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Experiences of Immigrants' Parenting in Foreign Context: The case of Ghanaian immigrant parents in Vaasa, Finland

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to explore the experiences of immigrant parents concerning parenting in foreign contexts from the perspective of Ghanaian immigrants in Vaasa, Finland. To achieve this, the study explores how immigrants adapt to the new parenting culture and the feelings attached to the changes that occurred. Further, the study investigates how immigrants communicate with their children and the child welfare services as well as the coping mechanisms these immigrants employ to address the negative feelings and challenges encountered to ensure parental functioning.

The study employed qualitative research approach using ethnographic data collection methods such as personal observation, focus group discussion and interviews to acquire qualitative data from ten Ghanaian immigrant parents.

Findings indicate immigrant parents adapt to the new parenting culture by choosing parenting practices, which according to their understanding are very important from both their old and the new cultures in bringing up their children. All the participants said they pick from their old culture those practices that did not contradict the laws of their new (host) culture to get a sense of balance.

Some studies describe family lives in the Nordic region as being cold and a living nightmare for families. Nevertheless, the present study found Ghanaian immigrant parents had developed new ways of communicating with their children. Fathers (parent) who experienced unpleasant relationships with their parents in their old cultures have nonetheless developed special bond with their children due to integration in the new cultural system. However, the findings confirmed other literature findings that immigrant parents encounter some frustrations and stressful moments in parenting in new cultures. Nonetheless, the participants preferred to cope by seeking help from family back home, friends and from the internet with no or little involvement of the professionally trained family and child welfare services in the host or new culture. Only few participants for example had ever called to receive guidelines for parenting on phone. Irrespective, all participants said they believed in the positive outcomes of raising their children in the new culture, provided they could balance the two cultures accordingly. Their feeling of success gave those positive emotions that could help them cope with frustration and stressful moments (negative emotions) they encountered as parents in the new culture.

Based on the research findings, it was concluded that communication in an intercultural or foreign environment plays an important role in immigrant parental experiences and influence their acculturation to the new parenting culture. Failure in communication on the other hand, explained why majority of the participants did not want to involve the child welfare services in their parenting problems, as well as fostering certain negative emotions. Therefore, measures to ensure effective communication between immigrant parents and the host parenting culture was considered very important in bringing the immigrants close to understanding the host or new culture. This fosters their integration and consequently neutralizing the associated negative motions.

Contents

Introduction

The quest for humanity to better the quality of life conditions for themselves and their families are some of the reasons that trigger and motivate people to migrate across continental borders to start a new and better life (Urzua, Canales, Nunez, Ravanal and Tabilo 2017). Global migration statistics suggest that in 2015 and 2017, 248 million and 258 million individuals respectively, were international migrants with 78 million of these living in Europe[1]. These figures also showed that about fifteen percent of the global totals of migrants were children between ages one and twenty[2]. Finland is becoming one of the new destinations attracting many immigrants from Europe, Asia, Americas and Africa. According to the statistical report of Finnish Immigration Service in 2015 alone, 20,709 first time residence permits were granted to immigrants with 6,036 permits issued on family basis[3]. As of December 31, 2016, the total number of foreigners living permanently in Finland amounted to 244,499, including children[4]. Figures from the 2017 preliminary population count show that Finland's population of 5,509,984 registered an increase by 6,687. This increase was mainly attributed to the inflow of immigrants[5]. It is believed that migrants travel with their old cultures and worldviews to meet the host cultures in different contexts.

Culture is a particular way of life of a group of people, which involves "deposits of knowledge, experiences, beliefs, values, traditions, religion, and notion of time, roles spatial relations, worldviews, material objects and geographical territory" (Liu, Volcic and Gallois 2011, p. 57). Culture comes in different types, such as authoritarian, individualistic, masculinity (Hof). This implies migrants might carry with them their traditional behaviour (i.e. parental behaviours) and would like to pass it on to their generation and through parenting practices even in foreign cultural contexts. Literature also explains that, parents of each generation are charged with the responsibility and continuing task to pass on their culture to the next generation (Bornstein 2015). Hence, parenting style and state of immigrant parents in foreign contexts are very important. Thus,

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[1] United Nation's, Report on International Migration 2017
[2] *Ibid,* 2015
[3] Statistics of the Finnish Immigration service report of 2015 pp 1-12
[4] Foreign Citizens in Finland, Finnish Immigration service report of 2016 p 8.
[5] Preliminary population Finland, Statistics Finland as at October 24, 2017

parental issues are very keen to human development; its quality can have sensitive impact on children's physical, psychological well-beings, educational competencies, behaviours and adjustment in relation to host society (Baumrind, 1966, 1971a; Bernadi., 1989; Kekkonen, 1999; Zukauskiene, 2007; Bornstein, 2002., p. 214-215; Lansford, Kirby., and Bornstein., 2007 2007; Harris., 2018).

Existing literature suggest parenting is highly influenced by culture (Stavrinides and Nkoiforou, 2013; Tajima and Harachi 2010; Kesharvarz and Baharudin 2009; Bornstein, 1995). However, when there is a clash between immigrants' home culture and new (host) cultures, it is often the case that what is considered ideal in one culture may be considered inappropriate in others (Stella Ting-Toomey and Tenzin Dorjee, 2018, p. 29; Liu, Volcic and Gallois 2011). For instance, there are differences between parenting among immigrants from authoritarian and collective cultural backgrounds and host country with authoritative parenting and individualistic cultural background. Studies report there is always an intercultural interaction, which leads to possible conflict that requires negotiations and learning between the two actors to achieve possible acculturative outcomes (Sodowsky and Plake 1992; Barry, 2005; Bornstein and Bohr, 2011).

Acculturation refers to the outcome of a cultural change following continuous contact between two different cultures, normally between the immigrants' home culture and new culture where there is a predominant shift of the old culture towards the new culture (Barry, 1992, 2005). In view of this continuous contact, Nimmo (1979) expresses communication being the simultaneous encoding (sending) and decoding (interpreting) verbal (e.g. spoken word) and non-verbal messages (e.g. gestures, postures, signs, eye contact) between the two actors (Neuliep, 2009), as the backbone in every acculturation process 'by which immigrants and the host sociocultural systems interact' (Nimmo,1979, p. 436).

The interaction between members of different cultural groups' processes is termed intercultural communication (Ting-Toomey, 1999). According to the schools of communication theories, in an intercultural communication, the above simultaneous encoding and decoding of messages are based on the actors' experiences and reference frames (cultural values) in relation (Dahl, 2003). It has been established culture is communication and communication is culture, meaning they influences each other, therefore both communication and culture facilitate and enhance individual adaptation (Ting-Toomey and Dorjee, 2018, p. 19-20). This also implies that, the more effective

the immigrant parents and new country's parenting culture communicates, the more they understand each other. This influences the immigrant parents' acculturation strategies associated with low parenting stress (integration or assimilation). On the other hand, the less effective the communication between immigrant parents and the new country's parenting culture, the less they understand themselves, which also can lead to the immigrant parents' separation or marginalization strategies during acculturation contributing to increase in parental stress (Barry, 1992; 2005).

Some studies have shed light on immigrants' parenting experiences in relation to acculturation experiences in foreign contexts (Asander et al 2013; Kabatanya 2017; Rasmussen et al 2007; Renzaho 2010; Renzaho and Vignjevic 2011; Landsford et al., 2007, Sodowsky and Plake 1992; Bornstein and Bohr, 2011). Nevertheless, there is little known about immigrants' parental experiences in the Nordic region of Europe especially in Finland. Earlier studies failed to investigate how communication that manifest in cultural differences affect immigrants parenting and their adaptation in foreign or intercultural contexts in a single study.

Consequently, this study expands our knowledge in the field of immigrant parenting, communication, culture and acculturation, especially from the perspective of a clashed between the Ghanaian minority and the Finnish majority culture. This is because literature points out that the Ghanaian population among other cultural dimensions is highly collectivistic, masculine oriented, highly authoritarian parenting and practice relatively high-context communication. On the other hand, the cultural dimensions of the Finnish people is highly individualistic, feminine inclined, practices authoritative and permissive parenting and uses closely low-context communication (Nyarko 2011; Nishimura, Nevgi and Tella 2008; Neuliep 2009; Ting-Toomey, 1999). In addition to earlier statistics on immigrants, the end of 2017 saw 384,123 inhabitants with foreign background in Finland. The history of immigration into Finland between 1990 and 2017 suggests 1,487 net immigrants with Ghanaian background[6]. Between November 2017 and October

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[6] Results generated from the Official Statistics Finland PX-Web database (1990-2017) based on Migration by country of departure or arrival, Nationality and year, Access link; http://www.stat.fi/hae_en?function=Search&upper_type=tila&word=immigrants&page=2 Accessed on

2018, 636 Ghanaians received positive decision following their various applications types through the Finnish immigration service.

1.1 Research Question and Objectives

The primary purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of the Ghanaian immigrants parenting in Vaasa, Finland. To ascertain this goal, the study sought to explore and understand the main research question in (a) How Ghanaian immigrant parents adapt to the demands of the new parenting culture? The study saw that addressing the below supporting questions (b, c, d) will help to answer in detail, the main research question and to further help us understand the primary aim of the study. The questions are: (b) How do they feel about the possible changes in culture? (c) How do they communicate with their children and the caregivers or welfare service in their new environment? (c) What coping strategy do they employ to restore parental functioning in addressing the associated feelings and challenges?

1.2 Significance of the study

The study seeks to add more cultural and social understanding of communication, acculturation and parenting in an intercultural context from immigrants' perspectives. Studies indicates that in Finland, ensuring the integration of foreigners and their children to much equally to native-born Finns is problematic (Jouni, 2014). The communication schools of thought used in this study suggest that, differences in cultural dimensions, communication patterns, world views, life experiences, all give people different reference frame which affect effective communication, while communication also influences adaptation strategies in an inter cultural setting (Ting-Toomey and Dorjee, 2018; Dahl, 2003; Nimmo,1979). During communication in an intercultural context, it is believed that ethnocentrism which refers to the belief that one's own culture is superior to the other create walls between cultures as barriers which affects effective communication (Liu, Volcic and Gallois, 2011). However, to ensure effective intercultural or interpersonal communication the actors need to integrate knowledge, skills and practices with mindfulness (awareness of their own and others) behaviour in their communication process (with mutually interdependent relationship) (Ting-Toomey, 2009; Ting-Toomey and Dorjee, 2018). In an immigrant growing population like Finland (Nordic region), this study will highlight the conscious and unconscious ethnocentric cultural differences that affect communication between immigrants and host cultures. This awareness will inform the host culture to be mindful of the necessary reformations and parenting

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intervention programs needed to be addressed in relation to immigrants parenting and their integration into the host culture (Malcolm Williams in Tim, 2002, p. 5).

Chapter 2

2. Literature

This chapter discusses immigration into Finland and Ghanaians in Finland, the overview of literature on parenting in Ghana and Finland. In addition, it captures literature on prior studies on immigrants' experiences in new culture, thus Western world. Aside, the chapter provides information on care in Finland or the Nordic region. Again, the second part of the chapter presents theoretical explanations to support the background of the study and ends with a chapter summary.

2.1 Immigration overview in Finland and Ghanaians

Globalisation and its technological advancement of information have made the world very small, as well as outbreak of civil wars, causing people willingly and unwillingly to migrate in search of hopes, for better economic, political, and educational and seek refuge in new cultures across borders. The statistical history of migration suggest that Finns immigrated to various parts of the globe between 1860 and 2013, about 895,000 Finns emigrated between 1945 and 2013. Out of theses number about 5000 Finns emigrated to Africa (Jouni, 2014). After the World War II and 1980's Finland received major groups of immigrant refugees from Vietnam and students who sought for tuition free education (Gharbia, 2006). Finland over a decade now has been receiving 750 refugees annually adding up to her increasing population. The 2017 preliminary population count showed that Finland population of 5,509,984 registered an increased by 6,687. The 2018 statistics projection estimated Finnish population as 5,523,415 with 30,417 immigrants and a net immigration of about 15000 and estimated to remain until after 2029.

Increase in Finland's population for the last decade has been attributed to immigration. A natural increase of 4,721 in the 2018 population estimate was attributed to increase in immigration. The results generated from the statistics Finland's Px-web database indicates that between 1990 and 2017, 1, 664 totals of Ghanaians officially immigrated to Finland with net immigration total of about 1,487 living in the whole of Finland. Applications for residence permit, international protection, citizenship, extended residence permit and residence permit of EU citizens through the Finnish immigration service between November 2017 and October 2018 amounted to 101,146 out of which over 80,000 received positive decision. Children between 0-17years applicants recorded

20,641. Out of the total applicants, 826 were Ghanaian amounted, out of which 636 received positive decisions for entry.

In December 2017 Vaasa region recorded over 67,000 and[7] has so far received 1,112 immigrants in 2018 (Statistics Finland). However, in the history of immigration into Vaasa, Finland according to the statistics generated from statistics Finland's Px-wed database, Ghanaians began to immigrate to Finland from the 1990's and only 1 Ghanaian was registered to have officially immigrated to Vaasa region in 1993. Between 1990 and 2017, 233 Ghanaians have been recorded to officially immigrate to Vaasa region or (Ostrobothnia in Finnish). The statistics does not have information on Ghanaians emigrating Vaasa and, also considering internal migration and undocumented immigrants, the region might have received more Ghanaians than recorded.

2.2 Concept of culture and intercultural communication context

Hall (1966) defines culture to mean those deep, common, unstated experiences members of a particular group share, communicate unconsciously and which form the basis for which all other events are judged. This means culture nurtures a sense of shared identity and solidarity among its group members. Therefore, being a member of a culture entails that one has been natured by its core values and understanding what comprises of the good and bad behaviour in that particular culture (Ting-Toomey and Chung, 2005). As noted in the introduction, culture is a particular way of life, of a group of people and it includes "deposits of knowledge, experiences, beliefs, values, traditions, religion, notion of time, roles spatial relations, worldviews, material objects and geographical territory" (Liu et al., 2011). This also implies that, culture reflects the "safety net" through which individuals' expert to satisfy their needs for identity meaning, explanatory frame, boundary regulation, adaptation and communication coordination (Ting-Toomey and Dorjee, 2018, p.20).

The consensus meaning of culture defined above implies its characteristics as being holistic, learned, dynamic and ethnocentric. According to Liu et al. (2011), culture as holistic means, everything that comprises of it functions as an interrelated and complex whole and must be integrated as such. Culture is learned demonstrates that, it is not biological, it comprises of continuous conscious and unconscious learning throughout one's lifetime and most of which is

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acquired during childhood through family, friends, teachers, proverbs among others. Culture as dynamic signifies that, it is not fixed but subject to change with time. Culture being ethnocentric refers to the belief that one's own culture is superior to the others. The effect of culture is often realised when there is a clash between different cultural norms in an intercultural communication context. Intercultural communication refers to the interaction between members of different cultural groups whereas communication is the encoding and decoding of message between the two actors (Ting-Toomey, 1999; Neuliep, 2009). Language is seen as the heart of every culture because it is through language and symbols that members express their ideas. In intercultural context, individuals may not be able to pronounce words or speak as the native speakers. They may also use different choice of words, which can create misunderstanding in communication (Ting-Toomey, 1999). For example, collectivistic cultures (e.g. Ghana) use of words like 'we', 'us', 'our' may conflict individualistic preferences (e.g. Finland) for 'I', 'Me', 'your'.

2.2.1 **Cultural dimensions and communication**

In communication in an intercultural context, it is believed that ethnocentrism create walls between cultures as barriers affecting communication, in the sense that how one views a culture constantly affects how he or she interact with people from that culture (Liu et al., 2011). Identifying the cultural dimension differences in relation to communication will be relevant to the current study analysis because how the Ghanaian immigrant parents for example send and receive information, observe power distance; masculine and feminine orientations in parenting and avoid uncertainty and other cultural dimension attributes is different from how it is observed in the Finnish culture. The first four cultural dimensions and communication explained below are according to the views of Ting-Toomey (1999) and Liu et al., (2011) in relation to Hofstede's and Michel Foucault's point of view. Hall's (1976) view of high and low context communication, Bond's (1961; 1966) view on long-term and short-term orientation and Bolgt's (1978) view on loose and tight social structures.

Collectivistic and individualistic cultures: Collectivistic cultures are group-oriented cultures where the values and needs of entire group is strongly protected collectively, i.e. by the entire family and social group (Keshavarz and Baharudin, 2009; Neuliep 2009; Yaman et al., 2010). Interdependency is highly encouraged and stress group goals over individual. The downfall or failure of a member is a shame and it affects all, therefore all must work connectedly to maintain

harmony and the status of family, group or society (Neuliep, 2009). The Ghanaian culture as we will see later is generally regarded as collectivistic and communicate closely in line with what has been described as high-context communication (Ting-Toomey, 1991; Ting-Toomey and Dorjee 2018, p. 218-230). Individualistic cultures emphasise individual goals over group goals (Liu *et al*., 2011). Neuliep (2009) explains that these cultures place value on personal independence, which involves personal responsibility and autonomy, freedom, achieving personal fulfilment as well as seeing themselves as unique from others. Unlike the collectivistic, shame in individualistic culture is seen as personal guilt (Neuliep, 2009) as can be liken to the Finnish culture in the pages ahead. Communication in individualistic cultures are associated with closely low-context communication (Ting-Toomey, 1999; Neuliep, 2009).

Masculinity and Femininity: Masculinity and Femininity oriented dimensions of culture according to Ting-Toomey (1999) and Liu et al., (2011) implies that in some cultures gender roles are distinct (Hofstede 1984). In Masculine oriented cultures, men are expected to be assertive, tough and compete for material success whiles women are expected to be modest, tender and focused achieving quality of life. Ghana as we will identify below falls within masculine oriented cultures. Cultures labelled feminine inclined, refers to societies in which social gender roles overlap. These cultures place value on both men and women being modest, tender and concern with the quality of life. In these cultures, women are seen increasingly joining the work force and taken professional job positions. Finland and the Nordic region has been labelled as feminine oriented cultures. This implies that in communication with cultures like Finland, one should be guided by the flexible gender role norms and in masculine cultures like Ghana, be sensitive about the place of men and women (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

Power Distance: Hofstede and Bond's (1984) idea of power distance refers to the extent to which a culture accepts inequality in the fact that power is distributed unequally. Culture with large or high-power distance tend to accept 'unequal power distribution, hierarchical rights...reward and punishment based on age, rank, status, title and seniority' (Neuliep, 2009, p.). The less powerful (children) are dependent on the more powerful people (Fathers). High power distance cultures foster authoritarianism. Children in these cultures are expected to obey their parents and value respect for unequal status of the family and it is taught from childhood through parenting which becomes a way of life. Grandparents take on family decision-making process, Ghana, as an

example of a high-power distance will show in its parenting practices ahead. According to Liu et al. (2011) and Neuliep (2009) small or low power distance cultures tend to observe evenly distribution of power, equal rights, relations and equal rewards. Equal right is the idea that the people seek after. Decision making in families are based on reaching democratic consensus. Finland in this regard can be said to foster low power distance culture.

Uncertainty Avoidance Dimension: refers to the degree to which members of a culture feel threatened by unforeseen and unknown situations and the extent to which they try to avoid it (Hofstede 19..). In communication, some cultures have high need for information and ensure certainty. High or strong uncertainty avoidance culture in this case means that, members have stronger feeling of threat for the unseen and they try to avoid it in the same manner, which makes them security seeking cultures (Liu et al., 2011, p. 105). These cultures require formal rules and structure for it family or institution certain with rules which must be followed (Neuliep, 2009). The Ghanaian culture can be placed among cultures with strong uncertainty avoidance, because of its association with collectivism as noted earlier (Liu et al., 2011). Weak uncertainty avoidance cultures are cultures that seem more comfortable with risk. These cultures tolerate informal rules and practice negotiation to reach consensus. Finland as well as the Nordic region is labelled with weak uncertainty avoidance, because of its association with tolerance towards Individualism (Liu et al., 2011).

High-context and low-context communication cultural dimensions; in verbal intercultural communication cultures Hall's (1976) idea of high and low-context communication can be used here from the view Ting-Toomey (1999) and Liu et al., (2011). According to them in high-context communication cultures effective communication rely on the extent to which one can gather information from the social, physical and psychological context to make meaning during interaction. This is because, they stress indirect verbal mode where the listener of the message is expected to ``read between the lines`` to decode the actual implicit meaning of the verbal message base on the context and observing the non-verbal actions that accompany the verbal message. Low-context communication cultures emphasis direct verbal mode. They stress on the importance of explicit verbal message to express personal thoughts, opinions and feelings for easy decoding by the receiver (Ting-Toomey, 1999; Neuliep, 2009; Liu et al., 2011). Ghana and Finland labelled as

high-context and low-context communication cultures respectively will be exemplifying later under parental practices.

Long-term and short-term Orientations: Insight from Bond (1961; 1966) on Confucian work dynamism according to Ting-Toomey (1999), Liu et al. (2011) in relation to this cultural dimension refers to the dedication, motivation, responsibility and educated individuals behaviour towards loyalty, commitment and society identity. Short-term orientation, where cultures like Nigeria and Ghana can be placed, seek to ensure individual glory, personal dignity, respect, and high spending with short-term planning. Long-term orientation where Finland can be placed seek for group harmony, long term planning with low spending (Ting-Toomey, 1999).

Loose and Tight Social Structures: Based on Boldt's (1978) idea, cultures with loose social structures give room for members to experiment. Members in these cultures have the tendencies to deviate at a higher degree from their societal norms because of its cultural heterogeneity (Ting-Toomey 1999, Ting-Toomey and Dorjee, 2018). Finland's growing acceptance of multi-cultures and diverse values explains its close resemblance to lose social structure. Tight social structures tend to follow strict societal values, norms and rules. Ghana can be placed among these countries because of its lack of cultural heterogeneity.

2.3 **Parenting in relation to cultural dimensions in Ghanaian and Finnish perspectives.**

2.3.1 **Parenting**

Culture seen as particular way of life of a group of people implies that culture influences every activity concerning parenting. Baumrind (1966, 1991) categorised parenting into three basic styles-authoritarian, permissive and authoritative. This categorisation was primarily based on the level of demandingness (parental control measures) and responsiveness (care and support) parents practices over the activities of their children. The authoritarian parents exercise high control over their children, give little warmth and reasoning but expects grater outcomes. Permissive parents do not interfere but give their children freedom to govern and control their own affairs but provides more warmth and support. Authoritative parents on the other hand show more respect to the views of their children, support them enough to achieve their goals, give them their independence and set limits for them and make sure those limits are obeyed, discipline is done fairly with reasoning

(Baumrind 1971,1991,1966). Parenting is targeted at socializing the child to conform to the necessary needs of others and retain a sense of personal integrity (Baumrind, 1966). Brooks and Goldstein's (2001) studies on the aims and the wish of all parents for their children suggest that whichever parenting style they choose is to help them achieve positive and enhance better outcomes in their life development.

The aims and wishes of parents for children sometimes leads to overprotection and parental stress. Overprotection refers to situations where parents over-manage their children's life, parents try to do everything for their children or with the children, though the children can and do it independently. Literature suggest overprotection or parental invasion discourages child independence and child initiative. Marano (2008) point out that parental invasion or overprotection destroys the fabric of the society because it produces teens who lack leadership skills, makes children fragile and incapable of coping with anxiety and at the end the aim and wish for their children end up bringing the worst in them. The Finnish culture according to literature to some extent practice overprotection. Studies on health in Finland has for example shown that parental intrusive or overprotection are possible risk factors of alexithymia[8] in adolescence (Karukivi et al., 2011). Parenting is also associated with stress when parents' resources to meet the perceived demand for children cannot be met. Parenting stress has been found to have strong effect on children`s psychological development (Baumrind, 1966, 1971a; Bernadi, *et al.,* 1989; Abidin, 1995; Kahkonen, 1999 ; Zukauskiene, 2007 ; Lansford *et al*, 2007 ; Harris, 2018).

However, studies have shown that parenting is imbedded in cultural traditions and it is adjusted to meet the acceptable standards of the family or society's culture one finds his or herself (Stavrinides and Nikiforou, 2013; Tajima and Harachi, 2010; Kesharvarz and Baharudin 2009; Bornstein, 1995). Accordingly, this study believes immigrants parents culture might need some level of trade-offs to allow different cultures to better care for their children in foreign countries. Stresses and accompanying issues will be able to resolve.

2.3.2 **Ghana**

As noted earlier, the Ghanaian culture is highly collectivistic, associated with high-context communication, masculinity oriented, high power distance, strong uncertainty avoidance and as

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[8] A psychological term that characterise an inability to understand, feel and describe emotions, social affection and interpersonal relations. https://www.thefreedictionary.com/alexithymia

well associated with authoritarian parenting style compared to other parenting styles (Nyarko, 2011; Liu et al., 2011; Neuliep, 2009; Ting-Toomey, 1999). It is believed that authoritarian parenting style will help them achieve their collective or group-oriented goals (Grusec et al., 1997; Keshavarz and Baharudin, 2009). As noted above, according to Baumrind (1991, 1966), authoritarian parenting is the style of parenting, where parents attempt to evaluate and shape the attitudes and behaviours of their children based on   set of complete standards. Responsibilities for children and parents in these cultures are clearly stated and it must be obeyed as defined according to cultures with tight social structures. These parents are seen to be controlling, demanding and less supportive but expect greater outcomes from their children to also meet their collective goals.

Communication and parenting in the homes of the Nigerian, Ibo context for example was explicitly demonstrated by the novelist Chinua Achebe (1958) in his book titled 'Things Fall Apart' which depicts the true nature of West African authoritarian homes including Ghana. It is believed that these authoritarian practices will help parents avoid future failure uncertainties because in Ghana as it the responsibility of parents to carter for children, it becomes obligatory for the children to also take care of parents in their old age. Achebe (1958) expressed the commonly use of aggressive facial expressions and pointing finger at children to communicate emotions, sending signals of warning and put fear into children to make them obey instructions. In these cultures, there is high power distance, therefore respect and obedience to parents and the elderly is valued paramount. Children learn from the punishment and reward given to them when they do the right or wrong things. Punishment is used to control children and it is usually the responsibility of the fathers, even in their absence mothers commonly wait for them to return and perform that duty. Children in these homes do not have right to question adults and they are mostly physically punished and yelled at, when they disobey parents or adult orders.

In a research conducted on 'the influences of connectedness, communication and monitoring on adolescent's sexual activity in Ghana' it was found out that the children described their mothers as sympathetic and fathers as tyrants who do not listen before acting, especially when opposite sex visits children in the house (Kumi- Kyereme., Awusabo-Asare., Biddlecom and Tanle., 2007). There are masculinity and femininity-oriented differences in how children in the Ghanaian culture are brought up, men are taught mostly by men to be hardworking, brave, to take authority and give financial assistance and women are brought up in sober way to respect her husband, care and

manage the home. That means men are given much authority and responsibilities over women and in the family. Power distance was exhibited by the leading character of the novel "things fall apart" (Achebe, 1958). Chastity for children especially for women before marriage is very important for parents especially mothers show high interest in it, because it brings personal glory to them, the girl and the entire extended family. Based on their strong or high uncertainty avoidance towards achieving this, Kumi- Kyereme et al. (2007) found out that sexually active children are instructed to simply abstain from sex until married. An idea that was encouraged by going through some rituals and examination called ``puberty rites`` before they enter into marriage, ushering boys or girls into adulthood in the olden days (Marie, 1994). Meanwhile, these literatures suggest that the parents support for their children in terms of sexual education is very weak (Kumi-Kyerme et al., 2007; Marie, 1994).

Nevertheless, as could be observed from Achebe's (1958) novel, apart from exhibiting the authoritarian nature of parenting and gender roles in parenting, the novel also share how high-context communication is conducted in these homes. It expressed the use of proverbs; are simple ways of expressing thoughts in an unceasing manner to convey an indirect message for clear understanding base on the context and situation at hand. For example, in Ghana when children forget to do something, and parents still want it to be done, they can say '*se wo werefi na wo Sankofa a, yenkyi*', literary meaning when you forget something, and you go back for it, it is not taboo. In addition, if a child is accusing adults of their failures and incapability, the adults reply '*wo be yini abeto*' literally meaning when you grow up to their age you will understand their failures and incapability yourself, '*se anoma antua obua da*' if the bird does not fly it sleeps with hunger. This proverb is used to communicate encouragement to hard work and discouragement in laziness especially to children among others. Proverbs are used to educate and teach morals in the Ghanaian culture (Quan-Baffour, 2011; Marie, 1994). It is also common to swear with the names of certain gods and God to enforce or express sincerity of intensions when communicating and as well put fear into children to do the right thing.

Further, studies indicate that children from authoritarian parenting practices are affected negatively in health, social, physical, in some cases educational performance and abuse of rights of children, because of the way and manner they are brought up (Baumrind, 1991; Grusec et al., 1997; Durrant, 2008). Pinquart and Kauser (2017) study show that authoritarian parenting was associated with at

least one negative outcome in all regions of the globe and that authoritarian parenting child outcomes were weaker in countries with higher individualistic culture. However, authoritarian parenting among certain cultures was associated with positive outcomes and academic performance. Research findings among Arabs record no relationship between authoritarian parenting and children mental health, feelings of oppression or oppose punishment. The research concluded that though authoritarian parenting is harmful in the Western culture, within authoritarian cultures its practices are all normal (Dwairy and Menshar, 2006; Dwairy, Achoui, Farah and Abouserie, 2006). Again, studies such as Simons et al. (2013), Clark, Novak and Dupree, (2002) acknowledge that authoritative parenting produces more positive outcomes and however point out that authoritarian parenting in some context is good for blacks and does not always lead to poor outcomes, it is very effective when parent exercise trust, care and good communication with children.

2.3.3 **Finland**

There are two official languages in Finland, Finnish of about 93%, Swedish of about 6% and the Sami people in the northern Finland of about 0.03% of the total population of about 5 million. The Finnish culture is grouped among the more individualistic cultures in the world, with low-context communication, femininity oriented, low power distance, weak uncertainty avoidance culture (Liu et al., 2011; Neuliep, 2009, p. 43; Ting-Toomey, 1999). Baumrind (1991) categorisation of parenting styles was influenced by culture. Based on this, Finland is closely related to authoritative and permissive parenting. As noted earlier, permissive parenting involves low demandingness with high responsiveness. Studies have shown that it is the less effective with parental outcomes for individualistic as compared to authoritative parenting which encompasses high demandingness and high responsiveness (Mowen and Schroeder, 2015). Authoritative parents show more respect to the views of their children, support them enough to achieve their goals, give them their independence but set limits for them and make sure those limits are obeyed, discipline is done fairly, and reward is given in the form of love (Baumrind, 1971,1991,1966).

In Finland like any other Nordic country, parenting is done in accordance with legal law binding set out by the United Nations Convention on the rights of the child (UNCRC) where a child is any person under the age of 18. According to the stipulated Act, children right include the right to both parents for care, right to life by providing their basic needs for survival, education, right to national

identity, freedom to express their opinions in matters concerning them, health care and other developmental needs, physical protection against exploitation, abuses and neglects among others[9]. Tolerating the equal rights explain the cultures weak uncertainty avoidance and low-context communication. Nishimura, Nevgi and Tella (2008) for example examined the low-context communication of Finland and expressed that, Finnish act in a way not to attract attention, they communicate in silence, practice upfront and direct style of communication. They talk and listen in equal proportion, uses little body language. They use first names in communication. They dislike boasting and dislike forcing one's option on another.

Some literature claim that, children from authoritative homes possess health, social, physical and educational performance advantages over their authoritarian counterparts (Nyarko, 2011; Kim et al., 2018). Some literature share that, authoritative practices of inductive reasoning and warmth are associated with less depressive symptoms for parents and children (Liem et al., 2010; Milvsky, Sclechter, Netter and Keehn, 2007). Some studies in this regard also saw at least one positive outcome with authoritative parenting child outcomes and urge all parents around the globe to behave authoritatively (Patrick and Gibbs, 2016; Pinquart and Kauser, 2017).

On the contrary, Mowen and Schroeder (2015) study maternal parenting and delinquency by race. The study report although authoritative parenting was rated effective over authoritarian and permissive parenting, their overall analysis did not support the currently accepted paradigm that authoritative parenting style is the most effect parenting style to reduction and prevention of delinquency notwithstanding the degree of control and supervision, only parental support remain an important dimension to reduction and preventing delinquency rates. Again, other literature findings provide laudable reasons that authoritative parenting does not benefit Asian Americans as it does for European Americans (Chao, 2001).

2.4 Care and its perception in the Nordic Region (Finland)

Knowing the conditions of care, child rights, its femininity inclined and its perception in Finland is relevant to the study because immigrant parents themselves and children require care and their experiences and perception of care giver's will help in the study analysis on how it support their parental integration and communication.

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[9] United Nations Human Rights https://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx

Care system in Finland is to ensure equity in the distribution of its wealth to its people as way to curb poverty. As pointed out earlier this equal distribution of resource defines Finland as of low power distance culture and its femininity inclined (Liu et al., 2011; Neuliep, 2009). Kremer (2007) describes 'How welfare state care' in relation to culture, gender and parenting in Europe. The study examined the state of childcare services, the right to receive care, tax, social security and leave. The study in accordance with other literature expressed that, care for children includes parenting and their own parents best provide it. It is also considered as work, which requires remuneration preferably paid by the state (Kremer 2007, p. 30, 217). The study also saw change in full time mother into parental sharing where fathers also are 'forced' to stay home to care, lured by tax reliefs and work days off (Kremer, 2007, p. 43, 217; Rostgaard, 2014).

Care for children is considered a right and must be provided for the child, regardless of the parents' financial background. However, the Nordic family law reasoning of fatherhood (making fathers to take on motherhood responsibilities) is done for the best interest of children for them to get both images of the fathers and mothers in their parenting. It is also done to ensure gender equality, gender neutrality and the priority of the children as well as ensuring continuous working carrier for mothers (Eydal and Rostgaard, 2016). As at 2007, Kremer recorded that, Finland in this regard was moving towards a dual breadwinner model (femininity) (Kremer 2007, p. 63). However, studies have shown that in Finland this right is given to parents who live together and even that few fathers use all the parental leave days required of them (Eydal and Rostgaard, 2016). Solutions to family problems are provided to the advantage of the child, therefore the partner with whom the child is not living with, by law must pay child maintenance fee to support the child and in Finland, the amount is dependent on how much that partner earns (Rotsgaard, 2014). This is done to support single parents financially and it has been established that single mothers in Nordic countries in general enjoy better situations than those in other European countries (ibid). The Nordic family policy also supports maternity care and provides fertility assistance for persons who have problems with fertility and this is also done to enrich the region's low and declining population (ibid).

Elderly family care is given to the aged from 65 years with special concentration on 80 years plus age group. Literature on Nordic medical statistical suggest that the longer a person lives the more they are liable to diseases and dependant on help and medical assistance in their daily life. Most of them are primarily taken to old people's home where they are cared for. Care provided for the

elderly has improve for the last decades and has generally increased the life expectancy in the region (NOMESCO, 2017).

Ervast, Anderson Goul, and Rigdal (2012) point out a critical problem of the welfare state as being the perception of the public on how it operates. Kremer (2007) likens care in the Nordic region to Snow-white ideals of care where scholars communicate it with concerns on morality, care in the Scandinavia here is seen as being 'cold' and a living nightmare for families. Etzioni (1993) and Wolfe (1989) explained that, if the state takes care of people's responsibilities, the people will have no moral energy left to care for each other and that if commitment to family weakens, it reflects to commitments to people in the society. Therefore, it is a mistake to entrust effective personality formation of children and toddlers in the hands of strangers (as cited in Kremer, 2007, p. 31). Similarly, some literature ascribe that, a state that cares too much destroys the fabric of society. Thus, some benefits suppress individual responsibilities, make them lazy and care little of one another, as well as being available to people who do not want to take total responsibilities of their lives and also discourages people from hard work by the heavy taxation on individuals and enterprises that affect the society in general (Ervast et al., 2012). Other literatures point out that working conditions in the Nordic regions are not flexible because time schedules are not determined by parents. Therefore, combining full-time or part-time work with care for children is very demanding and stressful. It has been argued that belonging and possibilities of inclusion of care in the Nordic states have boundaries, which are politically streamed towards inclusion of immigrants especially because it is based on citizenship and work (Heidi et al., 2013).

Care in Finland is given in the form of income and service provided through Kela (the Social Insurance institution in Finland), according to the institution's official website (www.kela.fi), eligibility for its care is to people who intend to move to Finland permanently. According to the survival guide brochure for 2018-2019 jointly produced by Abo Academy University and Yrkeshogskolan (Novia), welfare benefits for children in Finland, includes free child day care services for families with low-income with income earning families paying fee according to their earnings, assistance in maternity and child welfare clinics, parental leave allowances such as paid maternity and paternity leaves. Kela provides monthly child benefit for children under 17years, housing subsidies, family replacements, illness, pharmaceutical reimbursement and rehabilitation services, travel allowances for health, occupational health care, care for disabled and their

interpreting services and students among others as mentioned earlier (www.kela.fi). Research and Statistics suggest that in June 2017, every sixth family in Finland received general housing allowance, with income support of about 6% to families with children and that the large proportion of support for families goes to single parents.

According to Tervola (2012), Finland supports child home care where parents are supported to care for their children themselves in the house until after three years before they are taken to day care. According to Tervola, the support Finland give in this regard supersede other Nordic countries and has become problematic for immigrants' integration, because base on the payment information for home support immigrant families prefer to care for their children at home until three years meanwhile it is known that day care for children help in the integration of immigrant children.

2.5 Immigrants experiences of parenting in foreign or intercultural context

Several studies have been conducted across the globe on immigrants in new cultures showing their experiences in USA, Australia, Canada, Sweden, Norway, Russia (Sodowsky and Plake, 1992; Landsford et al., 2007; Bornstein and Bohr, 2011; Rasmussen et al 2012; Renzaho, 2010, Renzaho et al., 2011; Wiebe, 2009; Kaida, 2012; Asander et al., 2013; Kabatanya, 2017; Ifaka, 2017; Curtis Jones, 2005).

In Australia, Renzaho (2010, 2011) examined parenting styles and family functions and relations among African migrants in Melbourne, Victoria. The study after 39 interviews with families revealed that African parents are more restrictive, exercise close monitoring of their children's interests, activities and friends. In addition, these immigrant parents ensure hierarchical approaches in decision-making; and prefer to hold on to their old cultures even in the new cultures toward achieving collective family goals than adapting the new. Since, parenting in Africa and other collectivistic culture is couched within what is culturally accepted as a family. As noted earlier, family in this sense include parents, grandparents, siblings, uncles, aunts and close neighbours each of whom also contributes to parenting of children to achieve collective goal.

When they migrate to new foreign cultures with these collectivistic ideas and authoritarian style of parenting encompassing, low support with scrutiny, absolute obedience by children, corporal punishment, and discouragement of individualism and among others they are often against the law

in the host culture (Renzaho, 2011). Bornstein and Bohr (2011) points out how this makes African immigrant parents feel loss of their ability to take effective decisions on behalf of their children because they are being assessed based on the host culture which makes their practices often to be misunderstood. In this regard, (Renzaho et al., 2011, p. 237) agrees with the opinion that in dealing with migrant parenting, it is appropriate to take into consideration their socio-cultural practices and parenting before migration and after migration, since it is based on the two experiences, they assess their parenting styles.

Sodowsky and Plake (1992) study on acculturation of international people in a Midwestern university found less acculturation levels among Africans, Asians and South Americans than Europeans. The study based its conclusion on the use of language as acculturation agents. Similarly, studies (e.g. Jay et al., 2013; Rasmunssen et al., 2012) agree that language and cultural differences do not augur smooth communication and therefore prevent immigrant parents and school administration from working together to achieve educational goals respectively. Jay et al. (2013) further elaborate that because of language barrier immigrants have limited access to helpful information, which affects their decision whenever they want to evaluate their options in the host society. They rather rely on hearsay and told stories of others. Jones (2005) interviewed immigrant families in Russia and saw that, 89 percent of immigrant adolescents behave as cultural brokers to their parents because of their inability to read and understand their new language among other variables of the study. These buttress the importance of language in communication, which is a key aspect for acculturation, or adaption of immigrants.

In addition, Bornstein and Bohr's (2011) studies on immigrant's acculturation points out a disorganizing situation in their acculturation process. Landsford et al., (2007) similarly emphasize the possibilities leading to multiples of stressors among contemporary immigrant families because of their reasons for migration, integration process and their illegal status. In Canada, Wiebe (2009) shows the gap between immigrants and native-born outcomes in the labour with even highly educated immigrants occupying low skilled jobs, insured forms of survival employment which makes them disorganise and think of racism. This disorganisation and thoughts have probable effect on quality of family functioning. Kaida (2012) explores the impact of host country education and language training on immigrants in Canada.

Rasmussen et al. (2012) also examined perceptions and disciplinary practices among new immigrants of West African origin in the USA. The study noted as children go to school, meet and socialize with friends they become open to new knowledge through the school's system, government agencies, media and wider networks on laws that protect their rights and freedom and supports through the welfare system outside the family. The study also expressed how in New York, African immigrant children threaten or call 911 on the door of their parents when they are disciplined through corporal punishment. The study however mentioned that none of their interviewees reported these interferences by the police or teachers as being helpful. The study therefore reveals that the immigrants have distrust in public authorities because many West African parents see the frequent intersection and monitoring of their disciplinary values as discontinuing and attack on their old culture.

In a master thesis in Norway, Kabatanya (2017) conducted a qualitative narrative study of 6 participants to examine the lived and told experiences of Ugandan immigrants. The study revealed the struggles and dilemma the immigrants face in maintaining their old cultural identities and tensions between parents and children and children welfare service which can have consequences on parenting. Ifaka (2017) thesis on ``Raising children in a new culture`` the research was based on theories of socialization and culture. The study used participants from Nigeria living in Norway and, reported similar tensions, conflict between them and the Norwegian authorities (Barnevernet) which the participants describe as insulting and base on misunderstanding making it difficult for them to find a balance between the two parenting cultures.

On the other hand, evidence of successful integration or adaptation strategies has been identified in Sweden where Asander et al (2013) found out changing patterns of distancing in parent- child relationship and mother and father roles towards the host's culture. This evidence confirms Renzaho (2011), which among other factors also saw positive impacts on key parenting dimensions based on their application of a unique and innovative parenting programs to address family related problems on 39 immigrants in Melbourne Victoria, Australia. In Norway, Ifaka (2017) master thesis however also identified parental negotiations and cultural learning process among Nigerian immigrants towards integration. Nevertheless, in Canada Kaida (2012) in answering her study question, 'Do host country education and language training help recent

immigrants exit poverty answered positive for immigrants' with certain standard of education prior to immigration.

In Finland, a PhD thesis and article by Stephen (2011; 2006) respectively among other topics was concerned with 'African immigrants' perception of police in Finland. In his answer to the study question, is it base on discourse of race or culture? The study answered that the immigrants' views on police behaviour could be attributed to cultural differences. He also indicated that immigrant minorities experience more discrimination and racism in Finland, which prevent them from getting their rights observed in the country (Egharevba, 2011). Again, literature in assessment of discrimination in the Finnish labour market among other variables indicates that in job recruitment about 35-65% of people with ethnic minorities with foreign background reported perceived discrimination that hampered their acquisition for job (Larja et al. 2012). Emphasising that the society give people a sense of belonging though immigrants may acquire schooling opportunities in Finland, they encounter problems in being recruited to participate in the Finnish working life (Jasinskaja- Lahti et al., 2002 cited in Larja et al., 2012). In addition, at work about 2-9% respondents representing the general population reported haven observed discrimination on the bases of ethnicity, language, and nationality

However, a research by Liedkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti (2000) compared the experiences of discrimination and their influence on trust in authorities and psychological stress among 1,146 immigrants of age between 20 and 36, from seven immigrants groups. The study found out that discrimination experiences were highly predictive of the lack of trust in the Finnish authorities and the psychological wellbeing of all immigrants.

Based on the available literature, there seem to be a consensus among researchers that authoritative parenting style presents better child outcomes than being authoritarian and it affect some immigrants' life conditions in foreign cultures. Consequently, the current study sought to find out the coping mechanisms Ghanaian immigrants in Finland (e.g. of authoritarian culture), use to adapt to demands of their new parenting culture, especially in terms of their parental control and support, communication with children and the Child Help Service(Welfare).

2.6 Theoretical framework

Two theoretical perspectives were used to explore the link between communication, acculturation and immigrant parenting. Dahl (2003) combined model of the Semiotic and the Process schools of Intercultural Communication and Barry (1992) Acculturation concept were used.

2.6.1 Dahl's Combined Model of Intercultural Communication

The study adopted the combined model of intercultural communication concepts for its context and its parties involved according to Dahl (2003). The Semiotic school of communication emphasizes on the importance of how people negotiate and create meaning of messages. After the sender transmits messages based on their socio-cultural understanding (reference frame), the model is highly particular on how the receiver interprets it. Understanding of the receiver and creation of meanings to these messages is in accordance with his or her previous experiences with the message or object to ascribe meanings in relation to other people and the cultural context (reference frame). The semiotic school of communication can be likening to high-context communication cultures described earlier in association to the Ghanaian culture. Process school of communication on the other hand is simply centred on the process by which the message is transmitted and received. The sender encodes the message and the receiver decodes the message. This school on the other hand can also be liken to low-context communication culture described earlier and in association with the Finnish culture. The reference frames here can be referred to cultural dimensions, communication patterns and parental differences between Ghana and Finland described in the previous chapters.

2.6.1.1 A diagram showing Semiotic and Process Models Combined by (Dahl 2003)
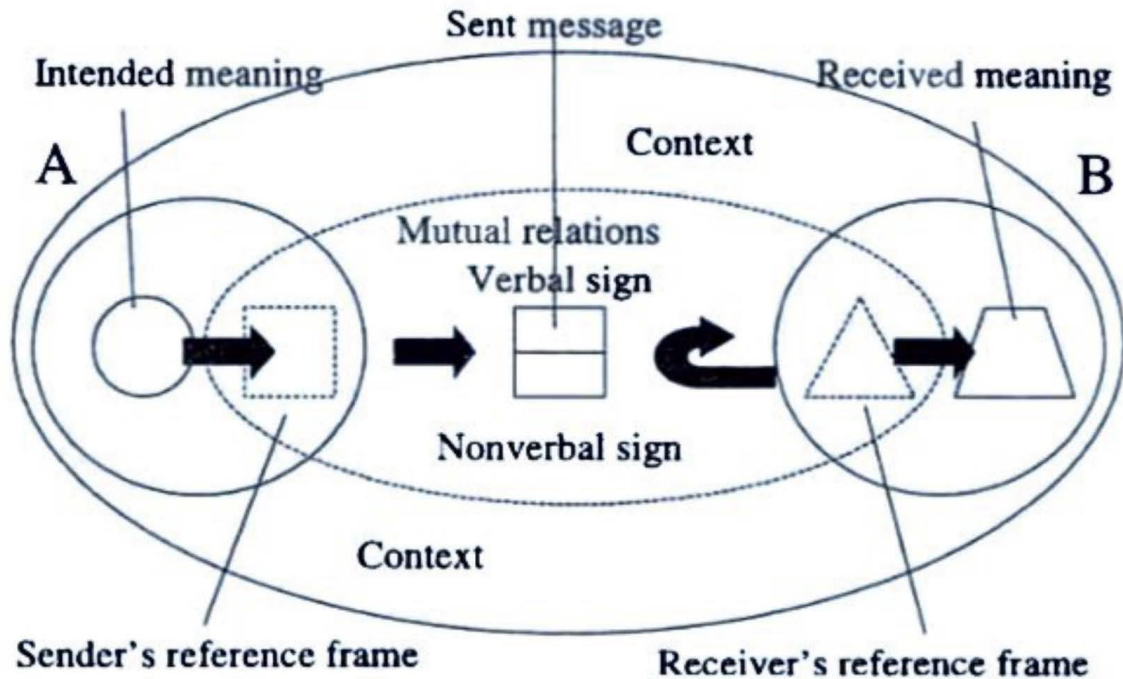
The diagram shows communication between A and B. According to Dahl (2003) the sender sends the message with an intended meaning, transmitted by verbal and/or non-verbal action based on his or her reference frame. From the diagram above 'A' shows cultural experiences and social-cultural background as a circle who encoded a verbal message of a circle in the form of a square together with non-verbal signs. When the receiver receives the message, and makes effort to interpret it, he or she also does so in relation to their reference frame. As long as the sender and the receiver have different *reference frames* linked to the message as well as their current situations and positions; the intended meaning sent to the receiver is received differently. In this case, there could be misunderstanding in communication. Diagram 'B' shows the receiver with a triangle reference frame who received the square and the non-verbal signs and interpreted it as a trapezium. The decoded message as a trapezium is different from the encoded square message. Dahl (2001, 2003) explains further that meanings are not found inside the messages themselves but rather is ascribed by senders who encode meanings and the receivers who decode meanings.

Literature on communication, parenting and cultural dimensions differences above suggest that the Ghanaian culture and the Finnish culture have different reference frames and could lead to possible misunderstandings. This suggests that the intended meanings of parental messages sent by the host (new) culture to immigrant parents may not be well captured based on their reference frames compared to how things are done in their old culture and how it is supposed to be done in their current conditions in the host culture. Studies examining immigrant parents' distrust in public authorities; conflict between old culture and the host cultural norms among West Africans in U.S.A, Norway and Finland (Rasmussen et al*.,* 2012 ; Ifaka, 2017 ; Katabanya, 2017; Egharevba 2011, 2006 ; Liedkind and Jasinskaja-Lahti 2000) suggest immigrants at that time had not received the intended meaning of messages sent by the public authorities. Further, the public authorities were not aware of the acceptable communication patterns of the immigrant parents. However, the concept establishes that the reference frames making up the cultures of the two actors are dynamic that change or develop with time with daily input (Dahl, 2003; Liu et al., 2011; Ting-Toomey and Dorjee, 2018).

To ensure smooth communication without breakages and misunderstanding one must bring the other to close understanding of their reference frames through mutual learning of culture and language of the other, socialization and mutual relations. This process is what can be termed as acculturation. Since cultures (reference frames) are not closed but socially constructed and are negotiated in human life experiences (Dahl, 2006), it will be possible for immigrant parents to be drawn closer to the host culture's reference frame. This is through shedding certain aspects of their old culture and adapting the new, which can be done through process of mutual agreement to understand the signs. In the case of the Ghanaian immigrant parents in this study, it will help them to receive the full or considerable meaning of the messages sent by the Finnish parental culture to ensure good communication between them and host country's welfare as well as with their children, since children acculturate faster than parents. In Australia, Renzaho (2011) saw positive impacts on key parenting dimensions of Africans based on their application of unique and innovative parenting programs to address family related problems. This does not mean that cultural factors can be taken on and off their actors but since, some humans are flexible, they can easily adapt to other cultures through learning (Dahl 2003; Samovar and Porter 2003).

2.6.2 Barry`s concept of Acculturation (Adaptation)

According to Barry (1992) *acculturation* is the term given to the outcome of a cultural change following continuous contact between two different cultures, normally between a cultural group or individual from a different culture (non-dominant) and a host culture (dominant). In these changes, there is always a predominant shift of the non-dominant (Ghanaian old parental culture in this context) towards the dominant (Finnish parental culture). At the individual acculturation level, many psychological changes occur leading to what Barry (1992) refers to as behavioural shifts. Here, it is required of the Ghanaian immigrant parent to change his or her original cultural parental practices and begin to consider learning ways of acculturation towards integration. The psychological and social problems accompanying the behavioural shift are termed *acculturation stress* and can relatively be seen in parenting as *parental acculturation stress.* In Norway, Kabatanya (2017) and Ifaka (2017) thesis revealing the dilemma and struggles that Ugandan and Nigerian immigrant parents go through in maintaining their old parental culture could be linked to parental acculturation stress.

The strategies used in the above acculturation and their outcomes are referred to as *Adaptation*. In this process as established earlier the Ghanaian immigrant parents will be confronted with ethnocentric issues whether they should value their old parental culture or that of the Finnish parenting culture and which should be retained or copied. A decision to reject their original parental culture in favour of the Finnish defines *assimilation* and it means communication has been very effective. A decision to hold on to the old parental cultural practices but still cloth themselves with the Finnish parental cultural practices defines *integration*, meaning average effective communication.

Decision to maintain their old parental culture and reject the Finnish, will define *separation or segregation,* signalling unsuccessful communication. Finally, at a stage where the immigrant's parents feel loss of cultural and psychological contact with both old and new parental practices, they are left in-between and do not know where they belong, and this is termed as *marginalization,* meaning confusion in communication. Bornstein and Bohr's (2011) investigation on immigrant's acculturation recognised a disorganizing situation in their acculturation process and pointed out that the immigrants receive the message sent by the host culture but get confused with the meaning they ascribe to it and its relation to their old parental culture and are left in-between.

The kinds of negative feelings associated during the immigrants' parental adaptation also leads to *parental stress* (parental acculturation stress). These parental stressors negatively affect both the child and parents psychological, social and physical health. society (Barry 1992; Baumrind, D. 1966, 1971a; Bernadi, et al., 1989 ; Kahkonen, 1999 ; Zukauskiene, 2007 ; Landsford et al., 2007 ; Harris., 2018). Nevertheless, it is dependent on the choices and kind of the old parental cultural characteristics the immigrants bring with them into the new parental acculturation and adaptation arena (Barry et al., 1987 in Barry 1992) which is also dependant on the degree of effectiveness communication. The significance of this to the current study means that possible parental stress Ghanaian immigrant parent's encounter in Finland continue until when satisfactory adaptation and effective intercultural communication strategies have been achieved. Choi et al. (2018) draws on Barry`s model to explicate ``Acculturation strategies among American youth subtypes and correlates across Filipino and Korean Americans``. The concept was used by Urzua et al. (2017) to examine ``the influence of acculturation strategies on quality of life by immigrants in Northern Chile``. Therefore, the concept fits for the current study and its intercultural context.

2.6.3 **Chapter summary**

The literature show differences in cultural dimensions (e.g. power distance, uncertainty avoidance, long-term and short-term orientations), differences in communication patterns, perception of care in Finland and parenting reflections of the Ghanaian and Finnish culture, reflects the parental references frames of both the Ghanaian immigrant parents and the host's in intercultural communication. The theoretical background presented from the combined model of communication indicates that the more successful the communication between the Ghanaian immigrant parents and the Finnish parenting culture, the more the immigrant parents will understand the new parenting culture which will also lead to their successful integration or assimilation as according to Barry's (1992) acculturation concept. On the other hand, the less successful the communication between the immigrant parents and the parenting culture, the less the immigrant parents understand the host parenting culture. The consequences can inform either their separation or marginalization as well as contributing to their state of parental stress (acculturation stress defined in Barry's acculturation concept).

Chapter 3

3. Methodology

3.1 Approach and research design

To answer the how, why and what questions of life experiences of Ghanaian immigrant parents in Vaasa, Finland, a qualitative approach was employed for the study. Qualitative ethnographic approaches were used to collect primary data to describe and interpret in triangulation to bring to light trusted and subjective experiences of immigrant parenting.

Since the study context involved two cultures, an ethnographic approach was incorporated to achieve rich qualitative data to interpret the world as it appeared to the participants of the study. Doing ethnography required the researcher to step into the field to observe, conduct interviews, participate, make audio recordings and interpret what was witnessed as it appeared (Maanen 1995). The ethnographic approach was used to explore how communities are created, held together with human interactions or explore questions relating to two cultures (Maanen 1998 and Wolcott 1982 cited in Potter, 2013). In line with this, the study sought to explore life experiences of immigrants' old parental culture against the new parental culture to know how the immigrants interact, feel and the perceptions they develop of their parenting world in the new culture in its natural form undisturbed by the presence of the researcher (Atkinson and Hammersley 1994; Malinowski 1884-1942).

Kirk and Miller (2013) define qualitative research as a tradition used in the social sciences that basically relies on watching people in their own setting and interacting with them in their own language on their convenient terms. Denzin and Lincoln (2013) see qualitative research as a situated activity that locates the observer in the world and consist of interpretative and material practices that make the world visible. Accordingly, the study employed field notes, individual and focus group discussions, observations and audio recordings to represent meaning of the specific situation being studied (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013). While there is no doubt that using quantitative approach would have equally led to some interesting conclusions of the study, the nature of its closed end questionnaires would have limited the extent of attaining the full life experiences of the participants under study (Creswell, 2009). However, as a qualitative research, the study utilised its open-ended nature to employ multiple strategies in a single and questions that focused on attaining trusted life experience, which was seen through examination of symbols, emotions and language

(Potter, 2013; Denzin, 2017). Again, the methodology offered advantages of flexibility where necessary to examine how the immigrant parents make meaning of events, processes and their perceptions and relate these meanings to their old and new experiences of their new world (Miles and Huberman, 1994; Tim 2002; Bickman and Rog, 2009; Yin 2016).

According to the anthropology and the Chicago school of Sociology, data collection methods such as observation, focus group discussion and interviews are traditionally keen for doing ethnography (Morgan, 1997 and Wolcott, 1982 cited in Potter, 2013). The approach for data collection was chosen in line with ethnographic ethics and rules of interaction with participants which is then related to patterns of cultural processes. The study was conducted as a micro ethnographic study on Ghanaian immigrant parents in Vaasa, Finland which can be used to relate to macro patterns of Ghanaians in Finland. A semi-structured interview guide was employed to collect data from purposeful sample of ten Ghanaian parents between 1st April 2018 and 7th May 2018. The city of Vaasa, between 1990 and 2017 recorded about 233 officially moving from Ghana to Vaasa. These number does not include those who move to Vaasa from within Finland and Europe. It is believed that Ghanaians mainly come to Vaasa for education in its tuition free vocational institutions and universities which serves as the gate way through which many of them gain permanent residence and establish families.

3.2 Participant Sampling Procedure

Sampling is the act of selecting a few out of the whole for a study. A sample of ten participants were purposefully selected to represent the Ghanaian immigrant parent's population in Vaasa, Finland (Tim, 2002; Yin, 2016). Purposive sampling strategy was used because the nature of the study required recruitment of participants who possess the quality of information needed to achieve the study aims (Rog and Bickman, 2009, p. 79; Yin, 2016). It was planned earlier to sample both married and single parents, it later involved a circumstance where a Ghanaian is married to non-Ghanaian and in that case only the Ghanaian partner was to be recruited. All ten participants who were Ghanaian parents were successfully interviewed. Among the participants it was seen that collecting background information such as their length of stay in Finland or Europe, level of education and number of children of the participants would be important for the study. The length of stay was important, because existing literature suggests that acculturation requires continuous contact between two cultures (Barry, 1992). Information on the length of stay helped to relate and

understand the experiences and perceptions of the participants based on how long they have been in contact with the new parenting culture. The researcher was interested in the respondents level of education, social status, age and number of children These data were collected because in communication when a message is encoded to the receiver, one of the key issue is for the receiver to decode and get the intended meaning of the message, which according to literature is based on the receiver's life experiences and knowledge constituting their reference frames and culture (Dahl, 2003). Therefore, it became apparent in the observation period that the level of education of the participants can influence how they perceive and make judgments between the two parenting cultures. The participants' ages gave clues on how well they had been with the old culture. Their marital status and the number of children in the new environment, indicates to some extent how well the participants possess the life experiences needed to ascertain the objectives of the study. I realised that the background information collected was very helpful to understand participants' experiences and make analysis.

3.2.1 Background Information of participants

Table 1 below shows the background information of participants showing their pseudo names in the study, length of stay in Finland or Europe, age, number of children, educational level, date and of interview, interview duration and venue for interviews. Table 2, shows the number of participants, date, time, duration and venue of focus group discussion.

3.2.2 **Table 1**

Pseudonym	Years in Finland or Europe	Age or Range	No. of Children	Educational Level	Date	Interview duration	Venue
Mr. Kumasi	10	36	2	Master	11.04.2018	00:53:21	Participant's home
Mrs. Kumasi	6	30	2	Diploma	11.04.2018	00:53:21	Participant's home
Mr. Sunyani	13	39	3	Diploma	15.04.2018	00:53:09	Participant's home
Mr. Tema	12	40	1	Bachelor	18.04.2018	01:24:52	Participant's home
Mrs. Tema	6	30-40	1	Master	18.04.2018	01:24:52	Participant's home
Mr. Accra	15	40	2	Ph.D.	20.04.2018	00:38:36	Participant's home
Mrs. Accra	13	35	2	Bachelor	20.04.2018	00:38:36	Participant's home
Mr. Cape Coast	10	35	2	Ph.D.	22.04.2018	00:45:07	Participant's home
Mrs. Cape Coast	4	31	2	Diploma	22.04.2018	00:45:07	Participant's home
Mr. Tamale	13	35-40	2	Master	30.04.2018	00:34:38	Researcher's home

3.2.3 **Table 2**

Focus Group Discussion				
No. of Participants	Date	Time	Duration	Venue
11	08.04.2018	14:00	01: 04:49	Church of Pentecost, Vaasa

Base on the information gathered from participants in table 1 and table 2 as well as observations, the research findings presents under chapter four

3.3 Data Collection and Methods

The actual data collection began on 1ˢᵗ April 2018 in Vaasa. Data was ascertained by personal observation, focus group discussions and individual interviews. Combining these data collection strategy was to supplement each strategy's weakness with the strength in triangulation to achieve rich data and ensure consistency required for trustworthiness of qualitative studies. A semi-structured interview guide was used to guide data collected through focus group discussion and individual interviews. The strategy utilized the flexibility of qualitative methods, for example, it did not follow the same step by step system of asking participants the same questions, questions were asked irregularly based on what respondents said in the boundaries of the semi-structured questionnaires. Questions were rephrased in both English and the Ghanaian Language (Twi) for participants understanding of the question and expressed themselves in the same accord.

3.3.1 Participant Observation

Observations are the descriptions of activities, actions, behaviours, communications and any other observable human experiences of participants in the study context (Patton, 2015; Maxwell, 2005). On the field I took on both insider and outsider position to participate and observe. I positioned myself as an insider to participate, because it is a requirement of ethnographers to enter the field and have personal experiences to understand the context. Positioning myself as an outsider made me observe and record events as exactly as I saw them in their context. As ethnography demands I engaged in persistent observation as soon as I set foot on the field. My observations in Vaasa, Finland began in August 2017 at Ghanaian gatherings, church, birthdays, house parties and personal visits to families and in informal conversation. To observe as an insider on two occasions, I personally took charge for taking care of seven immigrant parents` children at church during Sunday service. I also offered to take five children from three different families out to play with one of their fathers for two hours whiles their parents were in meetings. My background as a Ghanaian immigrant helped me to understand and relate to the immigrant parents' old cultural and their new cultural experiences. I felt very welcomed by all the people whom I had conversations with. I participated with them in their games and attended almost all their church meetings. This strategy is in line with literature and has successfully been used by Malinowski (1884-1941) to

work among the population of the people of Trobiand Island. Participant observation helped me to identify potential participants to include in the interview sample through informal conversations. It also helped to establish rapport and familiarity which also built up the participants trust and made them comfortable to participate in the study. To establish a link between the characteristics and useful elements for the objectives of the study to focus on them in detail to achieve depth (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), the observation notes were used to guide further data collection and questions in both Focus group discussion and Individual interviews.

3.3.2 Focus Group Discussion

After participant observation, a focus group discussion constituting seven parents was conducted to gain insight and opinions of individuals who would have been ignored during personal observations. For participants to fully express themselves, Languages used were the Ghanaian Language (Twi) and English Language. They could also mix the two as they wished (Bronislaw Malinowski 1884-1942). Discussion themes included, how they adapt to the demands of the new parental culture? If there were any changes and how they feel about the changes? What coping mechanisms do they employ to keep going? How they communicate with their children and with the child help centre in their new environment? During the discussions all that participants said were recorded, observations of their confidence and enthusiasms about what they said, their emphasis on certain information, agreed and disagreed were all noted. Also, I was careful about looking out for social desirability bias, a situation where participants seem to give positive responses to please the researcher or gave an overly general honest answer with the notion to keep me from forming negative impression about them. Probing questions were used to deal with these biases (Patton, 1999). Also, during the discussion children were playing around and could run to their parents. How parents communicated with them both verbal and non-verbal in these instances were also noted. The strategy gave me opportunity to follow up participants who had more to say for individual interviewees

3.3.3 Individual Interviews

As mentioned above some participants who the researcher found to possess more information were selected for in depth face-to-face interview guided by the same semi-structured interview guide to collect more data. Also, here participants were encouraged to freely express themselves within Twi or English depending on the respondent's choice (Bronislaw Malinowski 1884-1942).

Interviews were conducted within the limits of the study boundaries. Listening was conducted by nodding my head as the study goes on to create trust, rapport and mutual commitment within the interview time (Tim, 2002). During interviews with parents, their children did not see me as a stranger because a kind of rapport had already been developed during personal observation when I took care of them at church services on two Sundays.

Also, as mentioned earlier in the Focus group discussion, social desirability bias was checked for consistency in what participants said in the group discussion and the individual interviews (Patton, 1999). Again, I was careful in dealing with researcher bias, by positioning myself as a student and relying on only what participants said and observed because my position could affect the quality of the data at all stages of the study (Lincoln and Cuba, 1985; Patton, 1999). However, to discover the unexpected and uncover the unknown (Gerson and Horowitz cited in Tim, 2002) I made room for participants by asking if they had further information they would like to add. Almost all of them gave additional information that was useful for the present study and an insight for future study considerations.

3.4 **Research ethics**

All researches must recognize a set of ethical and legal principles of all those involved (Rog and Bickman, 2009). Oral permission was sought from participants and the nature and details of data collection well explained. Participants were well informed especially for the focused group discussion and suitable time agreed accordingly. Before the interviews, I informed the participants about the study content, its objectives and why they have been selected to participate. I also informed participants about their freedom and right to fully decide, whether to participate in the study or not and their right to withdraw from it any time. Their consent was sought for recording their voices. I was keen to protecting their privacy, guaranteeing anonymity, confidentiality and was sensitive to respecting the needs of the participants and population involved (Rog and Bickman, 2009). To achieve this, I assured participants that whatever information provided will be available to me alone and will be stored on my personal computer, which no third party can access. The information will be deleted after the final work. The anonymity of participants was achieved by representing their identities with pseudonyms from the Ghanaian context. I also made sure that sensitive information was not used as quotes but were generalized for discussion. Finally,

transcribed interviews were sent back either personally or by email for participants to crosscheck their own information and for approval.

3.5 Analysis and Conclusion

3.5.1 Thematic analysis

Literature endorses the need for qualitative analysis to be documented as a process for further studies (Miles, Huberman and Saldana, 2014). The study is about achieving Ghanaian immigrants parenting experiences. Thematic analysis was chosen because the study saw it as the best and flexible strategy for qualitative research that have stronger focus on achieving individual perspectives over an issue (Flick, 2018, p.474). The study employed four objective questions and it has been argued that thematic analysis work with multiple research questions and analyse different types of data such as interview data, focus group data and observations data used in the current study (Braun and Clarke, 2013).The study used the six phases of thematic analysis according to Braun and Clarke (2006, 2013)

First, I sought to familiarise myself with the data by listening and transcribing the audio recordings after each interview until all audio recordings for all interviews and focus group discussion were covered in detail. Although transcription was very demanding, and time consuming, total transcriptions of all recordings were necessary to capture all what the participants said. Every word participants said were deemed very important, so all words were transcribed to represent exactly the participants experiences and perceptions carefully that, the data did not stray out of the context in which it occurred (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Also, since the language used were either Ghanaian local language (Twi) or English or a mix of both, my background as a Ghanaian also helped me to understand both languages perfectly and transcribed it accordingly. After the transcription, I read through the data for more familiarity and to identify initial ideas. I read through a second time at a slower pace to immerse myself into the data and underlining similar terms, phrases and experiences. For example, regarding objective (b) of the study, phrases and experiences such as 'it makes you feel like am going crazy', 'you need to check my temperature to see my heartbeats', 'I get scared that my daughter can end up being a spoil kid', makes you feel very stressful and angry', 'there are somethings my daughter does, and you fall in love multiples times', 'I felt very happy', 'it make us proud', 'my son motivates me' etc were noted.

Secondly, I generated codes from the relevant underlined terms, phrase and experiences across the entire data, which was done in the confines of the study questions and objectives. For example, the codes that was generated for above phrases and experiences included 'going crazy', 'scared', 'stressful', 'anger', 'love', 'joy', 'happiness', 'proud' and 'motivated'.

Thirdly, out of the generated codes, I searched for potential themes by joining similar generated codes that have relationships to produce potential themes. This means coding the generated codes (Clarke and Braun, 2013). For example, the generated codes above were group based on their relationships and were given potential themes as negative emotions and positive emotions.

Fourth, Braun and Clarke (2006) established this stage as reviewing themes and it involved checking if the potential themes have relationship with each other and correlates with the whole data and codes. It may require joining themes or dividing themes where appropriate to generate a thematic map for analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 35). Here too, the above themes were reviewed and noted that both negative emotions and positive emotions were related and answered in detail, one research objective question, how do the Ghanaian immigrant parents feel about changes in culture? All the other objectives followed the same procedure from first to fourth and that described them in detail.

Fifth, I conducted a writing analysis of each theme with clear explanations noting the relevance of each theme and its relationship to the experiences of immigrants parenting in foreign contexts. Sixth, at this point, I now got the chance to writing up a report of the study to connect the whole data with vivid extracts from the data in its context (ibid; Malcolm Williams in Tim, 2002, p. 5). Every objective was discussed in relation to its reviewed themes, literature, concepts and theoretical background understudy.

3.5.2 Conclusion

Conclusions were given based on the meaning that were generated by the study findings with open-mindedness. This includes meanings generated from the discussions under each theme in relation to the theoretical understanding.

3.6. Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness according to Lincoln and Guba (1985) is the ability of a research's worth to be evaluated or be measured. This study's worth can be measured based on its reliability, validity, and generalizability as discussed in the following paragraphs.

Reliability: The reliability of this study lies in the fact that the data collected, and its interpretation reflect and represents the exact world that was studied. This was achieved by following careful and acceptable systematic research design, method of data collection, interpretation and communication (Mays and Pope, 1995). I engaged observation over an extended period to identify the useful characteristics and elements for the study objectives and focused on them to achieve depth (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). During focus group interviews I followed up participants had more to say but because of the context felt reluctant or shy to express themselves and engage them in personal interviews which helped to check consistency. Also, another critical issue I looked out for was social desirability bias, for example, in the situation where participants seem to give positive or negative responses to please me or the study context. To deal with this bias I used probing questions to check consistency in what participants said (Patton, 1999). After transcribing the audio recordings, I crosschecked with respondents to ensure I have captured exactly what they said to make sure valid information were presented in the study.

In addition, I watched out for researcher bias. As a researcher, I positioned myself to listen and relied on only what participants said. Personal information was seen to be very important for the study analysis, so it was collected within the interviewing process where I saw that the trust between the researcher and the participants has been built properly to achieve trusted information used for analysis. Further, the credibility of a researcher according to literature can affect the data at all stages of the study (Patton 1999), nevertheless the reliability and validity of the data is tied to the researcher who collects and analysed the data and vice versa (Lincoln and Cuba 1985, Patton 1999).

Validity: Validity in qualitative research according to Kirk and Miller (2013) is gained at the expense of reliability of the findings. Triangulation was also used to seek the validity of data during analysis. The idea of triangulation's original principle as from navigation, where the intersection of three different landmarks are easily used to calculate actual location of an object (Patton, 1999; Potter, 2013; Yin 2016) was employed. Similarly, according to Mays and Pope (1995)

triangulation is an approach to collection of data from a wide range of different independent sources to deliberately seek for evidence. The study is based on evidence from the tripod data from personal observations (field notes), focus group discussion and individual interviews to establish connection between findings to produce reliable and valid data. For instance, personal observations in public space was compared to what participants said in the Focus group discussion and Individual interviews to check their consistency over time (Patton, 1999; Maxwell 2005).

Though triangulation seemed to me a bit expensive in terms of limited time and training, combining the tripod data helped me to cater for errors linked to using just one data source (Patton, 1999). Triangulation further helped me to ensure illumination of blind spots in the interpretation of analysis which again strengthens the validity of the research's findings and conclusions (Yin, 2016). Potter (2013) agrees with Lincoln and Guba (1985) that when researchers find common views on an issue, shown among different kind of people in a society, it creates a positive impression that the insights exist in the society (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Potter, 2013). Using triangulation to assess the validity of common experiences among different Ghanaian immigrant parents in their new context shows that the study findings exist.

Dependability: The study's commitment to following careful and acceptable systematic research design, method of data collection, interpretation and communication as described in the above paragraphs among others, shows consistent results that can be repeated by another researcher (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) to achieve the same results.

Generalization: Since this study focused on Ghanaian immigrants parenting in Finland, we caution against its generalization (Denzin, 2017).

3.7 Problems encountered during data collection

The major challenge that the study face is the limited period in data collection, transcribing audio recording of both group and individual interviews of participants in detail for cross checking, analysing and writing of report between 1st April 2018 and 7th May 2018.

During interviews, because of participants' time schedules and needs related to their children, all participants were not able to meet according to the initial appointments for interviews, six made it on their second appointment and the remaining four made it on their third appointment time. Even though this was a problem, it also benefit to the richness of the data, because it made me understand

more on the participants' experiences in relation to their children needs. In order not to make the participant feel being pressurised to participate, possibilities of which could have had impact on the quality of information they gave, I had to obey the participants new time schedules. In some interviews, the duration of the conversation lasted more than an hour, which could affect the concentration of some of the participants. In other interviews, participants were either too busy trying to respond to emergency messages, calls and in hurry for other equally important meetings. However, because of the kind of relationship I had established with them and my background as a Ghanaian made them feel like "helping a brother or a family member" as well as the importance of the study I informed them.

In addition, focus group discussion, the venue, the time started, and its duration might have affected the participants' concentration. The discussion was conducted right after church service in the church common area where others who were not part of the discussion could see participants. Participants might have been tired from the two hours church service and might want to go home to rest, eat or feed their children, engaging them in additional hour and half might have affect their concentration and information given. Again, the participants' children were energetically playing around jumping and climbing tables and could run into our midst which could divide the attention their parents had in as much as they wanted to ensure their children's safety, causing them not to fully participate or follow the discussions at some points. I dealt with all these problems by following up with these parents and involving them in one-on-one interviews at their own convenient time and in their preferred meeting place to get their full concentration (Creswell, 2007). Again, during the analysis process, after transcribing my aim was to personally cross-check transcript with all ten participants to seek maximum richness of the data. However, I was not able to make it up with all the participants. My realisation of how this could affect the level of richness of the data gave me the nod to cross check one participant on phone and the others through emails.

Again, concerning research ethic as mentioned earlier, the study's use of anonymity to preserve the identity of participants could not permit me to put in appendixes pictures taken during observations. For example, on fathers feeding children, playing with kids, carrying them in Vons and pictures of posters in their houses.

Chapter 4

4. Research findings

Based on the information gathered from participants under chapter three table 1 and table 2 as well as observations, the research findings present explain experiences of immigrant parenting in foreign context. The main theme was on investigating the participants' adaptation strategy, In addition, reviewing themes such as examining the feelings or emotions they attached to possible changes, how they communicate with their children, the child help services, and their coping strategies for the negative feelings or emotions and communication challenges, supports the main theme. These were examined with extracts from the data transcript that provide direct answers to best explain the objectives and the main theme to giver the picture of the Ghanaian immigrant parents experiences in the following chapters. Each theme was discussed and a conclusion given for all these discussions.

4.1 **How immigrant parents adapt to their new parenting culture**

This chapter shows, according to the tripod data, on how Ghanaian immigrant parents adapt to the new parenting culture in their current situations under the sub theme "Adaptation Strategy". Participants' perceptions are presented in descriptive forms and with quotes showing their voices in circumstances where and how they apply them. These were also presented basic themes based Baumrind's perceived control measures (parental demandingness) and relationship and support (parental responsiveness) they give to their children in the new culture.

4.1.1 Adaptation Strategy (Integration)

During parental acculturation, it is believed that the strategies immigrants (participants) use to achieve adaptable outcomes are referred to as Adaptation (Barry, 1992, 2005). These strategies as we have noted earlier in the theory section are assimilation, integration, separation and marginalisation. The study sought to find out from participants which of these strategies they employ to adapt in the Finnish parenting culture. In the focus group discussion, the participants said they combine practices from both their old (original) parenting culture and the new (host) parenting culture. The study recorded in their voices as *'...in my house, we adapt both systems 50/50...'* (Mrs. Accra, 13years stay in Europe, 2 children). About three other participants also used the exact phrase 'we adopt 50/50' from both cultures whiles other participants agreed in other

similar phrases. The same strategy was confirmed during their individual interviews where one acknowledged that, the

> …old system is not bad...there are certain good things you cannot take from both systems..., So what I try to do is that I pick from both cultures and combine them. But to say this culture is hundred percent good than that of Ghana and vice versa, the answer is no (Mr. Kumasi,11.04.2018).

They expressed that some things of their old culture which they believe '...do not contradict the law...' they will gladly teach their children (Mr. Tamale, 13years in Finland, 2children). All participants similarly reported with enthusiasm that, since they live in this system they could not prevent their children from copying from the system. For example, with food, they eat Finnish food at school and eat Ghanaian food at home. One parent told me, she does not know how to cook Finnish food for them but the children like the Ghanaian foods they cook in the house. Indeed, during personal observation where I offered to take charge of the children class on Sundays, the children mentioned the food they like best and it included a mix of Finnish and Ghanaian delicacies.

4.1.2 **Parental Responsiveness**

Concerning parental responsiveness refers to the warmth or relationship and support parents give to their children (Baumrind, 1966, 1991). All participants especially fathers shared that their relationship with their children in the new culture is the best and they are proud to adapt a greater part from it to replace their old culture, they expressed that,

> ... back home there is a power distance between the father and the child for instance, but in Europe there is no power distance between a child and the father...parents think establishing some distance between the child will make the child respect them, thinking that when they become familiar to their children, the children will take them for granted or think that they are coequals … (Mr. Cape Coast, 22.04.2018).

As noted in the study literature in Hofstede and Bond (1984) idea of high power distance cultures, the participants shared that respect between children and parents is very important in the Ghanaian cultural certain but most of what we call respect there is fear. Because they believe now that shouting at a child does not make them respect but rather fear and make them become timid. Respect is believed to be reciprocal, it is earned, when you give, you will get it back. Therefore, in their speeches with their children they try to exemplify it for the children to copy. For example,

we try to say can you please get me this... and when she is asking for something and she says Mummy, I want cookie, I tell her...to ask properly, you help her to say can I please have some cookie and until she says it, she doesn't get it ...we have to correct her and keep doing it until she gets it. That is one way we teach her to respect ... (Mr. Tema, 18.04.2018)

In a way this culture has educated me in many ways, because maybe I may be suffering from some child hood trauma from how I was raised for anger problem. My Dad for instance was not open, and he didn't play with us like we are doing here now, and it made me a very quiet person. We have learnt how to deal with this here by being more open and playing with the kids. I know this will build the confidence of the children and they will know that Daddy or Mummy loves me. Because at a point in time I thought my Daddy didn't like me and it didn't help me as a person...here the children are allowed to say their mind and how they feel, they can say Mummy am not happy about this or that but back home if you are not happy about something nobody cares ... (Mrs. Accra, 08.04.2018).

They expressed that they want their children to see them as their friends, adding that if the children want friends it should be them, so that what others tell them will not be final, but they will feel free to ask them for explanation. They also listen to them, though sometimes they do not get any meaning from what the children say or might be trying to say but just by paying attention to them and hearing what they have to say can make them close friends. Unlike in Ghana where a child cannot call an elder person by the name, here most parents are not offended if their children calls them by their first names, however they teach the children to call African male visitors uncles and female visitors, aunties. I noted that, all the children called me uncle during personal observation.

Further, the fathers shared that even if they go to work they have to come home early enough in the evening to put the children to sleep. Although they may be tired but they have to tell the child stories from their old culture or read a book for them before they sleep which the parents themselves did not experience at childhood. Sometimes during the day, the children can insist on their mothers to call them home and they are very conscious of that because,

when they go to school their teachers ask them all these things behind us…unlike Ghana where a child might not see the father for maybe two or three days and nothing happens, it normal there...here family comes first...honestly the relationship between parent and child is a good thing here... and I have come to enjoy naturally (Mr. Tamale, 30.04.2018).

Majority of the participants expressed that care is most effective when provided in a form of emotions, which will reflect in their relationship with the children. Because there is no extended

or other family member helping them out with the kids, they have the main responsibilities to care for the children and in that sense, they develop a kind of bond with the kids all the time. Although they do not practice buying gifts for the children all the time, they do not forget important days like on birthdays or when returning from a journey and outing days on their house rules calendar. They expressed that they make sure they support their children's physical and emotional needs to the best of their ability. One participant said

> I try to let them know I understand their feelings, I go to them and for example ask why they are crying, I do not have to yell at them...I have to come to their level...However the necessary physical needs of the children in school and home are all met. (Mr. Tamale, 30.04.2018).

Participants for instance said, back home in Ghana whether you like the food being offered or not you have no other option and you must eat it. If you are a child you are being fed with it by force as one participants shared that, "…here when the children say they will not eat what you cook they have options and you must give them what they want or allow them to go into the fridge and point to what they want to eat" (Mrs. Cape Coast, 22.04.2018).

 All Fathers during individual interviews mentioned taking on new roles such as changing diapers, feeding children, brushing their teeth, taking them to and from school as well as putting them to bed which were solely done by women back home. During personal observations, I also observed changes in masculinity towards femininity oriented, some women could ask their husbands to bath the children, dress them up, feed them among others which in their old culture, they would not get the courage to even mention it. It was observed that majority of the fathers' reaction towards this change was positive and they do it without reflecting on how it should be, back home. Some opted to do it even if the mothers wish to do it themselves.

4.1.3 **Parental Demandingness**

Concerning parental demandingness refers to the control measures participants employ in their parenting (Baumrind, 1966, 1991). Majority of the participants said they prefer mixing both cultures. Whiles few of the participants think that drawing more unto the new parenting culture is the best especially when they misbehave, others think otherwise. It is identified that participants are left with trial and error and do not know which can work best for them and in most cases, they push a bit harder towards their old culture. All participants acknowledged the fact that corporal punishment has been banned in the Finnish culture since 1984 which means that it is forbidden for

an adult to exercise physical strength over a child to cause the child discomfort or pain to control his or her behaviour. They emphasised that back in Ghana if you treat your child in an awkward way nobody will report you to the police but in Finland they will because in Ghana the child is considered as your 'bona fide' property. No one questions you but, in this culture, as soon as you give birth although you are the parent who gave birth to the child, the child literally belongs to the state and he or she becomes 'a state-owned property' so you cannot handle the child any how here. One participant expressed his awareness that,

> ... if you misbehave you can be arrested or called for questioning, the child can be abducted and if it happens in that way it is on your record and you can be banned not to even go closer to any child at all. In case you give birth to another child the state will seize it at the hospital...the whites are not 'fools' to be doing those things, may be they foresee that one day you may hurt the child so bad or cause the child to lose his or her life. (Mr. Accra, 20.04.2018).

Mrs. Accra added that, not like in Africa, children are beaten anyhow to the extreme without them knowing the reason why. Here we combine the two, sometimes we must be had a little and let the know why and what he or she did wrong. It is helpful if we get the balance right. (Mrs.Accra, 08.04.2018)

Majority of the fathers who participated shared that, it is a good thing they have adopted in Finland, not to hit a child like they experienced in Ghana, citing that ''if you go to Rome do what Romans do''. They shared also that, the worst thing one can do to a child here to control his or her behaviour is to give the child time-out; thus, to put the child in his or her bed room for five or ten minutes without any body going there. Some parents confirmed that this has been effective for them because the children see it as a sort of punishment. Similarly, others said that they use the term "naughty corner" and which is also working for them, as stated in the below excerpts

> we introduced what we call the 'naughty corner' at her very early age. Now we don't necessarily have to take her to the naughty corner we only have to tell her if you do the wrong thing, you will be isolated, and you will be by yourself somewhere, which in this house is the room where we change our cloths and jackets. I don't remember taking her there more than twice but the mere mention of, if you don't do this right you will go to the naughty corner, which will change her behaviour ... (Mrs. Tema, 18.04.2018).

Nevertheless, some who had problem with the discipline practices of the host culture accepted it because of their cultural difference, emphasising that they have seen instances where the discipline

practices have led children astray and cause a lot of harm than good since they came here. Some also shared for example that, they could not tolerate allowing their sixteen-year-old daughter to sleep overnight with a male friend or bring home a male friend as a boyfriend. According to Mrs. Kumasi, you have to stop their certain behaviors and encourage certain behaviors, so you see as their grow they drop certain behaviors in place of others. If you don't take any action then you will regret not doing anything as when they grow. (Mrs. Kumasi, 11.04.2018). They have also seen that in this culture when a child is climbing a high object, the parents only keep telling the child the danger in it, every time the child climbs until the child gets hurt before they act. In the Ghanaian culture, your parents knowing the danger in what you are doing cannot let you get hurt before acting, they must stop you. In this regard some participants think that the children need a little bit push not necessarily to hitting them, but you need to be a bit harder to make them know their limits. Without that if you leave the children just to do what they want until something happens before you act, they don't see the need in that. They shared that though they sometimes yell at the children in instances like the latter, they have recognised that it does not help, because with time the children develop resistance to that kind of procedure and they now find it difficult to control the children when they misbehave at certain point in time. As one stated that

> It is so crazy to think about, like what they are doing now you cannot stop them (referring to children running, jumping, climbing tables and shouting around during focus group discussion) ...their playing in school is different from when they come home, and I don't understand ... it makes you feel like going crazy. (Mr. Accra, 08.04.2018).

They also shared that in mixing the two cultures, morality and certain beliefs from their old religious background and the integrity found in this culture should be instilled in the children.

> I have taught them a bible quotation which, when I ask, children what does the bible say you should do to your parents and they will respond, obey your parents, and they will quickly remember. This is because I have used the bible to teach them and I refer it to them, so that they will obey their parents and behave well. I ask them what they learn every Sunday after church. (Mr. Sunyani,15.04.2018)

In fact, it was on Sunday and I observed that the whole family were preparing to leave for church when my interview with their Daddy was just ending. It was also observed among all participants that on weekends all parents go to church with their children and tell them to pray before they eat or sleep. However, the participants were very keen to instilling the integrity in the new culture. Unlike in the old culture where parents for example fail to honour their promise to buy something

for their children on their return from a trip, in the new culture, participants said have learnt that, as a parent you must not lie to your children. If you do then you cannot come to agreement with them because it is a major disappointment to the child. Your "...yes should be yes and no should be no, if you promise, you must fulfil because lies do not work with the kids in this context..." (Mr. Accra, 08.04.2018). Another also expressed that, "here showing up on time is very important if your child closes from school and expecting you to pick him or her up like 14pm, you must be there exactly..." (Mr. Sunyani,15.04.2018)

4.1.4 Discussion
One aim of this study was to find how Ghanaian immigrant parents adapt to the Finnish parenting culture. Their adaptive procedure was grouped under Baumrind's idea of parental demandingness and parental responsiveness. The study has demonstrated how culture dynamism influenced behavioural shift of the immigrants' authoritarian parenting towards authoritative parenting of the host. Participants expressed that they did not want their children to lose total grip of the cultural values of their home country and at the same time, they do not want them to go through the bad experiences they encountered in their childhood. The interesting views and practices recorded showed that, the strategy the Ghanaian immigrant parents adapt to parenting in the Finnish culture is by blending both authoritative and authoritarian parenting practices, which means they are pursuing parental integration (Barry, 1992). There was no visible parental separation and marginalization strategy among the study findings. Total parental assimilation was not recorded since participants still hold on to the pride of certain cultural values such as the value for respect and some authoritarian traits of their home culture.

In the literature, Renzaho et al., (2010, 2011) echoed that when Africans migrate to new environments with their collectivistic ideas and authoritarian style of parenting encompassing, low support with scrutiny, absolute obedience by children, corporal punishment, and discouragement of individualism and among others, they are often against the law in the new culture. Similarly, the study findings suggest that, some of the participants at certain point wished to apply their authoritarian tactics of 'yelling' to discipline their children but have realized that they cannot do so anymore because of the child right protection in new culture and its consequences on child outcomes. Although none of the participants was victims of the law, they might have been informed in their pregnancy training programs, by friends, internet and hearsay (Jay et al., 2013).

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This is because unlike Ghana, in Finland, children are given the highest priorities and care for them is considered a right and must be provided for the child, regardless of their parents' financial background (Rotsgaard, 2014; Eydal and Rostgaard, 2016).

Nevertheless, since cultures are not closed, and they are socially constructed and negotiated in human life experiences (Dahl, 2006). The current study findings showed according to the participants voices in phrases such ''if you go to Rome do what Romans do'' as well as their aim of bringing into their acculturation arena only those old parental practices that ''do not contradict the laws of their new culture'' aids them to integrate the new parenting culture. For instance, Tervola (2012) reported that immigrant parents Finland prefer to care for their children at home and receive home care support until their children are three years before taken them to day care, which delays their integration process. The current study saw among participants that all children at school going age were enrolled in school.

Irrespective of the later, the current study findings support the argument that, collectivistic and authoritative immigrant parents' background makes it challenging for them to accept parenting practices that culturally endorse behaviours among offspring that indulge in drug abuse, alcoholism, disobediences and join bad companies (Renzaho et al., 2010). It was evident in the participants' voices that they do not support in totality the disciplinary practices of the new parental culture and would like to push a bit harder to set limits or control measures to certain behaviours of their children, not necessarily the use of corporal punishment but rather push a bit harder. The viewpoints on parent discipline and child outcomes established that, different children evaluate and react to different kinds of negative consequences differently and it is the duty of parents to notify those differences to instigate successful discipline procedure (Grusec et al., 2017).

The current findings on the desire to pushing a bit harder to some extent is in line with the mixed results of Simons et al., (2012) studies on the consequences of corporal punishment among African Americans that, parenting styles that include harsh or corporal punishment is not always associated with negative outcomes. It is believed that these authoritarian parental practices that were retained even in their new culture confirms their high uncertainty in avoiding raising irresponsible children which can bring collective shame to them. As one express that 'if you don't take any action then you will regret not doing anything as when they grow'.

However, Nyarko's (2011) study on authoritative families in Ghana, agrees with other scholars on its positive effects on children academics, social, emotional and psychological advantage, and made a call for parents in Ghana to utilize these advantages. Its implication on the current study findings suggests that some participants might have had the feel, or probably observed the advantages of authoritative parenting style back home prior to migration, which they would love to utilize its opportunities since they are in its right culture. It also makes it easy for them to understand and adopt to the new parenting culture. In addition, Kaida (2012) identified in Canada that immigrants' educational background affects their integration; likewise current study participant's background information indicates that their ability to integrate has something to do with their high educational background; participants had at least a diploma qualification, which also might have affected their ability to integrate parenting practices from the old and new cultures.

Again, the study found that immigrant parents were motivated to integrate as information and guidelines on what to do when you arrive in Finland are made available in brochures, written in English, Finnish and Swedish at the magistrate office where they first go to register their address[10]. Education on what to do and how-to parent children are made available to them throughout their pregnancy periods by the nurses and midwifes. Also, financial support is being given to them to provide for the children and to support those who wish to study the host country`s language. Culture as we have noted in the literature is dynamic, fluid and never permanent, it can be learned and modified (Ting-Toomey, 1999; Neuliep 2009). Nevertheless, integration rest on the individuals own effort towards discarding aspects of the old and replacing it with the new (Barry, 1992). So, the immigrants' willingness to integrate is based on their own efforts.

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[10]Hard copies are available at the Magistrate office, where every migrant is required to go and register upon arrival, Visit www.lifeinfinland.fi

Chapter 5

5. Immigrant parents feelings or emotions about changes in their parenting practices

The study findings on experiences on how participants feel about changes in their old parental culture will be presented below. As noted in Barry's acculturation concept between immigrants' old and new cultures, there is psychological and social problems accompanying the behavioural shifts that occur, called *parental acculturative stress*. The study observed some changes in participants emotions attached to changing old parental values in favour of the new cultures values. This chapter is necessary because both negative and positive emotions associated with this parental acculturative stress have the tendency to influence parenting qualities and can again have consequences on children and parents physical and psychological health in their new environment. It can also affect the participants' adaptation strategies in the new culture as identified earlier in relation to Barry's concept (Urzua, et al., 2017; Baumrind, 1966; Barry, 1992). Browne, Arti Kumar, Leckie, Sofia, Katholiki and Jenkins (2017) recorded emotional problems 1-in-3 immigrants in Canada with degree for immigrant parents. The chapter present under sub themes, negative emotions and positive emotions associated with participants' feelings or emotions and a discussion of it in relation to the study literature and theory.

5.1 Negative emotions

Negative emotions here refer to any feelings that made the participants sad, frustrated, stressed, nervous, fearful, angry, discomfort and the like. Participants had some negative feeling especially relating to changing their disciplinary and control measures, when their children disobey them and do not know what to do, few men were also not happy about taken on some duties they think are for women back home. During the group discussion it was recorded according to participant's voices as below

Mrs. Kumasi said, sometimes the children misbehave to certain level which makes you (referring to herself) feel very stressful and angry...when it happens like that you need to check my temperature to see my heartbeats (Mrs Kumasi,08.04.2018). Another participant also shared that, It is so crazy to think about, like what they are doing now you cannot stop them (referring to children running, jumping, climbing tables and shouting around during focus group discussion)...their playing in school is different from when they come home and I don't

understand...it makes you feel like going crazy' (Mr. Accra, 08.04.2018). Similarly, Mrs. Cape Coast gladly added that, when it happens like that the feeling is as compared to "a sensational feeling like a knife a cutting my intestines...my heart keeps beating heavily" (Mrs. Cape Coast, 08.04.2018). Mrs Kumasi the asked that "do you know that they don't do this in school? even their teachers talk ones and they stop misbehaving but when they come home they behave different (Mrs Kumasi, 08.04.2018). One of them answered, "yes" because when his son is in the school and playing he is different from when he comes home, and he does not understand, the child starts misbehaving from the time he picks him and continues in the house and he can't control him. It makes him feel very stressful. (Mr Accra, 08.04.2018)

This view was shared by almost all the participants especially those who have more than one children and combines parenting with part time or fulltime work. Through my observation from an informal conversation some, fathers return from work very tired and had to attend to their children and most often they even sleep first in the process of telling their children bed time stories. Parents especially those combining school with work are stressed up by the day's activities, therefore any little misunderstanding between them and the children leads to intense negative feelings. It was observed in both public places and during individual interviews that some parents felt frustrated and didn't know what to do to get through to their children to put them in order. They expressed the need to invite some family members to help but they said, "it will depend on your family's financial status for such a person to be given visa to come. Without that although you may need help you cannot get that kind of help" (Mrs. Cape Coast,22.04.2018)

Regarding the experiences on negative feelings of father doing what they think were supposed to be for only women back home explain the feeling associated in changing from masculinity oriented to femininity oriented and struggles without extended family support, one father established during focus group discussion that,

> ...in this culture everything is dependent on you and your wife.... between I and my daughter's mother (a Finn) it is 50/50 it doesn't matter how tired I will be after work, as soon as I get home, she will tell me to take over and that she wants to sleep. I bath the child and do everything. This is very stressful looking at where I am coming from, these are things women take care of not men**...**also it's because the lady is a Finn, I get scared that my daughter can end up being a spoil kid, since I do not have the chance to control and correct her actions. (Mr Wa,08.04.2018)

Again, participants expressed grievances regarding their cultural practices afterbirth. According to Mr. Cape Coast

> Let's take for example our case where we gave birth to a girl back home within the first week piercing would be done but here you have to wait till he is about 7yrs before it can be done and you realize that as a parent you want to see your girl looking as a girl, then if it was a boy circumcision which is a huge issue. In Finland it is almost like impossible to have your child circumcised in the hospital, because they see it as a surgery and they would want to consider if it's necessary. It must be on the grounds of whether it was imperative to do it, if the child does not have any health needs that require it, then why would they do it ... I have friends married to Finns and it is always a contentious decision, so far, I don't know any of my friends married to Finns who have been able to circumcise their sons. It will be a very difficult situation because when the child returns home they would be ashamed. So that part of what you must do as a parent is challenging (Mr. Tema, 18.04.2018)

Some parents shared that children in this culture know their rights even at early age, as one said "…Because he has been told from school that, don't fight and don't beat. So as little as he is he knows that we don't have to spank or fight. So, if you spank him now he will tell you, he is not happy" (Mrs. Kumasi,11.04.2018). The new culture, educating children on their right makes parents feel that they are losing their authority over their children

5.2 **Positive emotions**

Positive emotions mean any feelings associated with participants as joy, inspired, hopeful, love, proud, motivated and without any negativity or discomfort. Indeed, the study findings show some positive feelings attached to changes in the participants old parental culture. All participants felt happy that there is a means in the new parenting culture to save their children from going through what they dislike about their old parental culture. During focus group discussion, a participant expressed that, "I don't want my children to go through what I went through back home, receiving slaps on the cheeks, to me it is good here..." (Mrs. Kumasi,11.04.2018)

All participants held this general view and felt happy about it. In the words of one in an individual interview he said:

> What I have said often is that if you look at how much fun children are you will end up with ten children. However, the much frustration you get for being a parent, the truth is that one single moment is worth everything and can erase all the frustrations...sometimes there are somethings my daughter does, and you fall in love multiples times every day. (Mr. Tema,18.04.2018)

In addition, in the Focus group discussion all participants agreed with Mrs. Cape Coast, who said

> ...though sometimes the children frustrate us, other time too they make us happy....there was a time I was looking for my comb urgently, I search the whole house but didn't see it...later I saw my son bring it to me, then I said ooo...(son's name) thank you, I felt very happy, so the feeling is on and off...(Mrs. Cape Coast, 08.04.2018)

It was indeed motivating to hear one participant who enthusiastically said "...my son motivates me any time I remember what he told me; Daddy when I grow I will buy a Mercedes Benz and a house for you, then I asked why? He said, because you are the best Daddy in the whole world" (Mr. Sunyani, 15.04.2018). Some weeks before individual interview with one of the participant I engaged the participant in an informal conversation telling her how well I have seen her trying to correct her daughter and the good character I have observed about the child, she smiled and felt very complacent, however she appeared as if she had heard similar comments over and over, She confidently confirmed during individual interview when she said

> When we went to Ghana everybody that met her (referring to her daughter) was in love with her because of the kind of personality she had and how we have shaped her base on this culture and what we have learnt, growing as Christians. Everyone who met her want the child to be like her and that I think as parents it makes us very proud. (Mrs. Tema,18.04.2018).

Although few fathers were not happy about taking on motherly roles, majority of them acknowledged the strong relationship that has been created between them and their children, which they could not achieve, back home. One said in relation to his children that, "I provide an atmosphere for them to be able to share their thoughts with me, they tell me anything that happen in my absence…" (Mr Sunyani, 15.04.2018). Another also expressed that "...the dynamics in this culture is that, here we give importance and priority to family and children, so you are forced to care, and I have come to enjoy it naturally..." (Mr. Tamale,30.04.2018). All participants expressed their sincere hopes in the new system as two of them shared accordingly that "We believe in the Finnish system especially education... I believe the system will produce a good result for my children given the way it is structured now'' (Mr. Tema, 18.04.2018)

5.3 **Discussion**

The chapter has shown how participants feel about changes in their old parental culture. It was identified that the changes in the participants' parental culture have both negative and positive

emotions. The participants' emotions could be because of their adaptation strategy towards integrating authoritative and individualistic culture of the host to with their old culture. The participants acknowledged that no matter the negative emotions the success in the outcome of their integration strategy, noted as positive emotions that surpass the former.

The participants breaking away from their kinship networks where parenting is done collectively into an individualistic affects their parenting in the new context. In participants' old culture siblings, grandparents, aunties, uncles, among others, all contribute to parenting of a child. Participants shared their desire to invite parents from back home to support them in caring for their children especially, at the early stages of new births. However, to bring them from back home requires them to meet certain financial requirements and immigration policies before the Finnish immigration service can issue a family permit to enter Finland and even when it is given, usually the duration is very short, i.e. for three months. Failure in achieving success for reuniting with family members or extending their three months permit can increase their emotions negatively and affect parenting qualities. It has been established that the rapid changing of migration policies separates immigrants from their extended families (Valetina Mazzucato and Djamila Schans, 2011, p. 79)

Barry's concept explained acculturative stress which makes immigrants go through a disorganising situation during their acculturation processes (Barry, 1992; Bornstein and Bohr ,2011; Wiebe,2009; Milevsky, 2016) which leads to several stressful emotions and psychological problems among contemporary immigrant families (Landsford et al., 2007; Bornstein and Bohr 2011; Rasmunssen et al., 2012). Just as Renzaho (2010) observed among African migrants in Melbourne, Australia their desire to hold on to their old parenting culture as well as Kabatanya (2017) and Ifaka (2017) endorsement on the dilemmas among Ugandans and Nigerian immigrants in Norway respectively. The current study findings also identified some negative emotions in the form of participants feeling very frustrated, sad and stressful when their old and new parenting values conflict. For example, in participants' old culture, when a girl is born, piercing is done within the first two weeks to identify it as a girl and if a boy's circumcision is done.

Host country laws prohibiting these ritual practices make immigrant parents feel loss of identity and frustrated. Few fathers felt unhappy taken up duties they think were supposed to be done by women in their old culture. Indeed, it will be hard to completely do away with a culture which

deducing from participants background information in table 1 above, suggest that participants began to have contact on the new culture after they have had between twenty and thirty years contact with the old parental culture from childhood (Liu et al., (2011). They have had between six and sixteen years contact with the new culture not considering when they began to have children. This suggests that, for them to do away with the negative emotions (parenting stress), comes with time and will be dependent on the choices and kind of their old parental cultural characteristics they bring with them into the new parenting arena to achieve total assimilation (Barry et al., 1987 in Barry 1992). However, in the meantime according to literature, it is believed that these negative emotions can result in psychological and social problems which can have influence on parenting qualities that can also impact negatively on the participants and their children alike (Barry, 1992; Kekkonen et al., 2012; Urzua, et al., 2017)

Furthermore, in relation to communication and acculturation, literature suggests that children acculturate faster than parent and turn to understand the host language better and faster than their parents (Renzaho et al., 2011; Jones and Trickett, 2005). Unfortunately, majority of the participants could only understand some Finnish words and understand how things work in the new culture, communication between them and the children most often turns to be unsuccessful leading to conditions which build up negative emotions. Deducing from Dahl (2003) combined concept of communication reflects the fact that some parents' negative emotions recorded in the study was because of their inability to control or reach agreement levels with their children meaning that in those moments, there were problems with communication between the child and the parent. These led to forming negative emotions to some extent that augured their desire to apply in totality their old parental culture at some points in time.

However, since cultures or references frames are not closed (Dahl, 2006, p. 33) if parents can come down to the level of their children in those moments and understand them, communication will be smooth. The smoothness of their communication lessens their anger, frustrations, sadness, stress and the feeling of going crazy surrounding participants parenting in the new culture. Only few could speak in the dominant Finnish or Swedish language but said they understand most of the new cultural system well in total because of their length of stay and level of education, with these participants their negative emotion seems minimal. According to the acculturation concept, this

kind of acculturation where there is less, or no stress means either assimilation or integration processes (Barry, 1992).

Nevertheless, the findings recorded changing fatherly roles and fatherly relationship with their children just as (Asander et al., 2013, p. 802-804) identified among ``patterns of distancing in parent-child relationship and mother-father traditional roles`` towards the host culture among Ugandan parents in Sweden. Majority of Ghanaian immigrant fathers despite their challenges, pick up new roles and are very proud of the relationship they can now build with their children. Although some literatures (Wolfe, 1989., Etzioni, 1993 cited in Kremer, 2007, Ervast et al., 2012; Heidi et al., 2013) perceive care in the Nordic region (Finland) being 'cold', living nightmare for families and high taxation, participants from the current studies especially fathers expressed that though the system forced them to care they have come to love the relationship they now have with their families and enjoy it naturally. They get more motivation especially when their child acknowledges their efforts and express it, we noted a participant's son told him when he grows he will buy a Mercedes Benz for him because he is the best Daddy in the whole world. This also confirm literature in (2.4.0) above that parenting of children is best provided by their own parents (Kremer 2007, p.30, 217).

Other studies have examined the relation between acculturation, acculturative stress and depressive symptoms on international migrants' health (Yong Ju Cho et al., 2018). The current study shared, according majority of its participants views that some positive emotions have the possibilities of making them feel very satisfied and happy freeing their minds off whatever negative emotions and its associate desires formed before. None of the participants negative emotions affect their decisions on the number of children they intend to give birth to, some participants have the urge to even have more than ten children because of the positive emotions that come with having and raising children. This finding is in accordance with positive psychologist expansion on the knowledge of the effect of positive emotions on increasing human health (Barbara, 2003). In addition, participants background information on the length of stay with the new parental culture and high educational qualifications might have had significant effect on their acculturation and the relationship positive emotions. Although the positive emotions seem to downplay whatever situations the negative emotion has had on the parents within the shortest possible time, the indirect impacts of the negative emotions on parenting qualities affects their

children's psychological health through their life time and can become a bigger problem so society in the future (Kekkonen et al., 2012; Harris, 2014; Harris, 2016)

Unlike in the U.S.A where studies among some West African countries claim parents misunderstanding with teachers and the new school curriculum for their children (Rasmunssen, et al., 2012). All participants expressed their sincere hopes and trusts in the Finnish system especially its educational structure to produce good results and positive outcomes for their children in future if they can balance the two parenting cultures accordingly.

Chapter 6

6. Communication between immigrant parents and children and with welfare or caregiver.

Communication deducing from the theoretical concept of the study refers to the simultaneous encoding (sending) and decoding (interpreting) verbal and nonverbal messages between the two actors based on their reference frames or culture (Dahl, 2003; Neuliep, 2009). The chapter in this regard examined under sub themes, Ghanaian immigrant parents communicate with their children and Ghanaian immigrant parents communicate with the childcare centres or welfare in their new culture. Finally, the chapter presents discussion on the themes in relation to other studies and the theoretical background of the study. The chapter is important because communication as established earlier in the literature is an important element in parenting and affects adaptation (Ting-Toomey and Dorjee, 2018, p. 19-20).

6.1 Communication with Children

It has been established that culture and communication mutually affect each other, therefore between the Ghanaian immigrant Parents and their children it is by communication through which the diverse parenting practices are coordinated and transformed (Ting-Toomey, 2009; Liu et al., 2011; Bornstein, 2015). Considering the participants background in association with high-context communication that stress indirect verbal mode where the listener of the message is expected to ''read between the lines'' to decode the actual implicit meaning of the verbal message based on the context as well as observing the nonverbal actions that come with it to enhance the verbal message. All participants said that they use both English and Twi (local Ghanaian language) at home to communicate with their children, and in non-verbal forms give 'high five' handshakes and hugs to encourage and share love, one said that,

> We use signs like thumbs up to signal everything which is fine or good, thumbs down to signal bad ..., also, I hug and kiss to communicate love to her ... I try to speak Finnish..., I am still learning and my 6year old girl teaches me a lot, I am using her as a teacher at home. We also speak our local language Twi (Ghana language) and English ... As for my daughter, when we are at home and she is doing something I don't want and she sees me standing still and watching her face, then she understands and replies...ok mummy .., I don't talk, I only have to look at her in the face to signal her that am not happy with what she is doing...'' (Mrs. Accra)

Again, one participant shared that, you should understand their terms or words to use if not you will not find it easy with them. My daughter can say 'let's go guys' back in the U.K for example it is normal. She calls me by my real name, she calls me Daddy when she feels like. Sometimes she says, 'let's go man' because of the system we are in I also reply to her on the same terms, so it makes it easy but if you don't know its difficult (Mr Accra). Some participants expressed that communication between them and children have been a challenge some of the participant face in their home. This is because they tried to communicate with them with Twi initially but along the line they mixed it with English and that is what has brought the communication problem,

> ..., you see it when they are talking, they mixed the two languages, but they don't mix it with the Finnish language. I know it will be well...so I use signs to some extent especially when I want them to stop misbehaving I ..., only point my hand and open my eyes wide to them...to warn them to stop what they are doing ... (Mr. Kumasi 11.04.2018).

I observed during the interview process that as the participant said that he unconsciously pointed his hand on his daughter for example and the girl began to get furious saying but ''Daddy I have not done anything''. I also observed how the children started speaking in English and ended with Twi. The children sometimes stop misbehaving and comply more when their mother speaks to them with her little knowledge in Finnish language but in Twi, they seem difficult to be controlled. The participant said when she points her hand at the boy to signal that he must stop what he is doing as its done back home

> "...unfortunately, he understands it differently, he thinks that I want to shoot him, in that case he will stop immediately because he has seen from cartoons and movies that shooting is not good. However, that also helps me to reach the same conclusion to stop him. Sometimes he will reply...no, no, no I don't like this hand, then he stops ...'' (Mrs. Kumasi, 11.04.2018)

However, it is believed that "...pointing your finger at a child in this culture is not allowed whiles it is done very often in the Ghanaian culture. For example, "pointing to a child and saying if you do that again you will see' (with emotions), back home nobody will report you to the police but here they will'' (Mr. Cape Coast). It was observed that parents had adopted new communication system where posters instructing children what to do in the kitchen, before and after eating, in the bedroom, bathroom and in the living room. The parents expressed that they copied the idea and poster extracts from the internet and it is yielding results.

6.2 **Communication with welfare centres or care givers**

As noted in the study literature care in Finland is given in the form of income and services provided through KELA (the Social Insurance institution in Finland). According to the institution`s official website (www.kela.fi). The aim is basically to ensure equity in the distribution of wealth to cure poverty and is for people who intend to live permanently in Finland. Children are the central concern for this welfare (Tervola, 2012; Kremer, 2007). Communication between these welfare givers and immigrant parents is very important since the welfare of their children require care in the new culture. Communication in this regard was assessed through how participants seek parental guidance and get information on how to parent their children in the new culture.

The participants revealed that, during their first-time birth as foreigners Child welfare (Neuvola) organized classes for them in about 3 or 4 different sections which every man is required to go with their wife. Through the classes they were taught the basic things necessary to handle the child. ''Even after that when you visit the hospital for check-ups they still tell you the dos and don'ts of the system regarding to handling your child`` (Mr Tema). They give information to be contacted any time they need their help and shared that, it is all about child social protection and sometimes they give us some books to read, here the system itself will force you to learn it for yourself. You cannot go there all the time, so we find a way to get information on forums on the internet, seek from people who have the same problems as we might face and observation from natives around.

Again, during personal interview with one participant he summarises most of the immigrants' way of communication and receiving information in the new culture as shared below,

> "..., I don't speak Finnish...I don't have Finnish friends to copy from but sometimes I watch them on Tv ...I used to read change of policy, economic issues, immigration news every time through Tv, radios and Newspapers to know how things are done in the new culture. For example, there was a Ghanaian lady in UK who held the nose of her child closed and fed her food causing the child to die in the process and was arrested for 3years imprisonment....Here in Finland before a child starts school parents go to the school for an induction process on how to deal with the child and when he starts school for about one or two weeks you as a parent have to be in the school every day for about one or two hours until the child has integrated in the school system. As you go there the teachers will teach you, teachers struggle to speak in English and prefer to speak in Finnish, you as a parent only have to observe how they handle the children, here too you get some information, you also observe and relate...example in the school, every child has his or her own bed, and personal items for play etc...the system is trying to tell us that when the child comes home

too he is expecting to be treated in the same way ..., so, in doing all these then the learning process is going on, you do not need further push...'' (Mr. Accra, 20.04.2018)

From the participants' accounts above, participants' inability to communicate in the Finnish language hamper their communication with the child care or welfare centres which makes participants feel unaccepted. They also get information from observation, television news from English channels and rely on hearsay from friends, which increases their high uncertainty avoidance levels for losing their children.

The participants expressed their unwillingness to seek help from the child welfare service. One participant shared that, "When I was going to give birth to my first son they told me if I need help they can come and take the child and take care of him for me... I have not received an y help and I don't want it'' (Mrs Cape Coast). Another participant in agreement said, there was one woman in Helsinki who had twins and sort for help from the child welfare, but any time they come to help her they look around the home settings and send back report and at a point in time they took the twins from the woman that she cannot take care of the kids.

6.3 **Discussions**

The chapter has shown how the participants communicate with their children and the child welfare service. It identified non-verbal and verbal forms of communication used together to communicate. Participants' struggles to communicate in the new culture`s language makes communication between the parents and their children and between parents and the child welfare in most cases unsuccessful. None of the fathers interviewed especially could speak on average or considerable level of the dominant Finish language. Some mothers at the time of the study had children at school going age, were enrolled in Finish Language School, and could only express themselves a bit dominant Finish language during communication with their children. Therefore, the language they use at home are either English or Ghanaian Twi language and non-verbal expressions.

In this regard, studies in Finland show that language minority mothers use warmth and psychological control more than language in parenting and it benefit girls than boys (Siekkinen, Holopainen et al., 2018). The study recorded successful communication in non-verbal forms in handshakes (hi five), hugs, and kisses to give warmth to children and facial expressions, head shaking and eye contact to give signals for them to stop misbehaving. In addition, in some cases

parents with their high-context communication background fail in communication between their children. For example, a parent tried to communicate non-verbally by pointing a finger to tell a child to be careful and stop what he or she was doing, the receiver who is the child received the message and understood it as the parent wanting to 'shoot' him. Jones and Trickett (2005) expressed that, children acculturate faster because they meet native born-speaking peers in school who educate them in a more saturated way than their parents are open to. It was in fact observed in the current study that all school going age children of participants attend Finnish schools, speak, and understand the Finnish language better than their mother tongue. Therefore, communication between them and their parents is well understood in Finnish than in English or Twi that is being used in their homes. Therefore, to aid communication apart from the non-verbal signs, parents had posters instructing children what to do and what not to do in the kitchen, bedroom, bathroom, in the living room, before and after eating which the children can see every day.

In addition, the official statistics Finland site acknowledges the fact that immigrants are actively searching for jobs than Finns are, but their biggest obstacles have been language skills. In Finland, some researchers indicate that immigrant minorities experience more discrimination and racism, which prevent them from getting their rights observed in the country (Egharevba, 2011, Larja et al., 2012). However, with communication between parents and the child welfare centres just as observed in the Nordic countries, participants poor Finnish or Swedish language skills makes them feel uncomfortable trying to explain their situations for help from the child welfare centres (Nino & Marklund et al., 2018). Even if the two actors consider communicating in English their pronunciations, ascents, choice of words, tone of voice, facial expression and other communication strategy differences downplay effective communication.

According to the immigrants' background as high uncertainty avoidance culture, they try to avoid future problems between them and the welfare centres by completely not involving them in their parenting problems. Because they perceive that anytime they will be confronted with an issue with the welfare or childcare centre, it is often the case that what is ideal in their old culture may be considered inappropriate by the host (Liu et al., 2011). According to our study literature, it believed that ethnocentrism affects communication, because how one views a culture constantly affects how that person interact with people from that culture and these messages sent cannot be cancelled (ibid, Ting-Toomey and Dorjee, 2018, p. 23). Therefore, the perception of the immigrants in

relation to their cultural acceptance and the host believe that authoritarian parenting is generally associated with negative child outcomes than authoritative (Pinquart and Kauser, 2017).

Further, the challenges in communication between the participants and their children and care givers have possibilities to disrupt the continuum of the parents' engagement with their children`s learning at home and the flow of information and relationship with their schools (Sokio et al., 2018). Some studies agreed that language and cultural differences do not augur smooth communication and therefore prevent immigrant parents and school administration from working together to achieve educational goals (Jay et al., 2013, p. 16; Rasmunssen et al., 2012, p. 524). According to literature and studies made by Goodall and Montgomery (2014) parents are co-educators, whose engagements can boost their children's, self-esteem and motivation, which can improve learning out, comes, as well as the children's over all actions. In the continuum of education, parents are expected to help children read and do homework at home and have more conversation with teachers beyond their usual saying `hello` and `thank you` to ask questions, share and receive information on the child (ibid, p 403-404, Stavrinides and Nikiforou,2013). The current study findings on majority of parents' inability to express themselves more in the dominant Finnish language; the language, their children and the teachers understand best can affect the outcome of this continuum of education

Chapter 7

7. The coping mechanisms that parents employ to restore parental functioning, addressing the associated negative emotions and communication challenges

In chapter five, we identified that the participants go through some negative emotions and communication challenges that had possibilities of affecting parenting qualities and adaptation. This chapter looks at how the participants cope with the identified negative emotions and the communication challenges. How well they cope can also inform us about how they are adapting. The chapter presents this under reviewing themes coping by personal efforts and negotiating with the children, coping help from family and friends, coping with information on the internet, and coping with help from welfare services (KELA), as shown in the following pages.

7.1 **Personal efforts and negotiating with the children**

Personal efforts used here refers to an earnest physical or mental effort the participants employed to cope. Negotiation used here means mutual discussions between the participants and their children to reach agreement. Some participants said that they are able to cope through negotiations with the children, as one expressed "... sometimes I negotiate with her by saying if you don't do it we don't read a story book tonight and if that is something that she will react to then she will hurry and do it…" (Mrs. Tema). The participants observed that having patience and controlling their temper help them to cope with their children misbehaviours, one of them established that, "...Now am controlling my temper... I have learnt to control my temper no matter how the child misbehaves...it is this kind of patience we have here which we do not have back home'' (Mrs. Kumasi, 11.04.2018).

Getting to the end of the study, I observed through informal conversations four of the participants through their own efforts adopted new ways of dealing with their children. On communication with children, I was overwhelmed upon seeing a lot of posters that have pictures and writings telling the 'Do Not' and 'Do' in the house, table manners and health, and a chart recording children who obeys the most and compensate them every weekend when they go out. So now instead of thinking about spanking and yelling, they only must pick a pen and ask the child, will you stop, or I should mark and its working very well now. The other two have also adopted the 'naughty corner'

and its working for them. Again, the children are taught that they belong to two cultures, so they should also accept how things are done back home. A participant shared that:

> "..., In this culture they do not discipline children and even after they do they have to go and beg them which is not like that in Ghana. However, when their mother (referring to his European wife) talks they don't listen because they know...she only put them in the room for few minutes and open them... I started disciplining them when they were kids and now I don't spank them anymore. I only talk or by mere opening of my eyes, with facial expressions carries a message to them. Here if your child's teacher sees a mark on him in school they will inform social (Child Welfare service) and they will come for the child but the children have been taught that they are also part of two cultures and in my culture, this is how we do things...I can say, they have come to even love the way we do things in my culture to some extent than their mothers culture'' (Mr. Sunyani,15.04.2018)

This was an interesting experience that made me observe furthermore on the context and noted that the house seems to be in order than it should be for a house with three children during the whole interview period. Also, in public the elder boy is always more attached to his Ghanaian Daddy than his European mother. Again, the participants said that they are still going for Finnish language classes and putting in more effort to enable them to communicate in the dominant language of the new culture to help communication between them and the children. In an earlier extract a participant said that, "I am still learning and my 6year old girl teaches me a lot, I am using her as a teacher at home" (Mrs Accra,08.04.2018). Despite the negative feelings they incur, majority of the participants expressed that, it had nothing to do with their decision for having children. Simply put in a participant own words '..., I will not base my decision on the children's behaviour to say, I will not give birth again, I think the feeling is just frustration it comes and goes, ...' (Mr. Cape Coast, 08.04.2018). In this regard I observed a participant who has just delivered a new baby and two others who were expecting a second and a third born in few months.

7.2 **Family and Friends**

Family used here refers to participants relatives back home and friends refers to any person participants have acquaintance with or comrades. As noted from the literature about participants association with collectivism, life without collective support becomes difficult. In this regard majority of the participants call for the support of family members via various global networks and invites them abroad to support them especially when a new baby is born as it was evidently stated by a participant in below extract, "when I gave birth to my first child my mother came here to support for 3 months…" (Mrs. Cape Coast,22.08.2018)

Some stated that they had tried to reconnect their daughter to her extended family back home but the outcome in terms of what they do not want the child to experience in that culture brought them back within six months. In the absence of a family members who could give participants trusted advice and support, participants rely on friends and what other colleagues say as it was shared by one of them below,

> Also, we have a Finnish elderly woman in her late 70's who is our neighbour. She knows a whole lot about children and their upbringing here. She sometimes sees something and make a passing suggest ... Also, we have other Ghanaian friends who had their children before us, so they also say what they observe and choose between the suggestions, (Mr. Tema, 18.04.2018)

7.3 **Internet**

Internet is a computer consisting of worldwide interconnected systems that enhances communication through a modem. Internet has made the world a global village, just a click on a search for a word produces a lot of results. All participants said they go to the internet for answers and guidelines. They seek for parenting information regarding this culture from English website. As we have noted under coping through personal efforts participants pointed out for example that the posters used enhance communication with their children was taking from the internet. Extracts from the voice of one participants states it all, *"... Also we use the internet a lot, when we see something, and behaviour change we go to the internet and read about her age group. What are the potential challenges and we see also how parents will react to them"* (Mrs. Tema, 18.04.2018).

7.4 **Child Care Service or Welfare**

It was noted in the study literature according to Tervola (2012) that, in Finland parents are supported to care for their children themselves at home until after three years where they are taken to day care. According to Tervola, the support Finland give to support children and families in this regard superseded other Nordic countries and has become problematic for immigrants' integration (Tervola, 2012). Participants shared that in Finland welfare service is basically open to helping parents and children, as one participant stated, "When I was going to give birth to my first son they told me if I need help they can come and take the child and take care of him for me'' (Mrs Cape Coast). However only few of the participants said they had call on the child service for help before, one said,

> ... at her very early stage she uses to cry mid night and one day we called the child service centre and told them, then for my first time I heard something call Swaddling (you fold a cloth put her on and wrap the baby with it hands by the body tightly though she will cry but she sleeps shortly). This was strange to us because we had never heard or seen anything called Swaddling and it worked (Mr. Tema,18.04.2018)

However, majority of the participants shared their unwillingness to open for support from the welfare service in relation to parenting problems but because of what they have seen and heard from friends and other immigrants they are not able to. It was emphasised by one of them below who said,

> ...I go with what they have said, there was one woman in Helsinki who had twins and sort for help from KELA, but any time they come to help her they look around the home send back report and at a point in time they took the twins from the woman that she cannot take care of the kids…(Mr. Cape Coast, 22.04.2018).

This also could account for the reason why (Mrs Kumasi) expressed earlier that, though there is parental help available in the system which she has not received any and she does not want it. However, it was observed that all mothers attending Finnish language school accepts the financial assistance given.

7.5 **Discussion**

The coping mechanisms that participants employed to restore parental functioning, was studied and it came out that, all participants are conscious about involving the Child welfare services into their parenting challenges. They prefer to deal with their challenges by their own efforts, consult friends, and family member from home country and mainly through solutions, other parents with similar challenges have shared on the internet.

In chapter six, participants showed a distancing communication with caregivers and it has reflected in how they cope. In this chapter, participants seem to have more trust in any other sources for solutions than interventions from the professionally trained child services given by the state. Based on similar reasons identified in Norway, where Kabatanya (2017) and Ifaka (2017) reported among Ugandan and Nigerian immigrants respectively who shared that, the more they open for assistance from the child welfare service, the more they are being investigated and receives infringement on their privacy. A situation, which they believe it, is rather supposed to preserve families but end up affecting negatively on the immigrants families structure. This also confirms other research findings on African immigrant parents separating themselves from their collective monitoring by

State welfare system because of the "distrust" in them, adding that none of their interviewees reported the interferences by the police or teacher as being helpful (Rasmunssen et al., 2012, p. 523).

Literature also show that communication in an intercultural setting is irreversible, once the receiver has formed an impression even if the sender repeats the same message different impression may be formed, meaning the messages sent cannot be cancelled (Ting-Toomey and Dorjee, 2018, p.23). The current study recording that participants have witnessed or heard rumours of Kela abducting children from a Ghanaian family, also, with the growing technology in information, they might have heard stories about similar instances from other immigrants in Finland, or from friends in the Nordic region and the entire Europe on immigrants losing their children to these states are irreversible. Taking into consideration the immigrants' background on the value of children as precious gift from God, economic utility and for social status (Darkwah, Marduerite & Asumeng 2016, p. 165; Lackland, 2001), their high uncertainty avoidance culture, the stories of other immigrants might have put fear into participants. This in effect influence their distance communication and avoiding support or guidelines from welfare service or care givers to carter for unseen and unknown situations in the future, which can bring shame to them.

Participants noted that child welfare services or caregivers in most case fail to consider their background as authoritarian, collectivistic, high power distance, masculinity and high-context communication cultures. Further studies elaborate that because of language barrier immigrants have limited access to helpful information, which affects their decision whenever they want to evaluate their options in the new culture. They rather rely on hearsay and told stories of friends (Jay et al., 2013, p. 5). Moreover, for some of them to find a clear cut to these tensions researchers found out a strategy where some West African parents in Europe and North American send children back home to reconnect them to their cultural values (Mazzucato & Schans, 2011; Bledsoe & Sow, 2011). The current study findings recorded similarly among some participants who had tried to reconnect their daughter to her extended family back home but the outcome in terms of what they did not want the child to experience in that culture brought them back within six months. As a result, the study recorded among the majority who looked for parenting answers to cope a lot through personal efforts, the internet, from friends and sometimes by contacting or inviting a family member. Again, the study saw that some participants took parenting advice from friends in

the same neighbourhood. In addition, it was found that all participants had adopted new styles of communication because of going to the internet to look for information on the characteristics of their children age groups and how to react to it. In addition, we noted in some participants acknowledged that despite the stressor and challenges in acquiring visas for family members to come and help as we saw in chapter five, they were able to succeed and, in most cases, brought their mothers to help when a new child is born.

To be able to cope by personal effort means being positive towards ensuring effective communication. The current study captured mothers who learn and do their Finnish language assignment with the help of their children, just as Jones (2005) expressed how 'immigrant Adolescents behave as cultural brokers 'in Russia. In the current study too, the children through language teachings help their mothers to understand their new context and to integrate. All mothers desired for enrolment in Finnish languages classes fits the communication concept of the study establishing that the reference frames or cultures of the two actors are dynamic and culture can be learned. In ensuring effective communication one must bring the other to close understanding of their reference frames through mutual learning of culture and language of the other, socialization and mutual relationship (Dahl 2003, 2006) and supports literature claims that, communication influences adaptation or acculturation process (Ting-Toomey and Dorjee, 2018, p. 20; Nimmo, 1979). Therefore, mothers' positive efforts to learning the host language is a good coping strategy for understanding and managing their emotions and communication problems. In this regard, the study revealed some participants who said dealing with abilities to have patience and controlling their temper helps them to cope.

This indicates that mothers will cope better and acculturate faster compared with fathers considering their persistence in learning at least one of the host countries' languages, which is the backbone in their parental acculturation. However, among the families sampled for the studies it is clear from the background information that all fathers have been in contact with the new culture longer than mothers have, but majority of the mothers can speak and understand the host languages than most fathers. This is perceived that mothers integrate faster and will assimilate faster than fathers will. Again, the participants said the cope by negotiating with their children, and this according to the study literature implies that they are shifting from being strictly authoritative sometimes to being democratic which is associated with authoritative parenting (Baumrind 1991,

1966; Mowen and Schroeder, 2015) and it less depressive symptoms (Patrick and Gibbs, 2016; Pinquart and Kauser, 2017). This also confirms their adaptation strategy towards integration recorded in chapter four.

Chapter 8

8. Conclusion

The experiences of immigrant parenting in foreign contexts from the perspective of Ghanaian immigrant parents in Vaasa, Finland were studied. To achieve this, the study explored under a main research question (a) How do Ghanaian immigrant parents adapt to the demands of the new parenting culture? To answer in detail, the main research question the study answered the following supporting questions: (b) How do they feel about the possible changes in culture? (c) How do they communicate with their children and the caregivers or welfare service in their new environment? (c) What coping strategy do they employ to restore parental functioning in addressing the associated feelings and challenges?

The study employed qualitative research approach using ethnographic data collection methodologies such as personal observation, focus group discussion and interviews to acquire qualitative data from ten Ghanaian immigrant parents. The study employed thematic and descriptive analysis of its findings in triangulation with the study findings, in relation to literature. Although the study encountered some challenges, the study addressed issues of trustworthiness following guidelines prescribed by Guba and Lincoln (1985), Patton (1999), Maxwell (2005), Kirk and Miller (2013), Potter (2013) (Denzin 2015) and Yin (2016).

The study's findings indicated with respect to (a) above, that immigrant parents adapt to the new parenting culture by choosing parenting practices which according to their understanding are very important from both their old and the new cultures in bringing up their children which defines an integration adaptation strategy. All the participants said they pick from their old culture those practices that did not contradict the laws of the Finnish culture to get a sense of balance. Also, fathers who used to have distance relationships with their children back home were very proud of the bond they now had with their children. Regarding (b) above, the Ghanaian immigrant parents reported both negative and positive emotions associated with the changes in culture.

Despite the effects they incurred because of the negative emotions, they also said they trust in the positive outcomes of raising their children in the new culture, provided they could balance the two cultures accordingly. Their feeling of success gave those positive emotions that could help them

cope with frustration and stressful moments (negative emotions) they encountered as parents in the Finnish culture. With (c), the Ghanaian immigrant's parents encountered problems with communication with their children and between welfare or caregivers in the new culture because their inability to speak any of the Finnish national languages. Nevertheless, they had developed new ways of communicating with their children. In objective (d) above, the participants said they preferred to cope by seeking help from family back home, friends and the internet with no or little involvement of the professionally trained family and child welfare services in the host or new culture. Only few participants for example had ever called to receive guidelines on phone. The study finds out however that some mothers were attending Finnish language school with financial support from the welfare (KELA).

The study established its findings in relation to the study concepts and theory (literature) that, communication affects participants' ways of parenting and its influence on their experiences and perceptions determines their ways of acculturation or adaptation strategy. That means the more successful the communication between immigrant parents and new parenting culture, the more the immigrant parents understand the new parenting culture which possibly leads to successful acculturation strategies such as in their integration or assimilation, and when there is successful communication leading to integration or assimilation, there is less or no negative emotions (low parental stress). On the other hand, the less successful the communication between immigrant parents and the new parenting culture, the lesser the immigrant parents understand the new parenting culture, consequences of which possibly lead to increase in negative emotions (increase in parental stress). This suggests that when communication considered the backbone of acculturation is broken or altered between immigrant parent and their new culture, integration and assimilation is more likely to be affected. Therefore, the fear of majority of immigrant parents to actively request for professional help and information from the welfare centres, their inability to control their children as well as helping them to do their home works in some instances and relate effectively with their teachers can generally be attributed to unsuccessful intercultural communication between the actors involved. These tendencies may have some influence on parenting qualities and integration. Nevertheless, it is believed that unsuccessful communication in an intercultural communication such as the current study context is because of the actors' unawareness of their ethnocentric base interpretations and evaluations of one another (Ting-Toomey, 2009, p.57; Liu et al., 2011). However, to ensure effective intercultural or interpersonal

communication the actors need to integrate knowledge and skills and practices with mindfulness (awareness of their own and others) behaviours in their communication process (with mutually interdependent relationship) (Ting-Toomey, 1999; Ting-Toomey and Dorjee, 2015, p.531). In this case, the immigrant parents and the welfare services or caregivers will have positive perception towards each other to foster the immigrants' feelings of being understood, accepted and supported in host culture.

Apart from these, the study noted that, there are still more to uncover concerning immigrants' experiences in foreign contexts. Therefore, an extensive research is needed to explore more on this issue, taking into consideration more immigrants of different national backgrounds and in different contexts. Again, the perception of native Finns about Ghanaians or African immigrant's life in Finland can also expand our knowledge. Indeed, it will be interesting to interview the youth with foreign background in Finland to also know their perception and experiences about their old and new cultures.

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Appendix A

REGISTRATION OF PROJECT WITH NSD-NORWAY
Concerning registration with the NSD in Norway, notification was not done on time due to miscommunication and change of Supervisors. Also, I was supposed to make arrangement and move into the research area in Finland to avoid immigration problems. The NSD, was notified later after interviews and fieldwork was done by email because of my current location. I am still waiting to receive reply from the NSD. Nevertheless, the study followed the general accepted research guidelines and requirement of VID Specialized University.

Communication with NSD

On Monday, December 17, 2018, 3:19 PM, personverntjenester@nsd.no
<personverntjenester@nsd.no> wrote:

Vi bekrefter at seksjon for personverntjenester ved NSD har mottatt din henvendelse.

Vennlig hilsen seksjon for personverntjenester ved NSD – Norsk senter for forskningsdata AS

We hereby confirm that Data Protection Official for Research at NSD has received your inquiry.

Sincerely

Data Protection Official for Research at NSD - Norwegian Center for Research Data.

Appendix B

CONSENT NOTES FOR PARTICIPANTS
Information given to participants; Introduction of the study and consent of the participants were given and sought orally respectively. I began personal observations from the first time I step into the city in 2017, where I began to familiarize myself with the Ghanaian participants to establish friendship. My background as a Ghanaian who also understands the communication patterns of

the study participants helped me to utilize this advantage to introduce the study topic, its purpose and consequently sought for their consent to participate. I started by saying my name is Patrick Apraku and I am a master student studying with VID Specialized university, Stavanger in Norway. The topic under study to know the "Experiences of Immigrants' Parenting in Foreign Context: The case of Ghanaian immigrant parents in Vaasa, Finland" to understand how they adapt to the changes in culture.

They have been selected to participant in the study because the topic is about Ghanaian immigrants parenting in new cultures and their experiences as parents and back ground as Ghanaian living in Vaasa for some years qualifies them to take part in the study. They have the choice to accept for participation and their right to withdraw any time they wanted. They were assured that the data presented in the final study will not contain any personal identifiable information of participants, they will be given pseudo names. The data was going to be stored on my personal computer with secret passwords and any recording will be destroyed after the final submission of the study. They were told that the transcribed data will be given them for confirmation and were assured how to access the final study submitted if interested. They were informed the contacts of the researcher and supervisor for further clarifications as below

Student: Patrick Apraku   Contact: 0452009404   Email: goodpatrick23@yahoo.com

First Supervisor: Professor Torstein Jorgensen

 Second supervisor: Assistant Professor, Stian Sørlie Eriksen

Appendix C

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Maxwell (2005) interview give should help achieve answers to research questions and the questions ask should be one that the researcher is interested in answering too. I believe below are real questions that will help me to create collaborative relationship for participant to bear their knowledge and experiences without hesitations. It is grouped into four section labelled a, b, c, d with suggested probing questions below each part. Personal information seems to be very important for the study analysis, so it will be collect getting to the end of the study where I believe the trust between the researcher and the respondent has been built to give trusted information for the study.

Interview guide with probing questions under the main themes of the study.

How do Ghanaian immigrant parents adapt to the demands of the new parenting culture?

1   How is parenting conducted back home (discipline, relationship, respect and care)
2   How do you see parenting here in Finland (discipline, relationship, respect and care)?
3   What differences do you see between the two?
4   What are your opinions about the difference[?]
5   Are you able to meet all the demands of your child as required by the new culture?

8. If no why?

How do they feel about the possible changes in culture?

9. How do you feel when your child disrespects you?

10. Does the challenges and feelings associated affected the number of children they intended to have?

How do they communicate with their children and the care givers or welfare service in their new environment?

11. What language do you use?
12. Do you use non-verbal signs?

What coping strategy do you adopt to neutralize your emotions and restore your parental functions?

13**.** How do you deal with the emotional feeling?

14. Do you seek help from somewhere? Where or who?

15. What else do you do to cope?

16. How has these strategies been helpful?

Personal information will now be asked to end the conversation. I believe by this the participant might have built more trust with me to feel free to share this personal information.

17. Tell me a little about yourself. Age, education level,
18. when did you come to Finland?
19. Do you see these differences as good opportunity or challenge for you as a parent or to the child/children future?
20. What are you doing about these differences?
21. How do you manage with these differences?

22. How are the differences affecting your views on parenting now?
23. Are you willing to have any or more children? Why
24. Do you have any other thing to say?

Appendix D

COMPULSORY DECLARATION FOR MASTER'S THESES

VID

Compulsory Declaration for Master's Theses

Your Name:	PATRICK APRAKU
Study Program:	MASTER OF GLOBAL STUDIES
Course Code and Name:	MGS 320
Submission Deadline:	18th DECEMBER 2013
Number of Words:	27515

Examples clarifying what may be regarded as cheating in mandatory assignments and home examinations (bachelor's and master's theses included):
- To copy, duplicate or transcribe text from your own or another person's work without clearly marking as quotations and giving proper references
- To reproduce or reformulate your own or another person's work without giving proper references
- To submit a text that has been copied or downloaded from the internet and passed on as your own work
- To submit a text that you or another person have submitted on a previous examination at any teaching institution, in Norway or abroad
- To submit a text that has been written for you by another person
- To cooperate with other students/candidates in a way that leads to your answer paper in all relevant regards being similar to another student's/candidate's answer paper on an examination or assignment that requires individual work

Regulations regarding cheating and plagiarism:
- Act regarding Universities and University Colleges § 4-7 and § 4-8
- Regulations Pertaining to Admission, Studies, Examinations, and Degrees at VID Specialized University § 30
- Routines for handling cheating and attempted cheating at VID Specialized University

By writing my name below, I declare that my master's thesis is written in compliance with these regulations.

Name: PATRICK APRAKU

If my master's thesis is awarded with the grade A, B, or C, I hereby confirm that the thesis may be published on VID Open: (answer yes or no)
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