

**The Role of Immigrants' Self Identity in Effective Integration
Process into Finland**

Kyaw Hnin Hnin Thet

Spring 2016

Master's degree programme in Education

Faculty of Education

University of Jyväskylä

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

Tiedekunta – Faculty Education	Laitos – Department Education
Tekijä – Author Kyaw Hnin Hnin Thet	
Työn nimi – Title The Role of Immigrants' Self Identity in the Process of Effective Integration into Finland	
Oppiaine – Subject Guidance and counseling	Työn Laji – Level Masters
Aika – Month and Year April-2016	Sivumäärä – Number of pages 88
Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>The purpose of this research is to study the role of immigrants' self identity in the process of effective integration into Finland. The research questions of the study explore (a) individual perceptions of self identity and effective integration into the host society from immigrants' perspectives, (b) the impact of the integration process on immigrants' self identity and (c) the identity changes of immigrants during the process of integration into the host society. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with six participants in Jyväskylä, Finland in order to best capture immigrants' diverse life experiences reflecting the identity issues during the integration process into the host society.</p> <p>After a detailed inductive thematic analysis, seven overarching themes emerged from the gathered data. The themes examine: (1) immigrants' perceptions of self identity, (2) individuals' definitions of successful integration into Finland and contributing factors, (3) effects of integration process on immigrants' self identity, (4) role changes of immigrants and its impact on self identity, (5) dilemmas associated with identity and integration process, (6) immigrants' belongingness to the host society along with supporting and hindering factors and (7) immigrants' attitudes towards counseling concerning self identity. The findings show that immigrants' self identity acts as both help and hindrance in the process of integration into Finland. In addition, the integration process also has a prominent impact on immigrants' self identity in terms of identity conflicts, negotiations, changes and development. This study concludes with a discussion of theoretical understanding of the findings, limitations and implications for future research.</p>	
Asiasanat – self identity, integration process, host society, immigrants, transition, identity confusion, identity negotiation, identity development, identity construction, counseling	

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First of all, I would like to thank my thesis advisor Prof. Timo Saloviita for his insightful feedback and detailed comments throughout the writing process. Secondly, my heartfelt thanks go to Dr. Sauli Puukari. This research would not have been possible without his persistent help, guidance and understanding. Thirdly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Juha Lahti for his wise counsel, sympathetic ear and most importantly for inspiring me to do this research. In addition, special thanks to the wonderful participants of this study for their full cooperation and willingness to share personal experiences to make this study happen. I would also like to take this opportunity to extend my sincere thanks to Gloria Multicultural Center, Jyväskylä for their support and collaboration for the process of data collection. Last but not least, huge thanks, love and appreciation go to my other half, Lasse Kalliokoski for his unconditional love, support and understanding throughout this journey.

TABLES

Table 1. Sample of thematic coding analysis process of the present study.....	33
Table 2. Immigrants' conceptions of self identity	37
Table 3. Role and function of self identity in integration process to Finland	40
Table 4. Immigrants' perceptions of effective integration into Finland	43
Table 5. Contributing factors for effective integration into Finland	46
Table 6. Effects of integration process on immigrants' self identity	50
Table 7. Immigrants' dilemmas during transition period.....	57
Table 8. What help in dealing with dilemmas	59
Table 9. Factors contributing belongingness to host society.....	63
Table 10. Factors hindering belongingness to host society	66
Table 11. Immigrants attitudes towards identity counseling.....	68

CONTENTS

Acknowledgement	3
Tables	4
Contents	5
1 Introduction	7
1.1 Immigrant's profile in Finland.....	7
1.2 Integration and Government's Intervention.....	8
1.3 Integration as a two-way process.....	9
1.4 Immigrant integration and belongingness.....	10
1.5 The role and function of immigrant self identity in integration process	11
2 Literature review.....	15
2.1 Identity theories	15
2.2 Definitions of identity	17
2.3 Different approaches to identity concept.....	19
2.4 Self identity.....	20
2.5 Changes in self identity and its relation to integration process	21
2.6 Self Identity Construction and Counselling.....	24
3 Data and Methodology	26
3.1 Research Design	26
3.2 Participants.....	28
3.3 Data collection	29

3.4 Ethical considerations	31
3.5 Data analysis	32
3.6 Validity and reliability	34
4 Findings	36
4.1 Immigrants' conceptions of self identity and its role in integration process	36
4.2 Immigrants' perceptions of integration success and contributing factors	42
4.3 The effects of integration process on immigrants' self identity	48
4.4 Role changes and its impact on identity and integration	54
4.5 Dilemmas associated with integration and self identity	57
4.6 Factors affecting belongingness.....	62
4.7 Immigrants' attitude towards counselling regarding identity	67
5 Discussion.....	71
6 Limitations.....	76
7 Recommendations for future research.....	78
8 References	79
9 Appendices	86
9.1 Interview questions	86

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Immigrant's profile in Finland

Due to the political, social and economic changes around the world, the growth of immigration flow to the European Union has been steadily increasing in recent decades. As a safe and prosperous member of EU, Finland has developed its role as immigrant receiving country that annually accommodates people from more than 150 countries (Koivukangas, 2003) after 1990. According to Tanner (2004), the increase in awareness of Finland as a stable and socially developed country with few incidents of racial violence; the lack of a well-established, anti-immigrant far right; and increased asylum entry restrictions in other Western countries has recently made Finland a favorable destination for mostly humanitarian and a few other kinds of immigrants. As of 2015, there are 3,000,000 people with foreign backgrounds residing in Finland which correspond to 5.5% of the country's population according to Statistics Finland (November 2015). In addition, due to the recent outbreaks of political unrests in certain parts of the world, there has been a great increase to the population of immigrants in Finland. Annually, Finland receives 1,500 to 6,000 immigrants from all over the world. However in 2015, Finland was expecting to host 30,000 to 35,000 of refugees and asylum seekers by the end of the year 2015, according to the Finland Ministry of Interior (March 2016).

1.2 Integration and Government's Intervention

With the permanent presence of increasing number of immigrants for the past several years, getting the newcomers of Finland to effectively integrate into the society has become a challenging task for both immigrants and host society alike. That being said, the more recent political and public discussions do not stress much on how integration should work, rather they are about immigration itself such as restriction on immigration policy and types of immigrants to accept (Koskela, 2014). However, Finland is committed to ensure livelihood and welfare of immigrants transitioning to the new society. Based on The integration Act (2006), the matters of education, employment, housing and social service are addressed in the levels of national, local (municipal) and individual by government and local authorities (Tanner, 2004).

Aiming to encourage immigrants to take a more active role in the process of integration, Finland emphasizes on “personal integration plan”, an agreement between immigrants and official, whereupon immigrants are financially assisted for participating in language studies, on job trainings and further education to develop skills required in the Finnish working life as well as in the society in general. However the challenge with personal integration plan is that it can be considered as mere formalities by immigrants, resulting the full potential and substance of the plan being compromised (Tanner, 2004). Besides, the limitations such as language barrier, cultural restrictions and lack of manpower can hinder both parties of host and immigrants from achieving effective results regarding personal integration plan. Moreover, it is also argued that personal integration plan only aims to implement the labor market of the host society at most (Koskela , 2014) while fails to consider other aspects beyond physical needs. While it is undeniably important that newcomers are provided with assistance with settling in the new homeland such as

housing, language class and seeking a job, integrating into the new society, however, means much more than merely being in the welfare system of the host society.

1.3 Integration as a two-way process

According to Ministry of Interior Finland (2015), integration into Finland is defined as “immigrants adapt themselves to Finnish society and acquire new skills, competences and practices which help them actively participate in the life of their new home country”. Based on this definition, it can be argued that the meaning of integration in Finnish context heavily focuses on labor market once again. However, the initial aim of the personal integration plan of Finland is to build the social cohesion between the new comers and the host society for a more harmonious and well balanced lives for both parties.

In this respect, the responsibility for achieving effective integration, rests not only on the officials of the host country but also with the immigrants themselves, society and communities to name a few. Of late, the more common interpretation of the term “integration” includes an interactive aspect, rather than the idea of a one-way process (Valtonen, 1998). That is to say, “on the one hand, it is the responsibility of the host society to ensure that the formal rights of immigrants are in place in such a way that the individual has the possibility of participating in economic, social, cultural and civil life and on the other, that immigrants respect the fundamental norms and values of the host society and participate actively in the integration process, without having to relinquish their own identity.” (European Commission 2003, p. 17-18).

1.4 Immigrant integration and belongingness

Despite the fact that the term integration has become the most discussed in contemporary immigrant issues around the world, ironically it has no universal definition as it bears different meanings to different people. However, integration can be generally understood as a process by which immigrants become accepted by the host society, both as individuals and as groups regardless of the differences. Integration is defined as “an interest in both maintaining one’s original culture, while having daily interactions with other groups, integration is the option; here some degree of cultural integrity is maintained, while at the same time members of an ethno-cultural group seek to participate as an integral part of the larger social network” (Berry et al., 2002, p.354).

From among four types of acculturation strategies proposed by John Berry (1994, 2001), integration is the most preferred alternative among acculturating individuals and hosts. Berry et al. (2006) claim that integration strategy has the most positive acculturative outcomes for both parties involved as it allows immigrants to maintain their own cultural identity and become members of the host society at the same time. In contrast to Berry’s (1994, 2001) definition of integration as one of the strategies of acculturation, Entzinger & Biezeveld (2003) conceptualize integration and acculturation as two different cases. According to their differentiation, integration is immigrant’s growing participation in the major institutions of a society such as labor market, education, and healthcare system whereas changes in immigrants’ cultural orientation and identification is considered as acculturation. Valtonen (1998) also defines immigrants integration as full and unimpeded participation in the society as well as the access and openness of institutions to all members of society.

One reason of utilizing integration strategy is not only to encourage the immigrants to physically get involved with the society but also to provide the feeling of belongingness to the new home. Individuals have the need to feel belong to a society or larger group as it is a fundamental human motivation to be acknowledged and accepted into a social group or place for physical and mental security as well one's emotional well-beings. Becoming and being a part of a society, in other words, belongingness to a host country is far more complicated than merely residing in a particular geographical location or obtaining citizenship of the host country. A sense of belonging can mean many things depending on how a person sees, feels and defines it. For instance, it can mean locality in which one feels at home (Toivanen, 2014) whereas Anthias (2009) defines belonging as "experiences of being part of the social fabric and the ways in which social bonds and ties are manifested in practices, experiences and emotions of inclusion" (p.9). On the other hand, belongingness is perceived by individuals as positive feelings about oneself, acceptance and positive regard from and for others, as well as making a commitment to fully participate in new society (Chow, 2007).

1.5 The role and function of immigrant self identity in integration process

Self identity is primarily stressed as an important issue for children and adolescences by identity studies. However, a coherent and synthesis sense of identity (Erikson, 1950) can also be considered as a necessary prerequisite for immigrants in transition due to its function as "a self regulatory social psychological structure that directs attention, processes information, manages impressions and selects behavior" (Thompson, 2014, p.90). Therefore, it can be argued that self identity issues are not only important for

adolescents in transitioning period to adulthood but also of paramount necessity for the immigrants trying to integrate into the host society for a number of reasons.

First of all, immigrating to a new country and integrating into a new society can mean leaving the world behind where one is already acknowledged personally, socially and culturally and having to start from zero once again to earn a place in the new world. Voluntarily or by coercion, the whole process of immigrating to a new country can be very stressful and even traumatic at times for immigrants of all ages. In addition, major life turning points, rapid changes, uncertainties as well as role confusions due to relocation are the root causes that make individuals to feel lost, confused and helpless in the new homeland. In regards of coping with the problems induced by displacement, Schwartz et al. (2006) see the potential in individuals' self identity as it acts as an anchor amidst changes and uncertainty which provides the organization of self understandings that define one's place in world.

Secondly, integration process into host society necessitates learning and accepting new values, cultural norms, different customs and perceptions as well as diverse world views. In this respect, the integration process into host society has similarities with the transition period of adolescents from childhood to adulthood in terms of being confronted by the need to re-establish one's identity in the unknown world. Erikson (1950, 1968) conceptualizes identity as a normative process and a prerequisite that enables individual to find one's way in the world. For, self identity not only functions as a coherent inner self which maintains personal values, goals and beliefs but also serves as a flexible social self which supports changes and generates positive feelings about one's own group(s).

Thirdly, the term identity crisis or identity confusion seems to be associating mostly with the young adults who are still in the stage of questioning “who am I?” or “ what is the true purpose of my life?” in identity literature. However, such scenarios are also sadly very common for immigrants of all ages due to “the feeling of rootlessness and isolation in swarming anonymous throng (Gleason, 1983, p.928)” instigated by immigrating to a new country. Besides the identity crisis, major life changes and the needs of constant adaptation due to relocation may also contribute to losing one’s sense of self which could hinder individuals from functioning effectively in the journey towards successful integration into the new society.

On the other hand, being more aware of one’s identity will likely provide individuals with more adaptability, better and stronger relationship with host communities. Furthermore greater understanding of oneself and recognizing of one’s hidden abilities can enhance individual’s willingness to live and learn more actively, resulting a more fulfilling lifestyle as well as a smoother integration process into the host society. For, as Adams and Marshall (1996) state, “identity functions to provide (a) the structure for understanding who one is (b) meanings and directions through commitments, values and goals (c) a sense of personal control (d) consistency, coherence and harmony between values, beliefs and commitments (e) the abilities to recognize potential in future possibilities and choices” (p.433).

Last but not least, learning to get familiar with new ideals, values and beliefs as well as trying to fit in with the new environment may cause one’s identity to change in many aspects. Hence, the process of trying to integrate into a new society can be considered as somewhat similar to youths having identity crisis, in terms of cognitive and social

changes as well as having to develop a new identity once again in the new society. Erikson conceptualized the identity development as a central task of young adults that (a) optimally results in a coherent and self-constructed dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and personal history and (b) functionally guides the unfolding of the adult life course (Schwartz et al., 2001). Even though identity development concept has been associated with adolescences mainly, the current study finds the concept to be particularly pertinent in exploring the changes and development of immigrants' identity caused by the integration process into the host society, Finland.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Identity theories

The concept of identity, one's idea of who one is, how one defines oneself (Marcia, 1993), has been a dominant theme in the literature of the social sciences for more than half a century. The term “identity” was first introduced and brought into common usage by Erik Erikson (1946, 1950) several decades ago. Being a practicing psychoanalyst working mainly with children and his personal background as a refugee intellectual inspired Erikson to develop his concept of identity crisis and development of personality. Due to his personal, professional and anthropological observations, Erikson’s concept of identity and identity crisis naturally grounded in the experience of emigration, immigration and Americanization (Gleason, 1983). Eventually, based on Freud’s work of psychosexual theory, Erikson develops his eight stages of psychosocial development which describe a whole lifespan of individuals. While greatly influenced by Freud’s psychosexual theory of development, Erikson’s identity theory focuses more on self identity which develops and evolves throughout a person’s life.

In 1960s, Erikson developed his groundbreaking theory of ego identity and psychosocial development consisting eight stages of life cycle: (1) Trust vs. Mistrust (2) Autonomy vs. Shame (3) Doubt, Initiative vs. Guilt (4) Industry vs. Inferiority (5) Identity vs. Identity confusion (6) Intimacy vs. Isolation (7) Generativity vs. Stagnation (8) Integrity vs. Despair. According to Erikson, each stage of the psychosocial development of a person contains crises that challenge individual’s identity. Thus, successful development of the personality (psychosocial development) depends on

meeting and overcoming these crises (Fleming, 2004). Erikson believed that certain experiences and challenges in each stage that individual has to experience lead one to biological maturity and ego growth. Moreover, the relationship between a developing individual and his social milieu also plays a vital role in maintaining one's feeling of inner self-continuity in order to experience wholeness and construct the final identity of a unique and coherent self.

Additionally, other prominent researchers such as Freud (1923,1961), Allport (1954), Cooley (1902), Mead (1934), Berger (1963) and Goffman (1959) of modern psychology and sociology have done a significant amount of studies related to identity concept such as identification, evolving sense of selfhood, role theory and the self etc. As discussed briefly above, Erikson's theory of psychosocial development itself was originated from Freud's initial writings, psychosexual development stages. Among Neo-Eriksonian theorists, Marcia (1966, 1976, 1980) is well known for refining and extending Erikson's work by proposing the concept of identity status model which comprised four statuses: identity achievement, moratorium, foreclosure and identity diffusion. Marcia (1976) argues that one's sense of identity is determined significantly by the choices and commitments made in regards of certain personal and social traits.

Later on, identity developed itself in other fields such as gender, class, race, immigration, sexuality, religion, ethnicities, nationalism, culture and new social movements, in which many theorists felt obliged to address the identity question, although their work was not primarily concerned with the above concepts (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000: 2-4). Consequently, identity in the mid 60s has gained such a significant place in academic and related fields that it seems everyone has something to say or say

something about identity (Marcia,1993). Given it's richly elusive nature, the concept of identity has been interpreted into various usages in diverse academic disciplines such as art, history, biology, mathematics, sociology and psychology. Gleason (1983) remarks that at this point identity has reached the level of becoming to "mean so many things that, by itself, it means nothing" (p. 914).

Unquestionably, identity is made to do far too many explanatory works with multivalent and even contradictory theoretical burden due to its ambiguity (Brubaker & Cooper, 2000). In fact, Gleason (1983) points out that the word "identity" was so widely and so loosely used that to determine its provenance in every context would be impossible. However, there are a few key terms that could highlight the various understandings of identity concept depending on the different contexts. Brubaker and Cooper (2000) summarize the most common uses of identity into five categories: (1) identity as self understanding rather than self interest (2) sameness across persons or time (3) stable core or foundational aspects of selfhood (4) contingent product of social and political actions (5) unstable, contemporary nature of the self. In the particular fields of psychology and sociology, identity is mainly used as a means of understanding self hood and individuality (Adams & Marshall, 1996).

2.2 Definitions of identity

Conceptualizing a clear picture of what identity is, or in other words, what people actually mean when they use the term "self identity" is vitally important in order to better understand immigrants' identity in the process of integration into the host society. Obviously, there are countless definitions and clarifications regarding the term

“identity”, both in academic and laymen usages given the nature of its complexity and ambiguity. Oxford English Dictionary (2nd Edition, 1989,2004) defines identity as;

The sameness of a person or things at all times or in all circumstances; the condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else; individuality, personality.

Personal identity (in psychology), the condition or the fact of remaining the same person through out various phases of existences; continuity of personality.

The vernacular meaning given out by Oxford English Dictionary (1989, 2004) is significantly similar to the definition of Erikson, the key figure of identity concept tradition. The architect of identity trend, Erikson, considers identity to be temporally consistent and resistant to changes due to one’s fundamental and possibly unconscious beliefs and world view as well as the ability to maintain inner sameness and continuity (Schwartz-2001, Erikson-1968). In other words, as Schwartz (2001) puts it, Erikson’s definition of identity is “the awareness of ... self-sameness and continuity ... [and] the style of one’s individuality [which] coincides with the sameness and continuity of one’s meaning for others in the immediate community” (p.50). Schwartz et al. (2006) also regard identity as the organization of self-understanding that determine one’s place in the world. Marcia (1967), another prominent figure in the identity research area, also sees identity as a self structure which is “ internal, self-constructed, dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and individual history” (p.119).

However, there are other articulations regarding identity which are closer to laymen’s understanding of what makes one a unique individual. For instance, identity is one’s self concept variously described as “what comes to mind when one thinks of oneself (Neisser-1993, Stets & Burke-2003, Stryker-1980, Tajfel-1981), one's theory of one's

personality (Markus & Cross, 1990), and what one believes is true of oneself (Baumeister-1998, Forgas & Williams-2002)” (as cited in Oyserman et al., 2012). Consistent with above concepts, Oyserman et al. (2012) propose self identity as traits and characteristics, social relations, roles and social group membership that define who one is. In addition, Hogg and Abrams (1988) agree that self identity is individuals’ concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are and how they relate to others. Fearson (1999) also defines self identity as how individuals define and understand themselves, such as personality, character, goals and origin. For Waterman (1999), the selves that individual has created such as familial, social and occupational roles can be considered as one’s self identity. Moreover, individuals’ social roles, reputation, a structures of values and priorities and a conception of one’s potentiality are also considered as self identity (Baumeister, 1986).

2.3 Different approaches to identity concept

While Erikson’s literature inspires a highly productive line of research regarding self and identity, especially in sociology field, sociologists seem to hold different perspectives on the concept of identity in terms of the meanings and functions. According to Gleason (1983), Eriksonian identity is deep, internal and permanent which is more than just self concept or self image that answer the question “Who am I?”. Erikson insists that identity is the subjective sense of wholeness, both conscious and unconscious, comprised of synthesized identification that represent the person’s psychosocial stimulus both for oneself or for significant others in the community (Waterman, 1988). In this sense, Waterman (1988) points out that the function of Eriksonian identity is a subjective feeling of inner coherence, continuity and sameness across time and context.

On the other hand, influential sociologists such as Foote (1951), Goffman (1959) and Berger (1963) etc. tend to view identity as the artifact of interaction between individual and society (Schwartz, 2001). Unlike the Eriksonian self identity concept which is inner, stable and permanent, sociologists envision the concept as a flickering successions of identity adopted and shed according to the requirements of social situations (Gleason, 1983). For instance, Foote (1951, 14-21) argued that self identity is not a solid inner self but rather a process continually created and re-created in each social situation that one enters, held together by the slender thread of memory. Stryker (1980) also calls self identity as “internalized positional designation” due to its supposedly different positions and role relationships one holds in the society. In other words, the function of self identity, in sociologists’ point of view, is to take and leave roles according to its interactions with the social structure. Thus, self identity is understood by sociologists as fluid, adaptable and evanescent.

2.4 Self identity

Self identity in this current study is conceptualized as a synthesis of personal, social and cultural self conceptions (Schwartz, 2001). Personal identity is referred as one’s preferences, unique aspects of self, sets of goals, beliefs and values (Erikson-1968, Schwartz et al.-2006). Self concepts, personality, personal traits or attributes are also categorized under personal aspect of identity, according to many researchers such as Oyserman (2012), Tajfel (1981) and Fearson (1999). Social identity, on the other hand, associates with social relations, roles and social group membership that define who one is (Oyserman, 2012). Schwartz et al. (2006) also conceptualize social identity as group ideals, labels and pro-group attitudes. Cultural identity concerns with origin, mother tongue and racial background (Erikson, 1974). Schwartz et al. (2006) also consider

attitudes, behaviors and beliefs influences by the group and its ideals as cultural identity. In order to explore immigrants' identity and its relation to integration process into host society, it is of paramount importance to look through all the angles of (a) coherence and internal consistency provided by personal aspect (b) immigrants' roles, social relationship and pro-ingroup attitudes of social aspect and (c) individual's origin, racial background, ideals, values, and practices influenced by cultural aspect.

2.5 Changes in self identity and its relation to integration process

Changes in self identity occur when one and/or one's context changes in ways that do not mesh with one's current configuration of goals, values, and beliefs (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001). Sudden major turning points of life such as losing a job, ending relationship and immigrating to a new country may induce stressful situations that can trigger profound effects on one's sense of self.

2.5.1 Identity Confusion

In face of discontinuities and rapid changes , individual may find that one's particular roles, values, beliefs and identification may no longer be applicable or satisfying yet once again find himself in the transitional periods of exploration possibilities, roles and lifestyles (Stephen et al.,1992). Sudden changes such as discontinuity, altered roles or statuses, different value systems as well as physical, mental and cultural adjustments can initiate inner conflicts which lead one to question one's sense of self. Stephen et al.(1992) refer to such inner conflicts as "identity disequibration" where one loses a secure sense of knowing "Who I am". Similarly, Erikson uses the terms such as identity crisis or identity confusion which also refer a sense of disequilibrium and uncertainty about one's goals, values and beliefs. In his identity theory, Erikson claims that in

one's attempt to achieve a coherent and stable identity, individual's inner conflicts play a major role in changes of one's identity which will either result in personal growth or failure. Marcia (1993) also sees the identity crisis as what makes a person realize the need to meet the challenges and make the commitments. Furthermore, in his calamity theory of growth, Farson (1976) claims that "critical life events such as exposure to different cultural or social milieus or source of knowledge and internal change as growth experiences which encourage a person to make a major re-assessment of one's life situation and changes it in ways that reflect a deeper understanding of one's own capabilities, values and goals" (p.31).

2.5.2 Identity negotiation

Identity negotiation is another important aspect in immigrants' identity changes and effective integrating into the host society. According to Goffman (1969), identity is the way in which the individual manages one's self image and responds to the expectations of others in everyday life. In order to feel a sense of belonging to a new group or country, one must slowly release the former loyalty, commitment and culturally deep rooted mindsets and norms bit by bit. However, building belongingness to a new group does not necessarily require individuals to discard their previous identities and cultural affinity from home, but rather use them as "interpretative tools or templates in constructing their individual and collective identity in the new society" (Lerner et al., 2007). When certain beliefs and practices from previous life are no longer applicable, individuals have to re-construct their identities and re-negotiate their place in the new world, hence, the negotiation of identity occurs. Ting-Toomey (2005) defines the process of identity negotiation as "a transactional interaction process whereby individuals in an intercultural situation attempt to assert, define, modify, challenge

and/or support their own and others' desired self-images" (P.217). According to Swan Jr. and Bosson (2008), identity negotiation is also understood as a process through which individuals find the middle ground between achieving their interactional goals and satisfying their identity related goals, such as the need for agency, communion and psychological coherence.

2.5.3 Identity development

According to Erikson (1960), identity development is a central task that optimally results in a coherent and self constructed dynamic organization of drives, abilities, beliefs, and personal history. Furthermore, the functions of identity includes providing the structure for understanding who one is, clarifying meaning and direction through commitments, values, and goals, strengthening a sense of personal control and free will, striving for consistency, coherence, and harmony between values, beliefs, and commitments, enabling the recognition of potential through a sense of future, possibilities, and alternative choices (Adams & Marshall, 1996). Elaborating on Erikson's work of self exploration and commitment, Marcia (1966, 1980) developed the identity paradigm which characterizes the development process of one's journey towards a coherent and mature identity. Marcia's four stages of identity paradigm: Identity foreclosure, Identity diffusion, Identity moratorium and Identity achievement represent a combination of low and high levels of exploration and commitment which helps to determine how much one has made certain choices and how much one displays a commitment to the choices.

Exploration and commitment, the two fundamental dimensions are simultaneously considered as the processes that underlie the development of identity. Exploration is considered to be a rather significant part of the identity process by Grotevant (1987)

because of its problem solving behavior that elicit information about oneself or one's environment in order to make decisions about an important life choice (Berman et al., 2001). Meeus et al. (2000) also see exploration as the way how one deals with his or her commitments in an active manner such as by reflecting on them, looking for information and discussing with others about them. On the other hand, identity commitment represents the adherence to a chosen set of goals, values and beliefs (Marcia, 1988). Commitment is considered to have a vital role in developing individual identity as it imbues one with a sense of fidelity and continuity which counteract uncertainty and disorientation induced by identity diffusion. Moreover, stability and flexibility of one's commitment can be taken as "a valid measure of identity coherence (Bosma & Kunnen, 2001), as the commitments to a set of goals, values and beliefs represent the primary difference between coherent and confused identity" (Schwartz et al., 2006, p.13).

2.6 Self Identity Construction and Counselling

According to sociology and constructionist perspectives, individual's understanding of themselves is a product of significant others, therefore a person's identity is not a fixed result of certain level of maturity but rather a lifetime ongoing activity of renewing, revision and constructing to fit in to the different contexts. In other words, identity construction can also be seen as the constant managing and overcoming of the pressure triggered by adapting to the norms of the new society while also maintaining an individual uniqueness (Lingren and Wählin, 2001). Reconstructing one's once valued and acknowledged self identity to fit in to a new society can be challenging for individuals but it can also be considered as the opportunity of personal growth and

development, and a chance to try to reach one's full potential besides the initial aim of effectively integrating into the host society, according to Sonn (2009).

The present study sees counseling as a beneficial approach to implement immigrants' identity construction as the principles used in counseling could be immensely helpful for the immigrants in regards of promoting one's sense of cohesiveness, stability and self-esteem which can result in personal growth of immigrants and becoming more active participants of the receiving society. For, "counseling concerns with addressing and resolving specific problems, making decisions, coping with crises, developing personal insights and knowledge, working through feelings of inner conflict, or improving relationship with others" (British association for Counseling, 1996). Moreover, counseling also enhances social inclusion of immigrants by enabling individuals to learn to become the contributors of well being of others and social good (McLeod, 2013).

3 DATA AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The purpose of this study is to explore the role of self identity in the process of effective integration into the host society and the impacts integration process has on immigrants' self identity from the perspectives of six immigrants in Jyväskylä, Finland. Qualitative study was employed in this study as this approach “allows to see things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them”(Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p.3). To best capture the life experiences of immigrants without any restriction, inductive thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006) was chosen in hopes of presenting the stories voiced by immigrants as accurately and comprehensively as possible (Guest et al., 2012). Furthermore, thematic analysis was utilized in the present study as it enables the researcher to discover the potential perspectives from the gathered data and study them in a deeper level. According to Namey et al. (2008), “thematic moves beyond counting explicit words or phrases and focuses on identifying and describing both implicit and explicit ideas” (p.138).

The nature of this present study is data-oriented therefore the interviews were conducted open-mindedly without restraint from any concrete theoretical framework concerning the data collecting process. In other words, inductive strategy is best suited for the analysis as the researcher has no intention to approve or disapprove any hypothesis but rather to investigate the issues of importance to participants emerge from the story that they tell about an area of interests that they have in common with the researcher (Mills

et al., 2006). Nonetheless, it would be unethical to claim that research questions as well as the interviews questions were not in a bit influenced by preconceived thoughts and interests of the literatures that reflect the researcher's life experiences as an immigrant.

The aims of the study are as follows;

-To explore immigrants' conceptions of self identity and to analyze the roles and functions they play in the process of integration in Finland.

- To understand immigrants' image of effective integration into host society and to examine the factors affecting the process of integration from immigrants' point of view.

-To analyze how self identity of immigrants change, transform and develop while dealing with changes and adaptation to host society

-To examine other influencing factors regarding immigrants' identity and integration process

In order to address the mentioned purposes of the study, the following research questions are fabricated based on the findings of the study.

- What are the roles of immigrant's self identity in the process of integration into Finland?
- How does the integration process into Finland affect the self identity of immigrants and vice versa?
- What are the other influencing factors affecting the process of integration into Finland?

3.2 Participants

The data collection of the study was conducted in the city of Jyväskylä, Finland. Six participants of various ages, genders, nationalities, educational and cultural backgrounds agreed to participate in the semi-structured, in-depth interviews which ranged from 30 minutes to 90 minutes. The first two of the interviews took place in Gloria multicultural center of Jyväskylä, another two at the university of Jyväskylä, one in author's home and one in the participant's home in Jyväskylä, Finland. It should be noted that two out of six participants were introduced to the researcher by Gloria Multicultural center in Jyväskylä shortly before the interviews but the rest of the participants have been researcher's classmates for more than two years.

The six participants, three males and three females, who agreed to participate in the interviews have been living in Finland for more than two years. The ages of the participants range between 25 to 40 years. Five out of six participants were studying in Jyväskylä, Finland when the interviews took place. The rationale behind working with only six participants is by focusing on a smaller group, it is ensured that the research would cover the detailed aspects of individual's personal experience on their journey towards effective integration into the host society in a deeper sense. Besides, due to vast diversity among the participants regarding nationalities, cultural and educational backgrounds, the interviews reflect interesting multi-faceted perspectives of the process of integration into the host society, Finland, despite the small size of the participant population.

The participants of the current study immigrated to Finland for various reasons such as work, education, family tie or seeking a better life to name a few. All participants have

family with them in the host country and some of them are married to citizens of Finland. During the one-on-one interviews, the participants enthusiastically shared diverse and colorful stories regarding self identity issues and integration process based on their personal experiences from the journey of integration into the host society, Finland. For collecting data of the present study, six willing and helpful participants were selected solely based on their immigrant backgrounds and every participation in the study was on a volunteer basis.

3.3 Data collection

Given its flexibility and exportability, semi-structured interview method was selected as a means of data collection for the current study in order to best capture the full picture of interviewees' diverse experiences and perspectives throughout their journey towards integration into Finland. According to Barrilball and While (1994), semi-structured interview method is most beneficial when investigating perception and opinions of the respondents regarding complex and sometimes sensitive issues because it enables to elicit in-depth information and clarification of the answers . In order to cover the specific topics that the researcher wishes to focus, the predetermined thematic open-ended questions were designed to address the research questions of the study (see Appendix-9.1). The interview questions were fabricated based on the pre-established themes inspired by researcher's preconceived thoughts and beliefs to explore the individual perceptions on immigrant's identity, effective integration into a host society as well as identity development and changes during transition.

In addition, warming up questions and also unplanned, non-directive, follow up questions were included to ensure the good rapport between the interviewer and the

interviewees. As the goal of the interview was to encourage the interviewee to share as much information as possible, unselfconsciously and in his or her own words, it is vital to build a relaxing atmosphere and trusting relationship between interviewer and interviewees, old acquaintances and newly introduced ones alike. Building trust and relationship beforehand is a means of “establishing a safe and comfortable environment for sharing the interviewee’s personal experiences and attitudes as they actually occurred” (Dicicco Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p.316). To further ensure the comfort and relaxation of the participants, the place and time for the interviews were decided by the interviewees.

In order to familiarize the participants with the ideas of the study before the actual conversations, a set of interview questions, a brief description and the rationale behind the study were provided ahead. All interviews were conducted in English, a second language of the participants of the current study. Therefore the technical terms and any unfamiliar words in the interview questions were addressed in prior and during the interviews to avoid any possible misunderstandings. The interviews lasted from 30 minutes to 100 minutes with the duration of the shortest for 30 minutes and the longest one being one hour and 40 minutes, depending on how much the interviewees had to share. All interviews were conducted in the individual participants’ own pace and willingness. The provided set of interview questions were asked in an order only at times as the interviewer usually went along with the flow of the conversation as long as it stayed within the focused themes of the study. All the conversations were audio-taped with the informed consent from the participants in order to accurately record the information provided for verbatim inscription and detailed analyzing.

3.4 Ethical considerations

To ensure the confidentiality of the participants, pseudonyms were given to the interviewees during transcription and analyzing processes. Certain identifying information such as occupations, places, workplaces, nationality and ages were also omitted or changed to ensure the anonymity of participants. Regarding the informed consent of participants, prior to the interviews, participants were provided with a set of questions to go through and also informed clearly that they have the rights to not answer any questions or topics that they do not wish to discuss. In addition, the participants were clearly informed about their rights to refuse being audio recorded at all, or stop during the interview should there be any change of mind.

Moreover, it was guaranteed that the recorded conversations of the participants are to be used for the purpose of transcribing only and the researcher will be the only person that listens to the recordings. Moreover, transcriptions of the interviews were sent to the participants before analyzing in order to provide the interviewees with the opportunity to review and censor certain parts of the conversation, should they feel uncomfortable with what was said on specific topics afterwards. In fact, one participant had a change of mind on certain topics after reviewing the transcript and the desired parts were omitted in the process of analyzing. Furthermore, the participation of the interviewees of the present study was solely on a voluntary basis and no payment or any other forms of compensations were involved throughout the whole process.

3.5 Data analysis

For the present study, inductive thematic analysis method was chosen as this approach primarily has a “descriptive and exploratory orientation” (Guest et al., 2011) which best suits the purpose of the study to explore immigrants’ self identity issues in the process of integration. Qualitative approach was employed in the current study to “see and understand the meaning, perspectives and life stories of immigrants in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 3).

Moreover, by utilizing inductive approach, data analyzing process was not controlled by any theory, hypothesis or researcher’s presumptions. In other words, the chosen inductive analysis allows the findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant, or significant themes inherent in raw data, without the restraints imposed by structured methodologies (Thomas, 2006). Therefore, it should be noted that even though the interview questions were constructed to a certain degree by the researcher imposed interactive biases, the findings of the study were obtained straight from the analysis of gathered raw data without any regard to researcher’s theoretical interests and preconceived assumptions.

Table 1. Sample of thematic coding analysis process of the present study

Data extracts	Initial codes	Candidate themes	Final theme
I am very good. I am very good person.1* I want only good. I am a very good mother 2*. I have my first child when I was 17 and the second child at 19. Sometimes people say that child got child but I am a very good mother and I know that. 3* And I want to know stuff.4* I want to learn as much as possible. I can't find word now but I want to learn. 5*.	1:self image 2:self image 3: role 4:curious 5:motivated,willing to learn	self image, role &personal attributes	Individual conceptions of self identity
-In my own definition, it is who you are,1* where you are from2*, though that might not really matter sometimes. It is who you are. - I am an African. I am Muslim 3*	1:self image 2:nationality 3:ethnicity,religion	things that represent one's self image	
I think it's more not because where I am from but where I belong to 1* and the habits and customs and traditions that come with you 2*, the things you bring to the new society. All those facts that I am from Spain 3* and from a upper lower class family,4* I have another family, I have a son 5* that makes the unique me. I wouldn't use adjectives like happy. You have to take all things into account and it is really complex.6*	1:belonging 2:culture, personality 3:nationality 4:family background 5:familial role 6: the sum of who one is	Who one is and what one brings along with him (backgrounds, roles, customs, personal attributes)	
how I view myself 1* and also taking into consideration of how other people view me as well 2*. And realizing that there could be a conflict there as well 3*. And also realizing that , a lot this goes back to people's previous life experiences 4* as well. I hope I was clear.	1:self image by self 2:self image by other 3:different views 4:life experiences, history	different conceptions on one by self and others with consideration of past	
- But for me, I would put that as the highest kind of what values 1* you have as a person.2* Higher than whatever culture you represents or whatever, kind of, umm - After awhile, it makes you aware of what you are, who you are and what you find important in life and things like that.2*	1: personal values 2:self image & values	what one finds most important in life personally	
- I think for me it's kind of how do they define their goals , life goals.1* - My identity is proceeding my goal of my life that is kind of researching education 2*	1: life goals 2: aim of life	what one wants from life,	

For the analysis process, the six phases of thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) were utilized as a guideline to perform an effective and systematic process (see Table.1). First of all, the audio recordings were transcribed and read several times before the initial notes were taken to familiarize with the gathered raw data. Then, interesting features and concepts across the whole data set were looked for and coded to generate the initial codes. After that, a long list of different codes were examined and collated into the potential themes based on their relevancy and validity in relation to the data set. Following revising of potential codes, the selected candidate themes were then carefully reviewed and refined by combining, splitting or discarding, to generate a thematic map for the analysis. Next, through a detailed refining process, informative names and clear definitions were developed for the final themes. Finally, the results are reported by means of analytic narrative, along with sufficient evidence within the data such as data extracts to address the research questions in relation to existing literature.

3.6 Validity and reliability

Regarding the validity and reliability of the current study, the two selected evaluative criteria proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) were employed to examine the trustworthiness of the study. Concerning the internal validity of the study, it is of paramount importance that interviewees trust the interviewer enough to disclose honest opinions and personal experiences. To address this trustworthiness issue between the interviewer and interviewees, prolonged engagement technique was utilized before the interviews. As previously mentioned, four out of six participants have had regular contact with the researcher of this current study for more than two years in both academic and social contexts. This factor could be accounted as a prolonged engagement (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) to build a good relationship and establish trust

between the two parties involved. Moreover, the author had a weekly preliminary visits for six weeks to the Multicultural center where the newly introduced participants had their internships in order to build a good relationship before the actual interviews occurred.

Furthermore, member checking technique was also employed formally and informally to ensure the validity of data in terms of understanding, interpretation and adding additional information later on. Member checking is a process whereby “the final report or specific description or themes” are taken back to the participants to provide them with the context and an alternative interpretation (Creswell- 2003, Patton-1990). Any confusions during the interview conversations were clarified on the spot to ensure the accuracy of the data and before officially ending the interviews. Additionally, the transcripts were also sent to the participants before and after analysis in order to give them the opportunity to review and censor as well as to check the accuracy of author’s interpretation.

According to Patton (1990), the credibility of the researcher is especially important in qualitative research as it is the person who is the major instrument of data collection and analysis. The fact that the author of the current study shares similar immigrant background with the participants facilitates the author with a deeper understanding for the social settings and the context in regard of immigrants’ identity and integration process into the host society. Moreover, the author’s similar life experiences and struggles as an immigrant herself decrease the distance between the author and the participants. Sharing a common background assists the author with eliciting honest responses from the participants, making sense out of the life experiences as well as interpreting data as accurately as possible.

4 FINDINGS

This chapter portrays the voices and personal opinions of six immigrants in detail in order to address the aims and the research questions of the study. After carefully analyzing interview inscriptions, the following seven main categories came to light. The first category explores immigrants' perceptions of self identity to understand how individuals define themselves as a person and what role it plays in integrating into the host society. The second category analyzes immigrants' definitions of effective integration into Finland and the influencing factors based on immigrants' personal experiences. The third category investigates the effect of integration process on immigrant's self identity in terms of immigrants' identity confusion, identity negotiation and identity development. The fourth category looks into the old and new roles of immigrants and the impact they have on immigrants' self identity as well as the process of integration. The fifth category examines the dilemmas immigrants have to face regarding self identity and integration while trying to fit into host society. The sixth category concentrates on the immigrants' sense of belongingness to the host society along side the supporting and hindering factors to immigrants' belongingness. Finally, the seventh category discusses the attitudes of immigrants towards counseling regarding self identity.

4.1 Immigrants' conceptions of self identity and its role in integration process

In order to understand the role and function of immigrants' self identity in the process of integration, it is important to first get the clear picture of what self identity personally, socially and culturally represents individuals from their perspectives. The

following table summarizes how participants articulate their self conceptions that define them as unique individuals.

Table 2. Immigrants' conceptions of self identity

Participants	Immigrants' conceptions of self identity
Mai	Self image, familial role, personal attributes
Taja	Self image, personal attributes, nationality, culture & religion, familial role
Luis	Personal attributes, social & familial roles, nationality & culture
Andy	Personal attributes, self image by self and others
Alida	Personal attributes , personal values
Takeru	Life goals, familial role

As illustrated in table 2, all participants mentioned several factors that describe who they are as unique individuals. In order to portray self their self identity, the terms associated with personal attributes, traits and characteristics such as “curious, willing to learn, cheerful, adaptable, flexible, open-minded, fast learner, reliable, easygoing, sociable and independent” are mentioned by five participants as a part of who they are.

Mai: I am reliable. I am cheerful but sometime I am shy. And I want to know stuff. I want to learn as much as possible. I can't find word now but I want to learn.

Social and familial roles such as father, mother, friend, son, sister are second most mentioned as their self identity by four participants. For instance, Luis believes that his familial roles and backgrounds play a big part of what makes him unique.

Luis: All those facts that I am from Spain and from an upper lower class family, I have another family here, I have a son that make a unique me.

Self image both viewed by self and others is also considered as one's self identity. For three of the participants, self image viewed by self and others is a big part of their self identity. Andy described his self image as an easy going person who often gets misunderstood by others.

Andy : But when I do let go, I am very relaxed and go with the moment. But some people have different view about me.

According to two participants, nationality is a big part of who one is. When asked to describe self identity, Taja says it is the nationality and where one comes from. Similarly, nationality is also a big part of self identity for Luis in terms of not where one comes from but rather where one belongs to and what one brings along with him. Luis gave an example of identifying himself as a mixture of his backgrounds such as culture, family, nationality, education and traditions.

Luis: All the background I have such as I am Spanish, all those things add up to my self identity. I think it's more not because where I am from but where I belong to.

Culture is also mentioned by two participants as a prominent part of their self identity. For Luis, culture is an important part of who he is because the habits, customs and traditions that come along with one as well as the things that one brings to the new

society make an individual a unique person. Taja also believes that identity is one's culture, birth place and where one is raised.

For some participants, personal values and life goals represent one's identity. Alida states that values one has as a person is a very important part of self identity. Alida referred the personal values as the highest kind of what values one has as a person, higher than whatever culture one may represent. For another participant Takeru, life goal is considered as his personal identity.

Takeru: My identity is proceeding my goal of my life that is kind of researching education. That's is my life goal, that is my identity.

Religion is also considered as what defines one as a person. One participant, Taja defines herself as a proud Muslim. According to the definitions of the participants, self identity is a multi-faceted concept comprises self image, personal attributes, roles, nationality, culture, values, religion and life goals. The role and function of self identity in the process of integration into host society are also discussed by the participants. Table 3 displays how participants see the role of their self identity in the process of integration in terms of their functions. All participants agreed that their identity is a big help for integrating into the host society . However, two participants admitted that self identity can act as a bit of a hindrance as well while trying to fit into the new society.

Table 3. Role and function of self identity in integration process to Finland

Participants	Role of self identity	Function it serves
Mai	Help & hindrance	Personality, familial & leading role
Taja	Help	Leading role, attitude
Luis	Help	Nationality, familial role
Andy	Help	Flexibility, self image
Alida	Help, Hindrance	Fast learner, personality
Takeru	Help	Life goals

Mai sees her strong personality as both help and hindrance in the process of integration. While her strong personality and willingness to learn motivate Mai to learn, get involved and mingle with the host society, they also instigate clashes in certain daily life activities due to her strong will and goal-oriented personality. Also her roles as a mother and the cultural mediator for the family motivate Mai to integrate more with the host society. Another participant, Taja also mentioned that her new role as leading person in terms of providing information to the family encourages her to commit to the integration process even more.

Mai: Because I am the one who has to know everything and I have to be that mother lion (laughs). And knowing the country and I have to explain them why they do that here in Finland and why do you speak different language, that kind of thing. We have to be, my partner and I, we have to be the one that our children rely on.

Luis's nationality and cultural background usually sparks interest among the host members which leads him towards some degree of integrating into the host society. Also his familial role as a father makes the integration process somewhat easier by requiring him to meet more people as well as to get involved in more social activities such as parents-teacher meeting.

Luis: Here in Finland, all that stuffs I have in backgrounds which is defining my self identity is a big help. One, many people are interested in things from my country, especially the language. So they are kind of superficially integrated me in that way. But I want to emphasize that it's really on the outer layer. And also the fact that I am a father helps a lot with getting to know other people. So these help me to integrate into the society some. It's a big help, I think.

According to Andy, his easy-going personality definitely helps him with the transition process to Finland. He expressed that the easy-going personality and not worrying too much when things are not working out made the settling in the host society a lot easier. Andy's awareness of self image viewed by self and others as well as the acceptance of possible conflicts between how he sees himself and how other see him help him with the dilemmas due to the cultural differences. In addition, Andy's life experience in the working life of host society proved that realizing the self image conflicts helps him to act better while facing with difficult situations during transition.

Andy: Self identity is how I view myself and also taking into consideration of how other people view me as well. And realizing that there could be a conflict there as well. And also realizing that , a lot this goes back to people's previous life experiences as well. I hope I was clear. I mean, when I first moved here, I got the job and some lady was like "Who are these new people? Are we just hiring off the street?" Yeah, she was like really hard on me but after talking to her more, she loves me now. It's just her previous experience working with

foreigner was really bad, I found out later. So you have to go through those expectation as well and just not lose your cool, let's say.

While being a fast learner in terms of language definitely plays a helping role for Alida in integration process, her personal characteristics such as a strong sense of sensibleness and not wanting to invade personal space of new friends may have hindered her from gaining a close relationship with members of host society.

Alida: I don't really want to go too far with them. I don't know, I can't explain that. They have their own lives.

For Takeru, his life goals serve as a big helping role in integration process as they bring out his interests and enthusiasm for the host society. To be able to pursue his life goals more effectively, Takeru is motivated to learn the language and the systems of the host society as well as to get involved with the working life of host society. Additionally, Takeru states that his life goals also serve as an anchor that guides and stabilizes him throughout the rapid changes and constant adaptation on the journey towards integration into the host society.

4.2 Immigrants' perceptions of integration success and contributing factors

The topic of effective integration into a host society has been widely studied and defined varyingly by many researchers. In order to investigate individual's perception of integration success into Finland, participants were asked to share their perspectives of what effective integration process into a host society should look like and influencing factors to achieve integration success from their personal experiences.

Table 4. Immigrants' perceptions of effective integration into Finland

Participants	Perceptions of effective integration into a host society
Mai	Feel like one of the host members
Taja	Know dos & don'ts, the system and one's rights to fit in
Luis	Have a mutual relationship, differences acknowledged and accept nonetheless, contribute and being active
Andy	Live happily & peacefully while contributing back to the society
Alida	Know the language & history, have a close circle with host members
Takeru	Relationship between host & immigrants without middle ground

It is fascinating to see how the individual perceptions of integration success into a host society vary greatly from one another. While Mai defines effective integration as “to feel like one of them”, Luis’s definition of effective integration is the reciprocal effort of recognizing and genuinely accepting each other by both parties involved, the host and the immigrants.

Luis: the most important thing would, uh , it should kind of reciprocal. So for example , a person who comes to the host country, he or she should be active in doing things for the society that he or she is living. But also the host country, either the government or the citizens have to be also active in recognizing where they are from, where the person is coming from. So I think that kind of active relationship is the most important thing for successful integration for both.

Besides the active relationship, becoming active member of the society is a sign of successful integration, according to Luis and Andy. Furthermore, Andy emphasized that

living happily and peacefully while contributing back to the society would be his definition for effective integration since culturally mingling with host members might not agree with everyone, in his opinion. On the other hand, getting culturally familiarized oneself with the host society such as knowing the language, system and history plays a big role in achieving successful integration, according to Alida. Furthermore, awareness and knowledge of culturally dos and don'ts as well as one's rights as a member of the society are also considered as prominent factors for effective integration by two participants, Taja and Alida as understanding cultural and social norms of receiving society promotes closeness between host and the newcomers.

Alida: I mean knowing about history, I find it very important. It was the first thing I did when I came, getting to know about Finnish history because I think it helps to understand. Even though they mention very often the winter war, continuation war, especially history students, it's very interesting because it's such a big thing for them even though from a history perspective.

Taja also states that knowing the culture norms and one's rights in the society is essential for fitting in to the society in terms of effective integration.

Taja: To me, integration is fitting in, knowing dos and don'ts and what are my rights and what I am supposed not to, what is acceptable here for me and the kids. Yeah, I have to know those things. So like I said if I can't fit in, it will be very very difficult.

Moreover, a close relationship with host members as well as having a sense of belonging to the host society are also considered as integration success by Alida and Takeru. Having close friends from host society is really important for Alida in regards of successful integration. Similarly, Takeru sees effective integration as "a relationship

between host and guest without the middle ground”. To sum up, the findings show that immigrants’ perceptions of effective integration into the host society are based on becoming a part of the society as functional individuals and living harmoniously with the host members.

4.2.1 Contributing factors for integration success

Following the individual perceptions of effectively integrating into the host society, participants also shares the personally tried and true factors which could promote successful integration into the host society based on their experiences. The most mentioned factor is learning the native language of the host society for more participation in the host society. Language competency enhances individuals’ ability to communicate authentically with host members and contribute back to the society in terms of employment and volunteering. Some participants also feel that language competency plays a crucial role in integration success in terms of closeness to the host members.

Takeru: I know they can understand our English but I think we need Finnish sometimes. Also when I speak Finnish , I think they are, they feel very good.

Luis also emphasizes that language competency can heighten one’s chance of getting a job and opportunities to get socially involved with host members which are both crucial steps for effective integration into a new society.

In addition, relationship with host society such as having close Finnish friends, broadening circle with host members and having active relationship between host and guests are also vital for effective integration, according to Luis, Andy and Alida. Luis believes that building up active relationship between host and immigrants is essential

for effective integration. Only then, both parties can learn to see from each other's points of view and genuinely accept each other's presence to become fully integrated society instead of just tolerating the whole immigrant situation, according to Luis .

Luis: So I think that kind of active relationship is the most important thing for successful integration for both. I think it doesn't matter where you are coming from or where you are going to but the fact that you end up in somewhere and the country itself ends up having people or individuals from other societies. It makes you think about your own situation and other different situations from the other person's point of view.

Table 5. Contributing factors for effective integration into Finland

Participants	Contributing factors
Mai	Work, know the culture & history
Taja	Attitudes toward integration process
Luis	Language proficiency, active relationship between host & immigrants, acceptance & acknowledgement of differences, knowledge of politics
Andy	Acceptance of different points of view, broadening circle with host, previous experience living abroad
Alida	Language proficiency, knowledge of host history, close friendship with host members
Takeru	Language proficiency

Regarding friendship with host members, Andy and Alida agreed that having close friends and broadening social circle with host members can be considered as one of the

necessities for effective integration in terms of benefiting language competency as well as authentically mingling with host society.

Alida: So I don't know, integration, getting back to the question, definitely language and knowing, umm, having Finnish friends, that I think are important. So If you kind of live like an island, not knowing anybody who is a Finnish then it might not be an authentic experience.

Another contributing factor participants found useful in the process of integration is familiarizing oneself with the host society in terms of culture, history and politics. Alida and Mai stated that learning host's history and culture of the host country help one to understand about the host society on a deeper level. For Luis, being active in political matters of the host country such as closely following the events and news encourages him to be on the path of an active member of the new society. Being up to date with the current affairs of the host country also helps one to feel more belong the host society, according to Luis.

Getting involved with the host society from the employment perspective is also a salient factor in terms of opportunities to get familiar with host's work culture and broadening social and professional circle, according to some participants. Moreover, working in the host country means contributing back to the society as an active member, Mai added. In the case of Andy, the previous experience living abroad plays a significant role in effective integration as it prepares individuals with the things to expect, the questions to ask as well as the adapting strategies to different cultural norms. Last but not least, immigrants' attitude towards the whole integration process and host society plays a crucial role for effective integration as well. According to the personal experience of

Taja, a person's attitude motivates, encourages and even forces one to learn and get more involved with the receiving society in transitioning period.

4.3 The effects of integration process on immigrants' self identity

In order to explore the impacts the integration process may have on immigrants' self identity, participants were directly asked three questions; (1) if they ever had to negotiate who they are to fit in (2) whether they ever had a moment of "I don't know who I am anymore" and (3) If they still feel the same as before as a person. In response to these questions, the participants revealed quite interesting aspects regarding self identity which are sorted into three categories: identity confusion, identity negotiation, identity development.

4.3.1 Identity negotiation

One participant, Mai, shared an interesting story of her experience in regard of identity negotiation to fit in. At that period when the interviews took place, Mai was doing internship at Gloria multicultural center in Jyväskylä, Finland. Due to the nature of the job and possible personal passion, the whole crew of Gloria Center shows utmost enthusiasm regarding immigrant affairs, according to Mai. Despite the fact that she herself is an immigrant, Mai admitted that she has always been rather indifferent with the fellow newcomers. Nevertheless, Mai started to show more eagerness in order to better fit in with her colleagues ever since she started internship at Gloria multicultural center.

Mai: I need to be a bit more like them. It not so fantastic to me that people come from different countries to Finland or Estonia. It is not that great to me but I have accepted it. Just that I need to be a bit different person here than I am at

home. Because when I am at home, how could I say, I am like neutral to it. They can come but I am not super excited about it. But still I have moved here. They have accepted me. I got all those things that Finnish people have. I am basically Finnish by law but it's the same. I still don't care if they come or they don't come (laughs). But here I need to show my excitement that "yeah..it's great". But I don't show it at home. But here I need to show my excitement here because I think they would talk to me differently.

Mai admitted that she wanted to blend in with the big crowd and was also worried about being different from others. Hence, she negotiated her beliefs, attitudes and conceptions about immigrants and adapted to the concepts of colleagues to get accepted by host society members. However, she resumed her previous neutral self at home in order to fit in once again with her spouse. It is fascinating to see how one would negotiate one's own beliefs and conceptions, in other words, self identity depending on different contexts in seek of acceptance from others as well as to avoid conflicts.

Mai: And when I am here, I learned that "Hey..it is great that they come" (laughs). I have learned and I have changed to the good side, like that is good that they come and that is good that we can help. Like those refugees, they have better lives here and they came for a reason and all that. And I have learned a lot here about foreigners and those who moved here or to Estonia. But I can't say it out loud at home because my husband is not that excited.

Taja also shared her experience of identity negotiation regarding culturally appropriate ideal roles. According to Taja, one of the challenges she faces in the new society is having to take the leading role of the family occasionally. Coming from the culture where man as a provider and woman as a homemaker, Taja finds the gender equality in terms of dividing financial responsibility and household obligation in the new society rather shocking and inappropriate. For instance, dividing bills between man and woman

after a date would appear as disrespectful and offending in Taja's culture and so does dividing the responsibilities between man and wife as man should be the only provider of the family. However, it was necessary for Taja to start taking more responsibility in terms of going out and seeking information for the family. Nowadays, Taja also takes care of social, financial and legal issues of the family as her spouse is usually away with business.

Table 6. Effects of integration process on immigrants' self identity

Identity negotiation	Identity confusion	Changes in Identity
Mai (beliefs, attitudes)	Mai (Confused beliefs and values)	Mai (More defined roles)
Taja (culture role, customs)		Taja (Conception,independent)
Luis (language, manners & customs)	Luis (losing sense of self)	Luis (Personality, self image)
Andy (none)	-	-
Alida (language)	-	-
Takeru (values)	-	-

Another perspective mentioned regarding identity negotiation is language. Although it is agreed by participants that learning language of the host country plays a vital role for successful integration, some of them such as Luis and Alida admitted that not being able to use native language or having to use host language to make acquaintance with host members can be difficult and exhausting at times. Culturally deep-rooted customs such as starting conversation with random total strangers on the street, different eating and

greeting manners as well as cultural and personal values such as time and punctuality were also compromised during integration process, according the participants. Takeru gave one example of negotiating his personal and cultural values regarding time and punctuality in order to adjust to the host society's .

Takeru: In that sense, I feel many times. For example, the sense of time. In Japan, fixed time, 1:00 o' clock means 12:50, we should go. But in here, they are not that strict. They say they are very strict but we Japanese think that they are very flexible and I think so too. For example, now we are using the day care and we always make the schedule for one week and before for two weeks. And for example, we put 9 to 4 and I think if we are in Japan, we would go 8:50 but we are so accustomed to Finnish culture so I go there like 9:15 or 9:10 so I am really late. (laughs)

4.3.2 Identity confusion

Losing one's sense of self in the host society is an inevitable side effect of the integration process, according to some participants. Time to time, Mai feels confused and lost in the new society as a result of identity negotiations in different contexts in order to gain approval or to avoid conflict.

Mai: I don't know what I think sometimes. I don't know what I think about different kind of world stuffs. I think like the others and I don't know that where is the middle me. I don't know if you understood me.(laughs)

For Luis, losing sense of self occurs due to the process of trying to integrate into host society and at the same time raising his own family in a foreign country. Having a cross-cultural family in a foreign country demands one to get accustomed to the host culture while trying to maintain one's own culture at the same time. In addition, having to start a new family culture on top of the mentioned situation can be taxing for

immigrants with such cross-cultural family situation in the host country. Another interesting aspect mentioned by Luis is his lack of the sense of belongingness in general during the transition period. Amidst all the stressful turning points such as leaving the familiar culture, learning to adapt to host culture and creating a new one with family, Luis feels that he is still in the process of going somewhere and yet to find a place to belong. The uncertainty and discontinuity induced by the integration process makes Luis question about his own sense of self. Luis also emphasized that these particular moments of losing one's sense of self are more prominent, especially when he is alone physically and sometimes emotionally.

Luis: Anyways, in chorus, it says "How does it feel, how does it feel, to be out on your own, with no direction home, like a rolling stone". So I feel myself like that. I feel myself like I am rolling and I am going somewhere. I don't know where yet and I am still I am but I don't know exactly who I am. It's like I am adding stuffs or kind of processing stuffs from my own culture. I am processing stuffs from Finnish culture and at the same time creating culture with my family. So at some point, it felt like really, I mean, I feel like I am not from Spain or from Finland so where I am from.

It should be noted that participants of the present study also emphasized on the fact that even though they felt the feeling of losing one's sense of self time to time, the feelings usually are rather momentary that they do not see the particular need to cope with them. Moreover, such feelings, according to Taja, Luis and Andy, are expected as inevitable parts of integration process.

4.3.3 Changes in identity

Another prominent impact integration process has on immigrants' self identity is the changes or growths of individuals' self identity, according to the participants of the

study. When asked directly whether they still felt like the same person after all the years of adaptation and integrating into the host society, some stated that they do notice somewhat obvious changes in their self identity, in the sense of roles, personality and cultural related issues while other claims very little changes or none.

Mai claimed that her role as a parent has become stronger and more defined during the integration process due to the big important roles she has to take such as being a cultural mediator and a mother lion. Taja also found that she has become more independent and stronger psychologically as the integration process requires her to be more involved in social and daily activities in terms of getting information and doing chores, unlike in the world she left behind. Moreover, Taja starts to accept the gender equality of the host society by acting as a leader of the family regardless of the different images of gender roles of host and home culture.

Luis, on the other hand, believes that a person's self identity is constantly changing through out the whole life due to many factors such as knowledge, work, relationship, environment. Thus, the process of integration has only a rather insignificant role in making one to transform one's self identity. However, Luis does notice changes in his personality during the process of integration such as much more serious personality and his new grown habit of starting to enjoy being alone opposed to his previous self of a carefree and sociable person. Furthermore, cultural related habits such as trying to make friends with random strangers, different eating habits and table manners as well as ways of greetings have also been changed over the years during the process of integration, Luis added.

For Alida, different situations and different contexts contribute to the changes of a person to a certain extent but she believes that a person always stays the same in terms of the inner self / self identity.

Alida: It's going to be very poetic answer (laughs). It's almost like when you see a river. I mean it's the same river but the water is always different...? I mean in the sense, I am the same river, the same person in the sense but totally different in a different way because , maybe yeah, the context is different, the life situations are different but I don't think I have changed that much as an overall person.

Andy believes that changes in one's self identity do not come abruptly but rather build up over time. Andy also added that he still feels the same as always in terms of personality, hobbies and values, thanks to his strong sense of self, in other words, a clear self perception of who he is. Takeru also shared his feelings of being the same as always and not having much difficulty regarding self identity. Takeru believes that the similarities between host and home's culture characteristics plays a vital role in making the changes seeming less visible so far. To sum up, most participants see rather significant changes in their self identity as a consequence of integration process into Finland. However, Taja, Luis and Alida claim that they do not see the integration process as the sole contributing factor for identity shifts nor see any prominent changes in themselves regarding self identity.

4.4 Role changes and its impact on identity and integration

Following the effects of the integration process on immigrants' self identity, another interesting subject to elaborate on is the effects of immigrants' role changes on self identity and the process of integration into the host society. Given their educational and

occupational backgrounds as well as voluntarily yet variety of reasons to immigrate, most participants are handling the clashes of their old and new roles considerably well. As previously discussed, some of the roles of individuals have become more defined and stronger which is a great help in the process of integration. For instance, Mai claims that her roles as a sister and daughter have been grown significantly ever since she came to Finland and also her role as a parent becomes a big motivation for the integrating into the host society.

Mai : Like that role that I am a sister, a mother and a partner, yeah. they are stronger in Finland now. I do think that they affect. Mm...because I think..mm...they made me stronger and the strength gives me better opportunity to integrate. Better chances and I do understand myself better like I have those big important roles in my life.

Taja also states that her role as a parent has become stronger ever since they arrived in Finland. Additionally, opposed to the culturally appropriateness and traditions from her home country, Taja has become more independent in general due to the leader position in the family. Moreover, new roles such as a spouse and a parent may also make individual seem more stable and reliable to other people resulting better integration and employment opportunities. For instance, Andy believes that his new role as a father brings him the image of a more mature and trustworthy member of staff which brings him employment opportunities.

Andy: Well, I would say, having a kid landed me one year contract. Because it made me seem more stable to other people.

Regarding the gap between old and new roles, the issue of downward mobility is mentioned by Luis who used to work as a manager in educational field in home country

but now starts again as a student in the host country. Although pursuing higher education in the host country is the initial reason for Luis to come immigrate, the gap between the old role of being a manager to the new role of an unemployed student makes him feel powerless in many ways. Additionally, as a former active leader in a political party in his home country, Luis's current status of political inactiveness in the host society also worsens the feelings of being incapable as a member of the current society. However, Luis emphasizes that his new roles as a student and a life partner to a host member provide him with more opportunities to involve in the activities of the host society. Additionally, Luis's new role as a parent motivates him to put more effort to the integration process as he believes that his child's life might be better in the new society with a fully integrated parent.

Luis: The big reason that I think I have to be fully integrate here is because of him. Because at some point he will grow and I don't think it's the best if his father is not fully integrated to society.

Takeru also mentioned same issue of downward mobility as he has left high-paid job in home country to become a student in the host country, Finland. In Takeru's case, the gap between old and new roles does not effect him as much thanks to his self identity in terms of his life goals as well as the unique life path he chose. Takeru also added that his parental role as a father also benefits him in the process of integration by requiring him to mingle and communicate more with the host members. For Alida, her new and old roles in terms of professional and familial are quite similar hence no big clashes. Besides, a new role of a working mother is more tolerated in host society in Alida's personal opinion. However, Alida did mention her concerns about her new roles as a mother and a cultural role model in terms of introducing authentic culture and language

of her former homeland to her child while living in the host society. Nevertheless, Alida does not find her old and new roles have any significant impact on either of her self identity or the process of integration into Finland.

4.5 Dilemmas associated with integration and self identity

Besides the conflicts instigated by the gaps between different roles, there are several other dilemmas immigrants have to face during the process of integration regarding self identity. The following table illustrates the most challenging things that participants of the study have to face in the process of integration.

Table 7. Immigrants' dilemmas during transition period

Participants	Dilemmas
Mai	Attitudes of host members towards immigrants
Taja	Negative attitudes, Racism
Luis	Feeling of rootlessness & insecurity, financially & occupational inactiveness, feeling alone in integration process at times
Andy	Powerlessness at workplace
Alida	Having to use different languages the whole time
Takeru	None

When asked about the most challenging things during the integration process, Mai recalled a personal experience regarding the attitudes of some host members towards immigrants which she referred to as trust issues. According to Mai, the host members of Finland in general are willing to take in the new comers right away into their

community but it takes time for them to actually trust the newcomer in terms of reliability.

Mai: When we moved here and very soon we met a family. They are my age girl, living in Estonia. She goes to school there. The family, the mom and dad are teachers here. They were very friendly. They took us in right away. They were “yeah, come to us, talk to us” that kind of. But we noticed that they don’t trust us. It took about half a year when they..umm...their talking was that, umm..now we understood that they now trust us. But when they gave us some kind of work to do stuff , then we did it. When they give “could you come?, could you do? We did it. And then step by step and “ ok, we tell them something and she’ll do it”. “We meet and she will come”. It took some time.

Mai, however, coped with the trust issues of the host members by emotionally accepting it as the process of integration. In addition, her gratitude towards the host society for taking her in helps Mai with overcoming the dilemmas.

The second participant, Taja, unfortunately experienced negative attitudes and racism from some host members towards her family lately. Taja believes that the racism could have been ignited by the recent refugee crisis in Europe as she never experienced such hostility before in Finland. Although such negative attitudes are not frequent, Taja was concerned about the risks of her children getting scarred emotionally as some incidents involved Taja’s sons. For instance, there are times that Taja’s neighbors were prohibiting their children from mingling with her sons because of their ethnicity and appearances. Such incidents sometimes make Taja self-doubt about leaving her homeland but she refuses to generalize such negativity with the whole host society as she firmly believes that every society has both good and bad sides. Taja has been

dealing with racism so far by avoiding direct confrontations and talking to other victims.

Table 8. What help in dealing with dilemmas

Participants	What help
Mai	Clear goals, acceptance, open-mindedness, gratitude, attitude
Taja	Awareness of both good & bad sides of every society
Luis	Being active, contributing back
Andy	Work culture knowledge, awareness, self perception
Alida	Attitude, work
Takeru	Clear life goals

As an immigrant trying to start a life from the beginning in the host country, the feeling of having nothing to fall back on either here in the new country or in the country he has left behind would be one of the most challenging dilemmas for Luis. It could have been induced by the current situation of world's economic crisis, Luis thinks, but as discussed in the previous section, the changes in the roles and unemployment also contribute to the feeling of insecurity financially and general powerlessness. Furthermore, despite being with the family, Luis sometimes feels that he is all alone in the journey of integration emotionally. Given his sociable personality, lifestyle changes and less opportunities of social interactions in the host country have also become rather challenging to deal with, according to Luis.

Luis: Sometimes I feel really desperate that I am not joining groups or something like that because as I told you I am social. I am really social so I feel like I want to do something with people.

Luis is trying to be active as a new member of the society even if it is just for small gestures such as volunteering, joining social events related to children's activities as a parent and lending a helping hand to whoever in need. However, Luis mentioned that language barrier and trust issues towards immigrants could sometimes deter one from effectively coping with the dilemmas. Luis gave one example to the above point by sharing one of the incidents where he tried to lend a helping hand to a senior member of the host society.

Luis: One week, one old lady fell down in the street. So I went to help her and I was with her and even though I don't share the language and I don't know what they are talking about. My duty was that because I saw her and because we are living in the same place even though I am not from here so I have to help her and stay with her until the ambulance came. And it's funny because you could see, maybe coming back to some of what we had talked about, you can see that how people are willing to integrate you yet they fear something. For example, I was trying to get some answers from the lady so that I know she is fine such as asking her name and where she lives. And I think some people think that this guy wants something from this lady because I even took her bag because she had it in the neck and it looked like it was choking her. So I took it away and put it in her carriage. And the other lady took it back and gave it to her in the hand. So at first I was thinking, maybe they are thinking I was trying to rob her. But I didn't care at that moment so. They were old. There were 3 of them plus the lady that fell. All of them they were above 60 years old, I think. So somehow they were still trying to talk with me but there was not that much communication that way.

Being voiceless and powerless at workplace is one of the dilemmas that Andy found rather frustrating in the host society. Andy feels that sometimes he is being told what to think or do, without having a chance to get involved in a deeper level such as decision making. However, Andy emphasized that it could happen anywhere and to anyone. In other words, the problem of not having a say at workplace and having to go along with certain politics could happen to any employee regardless of being an immigrant or a host member. Acceptance of the different work culture and awareness of having to compromise as part of life help Andy to tolerate the situations better.

Andy: But I would say that would happen anywhere. I don't like compromising and if I have to do compromising then it's really frustrating but just have to bite my lips and moved on.

The most common dilemma for immigrants to overcome is being physically cut off from family, friends and the atmosphere where one feels at home, Alida stated. Having to use different languages from morning to night is also quite challenging for Alida. In her case, apart from having to learn the language of the host country, Alida also has to use her second language, English, at home due to the cross-cultural marriage. Not being able to use mother tongue and missing the atmosphere as well as customs of home country are also rather big challenges for Alida in the process of integration into Finland. For Alida, her positive attitudes toward the whole immigration and integration process as well as good distractions such as new career and relationship help her to manage well with the dilemmas.

On the other hand, unlike the fellow participants, Takeru personally finds the process of integration into the host society to be rather smooth and undemanding. Takeru did

mention a few inconveniences and challenges such as different systems and language learning which he finds relatively difficult to get used to. However, he has yet to experience significant problems that could affect his self identity or the integration process into Finland up until now. Takeru believes that similarities between home and host cultures, his unique conception of life path in pursuit of life goals, in other words, being true to his self identity contribute to his reasonably smooth journey of integration into the host society.

4.6 Factors affecting belongingness

Another important finding of the present study is immigrants' sense of belonging to the host society and the contributing factors from the perspectives of the participants. When asked if they feel accepted and belong to the host society in terms of integration, most of the participants expressed that they do feel a sense of belonging to the host society to a certain extent.

For instance, Mai claimed that she is well accepted here in Finland by the host society, thus she belongs here. The fact that Mai is contributing to the host society by working and pursuing further education makes her feel that she has become one of the members of Finland. Mai specifically mentioned that the help of supporting members such as teachers and the systems of Finland play major roles in cultivating her sense of belongingness. Moreover, having a family in the host country also encourages her sense of belongingness by alleviating the loneliness as well as providing opportunities to socialize more with host members such as parent-teacher meetings and meeting other parents. On the other hand, Mai states that the attitudes of the host members such as

trust issues, based on her experiences, could affect one's sense of belongingness to the host society as well as one's sense of self although that is not the case for herself.

Table 9. Factors contributing belongingness to host society

Participants	Factors contributing belongingness
Mai	Contributing back to the host society, having family & friends
Taja	Equality in terms of individual rights and freedom
Luis	System, consistency, mutual relationship, activeness
Andy	Getting familiar with work culture
Alida	Work, similar background community, family
Takeru	Contributing back to the host society

Although Taja feels that she still has a great deal to learn in order to be fully integrated into Finland, she does feel accepted here. Taja believes that the social service system of the host country, family and her attitudes towards the process of integration influence a great deal over her attempt to integrate into the host society as well as her sense of belongingness. Despite some unfortunate incidents of racism, Taja feels that she is well-accepted and treated with respect just as anyone in the host society in terms of religion, individual rights and social benefits. According to Taja, equality in terms of individual rights and freedom to act, learn and live independently are the factors which make her feel like she has become a part of the host society.

Taja: Yes. I do feel so. Because when I go to places with my kids such as open places, everyone is equal there. They are free to do whatever they have to do.

And I am free to do if I have to do something. Then I don't scare because I am free to do here.

As a father, a spouse of a host member in Finland and a student, Luis also believes that he is accepted into the host society to a certain degree. The government support system such as social benefits, insurances and integration program certainly help individuals to feel welcomed to the host society, at least on a physical level, Luis stated. However, from the perspective of a small community, Luis does not feel fully accepted as he believes that government is not the only responsible one to recognize the newcomers. For the immigrants to feel a sense of belongingness, a mutual effort between host members and immigrants for building a relationship is required but certain areas of the host society neglects to nurture it, especially in small communities, Luis argued.

Luis: I don't think I feel accepted actively but I do feel accepted. The things that make me feel accepted is the different policies and those kind of things. For example, I am able to get unemployment money or parent money for some period and things like that. They are helping you to try, yeah? But not actively because it's not all about the government. For example, no in Jämsä, maybe because there are not many immigrants but there are not happenings for immigrants. So I don't see them that they are trying to integrate that way. Maybe here in Jyväskylä, there are more, yes but I think it's more of a specific situation and specific society. In certain community, they might not care that much about immigrants. For example, in Jämsä, they are not really taking care of them.

Luis also expressed that consistency is one of the most important contributing factors as integration is a matter of constantly building relationship and becoming fully functional members of the host society. However, according to Luis' personal experiences in the community he resides, the mutual interest and effort of building relationship between immigrants and host members are almost non-existent. In addition, Luis emphasizes the

role of language competence which can serve as help or hindrance since better language skills means broader social circle and more opportunities to participate in the society, hence, stronger sense of belongingness.

Working in the host society for more than a couple years, Andy feels that he is well accepted especially in the work community. Andy emphasized that it takes times to feel recognized by the fellow workers of the host society. However, getting familiar with work culture and being able to eventually contribute certainly help with promoting the feeling of belongingness to his community.

Andy: So they are like, who are you? what are you doing here? It took me like half a year and they are like ok, fine and like contributing ideas, understanding workplace's culture like how it works and then no problem.

However, Andy mentioned that as a foreign expat working in the host society, he sometimes feels the guilt of immigrants' taking away the employment opportunities from the locals. Even though the mentioned fact has not affected his relationship with the host members so far, Andy pointed out that the guilt might hinder one from mingling with the community to a certain extent. Another hindering fact, according to Andy, could be language incompetency as it can limit individuals from effectively expressing themselves at work and social community which could distance one from the fellow members.

Alida also feels that her language skill is hindering her from fully contributing at work community in terms of ideas and inputs at work meetings etc. Also lack of language competency might deter Alida from feeling fully belonged to the host society as it

hinders her from expressing and interacting authentically with the host members. Nonetheless, she feels well accepted both by her work community and the host society in general and Alida usually feels herself at home in the host society.

Table 10. Factors hindering belongingness to host society

Participants	Factors that hinder belongingness
Mai	Trust issues of host members
Taja	-
Luis	Trust issues of host members, Inactiveness, Lack of mutual effort, Language incompetency
Andy	Guilt, Language incompetency
Alida	Language incompetency
Takeru	-

In the case of Takeru, in spite of meeting with some host members through friendship clubs many times, he did not feel particularly accepted nor a sense of belongingness to the host society up until when he started working. According to Takeru, contributing back to the host society by working certainly brings him closer to the host members as the work increases his chance of getting involved with the society and becoming a functional member. Moreover, Andy, Alida and Takeru mentioned that having a family or partner in the host country makes them feel at home as well as increase their sense of belonging to the host country. Among them, Alida even referred the host country as her “second home” and shared an interesting example of how she immediately switches into

defensive mode when someone challenges the host society she now lives in despite the fact that she herself can be critical about the host society sometimes too.

Alida: it's interesting that when you are abroad, at least when I am abroad, and then I am sometimes very critical about Finland, weather and stuffs. But when my friends say that "oh, the Finnish education and Finland, everything is rosy and nice and wow you are living in this beautiful country". And then I say that "uhhh, wait a minute and then I started to say negative things. But immediately (laughs) if someone say "arrgh, Finland is so bad" and then I started "um, actually" (laughs). I don't know why this happen but this is so interesting.

4.7 Immigrants' attitude towards counselling regarding identity

One of the follow-up questions regarding what helps and would have helped in the process of integration draws out interesting opinions from the participants regarding the perspectives of counselling and self identity. Concerning self identity issues, most of the participants never received any type of counselling from a person or organization. Furthermore, most of the participants reveal that they do not wish to receive any kind of counselling service from the host society either for a number of reasons.

As shown in the following table, more than half participants seem to be rather indifferent about identity counselling personally. Taja emphasizes that she prefers practical assistance such as language classes, housing and information about how to deal with offices etc. However, Taja believes that counselling could be helpful for the illiterates and uneducated immigrants as they might have more issues regarding self identity such as lower self esteem. Likewise, Andy believes that the necessity of identity counselling for a smoother integration may depends on the individuals as well.

Table 11. Immigrants attitudes towards identity counseling

Participants	Immigrants' attitudes towards identity counselling	Have you had counselling in Finland?	Did you need / want to have it personally?	Why? / Why not?
Mai	Beneficial–self awareness, clearer life goals, recognize potentials	No	Yes	Probably easier transition
Taja	Probably could be helpful for illiterates and uneducated individuals	No	No	Prefer practical assistance such as housing, language classes.
Luis	Helpful- necessary for immigrants identity crisis and integration process	Yes – with Career advisor	Yes	Better self understanding, self awareness
Andy	Not sure- depends on the persons	No	No	Not necessary
Alida	Not sure- depends on the situations	No	No	Identity issue is too personal and sensitive to share with strangers.
Takeru	Important – healthier identity, clearer self image, identity growth, having someone to talk to	No	No	Counselling is for only serious problems.

For Alida, identity issues are usually rather sensitive and too personal to be shared with random people such as same culture community or identity and cultural ambassadors from home country for expats. However, Alida believes that it is always good to have an option as long as the counselling comes from a professional. Besides, the question of

identity counselling as a beneficial asset to integration process for immigrants depends heavily on certain situations such as ending a relationship or some other difficulties in the host country, according to Alida.

Alida: It always depends on the situation. And if there's always something somebody can choose and not to choose then it always better than there is nothing. Because it's good that there is this same cultural circle for example, it could be maybe supported by the government or something and that's a good idea. Because it's then if somebody needs it, or if I need it like if I break up with my partner which is not possible (laughs) but anyway, I might maybe go and find these things. Because it all depends when you need then you need and it's really good to have.

Unlike Alida, Takeru thinks that talking to people about oneself helps a person to develop healthier self identity and identity growth. Takeru believes that clearer self of a person can be a great help for the journey towards effective integration into the host society. However, counselling represents rather serious problems such as financial and relationship difficulties in Takeru's country of origin. Therefore, personally, he has no wish to receive counselling regarding self identity so far despite the fact that he thinks it would be very beneficial for immigrants in general. On the other hand, Luis, has received a sort of counselling as in speaking therapy in Finland. Based on his personal experiences with counselling, Luis sees a great potential in its assistance with helping individuals to understand themselves and the situations better.

Luis: At that time, I was having some crisis. I was feeling quite sad so I went to this hoitaja and speaking therapy. It was kind of related to identity crisis but the guy didn't point out much. He was just in there listening and developing point of views? And that one helps me a lot. Not even to get work or not even to feel better but to understand myself.

Mai also agrees that identity counseling could be beneficial for immigrants in transition period as well as the process of integration into host society by facilitating one to be more aware of oneself, life goals and potential abilities.

Mai: Like defining myself, what I want, what I do, what I will do, these kinds of questions are very open. When I moved here, I didn't know what I want, I didn't know what I will do and it could have helped to find myself, the person.

5 DISCUSSION

The first research question of the study aims to “**explore immigrants’ conceptions of self identity and the role it plays in the process of integration into the host society, Finland**”. Consistent with the concepts of researchers such as Erikson (1968), Tajfel (1981), Fearson (1999), Baumeister (1996), Waterman (1999) and Oyserman (2012), the findings show that personal attributes, familial and social roles, life goals, values, self image, self concepts as well as culture, origin and religion represent the self identity of the participants. Furthermore, the findings show that immigrants’ self identity functions as a constructive asset for individuals in the process of integration into a new homeland by enabling them to maintain self consistency while considering new possibilities (Schwartz et al., 2006, p.6). For instance, the functions of participants’ self identity such as clearer self image, inner coherence, motive force for commitments, values and life goals, refined roles, ability to recognize inner potentials and abilities for greater responsibilities (Adams & Marshall, 1996) could not only act as an anchor amidst rapid changes and discontinuities but also serve as a guideline for the path to a more satisfying life in new context.

Moreover, immigrants’ self identity plays a vital role in the process of integration due to its functions of requiring, guiding, enabling and motivating individuals to participate more in the host society, according to the findings of the present study. In this sense, the results are in partial agreement with Schwartz et al.’s findings (2006) in which immigrants’ self identity is assumed to stabilize and protect individuals from the distress caused by integration process as well as guide and reflect changes related to integration process. However, the findings also show that immigrants’ characteristics

such as overly ambitiousness and sensibleness to other's private space might inhibit the relationship development with host members. It is also worth to include that the findings of this study support both Eriksonian and sociological concepts of self identity. According to some participants' understanding, self identity is stable, deep and permanent in terms of individual's personal values, self image and life goals. However, the findings also report that identity can be a fluid, adaptable process that is constantly changing and developing according to the requirements of new contexts.

In addressing the second research question that investigates “**the impact of integration process on immigrants' self identity**”, the findings of the current study present three issues: identity confusion, identity negotiation and identity changes or development. The first issue is losing one's sense of self or identity confusion due to the discontinuities of former physical, psychological and cultural framework and roles during transition periods (Marcia-1966,1980) into Finland. Identity negotiation was also reported as one of the impacts of integration process in regards of beliefs, attitudes, languages and customs in attempt to better fit in with the host society (Goffman-1969, Swan Jr. & Bosson-2008). In addition, noticeable identity development in terms of more defined roles, abilities and different personality is also reported as a result of purposefully revising one's identities in response to challenges instigated by integration process (Berzonsky,1990). Moreover, the findings regarding identity confusion and identity development further support Farson's (1976) ideas of growth experiences which encourages a person to make a major re-assessment of one's life situation and change it in ways that reflect a deeper understanding of one's own capabilities, values and goals. However, self identity changes due to the process of integration are somewhat insignificant, according to the participants of the present study.

The third research question of the current study seeks to discover “**other influencing factors affecting immigrants’ identity as well as the process of integration**”. The findings report three interesting issues: role changes of immigrants and their impacts, dilemmas associated with identity and integration process as well as immigrant’s feeling of belongingness. Regarding the first issue, unexpected results in terms of the positive impact of role changes such as personal growth in terms of personality, flexibility and ability, more participation in the society and better self image to others, emerge from the findings. However, the expected negative impacts induced by role changes such as downward mobility and identity confusion are also reported by the participants. Nevertheless, the findings imply that role changes and its consequences are strongly linked to one’s identity development in terms of one’s levels of exploration and commitment (Schwartz et al., 2006)

The second issue regarding influencing factors is the dilemmas associated with integration process such as host’s attitudes, racism, feeling rootlessness and insecurity. Moreover, inactiveness in terms of financial, work and political matters, feeling voiceless and having to use foreign language most of the time in the case of cross-cultural family are also reported as common dilemmas during the integration process. These may seem to be typical problems faced by immigrants everywhere but the study finds the diverse coping strategies of individual to be particularly interesting and beneficial for further research. Based on the reports, individual’s behavior, attitudes and active manners in terms of identity exploration and commitment help one with managing the stressful situations in transition. These findings corroborates with the concepts of Meeus et al. (2000) and Grotevant (1978) who suggest that exploration is how one deals with his or her commitments in an active manner such as by reflecting on

them, seeking information about self and environments as well as discussing with others about them in a problem solving manner.

Regarding the influencing determinants of making one feel as a part of the society, the third category discusses factors affecting immigrants' belongingness to the host society. According to the findings, family, social welfare systems, close relationship with host members and community, equality, activeness and contributing back to the society assist one's feeling of belongingness by creating positive self image, gaining trust and positive regard to and from the fellow members of the new homeland, Finland (Chow, 2007). On the other hand, trust issues of the host members, inactiveness of immigrants, negative attitudes of both parties, lack of social relationship and language incompetency could hinder one from fully accessing and participating in the society which could result in alienation or marginalization. According to the findings, immigrants' conceptions of influencing factors affecting one's belongingness are strongly linked to immigrant's image of effective integration in terms of membership, mutual relationships, knowledge of cultural and social norms, language and history as well as peaceful coexistence with the host members.

Moreover, the study briefly discussed identity construction and counseling as a potential means of encouraging personal growth and wholesomeness of immigrants for becoming a well integrated member of the host society as well as leading a more meaningful life in a new context. According to the findings, the concept of identity counseling is acknowledged as a possible beneficial asset to assist individual towards effective integration and more satisfying lifestyles by most of the participants. However, the findings suggest that participating in identity counseling might be less likely for the immigrants due to lacking of awareness and deep-rooted cultural image of counseling.

To sum up, the significance of the present study lies in the fact that it displays the role and functions of immigrants' self identity in the process of integration into Finland and the impacts they have on one another. Therefore, greater understanding of the role, function and impact of immigrants' self identity can tremendously improve the harmonious coexistence of the host society and the newcomers. Moreover, by incorporating immigrants' voices in inquiries and evaluations concerning integration issues, the integration policies and the personal integration plan of Finland can become more effective in practice in terms of better relevancy and more adaptability to each individual. All in all, being more aware of one's self identity and its roles can not only assist immigrants with coping to the new life in Finland but also empower individuals to take a step towards becoming fully functioning contributors of the host society.

6 LIMITATIONS

Although the research has reached its aims, it has to be acknowledged that there were unavoidable limitations. The first limitation is generalizability of the results regarding participants' backgrounds. The participants of the current study were chosen based on their immigrant background regardless of other circumstances. Consequently, the somewhat similar backgrounds of interviewees tend to limit the findings from bringing it to a broader setting. Inclusion of participants with more diverse familial, educational and social-economical backgrounds is recommended for future research as it could generate the findings which are more applicable to the more diverse and larger population of immigrants.

The second limitation is participants' somewhat similar reasons of migrating to the host country, Finland. All participants of the current study voluntarily migrated to the host country, Finland for personal reasons such as pursuing higher education, seeking better life or family ties. Therefore, the relocation of the participants can be considered as somewhat well-prepared and planned, resulting in lack of diversity in coping behavior and acculturation experiences in the findings. Including involuntary immigrants such as asylum seekers and natural disaster victims in further research is recommended for more transferable findings as the current study reflects only a small part of the reality.

The author of the current study is also considered as the third limitation in regard of her personal background as an immigrant herself in the host country, Finland. Given the similar experiences and backgrounds shared between the researcher and the participants, certain degree of subjectivity can get involved in analyzing and interpreting data.

However, precautions such as avoiding leading question and wording and summarizing as well as member checking were utilized to minimize any biases and presumptions regarding conducting interviews, analyzing data and interpreting findings.

The final limitation of the study is the possible language proficiency related issues. Considering the participants involved in the interviews are all non-native speakers, there are possible limitations such as understanding of the key concepts from interview questions or not being able to fully express oneself due to shyness or lack of vocabulary. A short questionnaire or relevant warming up activities before the actual interviews are recommended for future research in order to get the participants more familiar with the concepts of the interview as well as to provide them with time to reflect on their opinions before answering the questions.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The current study is emphasizing only on self identity of immigrants in order to explore the role and functions it serves in the integration process into Finland. Looking separately into all three aspects of personal, social and cultural self conceptions of immigrants and comparing the results to see what particular roles and functions each serves in the process of integration could assist to locate the possible major root causes of immigrants' identity crises during transition. Furthermore, the study only investigates the effects of the integration process on one's self identity in terms of identity negotiation, identity confusion and identity development. Looking further into identity development and how it affects individual's daily life in new context could be beneficial for raising immigrants' awareness of self identity as a potential coping mechanism during the stressful transition period. In addition, the brief section of identity construction and counseling of the present study can be further developed into future research in terms of proposing a platform to empower immigrants in the new context. Moreover, as shortly discussed in the limitations section, conducting further studies on immigrants with more diverse backgrounds and reasons of immigrating is recommended as it could not only heighten the applicability of the results to a larger population but also draw out interesting perspectives which can enrich identity studies and the personal integration plan of Finland in the future.

8 REFERENCES

- Abrams, D., & Hogg, M. A. (1988). Comments on the motivational status of self-esteem in social identity and intergroup discrimination. *European Journal of Social Psychology, 18*(4), 317-334.
- Adams, G. R., & Marshall, S. K. (1996). A developmental social psychology of identity: Understanding the person-in-context. *Journal of adolescence, 19*(5), 429-442. *An International Review, 46*, 5-68.
- Anthias, F. (2009). Translocational belonging, identity and generation: Questions and problems in migration and ethnic studies. *Finnish Journal of Ethnicity and migration, 4*(1), 6-15.
- Barriball, K., & While, A. (1994). Collecting Data using a semi-structured interview: a discussion paper. *Journal of advanced nursing, 19*(2), 328-335.
- Baumeister, R. F. (1986). *Identity: Cultural change and the struggle for self*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- British Association for Counseling (1996). Code of Ethics and Practice. Rugby: BAC.
- Baumeister, R. F. (1998). The self. In D. T. Gilbert, S. T. Fiske, & G. Lindzey (Eds.), *Handbook of social psychology* (4th ed., pp. 680-740). New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Berman, A. M., Schwartz, S. J., Kurtines, W. M., & Berman, S. L. (2001). The process of exploration in identity formation: The role of style and competence. *Journal of adolescence, 24*(4), 513-528.
- Berry, J. W. (1993). Ethnic identity in plural societies. In M. E. Bernal & G. P. Knight (Eds.), *Ethnic identity: Formation and transmission among Hispanics and other minorities*, (pp. 271-296). Albany: State University of New York Press.

- Berry, J. W., Phinney, J. S., Sam, D. L., & Vedder, P. (2006). Immigrant youth: Acculturation, identity, and adaptation. *Applied psychology, 55*(3), 303-332.
- Berry, J. W., Poortinga, Y. H., Segall, M. H., & Dasen, P. R. (2002). *Cross-cultural psychology. Research and applications* (2nd ed.). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Berry, J.W. (1994). Acculturative stress. In W.J.Lonner & R.S. Maplass (Eds.), *Psychology and culture* (pp.211-215). Boston: Allyn & Bacon.
- Berry, J.W. (1997). Immigration, acculturation and adaptation. *Applied Psychology, 46*(1), 5-34.
- Berry, J.W. (2001). A psychology of immigration. *Journal of Social Issues, 57*, 611–627.
- Berry, J.W. (2003). Conceptual approaches to acculturation. In K. Chun, P. Balls-Organista, & G. Marin (Eds.), *Acculturation: Advances in theory, measurement and applied research* (pp. 17–37). Washington, DC: APA Press.
- Berzonsky, M. D. (1992). Identity style and coping strategies. *Journal of personality, 60*(4), 771-788.
- Bosma, H. A., & Kunnen, E. S. (2001). Determinants and mechanisms in ego identity development: A review and synthesis. *Developmental review, 21*(1), 39-66.
- Brubaker, R., & Cooper, F. (2000). Beyond “identity”. *Theory and society, 29*(1), 1-47.
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative research in psychology, 3*(2), 77-101.
- Chow, H. P. (2007). Sense of belonging and life satisfaction among Hong Kong adolescent immigrants in Canada. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 33*(3), 511-520.

- Creswell, J. (2003). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). *Handbook of qualitative research*. Sage.
- DiCicco-Bloom, B., & Crabtree, B. F. (2006). The qualitative research interview. *Medical education, 40*(4), 314-321.
- Entzinger, H., & Biezeveld, R. L. (2003). Benchmarking in immigrant integration: report for the European Commission Immigration and Asylum Committee. *Rotterdam: European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic Relations*.
- Erikson, E. H. (1950). *Childhood and society*. New York: Norton.
- Erikson, E. H. (1960). Youth and the life cycle. *Children, 7*(2), 43-49.
- Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis*. New York: Norton
- EU (2003), *Communication on Immigration, Integration and Employment*. EU, Brussels.
- Foote, N.N. (1951). Identification as the basis for a theory of motivation. *American Sociological Review, 16*, 14-21.
- Farson, R. (1974). *Birthrights*. London: Collier Macmillan.
- Fearon, J. D. (1999). What is identity (as we now use the word). Unpublished manuscript, Stanford University, Stanford, Calif.
- Fleming, J. (2004). Erikson's psychosocial developmental stages. In *Psychological perspectives on human development* (pp. 9-24).

- Gleason, P.. (1983). Identifying Identity: A Semantic History. *The Journal of American History*, 69(4), 910–931. Retrieved from <http://doi.org/10.2307/1901196>.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., & Namey, E. E. (2011). *Applied thematic analysis*. Sage.
- Guest, G., Namey, E. E., & Mitchell, M. L. (2012). *Collecting Qualitative Data: A Field Manual for Applied Research*. Sage.
- Koivukangas, O. (2003). *European immigration and integration: Finland*.
- Koskela, K. (2014). BOUNDARIES OF BELONGING: HIGHLY SKILLED MIGRANTS AND THE MIGRANT HIERARCHY IN FINLAND. *Journal of Finnish Studies*, 17.
- Kroger, J., & Marcia, J. E. (2011). The identity statuses: Origins, meanings, and interpretations. In *Handbook of identity theory and research* (pp. 31-53). New York: Springer.
- Lerner, J., Rapoport, T., & Lomsky-Feder, E. (2007). The ethnic script in action: The regrouping of Russian Jewish immigrants in Israel. *Ethos*, 168-195.
- Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry* (Vol. 75). Sage.
- Marcia, J. E. (1966). Development and validation of ego-identity status. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 3(5), 551-558.
- Marcia, J. E. (1967). Ego identity status: Relationship to change in self-esteem, “general maladjustment,” and authoritarianism. *Journal of Personality*, 35, 118-133.
- Marcia, J. E. (1976). Identity six years after: A follow-up study. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 5(2), 145-160.
- Marcia, J. E. (1980). Identity in adolescence. In J. Adelson (Ed.), *Handbook of adolescent psychology*(pp. 159–187). New York: Wiley.

- Marcia, J. E. (1988). Common processes underlying ego identity, cognitive/moral development, and individuation. In D. K. Lapsley & F. C. Power (Eds.), *Self, ego, and identity: Integrative approaches*(pp. 211–266). New York: Springer- Verlag.
- Marcia, J. E. (1993). The ego identity status approach to ego identity. In *Ego identity* (pp. 3-21). New York: Springer.
- Meeus, W., Iedema, J., & Maassen, G. H. (2002). Commitment and exploration as mechanisms of identity formation. *Psychological Reports*, 90(3), 771-785.
- Mills, J., Bonner, A., & Francis, K. (2006). The development of constructivist grounded theory. *International journal of qualitative methods*, 5(1), 25-35.
- McLeod, J. (2013). *An introduction to counseling*. McGraw-Hill Education (UK).
- Ministry of the Interior (Finland). (2016). Retrieved from <https://www.intermin.fi/en/migration/integration>.
- Namey, E., Guest, G., Thairu, L., & Johnson, L. (2008). Stryker, S. (1980). Symbolic interactionism: A social structural version, (pp.137-161). Lanham : Altamira.
- Oyserman, D., Elmore, K., & Smith, G. (2012). Self, self-concept, and identity. In M. Leary and J. Tangney (Eds.), *Handbook of self and identity*, 2, (pp. 69-104). New York: Guildford.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Schwartz, S. J. (2001). The evolution of Eriksonian and, neo-Eriksonian identity theory and research: A review and integration. *Identity: an international journal of theory and research*, 1(1), 7-58.

- Schwartz, S. J., Montgomery, M. J., & Briones, E. (2006). The role of identity in acculturation among immigrant people: Theoretical propositions, empirical questions, and applied recommendations. *Human development*, 49(1), 1-30.
- Schwartz, S. J., Zamboanga, B. L., Weisskirch, R. S., & Rodriguez, L. (2008). The relationships of personal and ethnic identity exploration to indices of adaptive and maladaptive psychosocial functioning. *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, 33(2), 131-144.
- Sonn, C. C., & Lewis, R. C. (2009). Immigration and identity: The ongoing struggles for liberation. In *Psychology of Liberation* (pp. 115-133). New York: Springer.
- Stephen, J., Fraser, E., & Marcia, J. E. (1992). Moratorium-achievement (Mama) cycles in lifespan identity development: Value orientations and reasoning system correlates. *Journal of adolescence*, 15(3), 283-300.
- Stets, J. E., & Burke, P. J. (2003). A sociological approach to self and identity. *Handbook of self and identity*, 128-152.
- Stryker, S. (1980). *Symbolic interactionism: A social structural version*. Menlo Park, CA: Benjamin-Cummings.
- Swann, W.B., Jr. & Bosson, J. (2008). Identity negotiation: A Theory of Self and Social Interaction. In O. John, R. Robins, & L. Pervin (Eds.) *Handbook of Personality Psychology: Theory and Research I* (pp. 448–471). New York: Guilford.
- Tanner, A. (2004). Finland's Prosperity Brings New Migrants. Retrieved from <http://www.codewit.info/publications/103-finlands-prosperity-brings-new-migrants>.
- Thomas, D. R. (2006). A general inductive approach for analyzing qualitative evaluation data. *American journal of evaluation*, 27(2), 237-246.
- Ting-Toomey, S. (2005). Identity negotiation theory: Crossing cultural boundaries. *Theorizing about intercultural communication* (pp.211-233). CA: Thousand oaks.

- Thompson, R. J. (2014). *Beyond reason and tolerance: The purpose and practice of higher education*. Oxford University Press.
- Toivanen, M. (2014). Negotiating home and belonging. Young Kurds in Finland. *Annales Universitatis Turkuensis B* 389, University of Turku. Retrieved from <http://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/98544>.
- Valtonen, K. (1998). Resettlement of Middle Eastern refugees in Finland: The elusiveness of integration. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 11(1), 38-60.
- Waterman, A. S. (1988). Identity status theory and Erikson's theory: Communalities and differences. *Developmental Review*, 8(2), 185-208.
- Waterman, A. S. (1999). Identity, the identity statuses, and identity status development: A contemporary statement. *Developmental Review*, 19(4), 591-621.
- Weiner, E. S. C., Simpson, J. A., & Oxford University Press. (2004). *The Oxford English dictionary*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

9 APPENDICES

9.1 Interview questions

- Tell me a little bit about yourself!
- Could you give me one of your memories from your childhood?
- what brings you to Finland?
- What do you think of this country?
- What is the best thing about living in Finland?
- What is the worst thing about living in Finland?
- Have you ever experienced any culture shock here? Give me one example if you have.
- How did you deal with it?
- What / who helps you to overcome it?
- What do you think can be done to culture shock/ racism / prejudice?
- How do you understand integration into a host society? What would you call fully integration or effective integration?
- What, in your opinion, is the most important thing for successful integration process and why?
- Do you think you have integrated well into Finland? If so / if not, what makes you think so?
- Do you still see yourself as the same person before you come to this country? If so, please explain why you still feel that way. If not, tell me what makes you think you are not the same person anymore (examples).
- Who are you? Can you give me some adjectives that define you as a person ?

- How do you understand self identity? What is it to you? How do you identify yourself? What makes you the unique *YOU* ?
- What are your roles before you come here, who were you?
- Who are you now? How would you identify yourself regarding current states?
- How do you find a balance between the old and new you?
- What impact do your old roles and new roles have on you and on the integration process?
- Do you feel that you are accepted and recognized here? (if so, if not examples)
- Do you ever or have you ever had to negotiate your identity to belong (values, goals, belief)?
- Do the changes in your life as an immigrant ever make you feel like another person (losing your sense of self)? What kind of things make / made you feel that way?
- What is the most challenging thing that you have to overcome here as immigrants, regarding identity? How did you respond to it?
- Do you ever feel like your identity or sense of self is being questioned?
- Give me one incident example of “I don’t know who I am anymore” moments if you ever have one.
- How have you managed to survive it so far?
- In your opinion, is your identity a big help or obstacle in the process of integration? (anchor or obstacle)
- Have you ever felt you need to reconnect to your old self to make sense with the changes?
- What / who makes your process of integration and settling in Finland easier and more manageable?

- Did you ever have any kind of support, counseling, guidance, advice or help from people or organization? If so, how much did it help you?
- If not, do you think you would have liked to have it at ?
- How much do you think counseling for immigrants regarding identity and sense of self could help them with integration and daily life activities?
- Is there anything else you would like to share regarding identity and integration?