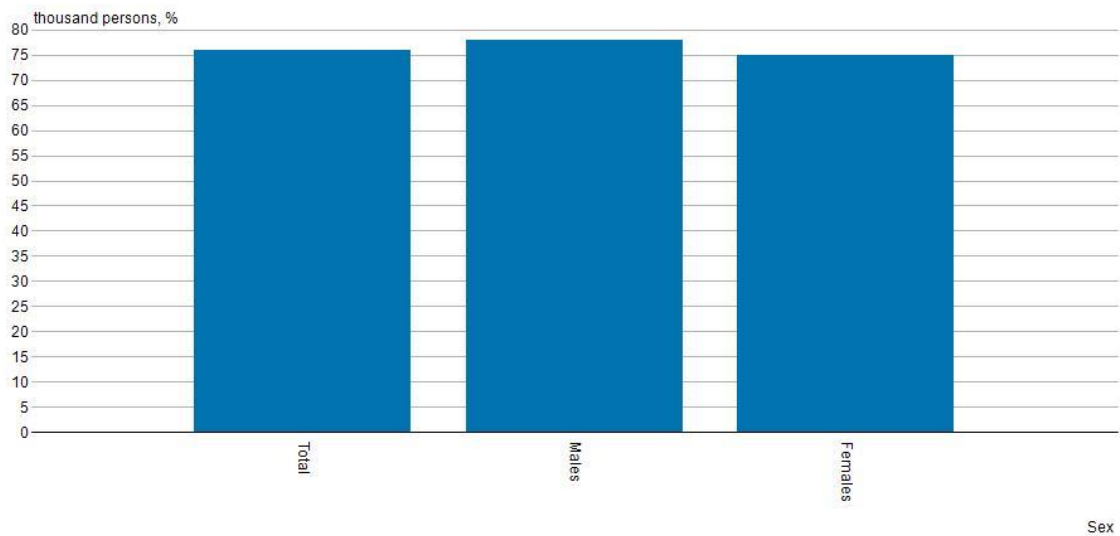


FIGURE 3: Labour market participation by sex in Finland, Statistics of Finland, 2022

On the other hand, according to UTH Survey which conducted by Statistics Finland and National Institute for Health and Welfare (THL) in 2014, %73 of native-born women were actively working, this ratio was %56 for immigrant women in Finland (Statistics of Finland-UTH Survey, 2014). The women who have Middle Eastern and African origins had lowest participation rates into the labour market in Finland, by 30-31%. The group with highest rate of labour market participation of women was Estonians, by 71% (Statistics of Finland-UTH Survey, 2014). Migrated Turkish women in Finland are regarded as one of the social groups in which the labour market participation rates are among the lowest by 31% in according to study in question (Statistics of Finland-UTH Survey, 2014).

2.3 Integration

According to Oxford Learners Dictionary, integration means “the act or process of mixing people who have previously been separated, usually because of colour, race, religion, etc.” (Oxford Learners Dictionary, 2021)

Moreover, “the term ‘integration’ is ambiguous and means a number of different things, all quite legitimate but in need of distinction”. Integration is, from one point of view, a social phenomenon. “In the migration field, it refers to relations between immigrants or their communities and the ‘host’ society to which they have come” (Lewis, 2006).

In according to Lewis (2006), integration of immigrants is not only a social phenomenon that just exists in the society at a certain level, but also it is a social direction and objective that needs to be achieved. Lewis (2006) claims that “integration is not simply a matter of people of different ethnic, racial, and religious groups living in the same neighbourhoods and attending the same schools and being able to use the same public facilities”. Integration, in this sense, “speaks to a state of mind on the part of both the newcomer and the host, a sense of belonging that is shared by both” (Lewis, 2006).

In the sense of legislation in Finland, matters that are related to integration are defined and organized in Integration Act. In Integration Act (1386/2010) section 11/1, the integration plan is described as “a personalized plan drawn up for an immigrant covering the measures and services, the aim of which is to support him/her in acquiring a sufficient command of the Finnish or Swedish and other skills and knowledge required in society and working life and to promote” (Integration Act et al., sec.11/1). Moreover, an integration plan may be extended by authorities in case of special requirements of the immigrant, such as maternity, paternity, disability or illness (Integration Act et al. sec.12/4). Abovementioned authorities are “municipalities, employment and economic development offices and other relevant authorities that are assigned to provide appropriate guidance and advice in terms of integration and working life” (Integration Act et.al., sec.8).

Heckmann defines and elaborates the integration in four different dimensions. Shortly, according to Heckmann (2005), integration may refer a stability of a well-functioning whole. All the parts in the whole function effectively in harmony and that demonstrates a state of being. Integration, as well, may refer to “relating single elements to one another and forming a new structure out of single elements” (p.8) Another meaning of integration may refer to adding new elements into an existing system that would subsequently function more effectively. Lastly, integration may refer to underpinning the relations or links between single elements of the whole in order to reach a well-functioning system. (Heckmann, 2005). From these perspectives, integration of the Turkish immigrant mothers in Finland is a socio-economic process to be achieved. This process refers to what Heckmann (2005) claims that added new elements into the society can be a well-functioning parts of the whole as one of his conceptualisations.

In addition to how Heckmann defines the integration, Esser (2000) as cited in Heckmann (2005), suggests four forms of social integration concerning the immigrant - host society relations. These are cultururation, placement, interaction and identification (Esser, 2000). According to Esser, cultururation refers to “the transmission to and acquisition of knowledge, cultural standarts and competencies” (p.10). Heckmann (2005) conceptualises Esser’s term of cultururation as cultural integration in which constitutes the first dimension of the socio-economic integration of the immigrant into the host society. In Esser, placement is defined as positions that immigrant holds in the society, such as in an educational institution or workplace. Heckmann conceptualises Esser’s “placement” as structural integration. In this dimension of integration, the immigrant’s participation into abovementioned core institutes determines the socio-economic statuses and opportunities.

According to Esser (2000), interaction refers to social actions and bounding connections between the immigrant and host society members, such as marriage, friendships. Heckmann conceptualises this dimension as “interactive integration” in which indicates the “acceptance and inclusion of immigrants in sphere of primary relations and networks” (Heckmann, 2005, p.18). Lastly, Esser suggests identification as a form of social integration. It refers to feeling of

belongingness and interconnectedness regarding the immigrant-host society relations. How the immigrant identifies himself/herself determines the cognitive and emotional outcome of the integration process. (Esser, 2000). Heckmann conceptualises this as identificational integration. Strengthened feeling of belonging to and identifying with local, regional, ethnic, national or even more complex identification are indicators of this dimension (Heckmann, 2005). Esser's four forms of integration and, aligned with Esser, Heckman's four dimensions of social integration can be traced for Turkish mothers in Finland as well. It is worth to investigate whether their cultural standards, knowledge, competencies are influenced by host society; what positions they occupy in the society; what kind of social interactions they have and how they identify themselves.

Newcomer mothers have plenty obstacles in engaging into the new life in the host country (CEDAW, 2014; OECD, 2018; THL, 2021). Sense of belonging of the both sides that Lewis (2006) mentions can be considered as an outcome of a well-integrated society as a policy objective. Because of the fact that not admitting children under 3 years old to daycares, in essence, closely related to mothers' integration (Tervola 2018, OECD 2018). It can be said that day-care choices of mothers in question need to be understood accordingly.

3. PREVIOUS STUDIES

Finland has a short history of hosting migrants and, while the number of foreign-born individuals residing in Finland remains small by international standards, growth – in per capita terms- has been amongst the fastest in OECD (OECD, 2018). Additionally, again according to OECD, in 1990 the ratio of foreign-born population to whole population was %1 and this ratio was % 6,5 in 2016 (OECD, 2018). As the migration flow continues with varying pace, the integration policies for newcomers have been re-considered and re-organized. “Since 1999, the integration policy in Finland, as in other Nordic countries, has been centred around the use of personalized integration plans which generally last for two or three years. The aim of these plans, which are drawn up by local employment offices, is to build a tailored package of training measures to ensure that the migrants are directed to programmes that are appropriate to their specific skills, experience and needs” (OECD, 2018).

In addition, in 2014, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) lists a set of issues and questions to Finnish government of that time. One of the issues concerns about “adopting temporary special measures to accelerate the equal participation of women from disadvantaged groups, including migrant women, Roma women, single mothers, older women and women with disabilities in the labour market, and undertake comprehensive studies on the employment and working conditions of those groups of women, with recommendations for enhancing their effective participation in the labour market” (CEDAW/C/FIN/Q/7-b, 2014).

In order to comprehend the immigrant integration and labour market participation, relevant researches and publications have been executed by OECD, Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare as well as a research book “Integration of Turkish immigrant women in Finland into Finnish society” by Cömertler was published by Tampere University in 2007, another research funded by KELA on “Immigrant families’ child care choices in the Nordic policy context” by Jussi Tervola in 2018 and lastly, an e-book with a title of “Immigration in the

Circumpolar North: Integration and resilience” by Yeasmin, Hasanat, Brozowski and Kirchner in 2021.

Two challenges were detected by OECD regarding the integration of immigrant women into working life, the poor outcomes of language courses and early separation of integration pathways of the active from the inactive newcomer. Whilst the active jobseekers are directed to employment offices, inactive ones are directed to municipal integration support (OECD, 2018). This separation has long-term influence on active and inactive immigrant women in regards with participation to working and social life.

In according to OECD’s report, “the labour market participation rates among immigrant women in Finland are also stymied by the availability of the Child Home Care Allowance (CHCA). This allowance, granted when a child under three years of age is looked after at home, can render staying at home more financially advantageous than engaging in training or paid employment. While the CHCA is not targeted at foreign-born women, their concentration in lower paid jobs means that the incentive to remain at home, endangered by the allowance, is likely to play more forcefully upon their choices. These choices risk having a lasting impact on the integration outcomes of the women themselves, and also on those of their children” (OECD, 2018).

Furthermore, immigrant women, many of whom arrive as family migrants with no direct ties to the labour market often experience more difficulties integrating than do their counterparts. Many of these women must also juggle childcare responsibilities which can compromise their involvement in early integration activities. As time passes, these women risk becoming increasingly distant from the labour market (OECD, 2018).

Childcare responsibilities can often mean that immigrant women find it difficult to participate in full-time integration activities at the time of arrival. Without the opportunities and incentives to participate in integration programmes, such women can become increasingly isolated- both socially, and from the world of work. In Finland the approach to these additional hurdles has been to direct women, along with the inactive, to a separate stream of activities organised by municipalities

that is not oriented at labour market entry. "...such early separation between the active and the inactive may have long lasting consequences, and women whose childcare duties place them temporarily outside the labour force at the time of arrival may struggle to find their way back to employment." (OECD, 2018).

In addition, according to Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare (THL), the exclusion of immigrant mothers from integration services is caused by mainly two factors: "Immigrant mothers looking after their children at home do not always have time to participate in training during their integration period" and "Women are more likely to immigrate as spouses. In such a case introduction to integration measures and the service system may be less thorough than for those who arrive as refugees" (THL, 2021).

What the Global Gender Gap Report of World Economic Forum reveals is that family policies have contributed undisputedly to the fact that Nordic countries have the narrowest gender gap in many domains, such as economic participation and educational attainment (The Global Gender Gap Report, 2015). However, based on statistics on the use of parental leave and labour market participation (Duvander, 2010; Eurostat, 2017a), parents in immigrant families demonstrate, on average, more specialized division between genders. The gaps can be partly traced back to the circumstances in origin countries (Antecol, 2000, as cited in Tervola, 2014).

In the case of Finnish home care allowance, family policies were called for to facilitate families' freedom of choice (Hiilamo & Kangas, 2009). Tervola traces the gap of home care admissions between native-born and immigrants through home care allowance take-on datas. According to her research, immigrant families tend to take care of their children at home for longer periods than native-borns. Moreover, the day-care admission of children of immigrant families, especially for the children under the age of three, is lower than native borns. (Tervola, 2018).

According to Tervola, two statistical facts further underscore the importance of examining the issue in Finland and Sweden. Immigrants' gender gaps in labour

force participation rates are accentuated in Finland and Sweden although the gender equality is generally promoted and the gender gaps for native-born populations are among the narrowest (Eurostat, 2017a; Tervola, 2018).

The employment rates in Finland vary largely by country of origin, partly reflecting the admission categories. Immigrants from typical refugee origins, such as the Middle East, are the most disadvantaged groups in the labour market (Busk, 2016). Second, the gap in school performance between students with immigrant and non-immigrant backgrounds is found to be the widest in Finland while day-care participation is found to contribute to school readiness especially for children with immigrant backgrounds (Lazzari & Vandebroek 2012; Felfe & Lalive 2014; Gottfried & Kim, 2015).

Labour market participation of women is often supported through the provision of low-cost child care services. As the expenditure of day-care services grew rather high, in 1985 Finland introduced a cash-for-care scheme or a flat-rate (home care allowance) paid to families who do not use public day-care services, to alleviate the costs (Sipilä & Korpinen, 1998). "Finland was a pioneer in that regard as no other Nordic country had introduced such a benefit, although a similar debate existed to some extent also in other Nordic countries" (Hiilamo & Kangas 2009). Despite high female labour participation being institutionalized in Finland, the subsidy quickly found extensive support. It is used to prolong the parental leave regarded too short in the light of the child's readiness for day-care (Tervola, 2018). It has been noted that families with lower socio-economic status use the subsidy more often and for longer periods. (Haataja & Juutilainen, 2014).

Tervola displays the determinants of immigrants' child care choices through two dimensions (Tervola, 2018). Through macro level perspective, economic incentives and service supply constitute policy context of day-care choices. Norms of raising children and gender norms constitute the cultural norms of gendered day-care choices. Through micro level perspective, affordability and labour market attachment constitute economic status of the decision-maker. Best interest of child and parental preferences constitute preferences as a concept and finally

the information that is utilized along the decision-making process completes the structure of determinants of gendered day-care choices (see Figure 4).

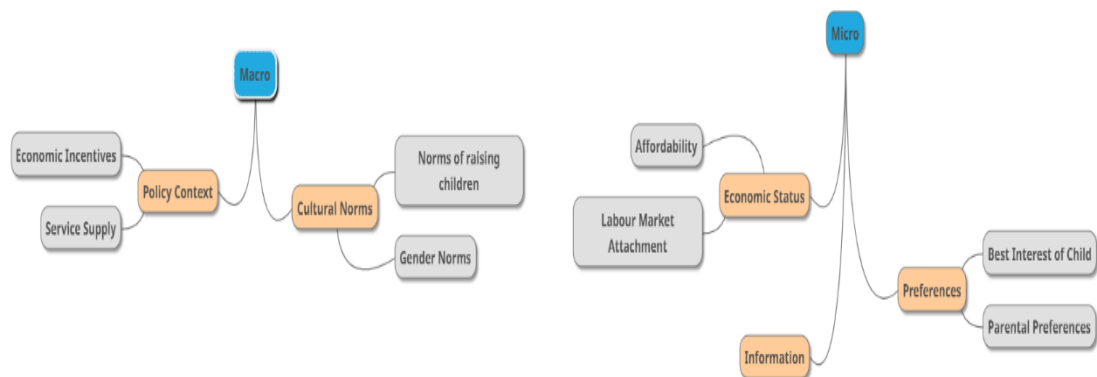


FIGURE 4. Determinants of immigrants' day care choices, Tervola, 2018

Findings of Yaesmin's research provide some valuable information about the cultural background of immigrant women in Finland. In according to Yaesmin and Koivurova, the relatedness of immigrant women to the host society is comparatively lower than in the case of men (Yaesmin & Koivurova, 2019). Immigrant women often have a strong sense of belongingness to their source country, which can slow down the integration process. Source country attributes are important among immigrant women, which can hinder their interactions with the host society. Immigrant women hypothesize a natural link with their country of origin (Ghorashi, 2017; Yaesmin & Koivurova, 2019). Moreover, a lack of autonomy and competencies can lead to self-isolation (Yaesmin, 2019).

Again, according to Yaesmin (2019), ethnic identities and lack of language skills limit social interaction and the ability to communicate. Some of the families follow patriarchal patterns of lives, which also hinders women's empowerment in the host society and causes poor integration results. To a great extent, they are dependent on their family for all decision-making. This creates self-exclusion, which can impact their integration. Lack of family influences causes a lack of determination in immigrant women to be integrated into a new culture and labour market

as well. Moreover, the stress of integration and gender discrimination among families can also hinder the balancing of self-esteem and sense of identity (Yaesmin, 2019).

Cömertler's research (2007) was the only research in which focuses Turkish women in Finland in particular. From this angle, the findings of the research are worth mentioning despite it was conducted 15 years ago. In the research, the integration of Turkish-born women in Finland is investigated and it provides some shedding light on the integration issues.

In according to Cömertler's research, almost all Turkish speaking immigrant women become pregnant within 3 or 4 months after they came to Finland because they get bored with being lonely. They wish and plan the pregnancy and generally, the Turkish families that were interviewed had two children (20/30). They take care of their children for at least three years. After starting to take their children to a day-care centre, women go to language courses and only 5/30 of husbands sharing childcare responsibilities at home with their wives. (Cömertler, 2007). Additionally, Turkish women's husbands do not prevent them from working. On the contrary, they support and encourage them to work (Cömertler, 2007).

4. PURPOSE OF THE THESIS

The purpose of this thesis was to develop an understanding on day care admission related decisions of immigrant Turkish mothers in Finland. As explained in the previous studies section, the day-care admissions of immigrants' children under 3 years old, have short and long-term consequences on mothers' integration and labour market participation.

Thence, this thesis aims to investigate the reasons of day-care admission related decisions of Turkish-born immigrant mothers in Finland. By focusing on the reasons behind the decision in question, I attempted to gain qualitative information on Turkish mothers' motives, concerns and opinions on taking care of their children at home first 3 years after the birth, instead of enrolling them to ECEC. Aligned with the purpose of the thesis, the target group was Turkish-born Turkish-speaking mothers who did not admit their child or children under 3 years old. On the other hand, this thesis was not able to aim to expose the impact of day-care related choices neither on labour market participation nor integration in a big scale, due to several limitations, such as numbers and profiles of interviewees, study requirements and the complexity of integration as a phenomenon.

According to Flick (2009), the research question must be formulated in concrete terms with the aim of clarifying what the gathered information is supposed to reveal (Flick, 2009). Aligned with his guidance, the research question of this thesis was as following:

What are the determinants of day care related decisions of immigrant Turkish mothers in Finland who did not admit their child/children under 3 years old to day-cares?

5. RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT AND WORK-LIFE PARTNER

Research environment was Turkish community in Finland in accordance to the subject of the thesis. The work-life partner of the thesis was Familia ry. “Familia ry is a national expert organisation for intercultural families and they support the wellbeing of intercultural families by offering peer support and volunteer activities, information, and advice. In addition, they are active on lobbying to make improvements in the social and legal systems, so that the needs of intercultural and multilingual families as well as Finnish people would be better met” (Familia ry, 2022). I aimed to receive their valuable advices and guidance on intercultural families throughout the research. Their familiarity and expertise on immigrant women in the intercultural families was relief to work in co-operation.

6. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS METHOD

The aim of this thesis was to explore the determinants of immigrant Turkish mothers' day-care related decisions. More specifically, the decisions whether the child or children should be admitted to day-care before the age of three or not and how this decision is made were the main focuses. In order to gain relevant information on this subject, personal diverse accounts, reflexivity and variety of data collection and analysis methods were essential. Therefore, qualitative research was conducted in order to meet the requirements of the study.

6.1 Data Collection

The target group of the thesis was Turkish-born mothers in Finland who did not admit their child or children first 3 years after birth. Their accounts on the question of the research constituted the scope of the study.

According to Polkinghorne (2005), the most widely used approach to the production of qualitative material is interviews with participants. Potter has defined interviewing as a "technique of gathering material from humans by asking them questions and getting them to react verbally" (Potter, 1996). The purpose of the interview is to gain a full and detailed account from an informant of the experience under study. Kvale (1996) has claimed that the purpose of the interviews is to obtain descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena (Kvva, 1996). Thus, collecting the information for analysis was executed through one-time interviews with participants. As Polkinghorne claims, interviewing practices require an ability to form an accepting relationship, skill in active listening, and focus on the other's experiential world (Polkinghorne et. al.) and common language and familiarity to the Turkish community in Finland facilitated the communication, acceptance and

understanding. Moreover, the aim of the research interview is to accomplish the researcher's goal of gaining information from the participants and it is important for researcher doing a research interview to make clear to themselves and to the participants the goal that is being pursued (Polkinghorne, et.al.). To realize that, interviewees were informed via email in advance about the objectives and scope of the research. A short description of the research question and interviewees rights concerning the voluntariness, withdrawal from the research any time and freedom of not answering the questions that they did not want to, were reached out to them before the interviews took place. In order to see the full picture of the determinants of day-care choices of Turkish immigrant women in Finland, personal experiences, opinions and justifications offered an understanding of the main question of the thesis to a reasonable extent.

Among the qualitative research interview types, problem-centered interviewing was chosen as the most relevant method. The reason was that problem-centered interviews can be committed closely to coding of the gathered material and eventually, qualitative content analysis in the further analyzing process (Witzel, 2000; Flick, 2009). Problem-centered interviewing offered the use of inductive and deductive knowledge through equal weight of interviewee's personal account and theoretical background of the subject (Witzel, 2000). During the interviews, the narratives of the interviewees were interrupted by specific questions time to time whenever relevant in order to stimulate the memories. By doing so, an active listening and understanding was aimed. The theoretical background was used strategically in order to reconstruct a meaning collaboratively. Problem-centered interviewing enabled me not only to follow an interview frame during the interviews but also gather demographic information at the beginning of the interview through conversational entry, consequently to ask general and specific questions based on the spoken topic in order to understand the scope of the context and finally to ask ad-hoc questions when the flow of the interview required (Witzel, 2000; Flick, 2009). By collection of demographic information of the participants at the beginning of interviews, I reduced the numbers of questions in a tight interview time and was able to concentrate on more essential topics as Witzel (2000) suggests. Based on the collected demographic information, two of the interviewees were in their mid-40s, one of them was in

her mid-30s. Two interviewees had been living in Finland for around 10 years whereas one of them for more than 15 years. They had work experience in Finland for varying durations (three, two and seven years). The annual household income was randomly 25.000€, 35.000€ and 45.000€ among them. The presentation of demographic information of the interviewees is random for the sake of preservation of anonymity of the interviewees. General questions were asked in line with Witzel's (2000) guidelines in order to receive broader material which would widen the context in which the determinants of day-care choices take place. The idea was not to isolate the determinants from the outside world and instead, the idea was to capture any correlations in case they surface in a broader context. Specific questions regarding the determinants of day-care choices and the decision process were asked in order to gather information on the very topic. It required to confront the interviewee with contradictions or inconsistencies when detected and the interviewee was asked for clarification along with Witzel's (2000) guidelines of problem-centered interviewing. One interviewee was asked for a clarification of her statement via email in coding stage as well. It was due to inconsistency in timeline of her narrative and it was crucial gather reliable account in order to do coding and analyzing. During the interviews, unplanned questions were asked time to time as well. In the flow of the conversation, regardless the topic's relevance, person-specific ad-hoc questions helped me when the conversation was stalled.

Polkinghorne explains the common hardships of the interviews. The researcher is interested in gaining a rich and inclusive account of the participant's experience. Often, the initial descriptions offered by the participant are restrained. They reflect concerns of the participant about the acceptableness of the answers, a testing of what they want to reveal, or the surface of a remembered experience (Polkinghorne, 2005).

In this research interviews were conducted online in Turkish. The online platforms were Zoom and Teams. A set of open-ended questions was prepared in advance. The schedule, duration and the length of the interviews and transcripts are presented in Table 1. The transcripts were written in Arial font, with the font size 11 and 1,15 line spacing.

	Date	Duration	Page	Words	Characters
W1	18-Mar	34 min	4	1726	7635
W2	25-Mar	46 min	4	1852	8116
W3	23-Mar	37 min	4	1815	7787

TABLE 1. The schedule, duration and length of the interviews and transcripts.

The announcement of the interviews was done through Facebook page of “Turkish mothers in Finland”. The criteria were to be Turkish-born immigrant mother in Finland and not admitting the child or children under the age of three to the ECEC. The sampling of the interviews was random and data saturation had to be neglected due to scope of the study. During the literature research on data sampling and saturation, all the relevant information I could find was concerning doctoral thesis proposals and assertions. For example, Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) suggests that the study design determines the data saturation and it can be as little as six even for doctoral level proposals depending on the study design (Guest, et.al.). I initially intended to conduct interviews as many as I could get responses to interview announcement. In accordance with DIAK supervision recommendations and responses to the announcement, I interviewed three volunteer Turkish mothers who had migrated from Turkey. The nature of hardship in finding, persuading and meeting with women -as a male- in question since the targeted population was small in numbers and outreach led me conducting interviews with a relatively small number. In this matter, Bernard (2012) states that the number of interviews needed for a qualitative study to reach data saturation was a number he could not quantify, but that the researcher takes what he can get (Bernard, 2012).

6.2 Data analysis

The analysis method of the research was qualitative content analysis. According to Mayring, qualitative content analysis examines data that is the product of open-ended data collection techniques aimed at detail and depth (Mayring, 2000). In addition, content analysis is an approach based on not only inductive data moves from the specific to the general but also deductive category development in which prior analyzed aspects of the phenomena in question are brought up in connection with the text (Mayring, 2000). Since the aim of the thesis was to explore the determinants of immigrant Turkish mothers' day care choices, the description of characteristics of the collected material by examining "who says what, to whom and with what affect" (Bloor & Wood, 2006) was required. By content analysis, it was able to do coding systematically and reach themes in response to research question.

According to Elo and Kyngäs (2008), the analysis process and the results should be described in sufficient detail so that readers have a clear understanding of how the analysis was carried out and its strengths and limitations (GAO 1996; Elo & Kyngäs 2008). This means dissection of the analysis process and the validity of results. Elements of validity in content analysis are universal to any qualitative research design, there were additional factors to take into consideration when reporting the process of analysis and the results. The results were described contents of the categories, i.e. the meanings of the categories. The content of the categories was described through subcategories (Marshall & Rossman 1995). Creating categories was both an empirical and a conceptual challenge, as categories must be conceptually and empirically grounded (Dey, 1993). Successful content analysis requires that the researcher can analyze and simplify the data and form categories that reflect the subject of study in a reliable manner (Kyngäs & Vanhanen 1999). Credibility of research findings also deals with how well the categories cover the data (Graneheim & Lundman 2004).

First, the information that had been collected through interviews was transcribed and translated at the same time, into English from Turkish on a Word file as soon

as possible after every single interview. The video recordings of the interviews were kept in my personal computer. After the transcription and translation, video materials were destroyed. The next stage was to upload the written material to QDA data miner software. About the use of software programs in qualitative research, Weitzman (2000) claims that software eases several aspects of the qualitative research, such as faster processing of time-consuming information, the management of the information and adding more quality to the research – at least quality to the demonstration of results (Weitzman, 2000). After uploading the written material, I aimed to increase my familiarity with the content by reading the participants' accounts repeatedly. At some point, I developed an understanding of the content and began developing the themes and sub-themes. The themes of the analysis were strictly based on the research question “what are the determinants of day-care admission choices of immigrant Turkish mothers”. Based on one of the initially intended research questions – that was later combined to main research question- the decision-making of child/children related choices was asked to interviewees as well. It focused on the decision-maker in the family in a more general perspective regarding the decisions that concern the child/children rather than those that only concern day-care admission. The reason of this question was to gain contextual information that would underpin understanding the circumstances in which the determinants of day care admission related decisions arose in the family. Since the decision-maker was assumed to be the pre-determinant for consequent motives of the day-care admission related choices, it developed as the second theme. At this point, two themes were constructed upon one research question. The determinants of day care choices and child related decision-making in the family. The meaningful repetitions from the extracts (see Figure 5) led me create two codes under the theme that referred to child related decision-making in the family. Participatory decision-making and woman dominant decision-making. I applied the same coding method to my second theme which was “the determinants of day-care related decision”. Clear interview questions that had addressed the very central research question, had resulted in receiving clear answers on the subject at the data collection stage. Depending on the received material, two meaningful cluster were outshined. These were “Turkish language education at home” and “norms of the Turkish community in Finland” (see Figure 5). There was one another answer that referred to “norms of Turkish

people in Turkey”. This answer overlapped with “norms of Turkish community in Finland” by same interviewee. At this point, I distinguished these two overlapping statements and created two codes for them as “norms of the community” and “culture”. The reason of it was to identify the origin of the norm since it could have been an indicator of integration as well. After creating my codes, I did read the written material repeatedly and marked the relevant statements in different colors that represent each code.

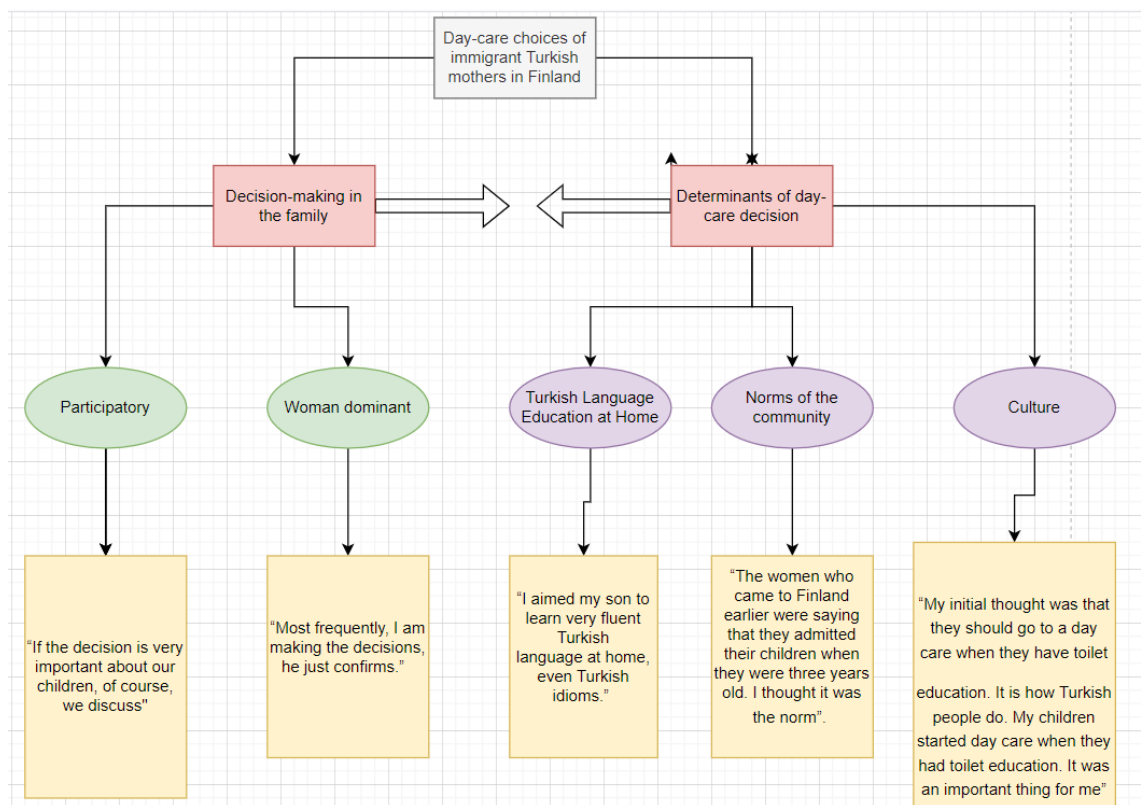


FIGURE 5. Mind map of the themes, codes and extract examples.

Creating my themes and codes helped me to clarify uncertainties and to settle a framework to analyze. Even though I had some doubts on whether some expressions belonged to one particular or more than one code, it was possible to mark and match overlapping expressions with more than one code when it seemed relevant.

When the matching codes and statements were completed, I was easily able to retrieve any text sorted by interviewee, code or theme with the help of software. Therefore, data management was easier and faster. In addition to data management, the features of the software allowed me to create pie charts, table of frequencies or word counts, for the results of content analysis. (see Results section)

One-time interviews provided analyzable material to a adequate extent. More in-depth and enriched material could have been provided through more than one interview with the same interviewee but, the purpose of the chosen problem-centered interviewing method was meant to minimize the requirement of further interviews. In this aspect, one-time interviews could be considered as one of the limitations of the study. Another limitation was the number of the interviewees. Despite 3 interviewees provided analyzable material, saturation was not at the desired volume. To bear in mind, further varying answers can still be sought against the same research question in a voluminous research. Therefore, conclusions can be drawn to a limited extent and they offer wider researches. Lastly, the amount of previous studies in English language was not abundant. This inevitably affected the scope of the study and challenged already limited conclusions.

7. RESULTS

The results of the research are demonstrated under two themes based on the research question. Child related decision-making in the family and the determinants of day care admission related decision. The research question was “What are the determinants of day care admission related decision of Turkish-born immigrant mothers in Finland?”. As a pre-determinant and pre-introductory aspect of the abovementioned decision, decision-making in the family was added to themes in order to answer the question of “who?” in the first place before the question of “why?”. By doing so, it was aimed to ensure that the target group was relevant. Reasons of not admitting the children to day cares was the central problematic of the study as it was presented in the second part of the results. This part concerned the motives and opinions of the mothers in their decision-making process. The results reflect the mothers’ narratives and their interpretations when necessary. In the analysing process some quantitative outputs were utilized in order to lay the foundation of the results as qualitative content analysis preserves the advantages of quantitative content analysis and interprets the text qualitatively through deductive and inductive category development (Mayring, 2000).

7.1 Child related decision-making in the family

In this section, child-related decision-making refers to all the decisions that deals with the child’s life, not only the decisions that are related to day care admission. The reason behind this was, to have a broader comprehension of decision-making processes in the families in question. The study aimed to determine the decision maker in the first place in order to demonstrate how relevant the target group was. The distribution of the sub-themes demonstrated that women’s dominance in child related decisions was significant since all three interviewees straightforwardly stated that they were dominant in decision-making in childcare issues.

7.1.1 Women's relative dominance in child related decision making

The most significant finding of this sub-theme was that all the participants mentioned that they were more dominant than their husbands regarding the child related decision-making in the family despite some participatory discussions existed to some extent. Husbands are informed about the decision at the later stages of the decision-making process and their confirmation was sought. The scope of what confirmation refers to is unclear. On the other hand, the passive stance of the husbands can be observed.

“Generally, we discuss about the decisions in the family, but I guess I am more dominant than my husband in decision-making.”

“I do not dictate but I guide him mostly”.

“Most frequently, I am making the decisions, he just confirms.”

“If the decision is very important about our children, of course, we discuss”.

“I really wanted my child to spend first couple of years with me. My ex-husband did not react to this decision in a negative way.”

7.1.2 Participatory decision-making in the family

Two interviewees mentioned the participation in decision-making process in the family not by direct quoting but by referring to a meaningful discussion among spouses.

One of them said that she discusses the child-related issues with her husband in a general manner. Participatory decision was limited and dependent on the subject.

“Generally, we discuss about the decisions in the family but I guess I am more dominant than my husband in decision-making.”

She stated that her husband was thinking alike on the day care admission of their child. Bearing in mind that she claimed to be more dominant in childcare related decision-making in a general manner, a distinction of decision-making areas was observed.

“I discussed this with my husband. We were thinking alike.”

One interviewee made a clear separation of minor and major issues to discuss with the husband.

“If the decision is very important about our children, of course, we discuss.”

Whether the decision of day care admission is perceived as major or minor issue is unclear since the purpose and scope of the responding question meant to comprehend the decision environment in a general manner. Nevertheless, the presence of discussion in the family is visible dependent on perceived significance of the issue.

7.2 Determinants of day-care admission related decisions

In this section, I figured out three sub-themes based on relative underlining frequency. These sub-themes were language education of the child, norms of the community that women live among in Finland and lastly, culture. Language education of the child and norms of the community were referred more frequently throughout this section (See Figure 6). Considering the low number of interviewees hinders the outcomes of the study, the chart below demonstrates the very core of the response to the research question. It cannot claim to represent the Turkish women in Finland as whole due to lack of material saturation.

Distribution of codes (Frequency)

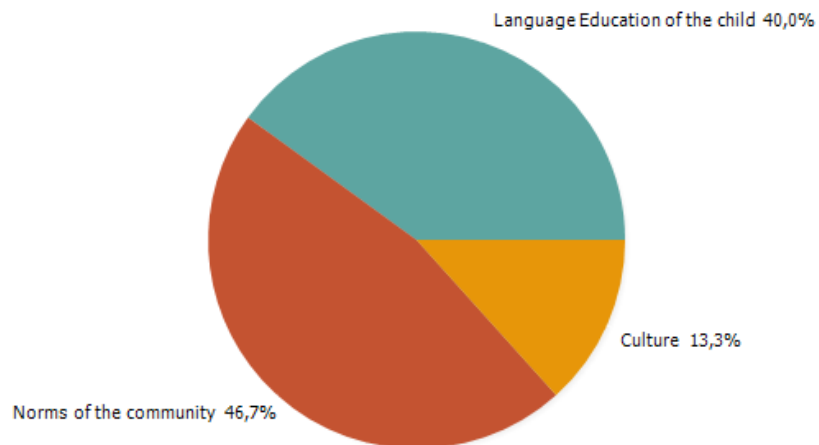


FIGURE 6. Frequency of determinants of day-care decision

Although the norms of community may refer to some cultural aspects, they distinguish from culture that the women carry along, especially in regard with origin of norm. While the norms of community describe the customs that can be often

observed in the minor community in Finland, the culture, as a term, represents a broader web of customs that the women bring in from the origin of the country, based on my interpretations on the narratives of the interviewed women.

7.2.1 Turkish language education of child

Language education of the child was one of the most frequently mentioned themes by two interviewees. They stated that the Turkish language education of the child at home was the essential motivation of not admitting their children to day-care system before the age of three. It was remarkable that they were married with Finnish men whereas the third one was married with a Turkish man. They shared almost the same fears or concerns regarding their children's native language development. Enrolling the children to ECEC before they learn the mothers' tongue is perceived as a potential threat to especially mother-child bond, as well as bond to relatives in Turkey. They expressed their pleasure to see their children communicating with relatives in Turkey. Some Turkish cartoons in which they utilized to teach Turkish at home were deliberately mentioned by two interviewees.

“They go to day care in an early stage and they spend long hours there, being exposed to Finnish. Finnish language is dominating the other language.”

“I aimed my son to learn very fluent Turkish language at home, even Turkish idioms.”

“The plan was to teach him Turkish at home.”

“When he was born, I had concerns about the language. I had spoken to the doctor about this and the doctor had said that I should teach him native language first.”

“I doubt how much he can get the culture from those cartoons but I prefer cartoons that are produced by Turkish creators.”

7.2.2 Norms of community

As it was explained earlier in the same section, norms of community refer to perceptions and attitudes that Turkish community in Finland have towards day-care admission. It was mentioned by two interviewees but especially one of them emphasized the norms of the community abundantly and how she was guided by these norms. The frequency of addressing the community for guidance was higher than any other sub-themes (codes). It was visible that the interaction between community members was determinative on the interviewee's childcare related decisions. She stated that the community members tend to stay at home with their children and take up home-care allowances at least until their children reach 3 years old.

“The women who came to Finland earlier were saying that they admitted their children when they were three years old. I thought it was the norm”.

“They (Turkish women in Finland) were staying at home and raising children”.

“They were saying they should give birth in every three years to get money from the state. In order not to go to school or work it was advised among the women”.

“In my mind, three years was the way of our community”.

7.2.3 Culture

Among the interviewees, only one of them mentioned about culture referring to customs in Turkey as an origin of the norm. In comparison with other determinants of day care admission, the frequency of culture as a reference was remarkably low in the narratives. Therefore, among the determinants that were detected in the narratives, culture was the least significant. It was my interpretation that the reference was given to culture (or custom) in the narrative below. It can be, as well, considered as norm of the community but in the context of meaningful flow of the interview, I was convinced that she referred to Turkish people in Turkey.

“My initial thought was that they should go to a day care when they have toilet education. It is how Turkish people do. My children started day care when they had toilet education. It was an important thing for me”

8. ETHICS AND VALIDITY OF THE RESEARCH

As Buber and Lincoln indicates, ethical principles of the research will be built upon the context of research environment in which consists of the researcher and the researched (Buber, 1958; Lincoln, 1995). In the context of this thesis, the welfare of Turkish mothers in Finland was carefully considered. Bearing what Sieber (1992) claims in mind that the acknowledgement of the probability of differing standpoints, “social power, lifestyles and experiences” as well as the “understanding of and expectations from the research and its products”, the research provides a common sense and understanding into the subjected matter (Sieber, 1992). Thus, by acknowledging these possible differences and avoiding biased pre-assumptions, the outcome of the research was aimed to produce transparent and valid knowledge.

The participation to the research was voluntarily. The notice and consent form were reached out to the participants in advance. The consent form specified that the participants have rights to withdraw at any time and to remain silent in response to interview questions. and explain the process of storing and disposal of the collected material.

Another ethical consideration was to benefit the participant. In according to Peled and Leichtentritt (2002), “the contribution made by a study to a knowledge domain or to the amelioration of a social problem is not necessarily perceived as a research benefit by the individual research participant” (Peled & Leichtentritt, 2002). Ethical research should drive towards maximizing the direct benefits of research participation for participants. Regarding the benefitting the participant, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, empowering was aimed to be the major benefit of the participants.

I believe that although the fact that the common language was a crucial advantage in this thesis, in interviewing, translation and transcription stage, this advantage mandated serious ethical consideration in order not to divert the conversation and interpretation from its genuine course. Therefore, the interview

questions were designed as clear as possible for the interviewee and in order to minimize the deviation or misinterpretation I sought clear answers for each question. In the data analysis and results sections, I attempted to disclose the statements that required interpretations with the reader.

One another ethical consideration in this thesis was prevention of harm. In according to Punch (1994), “participants in qualitative studies are particularly vulnerable to invasion of privacy, unwanted identification, breach of confidentiality and trust, misrepresentation, and exploitation” (Punch, 1994). Therefore, the identities of interviewed women were not revealed in the thesis. Special efforts should be devoted throughout the research process to ensuring the well-being of participants situated in particularly vulnerable circumstances (e.g. children in out-of-home placements, abuse victims) (Demi & Warren, 1995; Sieber, 1992). Researchers’ commitment to ensuring the well-being of participants overrides considerations regarding the quality of the data produced (Peled & Leichtentritt, 2002).

I paid utmost attention to Butler’s (2000) suggestion that in every aspect of the research, the high-standards and core principles of social science guided me not only for conducting a research process but also for reminding me of my own capacity and limitations.

Merriam and Tisdell (2015) elucidate the validity of a qualitative research as concern that can be approached through careful attention to a study’s conceptualization and the way in which the data are collected, analyzed, and interpreted, and the way in which the findings are presented. (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). On the other hand, Ratcliffe claims that “data do not speak for themselves” (Ratcliffe, 1983, as cited in Merriam and Tisdell, 2015). From his perspective, the reality deviates since the existence of the fact that there should be an interpreter and/or translator. It sounds like Schrödinger’s cat in social sciences but bearing in this mind, my goal was to reflect the reality of a small universe as accurate as possible. The methodological aim was, in Wolcott’s words, “increasing the correspondence between the research and real world” (Wolcott, 2005, as cited in Merriam et al., 2015).

Roller and Lavrakas' Total Quality Framework (TQF) (2015) can be utilized as a tool for evaluating the validity of this research. What Roller and Lavrakas introduce is a framework in which the required elements of a quality research guide the author and others to evaluate the validity of the study in question. According to TQF, there are four fundamental elements of a quality research. These are credibility, analyzability, transparency and usefulness (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015).

Credibility basically refers to "the trustworthiness of the outcomes" (Roller, et. al., p.10). Credibility as a quality component, focuses on the data collection stage. At this stage, two elements are tested in the research. Scope of the target group and data collection method (Roller, et. al.). My thesis subjected the Turkey-born immigrant Turkish mothers in Finland. According to Statistics of Finland, 2181 Turkey-born Turkish women -not mothers- between the age of 20-55 reside in Finland (Statistics of Finland, 2022). It can be assumed that the number of mothers is less. The number of interviewees in this thesis was three. The initial goal was to interview with five interviewees despite the absence of a literature backup on bachelor level thesis but due to time constraints, hardship in reaching the target group and supervisor's favorable guidance, data collection stage resulted in three accounts from three randomly chosen interviewees. Therefore, this thesis is not able to assert to correspond the all determinants of day-care related decisions of immigrant Turkish mothers as the data saturation and sampling requirements are not fulfilled.

The other element of credibility is data collection. Data (or material as it better fits to qualitative research as a term) collection was performed through problem-centered interviews. The common language of interviewer and interviewees, pre-designed interview frame and recording of the interviews were meant to be quality elements in order to conduct reliable data collection process. The collected data of each interviewee was not shared with the responding interviewee or with a peer for reviewing purposes. Considering these, data collection process was unchallenged. Thus, the thesis is not able to assert credibility within introduced quality criteria in TQF.

Next fundamental element for a qualitative research is analyzability. Analyzability refers to “completeness and accuracy of the analysis and interpretations” (Roller, et. al.). In regard to the processing of the analyzability as the first component, the translation, transcription, development of the themes and codes stages were explained at data analysis section. The aim of the use of a qualitative data software was to conduct a reliable data process in data management and coding. According to analyzability principles, training, knowledge and experience on the chosen subject; familiarity to the language and culture are essential pros as well regarding a well-processed qualitative research (Roller, et. al.). In regard to the verification of the analyzability as the second component, the collected, interpreted and conceptualized data was challenged by only previous studies (triangulation). I made comparisons between my conceptualized data and previously laid out information on the subject. I found similarities and contradictions to my findings in the previous studies, especially, Tervola’s (2018), Yaesmin’s (2019) and Cömertler’s (2007) researches.

The third fundamental component of TQF is transparency. Transparency refers to reporting of data collection and analysis process in rich detail to the reader (Roller, et. al.). Detailed information on data collection, process and analysis was given in the data collection and analysis section. The aim was to produce and report valid information on the subject. Evaluation of transferability of the research design, used methods and implementation can be done through detailed explanations of the overall thesis process.

The fourth and last fundamental component of TQF is the usefulness. Usefulness of a research refers to future actions that can be taken in relation to executed research (Roller, et. al.). According to TQF guidelines, several questions can be asked after execution of the research such as whether the research confirmed or refuted a hypothesis, whether identified important knowledge gaps or whether offered new actions on the subject in future researches (Roller, et. al.). Regarding this thesis, I could claim that, the native language education at home versus day-care participation of immigrants’ children under 3 years old offers holistic researches to a great extent. Native language education at home of the immigrants’ children was not subjected among the researches that constituted the

background of this thesis- at least, was not specified-. Considering the mother tongue “instructions” which are organized by Helsinki city administration that aim only pupils, native language learning of children under 3 years old and provision and type of relevant services can be investigated further.

9. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This thesis targeted to investigate the determinants of day-care admission related decisions of Turkish immigrant mothers in Finland. The initial idea was to interview Turkish mothers who took care of their children at home first three years in order to explore the determinants of the decision in question and its consequences on labour market participation and integration. Due to interviewee profiles, collected data and the complexity of integration as a concept research question(s), scope and aims of the thesis has been refined. I'd thought these women would have been relatively outreach and difficult to contact. The interviewees were reached randomly via social media. The criteria were to be Turkish speaking mother in Finland and to take care of the child first three years of age. Employment status was not criteria, thus none of the volunteers that I interviewed were unemployed as consequence of random responses to my announcement on social media. This situation forced me to revise the axis of my research. The focus had to be reduced only on the determinants of day-care admission related choices as a result containing one research question. Therefore, the impact of the decisions in question on integration and labour market participation had to become background information that responds the justifying importance and consequences of the subject. The purpose of the thesis was, thus, exploring the determinants of the day-care choices.

The integration challenges of immigrant women were demonstrated in researches that were conducted by OECD (2018), THL (2021), Tervola (2018), Yaesmin (2019) and Cömertler (2007) and these researches were issued in the previous studies section.

In her research, Tervola demonstrated the determinants of immigrant women's day-care choices (see Figure 4). The determinants were divided into two dimensions as macro and micro level. Under these two dimensions were shown several determinants. Based on the interviews I conducted, norms of raising child under macro level and parental preferences under micro level overlapped frequently with Tervola's research. Although almost all other determinants were

rarely mentioned, no strong link was derived from the interviews that could demonstrate the pivotal motivation of day-care choices and other determinants. Considering that the figure of determinants of day-care choices of immigrant women is a collection of all determinants that were revealed in Tervola's research, I may claim that the findings of my research were in consistency with Tervola's findings (Tervola, 2018).

Yaesmin, Ghorashi and Koivurova demonstrated in their researches that "immigrant women hypothesize a natural link with their country of origin" (Ghorashi, 2017; Yaesmin & Koivurova, 2019). In my research, the dominant determinants of taking care of child at home at least first three years were Turkish language education of the child at home with mother and norms of the Turkish community in Finland (see Figure 6). Therefore, these assertions can be interpreted as overlapping. Nevertheless, the relation between "natural link with the country of origin" and Turkish language education of the child at home or norms of the community require to be defined in more detail in further researches.

Especially in W2's and W3's cases, self-isolation due to lack of autonomy and competencies, can be detected. This was what Yaesmin asserted in her research, as well (Yaesmin, 2019). She also claimed that "ethnic identities and lack of language skills limit social interaction and the ability to communicate" (Yaesmin, 2019). I observed the claim on language skills in all cases without exception and the claim on ethnic identities in W2's cases to a great extent.

Another assertion that was claimed by Yaesmin was the impact of the stress of integration and gender discrimination on balancing the self-esteem and sense of identity (Yaesmin, 2019). In my research, the stress of integration was narrated frequently. The adaptation to the new culture in social and working-life aspects, to new language and to different weather conditions were significant concerns that were shared by all three interviewees. On the other hand, based on interviewees' their own assessments, there was no mention of treatment or attitude that might be an indicator of gender discrimination. Therefore, this research cannot make any assertions on direct or indirect gender discrimination regarding the determinants of day-care choices of mothers in question.

As mentioned in the results section, all three interviewees stated that they were dominant in child related decision-making regardless the origin of husband. Origin of the husband was a significant variable regarding the determinant of day-care choice, according to my research. W1 and W3 were married with a Finnish man when their children were eligible to be admitted to day-cares. The determinants of their day-care admission related decisions were strongly based on Turkish language education of the child at home. W2's husband was Turkish and W2 never mentioned Turkish language education. On the contrary, she stated her desire for her children to be fluent in Finnish language. This outcome raised some question marks in my mind regarding the best interest of child principle. I believe, a comparative research on native language learning at home and benefits of early participation to the day-care system as themes could be conducted in the future.

In the OECD research which was conducted in 2018, the challenges of labour market participation were revealed as poor language learning outcomes, separation between active/inactive jobseekers, childcare responsibilities and availability of home care allowance (OECD, 2018).

W1 attended a language course soon after her arrival while she was not a mother yet. W2 did her language internship nine years after her arrival when their children were nine and four years old and W3 did not attend any language course despite she did not have a child first three years in Finland. None of the interviewees were attending to a language institution while they were taking care of their children at home.

It is important to note that all three interviewees moved to Finland as family member as OECD report asserted. In according to OECD report in 2018, most of the immigrant women move to Finland as family members with no direct ties to the labour market. (OECD, 2018). "They often experience more difficulties integrating than do their counterparts" (OECD, 2018).

As it was stated in OECD research, childcare responsibilities are considered to cause obstacles regarding involvement in early integration activities and longer gaps can cause challenges in beginning or returning to labour market (OECD, 2018). In the case of my interviewees, W1 enrolled to a vocational training programme soon after her child's day-care admission and participated into the labour market one year after her child's day-care admission; W2 participated into labour market one year after her second child's day-care admission and W3 enrolled to university of applied sciences right after her child's day-care admission.

The consequences of childcare responsibilities and the fact that migrating to Finland as a family member were also issued in THL's research (THL, 2021). In THL's research, the time spent at home with the child was underlined and the integration measures for newcomer family members were compared with ones for refugees. The claim was that integration measures might have been less thorough for the family members. (THL, 2021)

Another challenge mentioned in the OECD report was availability of home care allowance. In according my research, all three interviewees received home care allowance during first three years but there was not significant information revealed regarding the impact of home care allowance on day-care related decisions. Nevertheless, W2 addressed the women in Turkish community in which she was engaged, preferred staying at home and giving birth in every three years by referring home-care allowances.

In addition, another research can be conducted with unemployed Turkish mothers only. This would provide comparative results and more solid validity to the subject and take further step to measure the impacts on labour market participation. Worth mentioning, in according to Cömertler's research, half of the interviewees had never looked for a job in Finland (15/30); almost half of them were not following the news in Finnish (44/56) and lastly, majority of the interviewed women were not participating in civil society (80/20) (Cömertler, 2007). During my interviews, all three interviewees mentioned about the Turkish community that they encountered with and comments were verifying the existence of the outreach Turkish mothers in Finland whom I would have liked to reach.

The research question of this thesis was “What are the determinants of day-care related decisions of Turkish immigrant mothers in Finland who did not admit their child/children to day-cares before the age of three?” Maybe it could have been formulated better but I could not think of a better formulation of the research question with so many variables involved. Nevertheless, the results demonstrated that – in the small universe of the research- norms of the Turkish community and more frequently, Turkish language education of the child at home were the revealing motives of the mothers as decision-makers.

Thesis writing process has been challenging due to several problems mostly in research design. Initially planned other research question(s) were very challenging within the context of collected data and complex phenomenon of integration. In addition, to measure the impact of a social phenomenon on another social phenomenon requires multi-layered and more complex data collection and analysis methods such as grounded theory etc. The scope of the thesis varied at several stages and resulted in one research question, responding analysis and its answer. During the thesis process I took advantage of relevant resources. Literature review and subsequently tracing the methodologic guidelines, theoretical frameworks and previously done researches envisioned the scope of the thesis as well as my personal views on research in a general meaning and on the problem of the thesis specifically. I developed my knowledge on social science principles and qualitative research conduct with the help of ethical requirements. I familiarized myself with several explicit research, data collection and analysis methods. The methods that I utilized, undoubtedly developed my understanding on how to design and implement a qualitative research in a practical manner. I strongly believe that I have learnt plenty from the mistakes that I did in research design, literature review, time management and writing process. I can claim that it was the most intensive but the most educative assignment of my study years. As a future social worker who wishes to work on integration field, it was an opportunity to familiarize myself in the field and to produce relevant information regardless the amount. The reason behind why I chose to write my thesis on Turkish mothers in Finland was a personal interest based on familiarity to the culture and advocating gender equality.

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APPENDIX. Semi-structured Interview Frame

PERSONAL INFORMATION

- How old are you?
- How long have you been in Finland?
- What is your education background?
- How many children do you have and how old are they?

DECISION MAKING IN THE FAMILY

- Can you describe how the decisions are made about the children´s everyday issues in your family?

DETERMINANTS OF DAY-CARE CHOICE

- Can you describe the first three years of your child at home?
- What kind of information about day-care providers in your area did you have? How?
- What do you think about Finnish day-care system?
- Have you received home care allowance from Kela?
- What was the reason of taking care of your child/children at home at least first three years?

INTEGRATION

- Did you have an integration plan? Can you describe it?
- Can you tell me about your work experiences in Finland?
- Can you describe your satisfaction with your working life?
- What changed in your life after your child/children started day-care?
- What would you find helpful in your process of integration?
- What do you think about your integration process?