Acculturation and transition to parenthood in Russian-speaking immigrant families in Finland

Preis, Irina

2016 Laurea

Laurea University of Applied Sciences

Acculturation and transition to parenthood in Russian-speaking immigrant families in Finland

Irina Preis
Degree Program in Social Services
Bachelor's Thesis
November, 2016

The objective of the research is the development of the knowledge on the processes of acculturation and transition to parenthood in Russian-speaking immigrant families in Finland. The knowledge is required in order to design the education instruments for the families under consideration and the welcoming state social institutions. The objectives of the study included exploration of the perceived psychological adjustment and subjective wellbeing of the Russian-speaking immigrant families prior to the child birth in the host culture. The disclosure of expectations of the participant family members about parenthood in the new country of residence also comprised an objective. Also, the determination of the social and cultural adaptation processes on the parenting practices and cognitions presented a target.
The study was carried out in cooperation with the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Tampere, which is known for its leading positions in research focused on the relationship between the society and individuals in its changing dynamics.
The theory of the study is based on two main academic trends of acculturation developed by Berry (2005), and the family development theory advanced by Rogers and White (1993).
The research was conducted qualitatively, both in data gathering and their analysis.
The practical methods of research included: semi-structured in-depth interviews with Russian-speaking immigrant families, followed by the projective conceptualization method as a part of the interview. Two focus group discussions with Russian-speaking immigrant mothers were also considered in research. The thematic analysis showed that both processes, migration and parenthood, become involved in the narratives and represent the unity attributed to the effects determined by the personality traits, cultural identity, environmental issues, cultural differences, trust to the system of maternal care, self-empowerment and social support. The subjective wellbeing during transition to parenthood in immigration is predisposed by the level of acculturation of a parent, and of the overall success of family adaptation. The participants of the study were mostly satisfied with their life at the time of transition to parenthood. However, the study revealed that projective assessments and associations appeared to be rather negative describing the parents experiencing isolation, perplexity, loss of significance, financial difficulties, and conflicts. The respondents' expectations expressed on the projective part of the interviews were nowhere near their own reality concerning status, respective employment, financial wealth, and social involvement with nationals. Finally, the Russian-speaking immigrant parents have shown an encouraging pattern of attitudes and behavior: despite the anxiety involved in the transition processes, their way of fighting the social isolation and cultural conflict is to create their own community organizations for social activity and change. This way promotes both the cultural adaptation and cultural support within the family and in the society.

Keywords: parenting, acculturation, transition to parenthood, subjective wellbeing.

Table of Contents

1   Introduction

According to the data report of Working Group of the Finnish Advisory Board of Ethnic Relations, Russian-speaking people, in general, have adapted themselves to Finland quite well (ETNO report, 2003). This claim appears to be true and even could be explained by cultural and ethnic similarities (race, partly orthodox religious confession, territorial proximity), but at the same time author's own life and work experiences do not fully correspond to this opinion. Moreover, there are only a few studies found on the specificity of acculturation phenomena of Russian-speaking immigrants in Finland (Heino & Veistilä, 2015; Valtonen, 2009; Reuter & Jaakkola, 2013; Pöllänen, 2013; Kivijärvi & Heino, 2013; Katisko, 2013). Some of the study results are not even available in the open access sources thus limiting their reading and referring. The published ones detect negative attitudes towards this minority group and point out faults concerning the processes of acculturation of Russian-speaking immigrants in Finland (Arajärvi, 2009; Nshom & Croucher, 2014; Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000).

Furthermore, the last decades Finnish and Russian mass media publications and discussions often tend to highlight mostly the public concerns for Russian-speaking minority with child protection and family services, mental health issues, and unemployment. The parental issues were so far handled scarcely. Therefore, deepening the knowledge on how Russian-speaking families cope with the problems they face while becoming parents, raising children, when living in the Finnish cultural environment, presents the key point of this research.

Present theoretical study project focuses on the interrelation between acculturation and transition to parenthood in Russian-speaking immigrant families. Parenting requires acculturation because it binds together the culture and the adaptive human development. Only a few comparative studies are available on the culture impact to the early parental rearing practices and rituals, and even less research has been made in the cross-cultural context of immigration. Bornstein & Bohr (2011) provide the multiple research summaries saying that

> "While parents in all societies are expected to nurture and protect young children, culture influences a wide array of family functions including roles, decision-making patterns, and cognitions and practices related to childrearing and child development. Parenting may be subjected to complex transformations when families emigrate from one society to settle in another" (Bornstein & Bohr, 2011, p.1).

The author's research interest originated from two motivations: i) the authors' own interest and involvement in the voluntary family work in the sector of Russian-speaking non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and ii) the innovativeness of the working life partner's project, including part-time employment. Both rationales come from the extensive research project

conducted by University of Tampere in 2012 - 2015 on the infant development influenced by the parental traumatic experiences preceding immigration, such as, for example, escaping from war regions (Punamäki, 2010). The non-refugee, i.e. voluntary immigrants Russian-speaking families were the reference group for comparison of the role of psychic trauma in transition to parenthood. The immense quantity of scientific data was collected by the author of the present thesis report working in the field.

With the key objective of enlarging the knowledge and promoting better understanding of acculturation and parenting phenomena among Russian-speaking immigrants, this qualitative study covered three main topics: 1) the couples' perceived psychological wellbeing within the context of acculturation prior to the child birth, 2) the transition to parenthood within the context of adjustment to new situation when child is born, 3) the influence of immigration on the parental roles, their cultural beliefs, practices, and behavior.

2 Background

2.1 Working life partner

The study was carried out in cooperation with School of Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Tampere, which is known for its leading research focused on the relationship between the society and individuals in its changing dynamics. They hold a number of solid educational interdisciplinary Bachelor, Master and Doctoral degree programs together with the high-profile research specializations certified at the state level in health and social sciences.

The major objective of the university research project was to advance understanding of how parents' cultural background, immigration experience, and exposure to war trauma contribute to early child development and family relationships. The planned study aimed to explore challenges that parents are facing in their new host country or when living in conditions of war and military violence, investigating resources and protective factors of family relationships. Further study concerned the parental beliefs and values in child-rearing, parent-infant interaction, parents' mental health, and early child development.

The project's first longitudinal setting targeted families arrived to Finland from Somalia, Russia, and Middle-East countries. During the research, the families were monitored from pregnancy until the child's first birthday. The research visits were paid to the family homes or other places arranged on agreement, where the families were interviewed in their native language. The second longitudinal setting dealt with families presently living in war conditions in Gaza, Palestine, with the analogous monitoring pattern. With these two settings, the impact of sociocultural environment, traumatic experiences, and immigration to the early family relations was studied.

The fieldwork was carried out in 2013–2015, and the data will be analyzed and published in 2016. The research aimed at offering novel information of cultural, family, and infant psychology for developing the state maternity service systems to meet the needs of families from different cultural backgrounds.

2.2   Context of the study

At the end of 2015, the Russian-speaking immigrants constituted the biggest ethnic and linguistic minority of 72 436 persons, i.e., 21.9% of the total immigrant Finnish population, which is nowadays the most rapidly growing group of foreign residents in Finland (Population Register Centre, 2015). The last large immigration wave started as Ingrian Finns remigration prior to the Soviet Union collapse in 1990. Nowadays, family ties, marriage and employment remain common reasons for Russian-speaking people to immigrate to Finland.

> "Generally, however, migration appeared to be the one way of keeping up a satisfactory level of existence, and when children were involved, the criteria determining what constitutes a satisfactory existence level obviously also included consideration of their needs and future prospects" (Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2000, p.4).

Even though the situation with immigrant youth integration reportedly is not so encouraging (Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2011), the parents' motive to immigrate for their children's better life is still often mentioned by Russian-speaking parents in common conversations.

On one hand, becoming a parent is an experience of personal matter, but on the other hand, it is always a social and cultural event that represents a major life change. The pregnancy and birth of the child are mostly perceived as the positive fulfilment of the psycho-physiological needs of the woman. Nevertheless, these are often considered as a personal and family developmental crisis. The associated stresses increase if couple decides to change the country of residence no matter temporarily or permanently (Bornstein, 2012).

The author of the thesis failed to find the reliable scientific data on how Russian-speaking immigrant couples in Finland construct their transition to parenthood. In the frames of project co-founded by the European Union, the Russian Federation and the Republic of Finland, only few scientists have studied the Russian-speaking children's, adolescents' and families' well-being for the purpose of social work empowerment (Törrönen, Borodkina and Samoylova, 2013; Heino and Kärmeniemi, 2013; Veistilä, 2013). Written by the experts from Finnish and Russian Universities, the report of the project covered the topics of racism and multiculturalism in both countries. Understanding these issues can help professionals to find new ways of

stimulating mutual trust in client-worker relationships, thus improving the clients' opportunities to make decisions concerning their own lives. It is worth to note, that this report inspired the author of the present study as a student, researcher, and future social work practitioner equally.

2.3   Research objectives

The transition to parenthood influenced by migration processes demand parents to re-evaluate their parental roles in a different way compared to their own upbringing. The knowledge on parenthood in multi-cultural settings suggests to immigrant parents as well as to the state institutions the deepened understanding on how to provide the resources for social equality in maternity and child care services for the migrant families.

The research aims to explore new knowledge on the interrelation between two multidimensional processes: i) acculturation and ii) transition to parenthood in voluntary immigrant Russian-speaking families in Finland. With focus on lived experiences of adaptation and specific abilities of immigrant family couples to interact with host society, this study discloses:

- the personal experiences in the psychological and relational wellbeing of Russian-speaking immigrant families prior to the child birth in the context of new culture environment,

- the main ideas, themes and expectations of the probable instabilities and changes in family life during transition to parenthood in immigration,

- the impact of the immigration experience on the parental roles, beliefs and practices.

The preceding level of acculturation and psychological wellbeing of forthcoming immigrant parents are estimated to be connected to parental expectations and experiences involved in their new roles.

3   Theoretical framework

Various theoretical schools have contributed to the understanding of parenting in different cultures, looking at the phenomena throw-out four major domains (Walker, 2013).

The first is the theory of acculturation that is one of the most complex areas of research in cross-cultural psychology. The complexity has made the reviewing of the field both difficult and selective. As a result, the limiting and framing are done to provide structure and to focus

on specific features of parenting and acculturation phenomena. The author's idea was to introduce small-scale study identifying specific illustrative features studied for the specific group, Russian-speaking minority in Finland. Taking into account, but narrowing the theoretical approach while applying it to the empirical study, special attention is paid to the psychological and sociocultural adaptation experiences and wellbeing of family couples during transition to parenthood.

The second domain is a part of developmental psychology studies. Pregnancy, transition to parenthood, and parenting are critically important family adjustment periods of life in the human developmental continuum. For this project, the segment taken from this domain is the concepts on parents' wellbeing that seeks for answering questions: - What are the expected pains and pleasures of parenting? To what extent the transition to parenthood is associated with couple's wellbeing? What conditions of life are expected to be changing while becoming a parent? (Walker, 2013)

The cultural and community-based approaches to parenting is the third applied methodology stemming from social psychology theory and research. The approaches are multifaceted and include affective (feelings), behavioral (actions) and cognitive (knowledge) aspects. The acculturation of parenting cognitions is a relatively new stream in cross-cultural research. It gives the perspective of variations and similarities of culture learning strategies for successful family functioning during adaptation to new culture (Ward et al., 2001; Bornstein, 2012; Matsumoto & Van de Vijver, 2012).

The family development theory, the fourth theoretical framework, focuses on the transition to parenthood as a stage of family life-cycle changes in roles, family career, social norms, and resulting social change. The practical application of this theory assists family support workers with therapeutic tool in the analysis of family "here-and-now" progressive situation and events (Carter & McGoldrick, 1988)

3.1   Acculturation

The first theoretical conceptualization was done by Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits in 1936 by stating the definition of acculturation.

> "Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups …" (Redfield, Linton, & Herskovits, 1936, pp. 149-150).

Cross-cultural psychology has demonstrated significant links between cultural context and individual behavioral development. Given this relationship, cross-cultural study has increasingly investigated what happens to individuals who have developed in one cultural context when they attempt to re-establish their lives in another one. The long-term psychological consequences of this process of acculturation are highly variable, depending on social and personal variables that exist in the society of origin, the society of settlement, and phenomena that both exist prior to, and arise during, the course of acculturation. According to later discussion in 1954 (Social Science Research Council, 1954), research in the field stated the concept as more associated with assimilation. However, later it was clear for many researchers that assimilation is not the only way to acculturate. It can also be reactive, i.e. triggering resistance in both groups, creative, i.e. stimulating new cultural shapes new for both groups, and delayed, i.e. showing changes in groups wholly years later.

There are two main concepts assumed for consideration: the concept of acculturation that applied to the cultural changes in groups, and the concept of psychological acculturation or adaptation as employed to the changes and eventual outcomes that exist as a result of individuals experiencing acculturation. The latter distinction was published by Graves (1967) and it more clearly pointed out two main changes due to acculturation: in the culture of the group, and in the psychology of an individual.

Berry's (1997) contribution to the acculturation theory and research deepens the conception for plural societies (pluralism as a result of population migrations) with dominant (host society) and non-dominant groups (other than host). In plural societies many different groups may exist. The variety of non-dominant groups is characterized by three main factors: voluntariness (voluntary immigrants, refugees, indigenous people), mobility (immigrants and refugees), and permanence (international students, sojourners, guest workers or asylum seekers). All these groups are facing the acculturation process with varying levels of difficulties. These variations in factors leading to the process of acculturation appears to be common for all these groups (Berry & Sam, 1997).

Berry (1997) also introduced the dominant and non-dominant cultural groups as contextual conception of the acculturation. The dominant defines the host culture group that "accommodates" the non-dominant acculturating group. If the strategy is assimilation, then people from non-dominant groups do not maintain their own culture and pursue daily interaction with other cultures. Conversely, if people place a value on holding on to their original culture excluding communications with other cultures, the strategy is called segregation. If both above mentioned processes are valued and equally kept as important, the integration is the strategy. The marginalization characterized by the low interest or wish to maintain own culture often induced by enforced cultural loss and at the same time by little interest to have

relations with others due to exclusion or discrimination (Berry, 1997, p.9). Under assumption that individuals from non-dominant groups have the freedom to choose how they wish to ac- culturate, the only freely chosen acculturation strategy is Integration presenting the ideal case. In reality, there is the dominant group factors, constraints, and forces that influence the overall process of acculturation. The schematic representation is shown in Figure 1 (Berry, 1997, p 10).
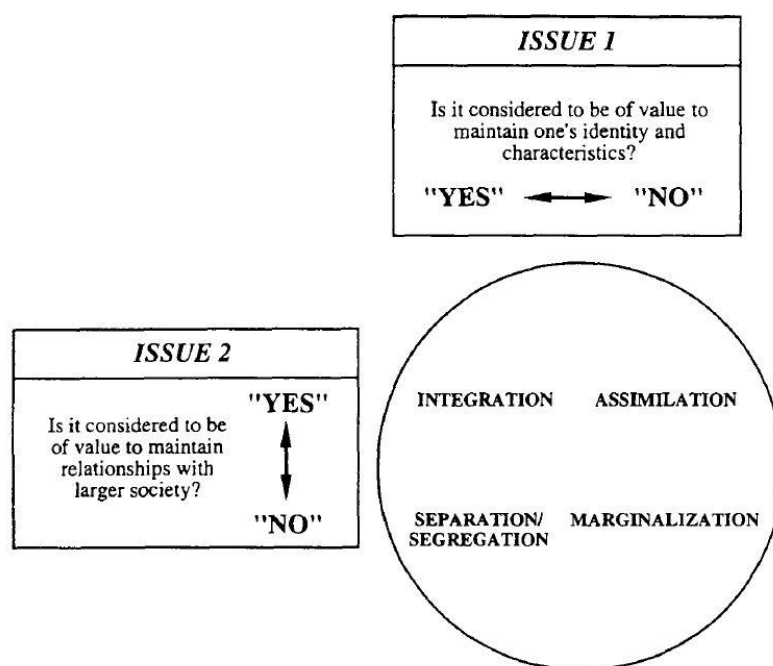

Figure 1: Acculturation strategies (Berry, 1997, p.10)

The next framework in Figure 2 systematizes the process and the structure of acculturation and brings the insight on group and individual level variables that should be addressed to when carrying out studies of psychological acculturation. However, it is important to note that it is not possible to cover all the dimensions and variables in one study (Fig. 2), there- fore, it is always the fractional studies collected for more broad theoretical conceptualiza- tions.

The five main feature of psychological acculturation (oval contour in Figure 2) represent the outline of the personal adjustment progression. In acculturation process the dealing with life events often starts from causal agents and proceeds by having a deal in contact between two cultures (Berry, 1997). This intercultural contact in some cases represents enhancing chal- lenges, in other cases it might seriously demoralize the feelings of one's life balance. Further- more, the person appraises the meaning of experiences and evaluates them as obstacles or opportunities (stressors). In this sense, three individual strategies to cope with stressors are

known: emotion-focused, problem-focused and avoidance-oriented coping. The immediate effects (stresses) represent the results of stressors' influence and are characterized by the high levels of anxiety or personal crisis if overwhelming took place and by the low levels if problems are successfully resolved. The last feature of psychological acculturation is the long-term adaptation that includes both the individuals' wellbeing and coping (psychological) and managing daily life in the new cultural context (sociocultural) (Ward, 1996).
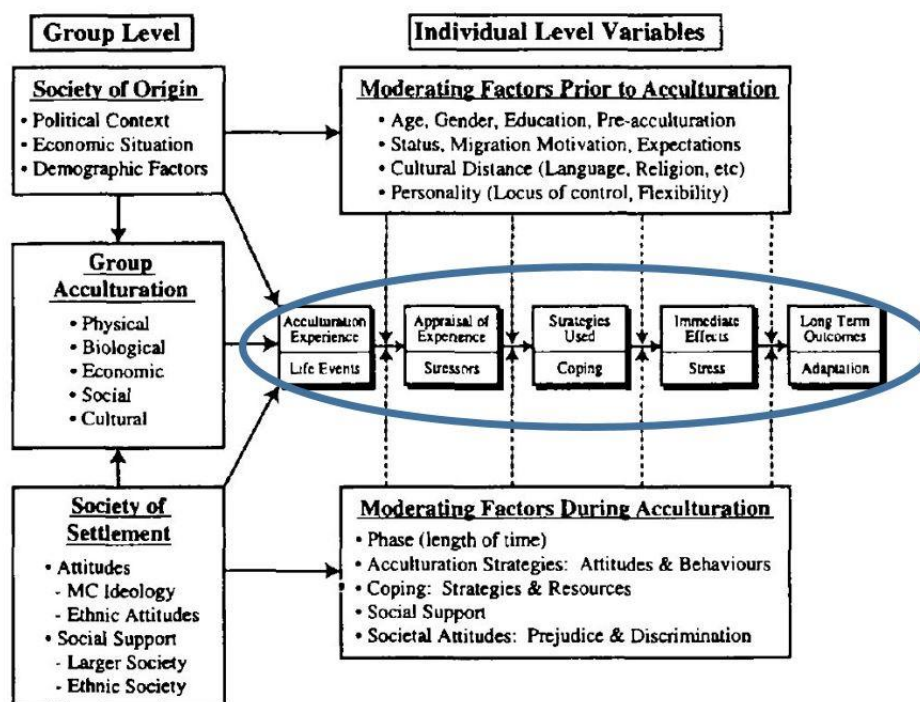

Figure 2: The framework for acculturation research (Berry, 1997, p.15)

3.2   Family development theory

The theory focuses on the systematic and patterned changes involved in the family life course. Early notion of a family-life cycles is known from the history back to 1777 (Mattessich & Hill, 1987), but more profound formulation comes from 1949 and 1957 when Reuben Hill and Evelyn Duvall respectively systematize the stages of family development. From those times, the family life is studied as the interconnection over three levels of functioning: the individual-psychological, the interactional-associational and the societal-institutional. Starting from 1991, James M. White suggests the family development considered as a scientific theory, by which the formulations and mathematical models might be developed and used for perspectives of families moving through universal deterministic stages of life.

The basic concepts and propositions include definitions and understanding of position, norms, roles, family stages, and transitions from stage to stage, family career, and deviations over stages. Developmental studies are often the target of criticism because their frameworks are

broad, vague and ambiguous. Focusing mostly on the mode values the scholars of the theory are criticized as covering variations that are not taking into account ethnicity, race, and gender. But in spite of that, the theory remains one of the internationally popular academic approaches to the family studies and a number of applications are proved to be useful for example in blended families (Baxter, Braithewaite, and Nicholson, 1999), work-family boundary (White, 1999), and family computer uses (Watt and White, 1999).

One of the stages of the family development theory is the transition to parenthood that consists of two other stages: marriage and birth of the first child. The main tasks of these stages include: i) investing in the spouse as the major emotional resource, ii) establishing the mutual satisfying marriage relationship with interdependence, iii) finding the place in the families' network, iv) developing goals and expectations about parenthood, v) adjusting and encouraging the development of infant, and vi) developing an effective relationship with infant as mother and father (White, 1991; Bengston and Allen, 1993).

3.3   Transition to parenthood as a developmental stage

Transition to parenthood represents a major developmental period for the parents, child-parent relationship and for child's development. Research data consistently demonstrated it as a stressful event often inducing more profound and unsettling changes than any other developmental stage of the family life-cycle (Graves,1967; Harold & Leve, 2012; Heino & Veistilä, 2015; Heino & Kärmeniemi, 2013).

Applying a systems model of family processes, Cowan & Cowan (1992) depict five aspects continuum: the inner life of partners, the quality of relationships in the family, stress outside the family, the quality of marriage, and the child. The interconnectedness of those aspects is obvious, however they are not timely framed. Becoming a parent may start very early or it may take up to one year after the child's birth. In the qualitative study on transition to parenthood most of the studies on these aspects are done retrospectively, and the author of this thesis failed to find the prospective assessments of the couples' functioning collected during the prenatal phase.

In many cultures, marriage has been conventionally described as the precursor to becoming a parent, and many religions regard the reproduction as a key function of family. Moreover, families are considered as the foundation of stable societies and children rearing is of high importance over a number of human cultures. For the past century, however, the traditional concept of family has been changing and the new forms and understandings appear, such as step-, LGBT-, and alone-parent families, gaining the new social constructs sometimes viewed by classical theorists as threatening tendencies. However, the family and parenthood are still

highly valued by both the traditional notions of familyism and the modern shifts to individual-ism (Lawrence et al., 2012).

Dahlström (1989) carried out a study in fourteen European countries identifying four contra-dictions that influencing a couple in transition to parenthood. These include: i) the paid em-ployment vs child birth and rearing (in the context of economic independence of women), ii) the privacy of family life vs the attention to family life and regulations by state policies, iii) freedom of choice in marital relations vs the need for stability in children lives, and iv) the Patriarchal tradition vs the gender equality. All these tensions are also encountered in the family cross-cultural research. In modern societies the reproductive behavior becomes more the matter of individual choice of women, and less the values of moral codes, religion or laws and customs as in the past times.

Over the 2000s, the research on the parenthood widen also studying the phenomenon of childlessness. Recent decades have witnessed a trend toward increased childlessness and de-lay with childbearing. For example, in 2000, 28% of women of 30-34 age and 20% of 35-39 were childless. This made the interest in the psychological effects of childlessness also in-creased. The studies point out that childlessness is associated with low distress and better wellbeing of couples if the decision was made *una voce* (Umberson, Pudrovska, & Rezsek, 2010).

Becoming a parent leads to changes in identity and restructuring of roles and relationships, but each partner may experience these changes differently and react in markedly different ways. Cowan & Cowan (2012) described this family transition as "long term processes that re-sult in a qualitative reorganization of both inner life and external behavior". The growing number of divorces in the early times of marriage when children are very young have put the focus on the transition to parenthood and the way of parental coping with stresses caused by the transition.

Many qualitative studies attempt to understand the stressors in relationships within couples in order to help finding better ways of supporting parents during this key event. The significant traits of the transition to parenthood were addressed by Walker et al. (2010) and include "the decision to have a child, the problems with pregnancy and postnatal period, the changes in roles and responsibilities, and the burdens associated with becoming a parent and their im-pact on the couple relationship" (Walker et al., 2010).

The decision to have a child is not conflict-free. Couples retrospectively describe that as one of the most difficult and stressful moments in their relationship. It became clear that not everyone is always ready to become a parent and often there is a pressure form the other

partner to have a baby. A common observation in the research is the choice often being out of control, and the discussions often involve tension between partners. Some families even suffer from emotional violence while making this significant decision. The economic issues, i.e. having only one stable income from working father, stick to decision making during transition to parenthood (Walker et al., 2010).

Handling the problems in prenatal period and pregnancy also associated with tensions between future parents. Women having problems with conception or experiencing miscarriages speak about how emotionally stressful this had been and how the relationship with their husbands had worsened as a result. It was found that it was challenging also for men to respond and support their women in these problems: they felt isolated and withdrawn. At the same time, there are data on some men who were very supportive and understanding of their partner during and after pregnancy (Walker et al., 2010).

For most parents the birth of baby is a joyful event and many couples regard the transition to parenthood as a next positive step to commitment to be together. Nevertheless, the roles and responsibilities associated with parenthood are always considerably changed. During the first month of child life, the patterns of sleep and their disruptions should be managed by both parents. Putting on hold of intimate relationships while baby is very young and as a result the deficiency of time alone together makes it difficult to talk about things that are really important day to day. Lack of time, coping with tiredness and combining work obligations with caring for a baby, need of energy to support each other, lack of money are the main challenges in the accounts of new parent. Some men even share opinions on the impossibility to go out and see their friends when life at home becomes difficult, that also makes their life disturbed in a certain way. The obligations to be a parent can be overwhelming if the parental relationship is under the strain of any factor and the negotiations on the parental roles and obligations are not always successful and up to the interests of the parties (Barlow & Parsons, 2003; Furlog & McGilloway, 2012).

Positive, consistent, supportive parenting predicts low levels of child problem behavior and child abuse, and enhances cognitive development. Contrary, inconsistent and tough parenting is predictive of problematic child outcomes, delinquency, poor educational realization and poor marital and physical health (Walker, 2008, p.17-19)

In many cases the stability factors for this transition stage are connected with the scheduled family support and interventions provided by social agencies and networks. The supportive actions for relationships in couples are focused on the parenting skills and couple relationships. The strategies and interventions taken on for parenting skills improvement have good outcomes for both parents and children. Clinical experiences show that results obtained for

children and parents are significantly better when interventions target not only the relationship between parents, but also parenting practices (Hertzmann & Power, 2003).

Harold and colleagues (2007) argue that the quality of parental relationships serves directly the psychological wellbeing of children, and orienting them to have positive expectations towards other family life and experiences. To address the negative consequences of family stressors and reduce the amount of families that experience parental crises the programs that improve the couple relationship skills need to be organized.

There are three main background theories applied in the interventions' strategies. Social learning theory used to understand and change the parent and child behavior (Bandura, 1977). The attachment theory is taking into account the building of the relationships in the parent-child dyad (Bowlby, 1999). The cognitive behavior theory aims to address parent stress and anger (Beck, 1975). The flexible teaching approaches, recommended by agencies during transition to parenthood, focus on helping parents to cope with relationship stresses, to develop positive child interactions, improve parent-child bonding and reduce disciplinary nurture strategies (Epstein & Baucom, 2002).

3.4   Culture and parenthood

Embedding the cultural context into the transition to parenthood studies make the overall research more heterogeneous. The migration and acculturations issues open up several sub-themes such as integrational conflict, social support, and cultural maintenance, working specially for immigrant communities (Stuart et al., 2009; Morelli & Rothbaum, 2007).

New findings reveal that parents differ in their expectations across cultures and possess various visions about family in cultural transition. The acculturation theory of transition to parenthood focuses more on the family as a unit and move towards research that considers the acculturation process as embedded within a familial context. However, the data and the research dynamics are still lacking of the relational aspects of family acculturation. Furthermore, the study challenges include the status and roles' changes associated with adapting to the new culture. Observed, that on one hand, the immigrant family and parent-child relationship are most affected by the stresses associated with the acculturation experiences, but on the other, often the family is the agent and the resource of handling and coping in adaptation process (Chung, 2001; Dinh & Nguyen, 2006; Stuart et al., 2009).

One of the interesting studies in the field conducted by Cote and her group provides the data on how the acculturation of parenting cognitions is featured among immigrants from South Korea in United States. Two main cognitions parental attributions and self-perception of parenting were taken into consideration. The Korean immigrant mothers showed relatively less investments in parenting than native mothers in South Korea, but have achieved a relatively

greater role balance than mothers in South Korea, although not as much as European Ameri-can mothers, and, thus, reported of less satisfaction and competence than those. The Korean immigrant mothers felt that they are not doing enough for their children, especially if they are rearing children in a different cultural context (Cote et al., 2015).

Bornstein (2012) captures the universals, specifics and distinctions between the behavior and functional meanings in parenting as embedded in culture. For example, European American and Puerto Rican mothers of young children believe in differential values of individual auton-omy versus connected interdependence, and this dissimilarity relates mothers' actual caregiv-ing. European American mother more often use suggestions rather than commands and other indirect means of guiding their children's behavior, Puerto Rican mothers more structure the child's behavior by direct means like physical restraints and positioning to draw child's atten-tion. The first universal acquisition device is language that shapes the psychological con-structs, functions, and structures of the culture. Language illustrates the essential duality of internal and external cultural universal forces. In some societies parents speak to their babies and see them as comprehending partners long before the infants acquire language, whereas in others it is thought that it is of nonsense to talk to infants before her/his language skills are clearly shaped (Bornstein et al., 2012). Plenty of questions arose with moving further with cultural context. For example, what are the cultural influence on the parenting cognitions and norms? How the sources of cultural variations (history, economic, social etc.) embedded to the parenthood and its practices? How those practices revealed and maintained through parenting in new cultures?

The biological or genome-specific heritage that assumes the universality of the parenthood is the second universal factor. Many parenting cognitions differing in their form and degree re-flect the universals, common for all cultures. For example, parents in all societies have to nurture and protect their children, support and wish physical health, social adjustment, edu-cational achievements, economic security and wellbeing of their children, and so they are parents in similar ways (Cote et al., 2015).

Culture-specific impacts on parenting begin long before child's birth, shaping fundamental choices on how parents will proceed and interact with their children. By that, the cultural specifics concern the whole caregiving opinions and competences. For example, the Japan and the United States are both child-centered countries with very high standards of living, but parents of these societies differently see the childrearing perspectives and goals, which they experience in various ways. Japanese mothers support emotional maturity, self-control, social politeness and interdependence in their children, while the U.S. mothers try to pro-mote assertiveness, verbal competence, self-actualization and autonomy in theirs (Bornstien et al., 2012). Social learning theorists, for example, have invented the role of free play as the

basis for children development that represents in fact the cultural self-construct. Children think, play and act as adults of their cultures. Attachment theory scientists claim that children develop internal working models of social relationships through the interactions with their primary caregivers, and further this provides children's social life with others through the whole life course (Bornstein et al., 2012).

By form of parenthood, Bornstein (1995) means a parenting cognitions or practices as acknowledged in the cultural context. The function is attributed to the aim or meaning attached to the form. When a certain parenting cognition serves the same function, that have the same meaning for different cultures, then the form-function relation could be seen as universal. For example, attuning the adult speech to baby language to support early language acquisition can also assume different meanings in different cultural contexts (Papoušek & Bornstein, 1992). Furthermore, particular parenting practices such as, for example, harsh initiation rites, considered less harmful to children in some culture, may be judged as abusive in others. If different parenting cognitions or practices serve different functions in different settings, it is evident cultural specificity. Thus, the research in the field becomes more and more often not quantitative, but qualitative (Ogbu, 1993).

4   Methods

For the present study, the following three methods were applied:
- i)   in-depth individual interview,
- ii)   group interview,
- iii)   projective conceptualization.

These methods are qualitative, aiming to explore the lived experiences and reflections of immigrants who are becoming parents in Finland. Qualitative methods used in the study were expected to be more appropriate than quantitative ones due to i) their degree of subjectivity that facilitates author's own interest to the social world, and ii) unfolding the specific terms of parenting in immigration (Silverman, 2005). In addition, the author of this study has connections within the Russian-speaking immigrant parents' communities and represents an informed observer position (outsider and insider) in the above mentioned communities.

The in-depth, focus group interviews, and projective conceptualization (with consequent respondents' self-interpretations) were audio-taped, transcribed and used as the data sets for thematic analysis. The analyzed data embodied interlinked themes, conceptions and reflections on the major research question "In what way the social roles of immigrant and parent affect each other?"

4.1   Participant recruitment

Participants for the study were personally invited from both municipal maternity care clinics and through snowballing from Russian-speaking non-governmental communities of Helsinki metropolitan area. The ethical approval was granted according to the agreement between Tampere University and HUS (Helsingin ja Uuudenmaan Sairaanhoitopiiri, Yhtymähallinto, Koordinoiva eettinen toimikunta). The participants have themselves initiated the contacts with the researcher through their e-mails and phone calls. Mostly, respondents expressed a strong interest to take part in the study. To respect the confidentiality of the data and to protect the participants' identity, the study was carried out as anonymous.

A total of six immigrant parents (four mothers and two fathers) from four families were inter-viewed face-to-face. Two families had the residence period in Finland of less than three years and another two have been living in Finland longer than that. The educational and profes-sional backgrounds of participants were not taken into account as the only perceived level of psychological wellbeing in immigration was under the scrutiny. The three-year of residence in Finland was chosen as the boundary criterion in these studies since it was assumed that the acculturation shock experience has already lived through (Berry, 2005). The outline of the participants is given in Table 1.

Respondent	Interviewed parents	Years in marriage	Time in of residence in Finland, years	Age, years
Family 1	Mother, father	3	3	27, 30
Family 2	Mother	15	24	39
Family 3	Mother	14	18	49
Family 4	Mother, father	5	3	31, 36

Table 1: Outline of participants in personal interviews

Two focus group interviews were conducted to explore the perceived acculturation and par-enting experiences. The interviews were semi-structured wherein the flexibility to variation and probing questions sat for more understanding and information. A total of thirteen immi-grant mothers participated in the group meetings. The first group consisted of six women who had the experiences of the first pregnancy and child birth while being resided in Finland. An-other focus group interview was designed and conducted with seven mothers who have been living in Finland longer than three years and have more than one child born in Russia and/or in Finland as well. The participants' outline for focus group interviews is presented in Table 2.

Participants	Age, years	Time of residence in Finland, amount of children	Number of children	Amount of participants in the group
Focus group 1	21 – 37	< 3	1	6
Focus group 2	27 – 44	>3	1 or more	7

Table 2: Outline of participants in focus group interviews

The projective conceptualization method was suggested for two Russian-speaking immigrant mothers of 39 (PC1), and 26 (PC2) years old, whose all children were born in Finland.

The Russian language was used in all interviews as an anti-oppressive element of intercultural study approach set by the project facilitator, the supervision board of the University of Tampere. The sampling decisions were made according to the principle of theoretical saturation, i.e. the subsequent data were no longer of new information (Patton, 2002).

4.2   In-depth personal interview

The study included qualitative data gathering during in-depth interviews conducted at the interviewees' homes, i.e. in comfortable conditions. The questionnaire (see Appendix 5) consisted of three sequential parts: i) recalling the experience of immigration and adjustment to the new life, ii) expectations and hopes concerning the parenthood in the new cultural environment, iii) the perceived positive and negative challenges in becoming a parent in immigration. The pilot testing was completed prior to the series as an important stage of the interview preparation. The general interview approach was semi-structured, so that during the interview process it was possible to create positive informal environment allowing the author (interviewer) to modify or amend certain questions based on participant opinions and responses to previous reflections on topic.

4.3   Focus group interview

A focus group interview, as a widely used tool in social sciences, aimed to study the variety of opinions, key topics and themes in more interactive way. Each focus group meeting continued at least 90 minutes and the participants were asked to answer the following questions:

－   Could you (get us started and) bring three associative words (or phrases) that come to your mind when you hear the term "immigrant parent"? – Please, follow-up with the opening-up (examples and explanations) of your associations (projective question)

- What do you think, your children expect from you as a parent who lives in immigration? (If you switched roles with your child, what would you expect from your immigrant parents)? (projective question)
- In what way, do you think, the social roles of immigrant and parent affect each other?
- As an immigrant parent, what positive/negative challenges do you face related to your parenting role?
- What are your strategies to cope with those challenges?

The focus group interviews took place in the Leikkipuisto hall (Klubok ry, Helsinki) and in the HELMET library-room at Entresse center, in Espoo City. In the beginning of each interview session, the participants were briefly informed about the content and the goals of the study, in what way the data will be used and had given the consent for audio-recording. Ideas, expressions, experiences and viewpoints were taken as units for analysis. The logical relations between units were looked up for deducing the meanings of what the respondents say, followed by implications.

4.4   Projective conceptualization

Before 1960s, the projective techniques were mainly employed in clinical psychology for personality assessment and research. Nowadays, these expressive methods find broad application in numerous fields of studies such as marketing, education, and humanities. Projective techniques permit the respondents to answer from whatever frame of reference he or she consider relevant. In this way they can facilitate the identification of new issues not revealed by more conventional questions designs (Catteral & Ibbotson, 2000, p. 245-256).

The projective conceptualization method was employed in this study to deepen the analysis of distinct psychological features of parenthood in immigration. The choice of this qualitative technique stemmed from the author's own practical experience of working with Russian-speaking communities. It was assumed that the associative type of the method and its expressiveness will promote participants' higher degree of freedom in self-disclosure. In this case the visual representation of "immigrant parent identity" was focused on the non-textual lived experiences and feelings. The sessions were conducted as face-to-face meetings. After the warm-up, a participant was asked to paint a picture or story using their imagination and creativity. Each session lasted from 40 minutes to one hour. Further, the respondent was asked to present a picture and explain what is happening in the picture, or what meanings has the symbolic content of the painting.

4.5   Transcription of interviews

There are three main types of transcription common for the research field: the verbatim, the edited, and the intelligent transcription. The first is more complicated as it is highly attentive to the words, semantics, emotions, pauses and all the features of the verbal speech. It is complicated, time-consuming, and used mainly in sensitive cases of interpretations. The second type is characterized by the purpose of research and the abilities of a transcriber to distinguish the information between what is important and valuable, and what is not important and might be skipped. The third transcription style is designed as revised, logical and intelligent texts which are written suitably for reading (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). For this study project the author used the intelligent transcription because of the planned thematic analysis of data.

4.6   Thematic data analysis

The data obtained from personal interviews, group discussions and projective conceptualization represented the massive scope of opinions, views, meanings, and comments on the variety of phenomena. This large set was reduced by in-depth interpretative analysis aiming to undertake the categorization of the texts and the meanings' summaries. Furthermore, the "uncovered" meanings were grouped into section thematically. This helped the author eliminating the possible biases and over-analyzing of collected data. From thorough examination of interview texts, the author has chosen six main themes, the seventh and the eighth themes were analyzed separately. The projective conceptualization (5.1.7.) and associative words (5.1.8.) represented the valuable additional parts of the present study.

5   Results

Prior to the analysis of the obtained data, it is significant to highlight that the acculturation research is often criticized due to its ambiguous results and drawn conclusions that are off practical implications for immigrants and for those who support them (Chirkov, 2009b). This thesis project, nevertheless, studied the acculturation and the transition to parenthood phenomena as interconnected processes. This will allow the community organization to plan social actions as an empowering strategy for small social changes. The predicted factors, such as a role of third sector organizations, peer networking and action-oriented support for immigrant families, were the most valuable outcomes of the complete research and future implementations of its results. This thesis part specifies the major results of the study in terms of the themes on the research topic. Despite the broad scatter of opinions, the process of transition to parenthood in immigration mostly characterized by six sensitive issues described in further subchapters.

5.1   Subjective well-being and transition to parenthood

As mentioned in the theoretical framework section (p.10), the integration represents the most desirable and adequate strategy of acculturation. However, it is not often a matter of individual choice or personal goal of an immigrant. The integration strategy may be actualized only in case if there is openness and acceptance towards people of different race or ethnicity existing in the host (majority) population. Herewith, it is required that immigrants accept new values and customs of host society. In practice, these two processes are extremely painful for both the majority and the minority groups. Associated processes such as difficulties with language learning, the worries about economic status and employment, social and psychological instabilities affect the perceived well-being of newcomers (Berry, 2005). Moreover, the transition to parenthood as an unfamiliar life event often shifts the lifestyles from one stage to another causing complication in physical and emotional adaptation. Experiencing transition to parenthood while acculturating requires addressing the main research interest: what unique challenges do immigrant parents encounter in acculturating?

5.1.1   Personality: "I think I am responsible for feeling good… "

Ward (1996) proposed the cultural adaptation having two main facets: "psychological (emotional/affective) and social (behavioral). The former refers to psychological well- being or satisfaction; the latter is related to the ability to "fit in", to acquire culturally appropriate skills and to negotiate interactive aspects of the host environment". The psychological adjustment could be defined as subjective well-being and it is significantly affected by personality traits, life events, coping strategies and social support of an individual.

In this study, the feeling of being satisfied was expressed as associated with personal openness and flexibility, inner locus of control (high level of self-responsibility and motivation), successful communication skills and satisfying relationship with significant people, sense of humor, agreeableness, and courage to be honest and patient. The results reflect the broad continuum of opinions on subjective well-being. All respondents highlighted the significance of personality traits in acculturation.

> "I think, mostly, my life depends on my own input and optimistic attitudes. Life in immigration…is the same human life, with its own troubles and pleasures… you need to be responsible for many things you do for yourself and your family. If you know what motivates you … to do the thing you do, then it's ok to see what happens or happened. Never too late to start thinking positively. When I came to Finland, I was very proactive looking for new information, events, and people. It is interesting… I have found myself here, in Finland. I have started to do things that I have been

dreaming about for a long time." (Here and further on the responses of the interview-
ees are cited)

Often, the starting point of reflections on subjective well-being in immigration was the "ini-
tial optimistic attitude" towards the possible difficulties in adjustment and the life in gen-
eral. The openness to a new culture and its challenges with courage and understanding and
the will to keep going even if the situations are tough, were expressed almost by every re-
spondent:

> "Being positive influences me… myself … and people around me… a lot… I enjoy new
> experiences even if they are challenging. I feel like in each challenge I am gaining a
> knowledge how to cope with unknown situations. I am keen on studying Finnish… have
> a lot of curiosity and interest… We are … me and my husband participating in yoga
> trainings for couples… I did not find that in Russia… and have not tried. I am ready to
> try many things… don't know even what kind of (laughter)… like … ready for every-
> thing."

In spite of the variety of immigration motives, the importance of the enthusiasm in looking
for better life, employment, Finnish language learning opportunities and self-realization are
the next indicators of personal involvement in the cultural adaptation.

> "I came to Finland as with new wings of happiness, even though I did not expect that
> the permission for me, as for Ingrian returnee will be obtained so soon after applica-
> tion… unexpectedly soon, though, … the motivation was not so intensive yet. I de-
> cided, being in Petroskoi, to check what are the possibilities for courses and apart-
> ment rent, and doing so I found out, that I really want to live in Finland, you know,
> like a child when she sees something new, unfamiliar, but do not get the meaning…
> always feels this enthusiasm and curiosity. I dreamed to become someone else… I
> mean, to try maybe new profession… when I come to the ancestor's ground."

Across the interviews, the concept of personal responsibility (inner locus of control) as the
tool for the adjustment and further positive perception of well-being in immigration occupied
the central position. However, some interviewees, who have been living in Finland longer
than three years shared their thoughts of inner anxiety and sometimes even helplessness
meaning that a number of useless efforts to remain stable and proactive during the job seek-
ing bring emotional frustration and problems with physical health.

> "To have good job and satisfying amount of money for living… may be it is not only
> my fault, that I have no employment and… all these worries. Time to time, when I

face the need to search for employment… now I see, that my future mother role could be also as employment. I feel like this will never end… I mean, sometimes I think about this and do not sleep. Work, money, children… again and again. I was very positive-minded in the beginning of my life here. Somehow this positivity failed. I think that my immune system is giving up and I fall ill very often because of these thoughts."

The participating fathers mostly valued the professionalism and intelligence, as determinants of success, social status, and economic stability of the family. According to their answers, their self-realization was not satisfying for them. The acquiring a new profession, re-qualification and job search in immigration required time, energy and, as a rule, were associated with periods of lack of financial resources.

"I would be happier if the situation with employment changed… I think men need solid social status that related to their professional realization… Intelligence means a lot for me. I think farther need to be aware that he is an example of success to his children… if he works in highly valued professions and has good position at work… it benefits whole family, brings a lot of possibilities… to children and to himself."

In many responses, stable employment and financial solidity as the indicators of subjective well-being were mentioned by women as well.

"… financially doing well, we both, me and my husband have stable employment, the domain we work in is promising and… IT- sector is fast developing and advanced, we are living in wealth, perhaps because of that, we are not terrified… yet… by social security system support, we pay our rent and all living expenses, we can travel twice a year. I know unemployed… and those who have part-time employment… they do not feel good."

The immigrant parents' frustration about the limited interpersonal and social communication inside and outside the diaspora was also addressed in the study. Those respondents who fluently speak Finnish also noticed that they do not have friends among Finnish people. They typically communicate with Russian-speaking people, or have friends among immigrants. The issue of Finnish language learning arose in different contexts during interviews.

"…When the first daughter went to the kindergarten… we met there the first Finnish parent-friends with whom there was mutual sympathy and… fellowship somehow continued. We do not see each other frequently, but kids are playing well together, so we invite whole family to our place or spend time together in the playgrounds. We

speak mixing English with Finnish… but it is ok for us. They are the only Finnish family friends. The rest… are Russian-speaking.

"I'm afraid not to get medical help when I need it, I don't speak Finnish well, I also panic facing Finnish medicine, because when I come and ask for help, I am either sent back or remain without help, I never get help without begging, without fear… that I give up asking."

"I think I must learn Finnish till the end of my life… feel that it is never enough to be proud of myself, and… to be understood correctly. Very often I face Finnish people who "make faces", you know… you say something in Finnish, with mistakes or… not perfect in pronunciation… they do not tolerate how I am sounding, and then… I look at not very pleasant face reactions. Do not know… but it is extremely frustrating for me."

5.1.2 Cultural identity: "We are Russians here, …"

The cultural identity, defined by Moha Ennaji (2005), is the feeling of belonging to a group, the sense of unity with own cultural group, sharing the common cultural attitudes and ideals. Cultural identity is described as an aspect of acculturation that is associated with the sense of self rather than the attitudes or behaviors (Phinney & Alipuria, 2006).

"…Russians here have many communities that support us… I know a number of Russian-speaking mothers in my district. We usually meet to spend time together with children, chatting and walking with baby carriages… relaxed… simply sharing common things… language, first of all."

At the beginning of this study, the question of cultural identity was not under scrutiny. However, the question arose from the discussions about frequent travelling (for many reasons) to Russia. Expectedly, the respondents' positive experiences and views on this opportunity suggested to the author to analyze the probable consequences of this phenomena. The sense and the effect of nearness of the Russian boarders has vital influence on the support of cultural identity and, basically, provides the strong feeling of belonging to own cultural group not only in immigration, but in general, by visiting the country of origin.

"I often visit Saint Petersburg, and every time, in the Allegro (train) I meet someone whom I know… that is an advantage – to have your home country nearby. It is sometimes even… refreshing, to change the surroundings and…visit Russia."

Some younger mothers, on the other hand, pointed to the variability in self-identification. They reflected on the idea, that it is easy for them to be "just foreigner" in Finland, and do not associate with certain (Russian) ethnical group. However, the feeling of belonging and real belonging are conflicting issues for them. The explanation for this identity crisis could be seen in the quotation below.

> "I don't think it is important to be of certain cultural background... it is easy to blend into the life you have... there are many different groups to belong to... then it is easier to adjust to the changes. If you want to be accepted and... exclude the racism, you just start speaking Finnish, and Finns around you will smile to you, and think... you are not one of strangers."

The complications with cultural identification was also expressed (with high level of uncertainty) by women who moved to Finland from Estonia, the former Soviet Union republics after 1991. They explored the awareness of lost or mixed cultural backgrounds.

> "I do not feel I am Russian, because I was born and have grown up in Estonia... it is not easy for me to evaluate my cultural background... I speak both languages (Russian and Estonian) fluently, never lived in Russia longer than couple of weeks... but still it is a question - who am I? ... I don't like to answer at all... because I do not know."

> "You see, it seems that moving to Finland has put me in front of this question (on ethnic identity) ... I was trying to join firstly Russians, then... later I did not like the rules and relationship environment, and tried to find Estonians... to spend leisure time together. Finally, it was clear, that I have lost this ... my own awareness in self-identification and started, literally, looking for my own roots asking parents who we are. The story is not stress-free... I can choose with what ethnic people I want to share my time and energy, however... I started to be aware of the fact, that I need to learn this identity questions..."

The closeness of Russia was mentioned in the narratives in connection with the respondents' demands to support their cultural heritage by visiting art galleries, ballet and theaters of capital cities; Moscow and Saint Petersburg. The reasoning for this is Russian flavorful and unique cultural environment, with traditions that boundlessly influence the world culture. It was clear that in that context the participants looked very proud of their Russian roots.

> "This year we have been to Russia for visiting Peterhof and Pushkin... these places are pearls of the history, fine arts and architecture... My thirteen years old son was inter-

ested asking me about his Russian ethnic identity, by the way… couple year ago he re-
fused to admit the fact that he could call himself Russian. I saw how important it was
to show him the treasures of Russian culture. We will go there more often…"

5.1.3   Environment: "It is nature around and everywhere…"

A number of comments given in the interviews by Russian-speaking immigrant parents were
connected to the environmental comfort in Finland. Positive impressions about nature and
ecological approaches to the architectural design, beautiful surroundings, fresh air and many
other various details were mentioned across the overall study. Many participants expressed
their gratitude to Finnish society for the preserving the nature and its resources. This univer-
sal value of life was admitted as one of the true values related to the parenting (raising chil-
dren in the pure environment).

> "I remember when I first visited Finland… it was in April, I came to organize the ac-
> commodation for my family and to search for the people who could help me with
> that. It was so impressive to see the hostile nature of this country, how it changes to
> the summer time and how clean and fresh this early spring air everywhere. I still
> sense this…"

The next vital phenomenon of sociocultural adaptation and well-being emerged as "being
happy with day-to-day life" in Finland. This meant valuing the communal systems, natural en-
vironment, eco-design, low level of pollution and noise, clean public places, regular transpor-
tation, and overall arrangement.

> "Most of the time I am surprised how everything is organized in this country. Live
> here for pretty long time, and if something is… like additional roads for pedestrians in
> the parks, or new places for those who like to have a picnic outside… these are built
> so fast and with top-high quality, that is amazing…"

> "I like that all timetables… for the trains and busses in the city are so accurate, trans-
> portation is very reliable and you can go anywhere you want, with baby carriages."

> "In my opinion, the life here is made for people in a sense of comfort… it does not
> matter in what part of the country you live, there are always a lot of shops around,
> close small forests, lakes… nature… sometimes it is hostile (smiles), but this creates
> feeling of calm, some positive set of mind. Very resourceful."

> "While living in Russia, in Saint Petersburg… I could not imagine, that a big city can
> be so clean… and noise from trains passing your house are not so disturbing even if

your apartment windows are looking at the railway station… I found out that there is special noise isolation… made by three glasses in the window frames…"

5.1.4 Cultural differences: "It is hard to… be a part of their society… "

In acculturation studies, the concept of incongruence between one's heritage culture and the host society culture defined as a cultural distance. The greater the perceived cultural distance, the more efforts to acquire the cultural knowledge is required to 'fit in', and more stress there is related to adjustment to the host culture (Ward et al., 2001).

Many of the participants observed that it is not easy for them to initiate interactions and maintain interpersonal relations with the host nationals.

> "We, Russians, somehow… more emotional, but here it is necessary to calm down and do not show your emotional expression, you do not know exactly is it appropriate or not… I should be more phlegmatic…to be understood."

Russian-speaking parents prefer to communicate inside their local ethnic groups. This was mostly explained by their wish to communicate deeply, and, on the other hand, being unable to fully express the views and attitudes in Finnish. The next quotes illustrate this as a language barrier:

> "Do not know…, if I could communicate well in Finnish, maybe it would be easier to have more Finnish friends, or to be more open and explain myself fully…, most of the things I like to discuss sound so plain… flat in 'my Finnish'. I feel like I have so short vocabulary…"

> „ I am a teacher in a daycare center, I speak Finnish well, but I am not satisfied with my job, I feel, that I am not as a native… limited with language… you know… children need more from me… because their native languge is developing at school… I cannot give them much in this… and I just work, gain money… and then I aspire to my Russian-speaking activities, working with small children and conducting music circles for them… I like that very much. I better do my job speaking my mother tongue. I am passionate and unlimited expressing myself in Russian. There are more advantages of my skills for Russian-speaking kids."

The cultural differences were also experienced as the lack of attention and care of host nationals put on tolerating and not judging Russia and Russians. Reflecting on information in European media and the political situation in Europe, Russian-speaking immigrant expressed strong feelings of danger and growing perceived cultural distance.

> "No one likes to be judged, especially if prejudices are the background… Remember once how my colleagues asked me why I do not drink vodka 'you, Russians, drink a lot of this'… I do not, and it is not a part of my ethnical identity, it is just generalization…"

> "It is so sad to read Finnish media, to listen to discussions about Putin, Russia… how bad we are for them… I don't like to feel guilt or shame for my country… this is my country. I feel like we (Finns and Russians) are getting apart … in good things… and peace is under threat."

This study found out that cultural differences do exist for Russian-speaking immigrant parents in the parenting practices and expectations as well. In views of Russian-speaking parents, Finnish parents give more freedom of choice to their children. For example, there are freedoms what to wear or what to eat, by giving a child the options what to choose from.

> "I was participating in toddler-mother activity… a Finnish mother brought many different food options for her small boy, and suggested all of them to the baby … I thought, wow… how early baby can choose. Later, many times I saw how Finnish mothers discuss the choices their kids make. We are different…"

> "I see how much things are allowed to children by their Finnish parents… parents don't care about how clean are the child's clothes if he or she is in the sandbox outside, they do not care… I like this… It is so much freedom for kid to grow up here… I see, sometimes, how Russian mothers dress their kids in white… and send them to the dirty backyards and playgrounds, and… then there are worries about dirty pants or dresses … of toddlers who are crawling and exploring the dirty surroundings… poor babies."

Many of the participants brought the examples of cultural differences in everyday life, rules of conduct, and norms of behavior.

> "When I came to Finland, I was curious about who are my neighbors… Many of our neighbors in Russia were good friends, and it is common for us to say hallo to each other, for those who live nearby… later I found out, that it is not common to be "a

good neighbor" in Finland. Some people in my six-apartments' tiny house even do not say 'hi' if me meet occasionally … in spite the fact that we live in this building for a long time."

"The difficulty for an immigrant is adoption of many small and common, domestic features… it is not always easy to keep tracking on how and what is accepted or not, there is always hope that I do my best… but sometimes I see that I do not."

5.1.5   Transition to parenthood: "I trust Finnish system, however…"

This family developmental process starts from the couple's decision to have a child and continues during subsequent pregnancy period, child birth, and extensive period of couple's adjustment to the new roles. During this period immigrant parents face the needs to reorganize their life not only inside the family, but also negotiate the aspects of the new cultural environment, changing and navigating multiple new and dissimilar systems often without adequate support of accustomed networks (Bornstein, 1995).

Across the various interviewees' examples it was found out, that establishing the satisfying relationship in the couple with mutual understanding and help prior to the child birth was noticed as one of the most important tasks of the transition to parenthood. The observation in this research was the choice to have a baby often being out of control, mostly connected to the lack of discussions and, as a result, involved tension between parents.

> "It was not so easy to adapt to the situation … we argued a lot, could not often come to the agreement… but finally I can say that my husband was my support system in many cases… we are soulmates, he helped a lot when our baby was born, it was difficult for us … to adapt to the changes, we slept and ate by rotation... but I fully relayed on him. We did a lot of things together… and emotionally he is very supportive, calming me down and send very positive messages…"

Similarly, participants mentioned the importance of searching for agreements and elaboration of new practices and rituals in new roles. Mutual trust, empowering words, finding the "right time for certain things" were noticed in narratives.

> "Sometimes I felt very exhausted… first months of baby's life. I thought that it was only my fault that I am so frustrated and tired. I did not even think about asking husband to let me have a rest for a couple of hours. I was so involved… and stressed. He (husband) just read from somewhere, that I need to be away from the child for a little time…, just short period… to concentrate on some other things or just have my

own time outdoors, walking… I was grateful to him… it was so on time and really supportive."

This study showed that even if immigrant mothers trust the maternal care system in Finland, they are also very sensitive towards the practicalities and approaches, suggested by this. For example, the fact, that miscarriage risks are not addressed, in average, for two-three subsequent times, and only this reasoning allow women to be examined on the problem.

"It was so depressing… I thought I have definite fertility, did not expect that baby could be lost in the beginning of pregnancy… while being sure I thought everything will be good… and then… I was trying to get pregnant and later… the same… it was again under the threat. Then doctor said that this is ok to have miscarriage three times in a row… I said 'what?'… I must suffer this way… again and again, 'no'…"

This issue, as reflected, was very destroying for the participant, and it was solved by applying to the private maternal care services in Russia. The difference in approaching the miscarriages, their prevention, and medical care for pregnant women in Finland and in Russia became one of the central topic in many interviews and discussions. Nevertheless, many respondents admitted that they trust more the Finnish maternity care services concerning the process of delivery. Most of the women have been giving birth in Finland even if the pregnancy general health checks were done outside Finland.

Perhaps, most important was the expressed mistrust to the Finnish medical care system for small infants. There were obvious negative opinions on the situations associated with acute health problems of infants. Serious concerns were expressed about the time consuming visits at the emergency departments, complains about slow help advancing, long queues, and lack of attention to the problematic issues of a mother with an infant.

"I do not trust Finnish pediatricians, somehow my experiences are negative. Twice my child was misdiagnosed, the long time we have spent for these two misdiagnosing… this time was just lost…finally. We went to Moscow, found out very fast what was the child's health problem… started treatment in Russia…"

Sometimes, the participants mentioned also feelings of discrimination if their Finnish language skills were not sufficient fromm the nurses' or doctors' points of view. The emotional facial reactions of medical personnel towards client's Finnish language skills seemed for the mothers not appropriate.

> "So they think, that if I am very distressed with the illness of my child, and longtime cannot get help… child is crying aloud… with fever… I need to be fully involved in the speaking Finnish perfectly… I saw the face of nurse, when I tried to explain the symptoms… she… many times made grimaces asking rudely "mitä?" and then… the nurse said "oh, your Finnish is not so bad…as I thought before" … and I was like, how can you make a comment like that?... being a nurse. So, you know, the situations like that if you are an immigrant mother, can actually hurt…"

These implicit types of discrimination are in many ways perceived as hurtful. Undermining values and identities, these acts are very difficult to directly address as they can be easily left without attention. These types of stories were mostly told by participants of Focus Group 1, with the time of residence in Finland of less than three years, and with yet not comforting level of psychological adjustment. The Focus Group 2 participants expressed the attitudes toward encountered discrimination more understandingly.

> "Medical personnel are varying, some nurses are kind and attentive, asking a lot, and if they do not understand my Finnish, they just keep kindly asking. Of course, sometimes being misunderstood… could become an opportunity to rephrase some messages, or just use English instead…, no problem. What can you do if you face impoliteness or… hidden discriminative comments…? Nothing, I just keep smiling. I think for them (Finns) it is not easy also, to be all the time welcoming. However, nothing helps – we all live here, in Finland. Let's negotiate!"

While the adjustment experiences were very different, the majority of immigrant mothers felt that they positively look at their process of transition to parenthood in Finland. Moreover, the results indicated that mothers are aware of state institutional support systems and know how to use those in a variety of situations.

5.1.6   Self-empowerment and social support

Personal or self-empowerment theme constantly arose while participants answered two interconnected questions of focus group questionnaire:

i)   As an immigrant parent what positive/negative challenges do you face related to your parenting role?

ii)   ii) What are your strategies to cope with those challenges?

Participants have mentioned their developing self-awareness, confidence and strength for realistic goals setting, and creating the positive social potential for their children and families. The challenges derived from immigration and parenting enhanced the contribution they make both as individual and as a members of a team.

"I remember, when my first son was born I felt the need to join some immigrant mothers' club. Of course, it was easy to find the Russian-speaking community in my district. It was not just my plan to spend time during walking with baby carriage, I thought I was ready to become more powerful and do something valuable not only for myself, but also to be useful for other moms, facing similar challenges…like lack of community-based events for immigrant families… they have very low levels of events' organization… you know, these are often so primitive and uninteresting… Me and one friend of mine were so full of skills and information how to make our life purposeful… and advantageous for others…"

"You know, the greater the range of your own coping possibilities, the higher your chance to face and cope with diverse life situation in the future… you cope, you are full of power, you can share your skills and do something valuable to those, who are in need… I decided that we need to learn from each other, support own inner strengths and be heard in the community, with a couple of good, proactive people we decided to start our own yhdistys, and registered it… we all were mothers of three-four month aged… babies"

"I wanted my child would speak fluent Russian while playing with other Russian-speaking kids… we, parents, need to support mother tongue of our kids actively, not just waiting for someone else in the future who will take care… we organized the Russian-speaking music circle for our kids, started developing new ideas… how to broaden the language activities and usage for toddlers… I am an educated early child development teacher (with Russian diploma, unfortunately not approved yet in Finland) … I felt I can manage to do things on high level and professionally…"

"First, we gathered as immigrant parents, being volunteers for our own purposes… then we decided to register our NGO, and started being proactive looking for permanent space for meetings and event… we are seriously growing up, we have 150 Russian-speaking families in our community, we organize a lot of educational events concerning child bilingualism, native language support, and we do many others …interesting things, we invite specialist of many kinds, psychologists, the representatives of child protection services… we started asking grants from RAY … we have applied for founding suggested by different Finnish institutions, we are learning the system."

The idea, that immigrant families (especially mothers) can trust and support each other was many times repeated and highlighted in different contexts, such as encouragement to initiate communication, the provision of positive and satisfying outcomes of organized common

events, sharing emotions, thoughts and feelings. As a result of the personal empowerment, the theme of social support reasonably stemmed further from the discussions.

The definition of social support as "verbal and non-verbal communication between recipients and providers that reduces uncertainty about the situation, the self, the other, or the relationship, and functions to enhance a perception of personal control in one's life experience" was suggested by Albrecht and Adelman (1987, p.19).

Heino and Veistilä (2015) thoroughly analyzed the discourses on social support by families with Russian background living in Finland. Three main discourses were identified: "the "Integration" discourse, the "Recognition" discourse and the "Security" discourse". The social support that received by Russian-speaking families through the different relationships with institutions and informal networking has been reported in many situations as lacking and bringing different types of tension.

The question of social support arose in present study as the theme throughout the discussion on "switching the role with my child" and "expectations from parents as a child". On one hand, the respondents were ready to share their positive experiences about self-organized help and support among Russian-speaking mothers in the form of communities. On the other hand, the "switching the role with my child" brought the awareness of lacking social support for immigrant parents that exist in reality. "As a child of the immigrant parents", a number of respondents pointed their expectations of their parents' full involvement into social life, developing communication networks with locals, advancing in creation the positive attitudes of host representatives towards the immigrants and socialization of many kinds.

> "As a child, I would expect my parents making friends mostly with Finns, I would like they more often participate in events organized by Finns… they speak fluent Finnish and understand me who is studying at the Finnish school, they would be more social than…we with husband now (switches the roles back, laughter) …"

> "It would be my best day… my parents are not ashamed of their background, they are socially confident and are not so… humbled, they trust me, and I can share whatever I want, I am also not ashamed of them and …hm… it is not difficult to develop mutual understanding… I would like they go out more often, having adequate salaries, and … visiting concerts and socializing…"

> "As a child of immigrant parents I think I would expect they are supported in more visible way… like do not afraid to apply to Finnish state institutions if necessary, they feel here like home, and are not troubled with numerous misunderstandings… "

The importance of social support in parenting and immigration were many time, outlined as the critical factor of supporting the "happy childhood" for children with immigrant background. This is attributed to the role of parent as an agent of child socialization exceptionally during psychological adjustment to a new culture (Bornstein et al., 2012).

> "I think my childhood would be happier if my parents were more involved in communication with Finnish speaking people, through the language we make our life here more comfortable and secure, I wish they would maybe even skip time spending in Russian-speaking close circles… for their own better language (Finnish) skills… For us, children, it is important to feel that your parents are like locals… More chances to be accepted by school- or classmates...It is important if you are a teenager. "

5.1.7 'Immigrant parent' conceptualization map

The following part discusses in what way two Russian-speaking immigrant mothers represent their multifaceted ideas of 'immigrant parent' and in what ways they reflect on 'how is it to be an immigrant parent in Finland'. The resulting data painted pictures on self-conceptualization of "What does it mean - to be a parent in immigration?". Further, the conceptualization maps were "texturized" as self-exploration on lived experiences. These symbolized identities involved the aspects of both parenting and immigration phenomena. The rich symbolism of the maps was not coded and interpreted in this study. This study mainly aimed to triangulate (use of at least three different methods) the qualitative methods approach and to provide participants with more creative environment during conducting the interview. Nevertheless, the data were treasured for the symbolic elements rooted in the complex phenomena.

The interview session with projective technique was conducted as a final part of semi-structured personal interview. It was suggested to the participant to choose one or two cards from the deck of metaphoric cards used as stimulating material in different types of counselling approaches. This warm-up aimed to produce creative and relaxed state of participant's mind for further extending and finishing of the picture and reflecting on the created imagery. The time for painting was not limited and it took approximately forty minutes to do this part of interview. Further, the interviewee was suggested to explain or to 'texturize' the painting, to substantiate the color selection and reflect on the painting's specific symbols and in general.

Figure 4 illustrates the Conceptualization map 1 of Russian-speaking mother who has been residing in Finland for 23 years, married, have three children who were born in Finland. Discourse of the mapping pointed mainly the parental universal values and attitudes towards the event and own feeling and expectations.

"I have chosen this card (in the center of the map) because that is the simple day-to-day life I live and simple things I do. I spend a lot of time playing with my small son outdoors... so purple here is the wisdom and I think mother should be wise, yellow is for my optimism... I am optimistic and see many things in the positive lights, red expresses my worries and anxieties for various reasons with kids and not only with them, you know ... children get sick, there are certain problems you need to learn to cope with.

Figure 3: 'Immigrant parent' conceptualization map 1 (PC1)

Green is calming, like nature around, and blue is a sky, kind of freedom. The circles around this card... they are just circles, well... we are all following them, like cycles in the life... I like to be a parent in immigration. I trust this country... Everything here is designed for raising children. It does not matter if you are an immigrant or non-immigrant, the state helps you... I recently spoke to my Estonian friend, who is afraid of any consequences of giving a birth... and does not want to raise a child in poverty, in Estonia..., why not to give a birth, it has high value to be a parent, does not matter where... here, in Russia or somewhere else. Money is not an issue... there is always lack of it... I have many Russian-speaking friends here, they are all mothers, we have common grounds and interests, my relatives are also here and this give me a lot of energy... and support. I feel safe and helped by my close people... Finnish moms do not commonly initiate the contact if we meet on the playground with kids, I thought maybe they think I do not have fluent and developed Finnish language... they seemed

apathetic... or maybe just it is their cultural feature... not to initiate communication. I contacted them first, just supposed that it is continues in the future... I had Finnish friends when I worked... But...now it is enough for me to have Russian-speaking ones. How much time you need to spend with your friends if you have three kids... (laughter).

All universal human qualities and values were articulated and painted in a peaceful manner with calm voice, and the participant expressed deep satisfaction with overall life in Finland and the transition to parenthood in immigration as well. Actualized and positive responses and attitudes towards both parenting and acculturation phenomena allowed the author to bring the hypotheses that participant's identity successfully blended in the host culture in a non-conflicting way.

The second interviewee has been living in Finland since 2012. Figure 5 shows the map with two selected cards, positioned on the left. The motivation to pick up the upper from the left card was explained by the interviewee as "the nature, that makes me feel calm and stable... since I like walking and ...fresh air". The participant pointed also out, that parks and playgrounds for children are the special places for her due to the possibility to meet there her close friends, who are Russian-speaking mothers with kids. The narrative of the second selected card that was placed below the first one on the left reflected the joyfulness of children in Finland and positive attitudes towards becoming a parent here. Then, the conceptualization map was extended and finished creating the "samovar" imagery and its metaphor.

"Sometimes I feel like Russian samovar puffing jets of steam... something is boiling inside. Plenty of thoughts. Positive, negative and just... thoughts... neutral... these jets of steam are my thoughts. Sometimes I let them out of the samovar (laughter). You see, all these themes are here, those with question marks are problematic, and... without it (question mark) are mostly the thoughts I like to have. Especially about my family, kids and my parents... Family and friends are making my life in Finland more relaxed, could not imagine that there is nobody around me. I feel that the immigration brings the longing for good friends and communication. I feel comfortable deep inside, safe and somewhere there I know that I can manage with all my challenges... there are always things to take care of... I painted the textbook of Finnish language, I need to learn it and keep it going regularly. One of my language course teacher said that if I... learn every day a couple of words, I'll have ... a good language vocabulary and skills in one year. I trusted her and it really went well. With children... it is always good to keep "to do" lists for me, I like having those lists... All things also... are cycling around KELA in my life, do not know... why I become anxious if I get KELA's papers by mail... maybe because... these things were in mess a couple of times in my

life…I did misunderstand certain requests from them. As an immigrant parent one should be ready to cope with many challenges, even if everything seems OK, time to time… you keep the steam inside and go further… Surprisingly (laughter), my picture combined worries and calm moments… but I am more worried… seems like…yes."

Figure 4: 'Immigrant parent' conceptualization map 2 (PC2)

The experience of communication with natives was difficult for this participant. She admitted, that she often felt shame and nervousness. Nevertheless, she understood that it is important for her to continue studying Finnish language during the maternity leave and joined the program organized by Mannerheimin Lastensuojeluliitto. This language learning program was individually designed for this client and run by volunteer Finnish-speaking mother having her own maternity leave (with child). Women communicated once a week while spending common leisure time with their babies outdoors.

5.1.8   The associative words

The most interesting and contrasting reflections the participants brought up during the interviews were the associative words on the collocation "the immigrant parent".

"concern, fear, not in terms of housekeeping, but in terms of health centers, kindergartens, family support"

"women from leikkipuisto, noisy children, anxiety about the future and… some peace of mind"

"courage, uncertainty and anxiety where to go, what to do, whom to call if something happen"

"difficulty, support, my people"

"anxiety, difficulties, collision with a foreign society, judgments and attention from people around"

"support, gathering together, we are Russians, Leena (our leader) is here with us, there are people who can advise how to contact Kela"

"discipline, commitment, attention to what they have in common with us, I am a mother, set an example, anxiety time to time…"

"lost, unknown senses of life, new experience, discipline"

"new challenges, everything will be good, no panic"

"new opportunities, important deadlines for bills' payment, responsibility"

Those participants who were (subjectively) satisfied with their lives, and who were resided in Finland longer than three years, also expressed the moderate levels of anxiety and lack of security. These associative words demonstrated the specific contradiction between two phenomena: according to the answers on the open-ended non-projective questions, the subjective well-being was in general positive and successful, however, the projective view opened up the repressed feelings of uncertainty and perplexity.

6   Analysis

The conducted qualitative data gathering and its analysis, have shown a variety of results concerning the social and cultural perceptions of the participants in the focus groups. The semi-structured in-depth interviews and focus group discussions have shown that the participants are generally satisfied with their life situation at the time and place they are in. These respondents demonstrated their level of adaptation as immigrants to be fairly high, where the national institutions and provided systems in childcare and help in parenthood are said to be reliable and good. Subjects in Focus Group 1, however, demonstrated a slightly higher level of anxiety due to a fairly recent relocation, and the added stress of entering parenthood.

Nevertheless, these subjects too, have described the national maternity and child care services to be highly satisfactory.

The semi-structured interview included two questions of projective nature, where the participants have shown a contradiction with their complete satisfaction with the maternity and child care services in the country. Their projective associations have shown to be rather negative, and described them as residents and parents experiencing isolation, financial struggle, and loss of meaning, perplexity, anxiety and conflict. One of the projective questions offered the participants to think and describe their expectations, if they, in turn, were the children of immigrant parents. The expectations, expressed by the subjects were nowhere near their own reality concerning status, social involvement with nationals, respective employment or financial wealth.

Despite the perceivably anxious responses to these questions, the Russian-speaking immigrants have shown a hopeful pattern of behavior: their way of fighting social isolation is to create their own communities. These communities then become not only extra-curricular, but also turn into registered non-profit organizations, in which the members further develop e.g. educational programs for children, teens and adults, as well as specialist educational programs i.e. in early child development. These organizations initially take off due to the proactive volunteers simply working for their newly built communities, but excel further to apply for governmental support, i.e. grants for educational activity, where employment for the community members is created.

7   Conclusions and recommendations for further research

The key objective of the study was broadening the knowledge and understanding of a) acculturation and b) transition to parenting processes among Russian-speaking immigrants. Focusing on the interaction between these two processes, the current study revealed that transition to parenthood brings a range of challenges to the parent's subjective wellbeing. The thematic analysis showed that both processes, migration and parenthood, become involved in the narratives and represent the unity attributed to the effects determined by the personality, cultural identity, environmental issues, cultural differences, trust to the system of maternal care, self-empowerment and social support.

For a parent in immigration, these processes appear not as separated anymore: the continuous referring to the parental context during sociocultural adjustment is identified as a significant feature. The subjective wellbeing during transition to parenthood in immigration is predisposed by the level of acculturation of a parent, and of the overall success of family adap-

tation. The participants of the study are mostly satisfied with their life at the time of transition to parenthood. However, the slightly higher level of anxiety was demonstrated by those parents in transition who reside in Finland for less than three years and experience an added stress of entering parenthood. The national institutions and provisions in maternity and child-care service in parenthood are considered to be reliable and effective. The trust to the system of maternal care was admitted as a main reason encouraging the decision to become a parent.

The study revealed that the projective assessments and associations appeared to be rather negative describing the parents experiencing isolation, perplexity, loss of significance, financial difficulties and conflicts. The respondents' expectations expressed on the projective part of the interviews were nowhere near their own reality concerning status, respective employment, financial wealth, and social involvement with nationals.

Finally, the Russian-speaking immigrant parents have shown an encouraging pattern of attitudes and behavior: despite the anxiety involved in the transition processes, their way of overcoming the social isolation and cultural conflicts consists of creation of their own community organizations. This way promotes both the cultural adaptation and cultural support within the family and in the society.

Certain limitations concerning the external validity of the findings occurred: the assessment developed in a collaborative partnership with the University of Tampere bear the qualitative character. The several promising directions for future research were articulated in connection with the essential needs (informational, educational, emotional) of parents during transition to parenthood. Another possible direction for studies could be connected to the question of families' variety in their level of functioning and their ability to cope with the family relationship during the transition to parenthood, maintaining their cultural believes at the same time. The future research would benefit from the quantitative methods used in the study of acculturating and transition to parenthood.

8   Ethical consideration

From the onset of the research, it was aimed to conduct all the stages in accordance with the ethical issues of the concern. All the participants were well-informed about the goals of the research and understood the importance and risks associated with the study. They were informed that they may quit the interview even soon after the start of the session in case if they feel uncomfortable.

Starting from the design of questionnaires and following with the interviewing and discussions, the interviewer was always honest about the details of the research and how obtained information will be used. The signed consents (Appendix 1) were approved by the all parties of the research and three ethical board permissions were requested from the Helsingin ja Uuudenmaan Sairaanhoitopiiri (Appendix 2, Appendix 3, and Appendix 4).

For to the data analysis and protections, the confidentiality agreement between all the parties came to the force as soon as the study was initiated. The anonymity of participants was guaranteed. The raw and process data obtained during interviews were held double-locked and password protected. Sharing data was limited and only possible with the researches of University of Tampere, who were supervising the major research project. It is also worth to mention, that the author of this thesis was provided with adequate counselling in cases of complications if they have upraised. In field research circumstances, there was even the backup crisis management plan provided for participants in case if needed.

9   Trustworthiness

According to Shenton (2004), there are four main criteria for the evaluation of trustworthiness of qualitative research that should be considered: credibility, transferability, reliability, and confirmability.

Ensuring the credibility of this study, the author was supervised by skillful researchers of University of Tampere where the recognized research methods are applied and indicate high level of expertise. To frame findings and prospective data, the examination as well as theoretical background study using up-to-date research publications on the topic, were conducted. The questionnaires were piloted and participants, firstly, were asked to reflect on answering them. As a result, the obtained feedback allowed the author to correct and adjust certain terms, making them more varying and flexible for operating. For example, the initial term 'immigrant parent' appeared in the list of questions in different ways, such as 'two different social roles, parent and immigrant' and 'interrelation between parenting and immigration'.

Another important aspect checked during the study was the development of early familiarity with the culture of participating organizations and people. This was achieved via preliminary visits and discussions with Russian-speaking community organizations in Metropolitan area and during project presentation in maternity care clinics. Three research methods were applied in this study to ensure triangulation for the research credibility. Semi-structured interview, focus group discussion and projective technique allowed the author to obtain data that are saturated and thematically completed for the framework of present research.

Following the transferability principle, there were the possibility to apply equivalent study methods for various cultural minorities allowing the final comparison of how different cultural groups transit to parenthood accompanied by acculturation and adjustment processes. In addressing the issue of reliability, the overlapping methods were used, such as personal interviews and focus group. Thematic analysis of narratives showed that conclusive themes are repeated and variations of the views are saturated.

Finally, it was difficult for author to guarantee the full objectivity, since all questionnaires were designed by the humans, and the intrusion of author's bias was unavoidable in spite of the fact, that in this study she represented an informed position (combining the roles of insider and outsider).

References

Adamsons, K. 2013. Predictors of relationship quality during the transition to parenthood. Journal of Reproductive and Infant Psychology, 31, 160–171. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/02646838.2013.791919

Albrecht T. & Adelman, M. 1987. Communicating social support. Sage publications.

Arajärvi, P. 2009 Maahanmuutajen työllistyminen ja kannustinloukut. Sisäasiainministeriö. Helsinki. http://www.intermin.fi/intermin/biblio.nsf/D5A6B24123947ACEC225 754C004B836E/$fi le/22009.pdf. Viitattu 21.11.2010

Bandura, A. 1977. *Social Learning Theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Barlow, J., & Parsons J. 2003. Group-based parent-training programmes for improving emotional and behavioral adjustment in 0–3-year-old children (review). Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews. 2.

Baxter, L., Braithewaite, D., & Nicholson, J. 1999. Turning points in the development of blended families. Journal of Social and Personal Relationships.291-313.

Beck, A. 1975. Cognitive therapy and the emotional disorders. Madison, CT, International Universities Press.

Bengston, V. & Allen, K. 1993. The life course perspective applied to families over time. In: Boss, P, Doherty, W., LaRossa, R., Schumm, W. & Steinmetz, S. (Eds.), Sourcebook of family theories and methods: A contextual approach. New York: Plenum Press. 469-499.

Berry, J. & Sam, D. 1997. Acculturation and adaptation. In: Berry, J., Segall, M., & Kagitcuabasi, C. (eds.) Handbook of cross-cultural psychology. Vol.3. Social behavior and applications. Boston: Allyn and Bacon. 291-326.

Berry, J. 1997. Immigration, acculturation and adaptation. Applied Psychology, 46, 5–68. Berry, J. 2005. Acculturation: Living successfully in two cultures. International Journal of Intercultural Relations. 29, 697-712.

Bornstein, M. 1995. Form and function: Implications for studies of culture and human development. Culture and Psychology,1, 123-137.

Bornstein, M. 2012. Mother-infant attunement: A multilevel approach via body, brain, and behavior. In: Legerstee, M., Haley, D., Bornstein, M. ed. The developing infant mind: Integrating biology and experience. New York. Guilford. 266–298.

Bornstein, M., & Bohr, Y. 2011. Immigration, acculturation and parenting. Montreal, Quebec, Center for excellence for early childhood development, 1-8, Article from Encyclopedia of early childhood development. Accessed 10 June 2015. http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/sites/default/files/textes-experts/en/664/immigration-acculturation-and-parenting.pdf.

Bornstein, M., Cote, L., Haynes, O., Suwalsky, J. & Bakeman, R. 2012. Modalities of infant-mother interaction in Japanese, Japanese American Immigrant, and European American dyads. Child Development. 83(6), 2073-2088.

Bowlby, J. 1969. Attachment. Attachment and Loss. vol.1. 2nd ed. New York: Basic Books. Carter, E.A. & McGoldrick, M. 1988. The changing family cycle: a framework for family therapy. 2nd edition. New York. Gardner Press.

Catterall, M. & P. Ibbotson, P. 2000. Using projective techniques in education research. British Educational Research Journal, 26, 245–256.

Chirkov, V. 2009b. Summary of the criticism and of the potential ways to improve accultura-tion psychology. International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 33, 177-180.

Chung, R., 2001. Gender, ethnicity, and acculturation in integrational conflict of Asian Ameri-can college students. Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology. 7(4), 376-386.

Cote, L., Kwak, K., Putnick, D., Chung, H., and Bornstein, M. 2015. The Acculturation of Par-enting Cognitions: A Comparison of South Korean, Korean Immigrant, and European American Mothers. Journal of Cross Cultural Psychology. 46(9), 1115-1130.

Cowan, C. & Cowan, P. 1992 When partners become parents: The big life change for cou-ples. New York. Basic books.

Cowan, C. & Cowan, P. 2012. Normative family transitions, normal family process and healthy child development. In: Walsh, F. (ed.) Normal family processes: growing diversity and com-plexity. New York: Guilford Press, 428-451.

Dahlström, E. 1989. Theories and ideology of family function, gender relations and human re-production. In: Boh, K., Back, M., Clason, C., Pankratora, M., Qvortup, J., Sgritta, B., and Aerness, K. (eds.) Changing Patterns of European Family Life, London: Routledge.

Dawkins, R. The selfish gene. Oxford: Oxford University Press; 1976.

Dinh, K., & Nguyen, H. 2006. The effects of acculturative variables on Asian American parent-child relationships. Journal of social and personal Relationships. 23(3), 407-426.

Duvall E. 1957 Family development.1st ed. Philadelphia: Lippincott.

Dyer, E.1963. Parenthood as crisis: a restudy. Marriage and Family Living 25: 196-201

E-newspaper Iltalehti. December 17. 2014. Venäjällä taas skandaali Suomen lastensuojelusta. Accessed 26 July 2015. http://www.iltalehti.fi/uutiset/2014121618934157_uu.shtml.

Epstein, N. & Baucom, D. 2002. Enhanced cognitive behavioural therapy for couples: A con-textual approach. Washington. DC: American Psychological Association.

ETNO. Suomen Venäjankielisen väestönosan kysymyksiä 2002. 2003. Etnisten suhteiden neuvottelukunnan asettaman työryhmän raportti. Venäjän ja Itä-Euroopan instituutti. Hel-sinki.

Furlog M., & McGilloway S. 2012 The Incredible Years parenting program in Ireland: a qualita-tive analysis of the experience of disadvantaged parents. Clinical Child Psychology Psychia-try. October. 2012 (17) 616-630.

Graves, T. 1967. Psychological acculturation in a tri-ethnic community. South-Western Jour-nal of Anthropology. 23. 337–350.

Handbook of early childhood development. 2006. Malden. MA. Blackwell Publishing.

Harkness, S., Super, C., Moscardino, U., Rha, J., Blom, M., Huitrón, B, …Palacios J. 2007. Cul-tural models and developmental agendas: Implications for arousal and self-regulation in early infancy. Journal of Developmental Processes. (2), 5–39.

Harold, G., Aitken, J., & Shelton, K. 2007. Inter-parental conflict and children's academic at-tainment: a longitudinal analysis. Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry, 48(12), 1223–1232.

Heino, E. & Veistilä, M. 2015. Integration, recognition and security: discourses on social support by families of Russian background living in Finland. Nordic Journal of Migration Research. 5(2). 91-98.

Heino, E. & Kärmeniemi, N. 2013. Cultural interpreter as an empowering method in social work with immigrant families. In: Empowering social work: research and practice (eds.) Törrönen, M., Borodkina, O., Samoylova, V. & Heino, E. University of Helsinki, Palmenia Centre for Continuing Education. Kotka Unit, Kotka. 88-117.

Hertzman, C. & Power, C. 2003. Health and human development: understandings from life-course research. Developmental Neuropsychology, 24(2-3), 719-744.

Hill, R. 1973. Family life circle: Critical role transitions. Presented at 13th International Family Research Seminar. Paris.

Jasinskaja-Lahti, I. 2000. On a Way Toward Integration: Russian-speaking Immigrant Adolescents in Finland. Siirtolaisuus – Migration. 3. 3-17.

Jasinskaja-Lahti, I. 2008. Long-term immigrant adaptation: eight-year follow-up study among immigrants from Russia and Estonia living in Finland. International Journal of Psychology. 43(1). 6-18.

Katisko, M. 2013. Maahanmuuttajien asunnottomuus metropolialueella', in Näkökulmia asunnottomuuteen ja asumispalveluihin. Hyväri, S. & Kainulainen, S. (eds.). Diakonia Ammattikorkeakoulu, Juvenes Print, Tampere. 111-130.

Kivijärvi, A & Heino, E 2013, 'Ethnic minority and youth work in Finland: everyday anti-racism engendering empowering conditions', in Empowering Social work: Research and Practice, eds.

Kvale, S. & Brinkman, S. 2009. Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Interviewing, 2nd ed. Los Angeles: Sage publications.

Lawrence, E., Rothman, A., Cobb, R., & Bradbury, T. 2012. Marital satisfaction across the transition to parenthood: Three eras of research. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Matsumoto, D. & Van de Vijver, F. 2012. (eds.) Cross-cultural research methods in psychology. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Mattessich, P., & Hill, R.1987. Life cycle and family development. In Sussman, M.& Steinmetz, S. (Eds.), Handbook of marriage and the family. New York: Plenum. 437-470.

Moha Ennaji. 2005. *Multilingualism, Cultural Identity, and Education in Morocco*, Springer Science & Business Media. 19-23.

Morelli, G. & Rothbaum, F. 2007. Situating the child in context: Attachment relationships and self-regulation in different cultures. In: Kitayama, S., Cohen, D. (eds.) Handbook of cultural psychology. New York: Guilford Press. 500-527.

Nshom E. & Croucher, S. 2014. Threats and attitudes toward Russian-speaking immigrants: a comparative study between younger and older Finns. Russian Journal of Communication. 6 (3). 308-317.

Ogbu, J. 1993. Differences in cultural frame of reference. International Journal of Behavioral Development.16, 483–506.

Papoušek, H. & Bornstein, M. 1992. Didactic interactions: Intuitive parental support of vocal and verbal development in human infants. In: Papoušek, H.; Jürgens, U.; Papoušek, M., editors. Nonverbal vocal communication. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 209-229.

Patton, M. (ed.) 2002. Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods. Accessed 14 June 2015. https://bibliotecadecienciassociales.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/qualitative-research-eval-uation-methods-by-michael-patton.pdf

Phinney, J. & Alipuria 2006. Multiple social categorization and identity among multiracial, multiethnic and multicultural individuals: Processes and implications In Crisp R. & Hewstone M. (eds.) Multiple social categorization: Processes, models, and applications. New York: Psychology Press. 211-238.

Pöllänen, P. 2013. Hoivan rajat. Venäläiset maahanmuuttajanaiset ja ylirajainen perhehoiva . Population Research Institute, Publications D57. Väestöliitto, Helsinki. Population Register Centre, 2015.

Punamäki, R-L., Giacaman, R., Rabaia , Y., Nguyen-Gillham , V., Batniji , R. & Summerfield, D. 2010 Mental health, social distress and political oppression In : Global Public Health. 23, 1-13.

Redfield, R., Linton, R., & Herskovits, M. 1936. Memorandum on the study of acculturation. American Anthropologist, 38, 149–152.

Reuter, A. & Jaakkola, M. 2005. Venäjänkielisten, vironkielisten ja kaksikielisten maahanmuuttajien sosiaaliset verkostot, in Maahanmuuttajien elämää Suomessa, (eds.) Paananen, S. Tilastokeskus, Helsinki. 23-38.

Silverman, D. 2005. Doing qualitative research: a practical handbook. 2nd edition. London: Sage.

Social Science Research Council. 1954. Acculturation: An exploratory formulation. American Anthropologist, 56. 973-1002.

Stuart, J., Jose, P., & Ward, C. 2009. Settling in: Parent-adolescent family dynamics in the acculturation process. Wellington. New Zealand Families Commission.

Suomalainen lastensuojelu Venäjän lapsiasiavaltuutetun vallassa? Lokakuun Liike. Accessed 20 December 2015. http://www.lokakuunliike.com/ll-uutiset/suomalainen-lastensuojelu-vena-jan-lapsiasianvaltuutetun-vallassa.

Suomalaiset ja venäläiset asiantuntijat tekevät yhteistyötä lastensuojeluasioissa. Lastensuojelu keskusliitto. Accessed 11 June 2016. https://www.lskl.fi/teemat/kansainvalinen-tyo/suomalaiset-ja-venalaiset-asiantuntijat-tekevat-yhteistyota-lastensuojeluasioissa/.

Swain, J. E. (2011). Becoming a Parent – Bio-behavioural and Brain Science Perspectives. Current Problems in Paediatric and Adolescent Health Care, 41, 192–196. Abstract from DOI Journals. Accessed 2 June 2015. http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.cppeds.2011.02.004.

Törrönen, M., Borodgina, O. & Samoylova, V. 2013. *Empowering Social Work: Research & Practice*. Törrönen, M., Borodkina, O., Samoylova, V. & Heino, E. (toim.). Kotka: Helsingin yliopiston koulutus- ja kehittämiskeskus Palmenia.
Törrönen, M., O Borodkina, V Samoylova, & E Heino, University of Helsinki, Palmenia Centre for Continuing Education. Kotka. 222-245.

Twenge J, Campbell W, & Foster C. 2003.Parenthood and marital satisfaction: A meta-analytic review. Journal of Marriage and Family. 65, 574–583.

Umberson, D., Pudrovska T. and Reczek C. 2010. Parenthood, Childlessness, and Well-Being: A Life Course Perspective. Journal of Marriage and Family, 72 (3), 612-629. Abstract from Wiley Online Library. Accessed 20 May 2016. http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/

Valtonen, K. 2009. Social Work and Migration: Immigrant and Refugee Settlement and Integration, Ashtree Publishing, Great Britain.

Veistilä, M. 2013. Child-sensitive elements of the construction of child well-being during an acculturation process.: Exploring the narratives of well-being of children with a Russian background. Empowering Social Work: Research and Practice. Törrönen, M., Borodkina, O., Samoylova, V. & Heino, E. (eds.). Kotka: Koulutus- ja kehittämiskeskus Palmenia, Kotkan yksikkö. 174-199.

Walker, J. 2008. Family life in the 21st century: the implications for parenting policy in the UK. Journal of Children's Services, 3(4). 17-29.

Walker, J. 2013 Partnership and parenting. In M. Davies ed. Blackwell Companion to Social Work. 4th edition. Oxford. Blackwell. 109-120.

Walker, J., Barret, H., Wilson, G. and Chang, Y-S. 2010. Relationship Matter: Understanding the needs of adults (particularly parents) regarding relationship support. Research Report RR33. London: Department for Children, Schools and Families.

Ward, C., Bochner, S., & Furnham, A. 2001. The psychology of culture shock. 2nd edition. London: Routledge.

Ward, C.1996. Acculturation. In: D. Landis & R. Bhagat (eds) Handbook of intercultural training. 2nd edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. 124-147.

Waters, E., Corcoran, D. & Anafarta, M. (2005) 'Attachment, Other Relationships, and the Theory that All Good Things Go Together' Human Development 48, 80–84.

Watt D. & White, J. 1999. Computers and the family: a family development perspective. Journal of comparative family studies. 30. 1–15.

White, J. 1991. Dynamics of family development: a theoretical perspective. New York: Guilford.

White, J. 1999. Work-family stage and satisfaction with work-family balance. Journal of comparative family studies. 30. 163–175.

Figures

Tables

Appendices

Appendix 1: Sampled parent consent form PARENT CONSENT
"Parenting and the child's early development in immigrant families"
I have received information in writing about the "Parenting and the child's early development in immigrant families" study interviews, video filming and physiological measurements of the content and purpose. I have had the opportunity to ask questions by phone and e-mail to the Researcher in charge and orally to the interviewer. I understand the purpose and methods of the survey as a Parent. I have an idea of what the research participation for me and my future child means. I am aware of the fact that during the study I answer questions, and my child and me being together is recorded on video. In addition, saliva samples from myself and my child is collected to determine the level of stress hormones in two of the interview sessions. Research Interviews last approximately 2 hours.
I understand that my participation in this study is completely voluntary. I have the right at any time during the study, and without giving any reason to suspend participation in the research. I can also withdraw this consent, in which case my info and samples are no longer used in the research.
Suspension or withdrawal of my consent to participating in the survey does not affect my treatment or my position now or in the future. I also realize that all the answers given and the information gathered will be treated confidentially and researchers are bound by professional secrecy and all the study material will be disposed of in a secure manner after 2016.
I agree to participate in the study, and I agree that my child may participate in the research.
I agree to participate in the study within the different components in the following by marking X to that point:
Responding to questionnaires _____
Recording of the interview (both parents) _____
I confirm receiving information of the study, as well as a copy of my received consent.
Helsinki / Espoo / Vantaa _____ day of _____ kuuta____ / 2013
I agree to participate in the study:
_____
signature
_____
name in block letters
_____
personal identification number
_____
address
_____
telephone number
Receiver of the consent
Helsinki / Espoo / Vantaa _____ day of _____ 2013 year
_____
name in block letters
_____
Rank, occupation
_____
Contact
_____
telephone number
(Täytetään kahtena kappaleena)

Appendix 2: Ethical Board permition

HELSINGIN JA UUDENMAAN
SAIRAANHOITOPIIRI
Yhtymähallinto/ Eettiset toimikunnat
Koordinoiva eettinen toimikunta

LAUSUNTO PYYDETYISTÄ   1/1
KORJAUKSISTA

Professori Aila Tiitinen
HUS Naistenklinikka
PL 140

Professori Raija-Leena Punamäki
Psykologia
Kalevankatu 5
33014 Tampereen yliopisto

VANHEMMUUS JA LAPSEN VARHAISKEHITYS POHJOISMAIDEN
MAAHANMUUTTAJAPERHEISSÄ: EMOTIONAALISET, SOSIAALISET
JA PSYKOFYSIOLOGISET ULOTTUVUUDET

Viite: 275/13/03/00/12

Tutkimussuunnitelma on hyväksytty eettisen toimikunnan kokouksessa
20.11.2012 ja siitä on annettu puoltava lausunto edellyttäen korjauksia. Toi-
mikunta on valtuuttanut kokouksen puheenjohtajan hyväksymään pyydetyt
korjaukset liitteineen.

Pyydetyt korjaukset käyvät ilmi toimitetuista asiakirjoista:
- Saatekirje, Raija-Leena Pukinmäki 10.12.2012
- Rekrytointi-ilmoitus, 12.12.12 (HUS –leima)
- Henkilörekisteriseloste, 10.12.2012
- Englanninkielinen henkilörekisteriseloste, 10.12.2012
- Tiedote vanhemmille tutkimuksesta, 12.12.12 (HUS –leima)
- Vanhemman suostumus, 12.12.12 (HUS –leima)
- Lausuntokopio § 210 / 20.11.2012

Tutkimussuunnitelma ja sen liitteet täyttävät toimikunnan mukaan tutkimus-
lain (794/2010) 17 §:n 2 momentin mukaiset edellytykset.

Päätös   Toimikunnan puolesta kokouksen puheenjohtaja päätti hyväksyä pyydetyt
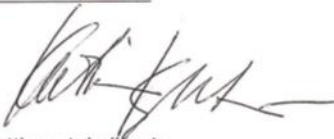korjaukset ja antaa niistä puoltavan lausunnon.

Lausunto on maksuton (STM:n asetus 46/2012, 1 §).

Vakuudeksi

Helsingissä 2.1.2013

Katia Käyhkö
puheenjohtaja
Koordinoiva eettinen toimikunta

Appendix 3: Research permit 1

ESPOO
ESBO

TUTKIMUSLUPA

TUTKIMUSLUVAN MYÖNTÄMINEN

Espoon sosiaali- ja terveystoimen esikunta/Kehittämisyksikkö myöntää tutkimusluvan

6.2.2013 saapuneen tutkimuslupahakemuksen ja alla olevien ehtojen mukaisesti.

Hakija/Yhdyshenkilö: Raija-Leena Punamäki

Aihe: Vanhemmuus ja lapsen varhaiskehitys Pohjoismaiden
                                     maahanmuuttajaperheissä

Edellytyksenä on, että tutkimuksen suorittaja/t ei/vät käytä saamiaan tietoja asiakkaan/potilaan
tai hänen läheistensä vahingoksi eivätkä luovuta saamiaan henkilötietoja ulkopuolisille, vaan
pitävät ne salassa.

Tutkimustulokset tulee esittää niin, ettei niistä voida tunnistaa yksittäistä henkilöä tai perhettä.
Lisäksi on noudatettava henkilötietolaissa ja muualla lainsäädännössä olevia
tutkimusrekistereitä koskevia säännöksiä.

Edellytämme, että tutkija/yhdyshenkilö lähettää sosiaali- ja terveystoimen kehittämisyksikön
sähköpostiosoitteeseen **sotet_tutkimusluvat@espoo.fi** lopullisen tutkimusraportin.

Espoossa 1.3.2013

Tuula Heinänen
kehittämisjohtaja

Appendix 4: Reseach permit 2

Helsingin kaupunki **Sosiaali- ja terveysvirasto**	**Pöytäkirjanote**	18/2013	1 (1)
Virastopäällikkö	05.04.2013		

117 §
Päätös tutkimuslupahakemuksesta HEL 2013-001743

HEL 2013-001743 T 13 02 01

Päätös

Virastopäällikkö päätti myöntää tutkimusluvan Raija-Leena Punamäen ym. tutkimuslupahakemukselle "Vanhemmuus ja lapsen varhaiskehitys Pohjoismaiden maahanmuuttajaperheissä: emotionaaliset, sosiaaliset ja psykofysiologiset ulottuvuudet". HUS:n eettinen koordinoiva toimikunta on antanut tutkimuksesta puoltavat lausunnot 20.11.2012 ja 2.1.2013. Perhe- ja sosiaalipalvelut -osaston päällikkö ja perhepalvelujen johtaja puoltavat tutkimuksen toteuttamista. Tutkimuksen yhteyshenkilö sosiaali- ja terveysvirastossa on ylihoitaja Tarja Viitamäki.

Tutkimuksesta ei saa aiheutua erillisiä kustannuksia sosiaali- ja terveysvirastolle.

Lisätiedot

Anne Kuvaja, toiminnansuunnittelija, puhelin: 310 43444
anne.kuvaja(a)hel.fi

Otteet

Ote	**Otteen liitteet**
Hakija	
Yhteyshenkilö	Liite 1
Päälliköt	
Valmistelija	

Virastopäällikkö

Helena Ylisipola
vs. virastopäällikkö

Appendix 5: In-depth semi-structured interview

Part I Subjective well-being

- Can I ask you to tell (me) about yourself and what made you to decide to come to Finland?

- What is your experience of living in Finland?

- What do you think, how satisfied are you with your overall life here?

- What things changed for you since you came?

- What are positive and negative things for your life here?

- Can I ask you to tell (me) about your marriage/partnership and how happy is life for your family here, in Finland?

Part II Transition to parenthood

- How it was for you to make a decision to have a baby?

- What are your experiences with Finnish maternal care system?

- What are of the positive to have a baby in Finland? What are challenging things?

- How do you think your experiences (with maternal and child care system) in Finland are different from those you might have had in your home country?

- What are hopes and expectations for the future concerning you parenting and adaptation?

Part III Immigration and transition to parenthood

- Could you bring three associative words (or phrases) that come to your mind when you hear the term "immigrant parent"? – Please, follow-up with the opening-up (examples and explanations) of your associations.

- If you switched roles with your child, what would you expect from your immigrant parents?

- In what way, do you think, the social roles of immigrant and parent affect each other?

- As an immigrant parent, what kind of parenting education or advices from the local/state institutions have you got?

- What do you think are the advantages for your child being grown up in Finland?