

Migration and Changing Gender Roles
Experiences of Turkish Migrants in Finland



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Abstract:

Migrants may find themselves in a vulnerable position after migration due to the new social structure (e.g., labor market opportunities, language problems, migration legislation, or networks in the new country). Since they lose their power in the society at large, this change may also affect power relations in their families. As a result, gender roles at home may also change. While existing studies on migration focus on migrants' socio-economic integration into host societies, their family formation and gender roles at home are not well explored. Rather than attributing these roles solely to 'cultural' reasons, I attempt to find answers through an exploration of the immigration experiences. This study has the potential to fill a gap in the literature on migration and gender studies and to contribute to this field in Finland.

In this qualitative study, I attempt to explore how Turkish married migrants experience their gender roles and power relations at home after migration. Through thematic analysis of six interviews with three male and three female Turkish migrants, I identified four themes: "status loss after migration," "status loss and willingness to move back," "loneliness after migration," and "rejection of traditional gender roles." One of the most important findings of the study is that those who moved to Finland through family reunification experience a strong sense of status loss, which lead to marital dissatisfaction or a desire to leave the country. Furthermore, labor market opportunities push Turkish women to more traditional roles, while language barriers and a lack of networks hinder their integration into the country. It is important to note that most of the participants reject traditional gender roles as an ideology. However, there are other factors that contribute to their adherence to these roles.

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1. Introduction

Migration to a new environment may cause issues between married partners since a new life under different social structure, or ideologies may affect couple's expectations from each other (Dion & Dion, 2001). However, most of the studies about migration focus on immigrants' socio-economic integration to host society. However, focusing on how immigrant families form their families, divide work, share power, or renegotiate their roles at home may offer insider perspective of the adaptation of immigrants to a new environment. Their integration to the host societies in the context of the family relationships still need attention due to increasing diversity within Europe (Huschek, de Valk, & Liefbroer, 2011, p. 164).

In Scandinavian public discussions, family formation of migrants is considered as problematic and as a reason why they are unable to integrate to the host societies (Olwig, 2012, p.12). Moreover, homogenization and racialization of migrant families are common in media discussions (Peltola, 2016, p.2). While Nordic and Western discourses take pride in gender equality, same discourses also other and racialize migrant families as non-modern, traditional, and patriarchal cultures (Peltola, 2016; Vuori, 2009; Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992). Immigrant families still need to fit into these "modern" cultural norms so that they can be part of the host society (Olwig, 2012). However, there are studies reveals that patriarchy and traditional gender roles are strengthened or reversed from "modern" to traditional due to immigration experiences (e.g unemployment, lack of networks with local, language barrier, immigration legislation) (Liversage, 2009; Clarke, 2014). On the other hand, migration may lead more egalitarian gender roles among immigrant families regardless of acculturation or integration to host societies (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992) Therefore, it is significant to focus on those socio-structural factors instead of considering cultures as either traditional or modern.

Moreover, social interaction of the partners with the larger group's norms may also affect the gender roles and expectations of migrant partners from each other. However, it is hard to talk about acculturation of the gender norms in case there is a limited contact between the migrants and the host society. Hondagneu-Sotelo (1992) states that acculturation-integration theories may not work well to explain gender role change of immigrants in case there is a limited connection with the majority.

Traditional gender roles, or household dynamics may have an impact on power relations between migrant spouses. Migration experience might make this power relations

even more complicated. The new social structure may lead to power imbalance between partners. Difference in legal status, language proficiency, or advantage/disadvantage in the new labour market may affect the power of a partner who moves to a new country. For instance, a woman who move to a new country for family reunification may find herself in a weak position due to her lack of social networks and dependence on her spouse (Dion & Dion, 2001; Huschek, de Valk, & Liefbroer, 2011; Liversage, 2009; Clarke, 2014; Boyd, 1986).

Immigrant women in Finland experience unemployment much worse than their male partners and Finnish women. While unemployment rate is 6,3 for Finnish women, it is 17% for those women with foreign background (Statistics Finland, 2014). Statistics from 2020 in Uusimaa region show that unemployment is 10% among Finnish background people (both male and female). But unemployment rate of migrant women is 19% while it is 14% among immigrant men (Saukkonen, 2022, p.36). Moreover, some studies have shown that even those highly skilled immigrants in Finland change their career to low skilled jobs (e.g Lulle & Balode, 2014; Saukkonen, 2022). Therefore, immigration to Finland does not necessarily offer immigrant women more egalitarian environment but it may add even more challenges. Since resource control is one of the most important power dynamics within household (Pratto & Walker, 2004), they might be in a vulnerable position in their families in Finland.

In this regard, this study attempts to explore the gender role experiences of married male and female Turks in Finland in the context migration. Studies that focus on Turkish immigrants in Western Europe are concentrated on those people who moved as guest workers and their descendants. However, immigrant Turks in Finland is still an unexplored field since Finland has been a relatively ethnically homogeneous country with approximately 9% of foreign population (Statistics Finland, 2021). Therefore, I study how Turkish married man and women experience their gender roles and power relations after their migration to Finland. The existing literature mostly focuses on Turkish immigrants in Europe and their descendants who moved to Europe from very rural and traditional areas as guest workers. Turkish migrants who were not part of guest worker concept may reveal some other aspects of the immigration and add something else to the literature about Turks in Europe. Since migration to Finland is mostly due to family reasons which is 54% (Statistics Finland, 2014), focusing on Turkish immigrants in Finland from a family perspective is very significant for the migration studies in Finland also. In this study, I attempt to answer following research questions:

- How do Turkish married men and women who moved to Finland experience immigration and gender roles?
- How do they experience power relations at home after migration?

In order to answer these questions, I conducted six semi-structured interviews with 3 male and 3 female married Turkish migrants and analysed these interview materials with thematic analysis. Next, I present the structure of this thesis. First, I start my theoretical background by discussing migration in Finland and elaborate the experiences of immigrants in Finland. After that I am going to elaborate the relationship between migration and gender roles. In this chapter, I also exemplify existing studies that focuses on certain minority groups. And finally, I am going to present Turkish immigrants as a particular group of immigrants in Europe then elaborate “Turkish family culture”. The theoretical background will be followed by a method chapter, results section and the thesis are going to end with a concluding discussion.

2. Migration in Finland

Finland was an emigration country for long time, but it has quite short experience as a host country for immigrants. Social welfare, health care system, and multiculturalism policies of the country are some of the pull factors that makes the country attractive for foreigners. So that the number of foreigners in the country tripled from 1998 to 2018 (Kemppainen et al, 2020).

Although the country represents itself as multicultural, Saukkonen (2013) criticizes that the national identity of Finnishness is still constructed on homogenous ideals based on language, and historical traditions. According to Saukkonen (2013) the integration policies are based on individual adaptation to the host society instead of expanding Finnish society towards multiculturalism.

In this chapter, I am going to introduce some aspects of the migration in Finland in the context of family life of immigrants.

2.1 Migration and Cultural Racialization

Finnishness was characterized as non-white, yellow, or Mongolian descent, but not a white European one prior to 20th century. However, Finnishness gained higher position in

racial hierarchy and become a white European one in 20th century (Keskinen, 2019, pp.172-173). Currently in Finland, non-western immigrants and Muslims are the racialized groups. They are at the lower racial hierarchy by the public debates that regenerates orientalist and colonialist discourses (Keskinen and Andreassen, 2017). In this regard, certain groups are labelled with certain behaviours in the context of gender roles in the racialization process such as, “...portrait of excessively tyrannical men and submissive women” (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1992, p.397).

In this regard, culturalized racism is a form of racism in which “black and white” is replaced by “European and non-European” where Europeans are culturally on a higher position than non-Europeans (Blaut, 1992). The fact is also described as cultural essentialism in social psychology. In this regard, culture innates to immigrants and justifies difference and exclusion (Verkuyten, 2018). For instance, Finnish Immigration Services’ (MIGRI) sign in their offices can be presented as how cultural racism occur. The patronizing view on immigrant women who are not independent and rational are well represented by the image below (Nichols and Virsinger 2021, p.61).



([Reddit user's post with the nickname: "u/ChiaBeanie"], 2021)

The image above also shows how feminist ideals are used to justify racism and xenophobia. The phenomenon is described as femonationalism in which immigrants are portrayed as sexist and West is presented as egalitarian (Farris, 2012).

The reason why there has not been enough attention to immigrant's household, or their gender behaviour at home might be because of the presumption that culture is something stable. Thus, there is nothing to talk about it. However, culture is based on many socio contexts and part of continuous evolution process (Maciel, Putten & Knudson-Martin, 2009, p.9).

Hondagneu-Sotelo (1992) notes that even women under the same ethnic culture and conditions-such as social class- may face very distinct patriarchal challenges from each other. Different migration paths, institutions or migration legislations may lead different responses to gender-role challenges. Therefore, the typical view on immigrant families that they are either "traditional-modern, European-non-European or Western, non-Western" is a very problematic issue. Gender-role behaviours, or negotiations does not only occur based on adoption of feminist gender ideology, "modern" values, or more egalitarian gender roles. But it is more related to social structures and migration process itself (p.394).

Hondagneu-Sotelo (1992) takes Mexican couples as an example of how gender-role change may be based on other factors. Legislation changes in 1965 indirectly gave freedom to Mexican women to move to USA without their husband's consent. Prior to 1965, Mexican men who work in USA resist their wives to move to north, send little amount of money back home, enjoy their life without their wife in US, or find some other women there. Interestingly, the structural change in legislation in 1965 let Mexican women to become able to challenge their husbands and enabled them to move to USA by their other networks in USA. They have borrowed money from their connections in USA, found work there and begun more independent life. One of the reasons why Mexican women did this was also due to long time separation from husbands. Through this separation, the authority of husbands decreased, and Mexican women gained a sense of autonomy since they managed their life alone back in Mexico. Moreover, since this study is done with people who have very limited connections to white Americans. Thus, it is hard to relate this gender role change with "modernisation", or acceptance of feminist gender ideology.

2.2 Family Reunifications and Migration Legislations

Border regime of Schengen is very selective for certain people from certain nationalities and social classes. Having certain passport or financial assets have become a core reason who can cross the borders and who cannot (Zaiotti, 2011). However, borders do not stay only at the passport control but still stays as something obstructive in immigrants' daily life. For instance, having work-based residence permits shapes the power relationship between employee and employer since person's existence inside the border depends on the employer (Nichols & Virsinger, 2021). On the other hand, family reunifications have a similar path since, divorcing causes the dependent partner to be deported or lose children. Thus, the power relationship, between employee and employer might also work for between dependent and the other partner in the family relations. Especially, in case of partners' children, divorce may put the dependent partner in precarious relationship in which the marriage continues not to lose the children (Clarke, 2014).

Language skills, social class, or other skills to use in a new labour market directly affect the immigrant's power in a new environment. But the power imbalance at home due to family reunification was not given much attention. While border studies within sociology problematize the border regimes, there are not much attention to it by social psychologists. Although it seems that having residence permit based on family reunification may give the other partner a certain power, the issue is barely touched in the literature (e.g Dion & Dion, 2001; Huschek, de Valk, & Liefbroer, 2011; Boyd, 1986). For instance, Boyd (1986) suggests that female immigrants who entered Canada through family reunification face some risks since they are dependent on their partner-especially nonskilled and less educated females are in a vulnerable position in the family.

Since Finland is a Schengen country and Türkiye is out of it, there is a potential that these legislations affect those partners' power and gender roles at home.

2.3 Migration Experience in Finland

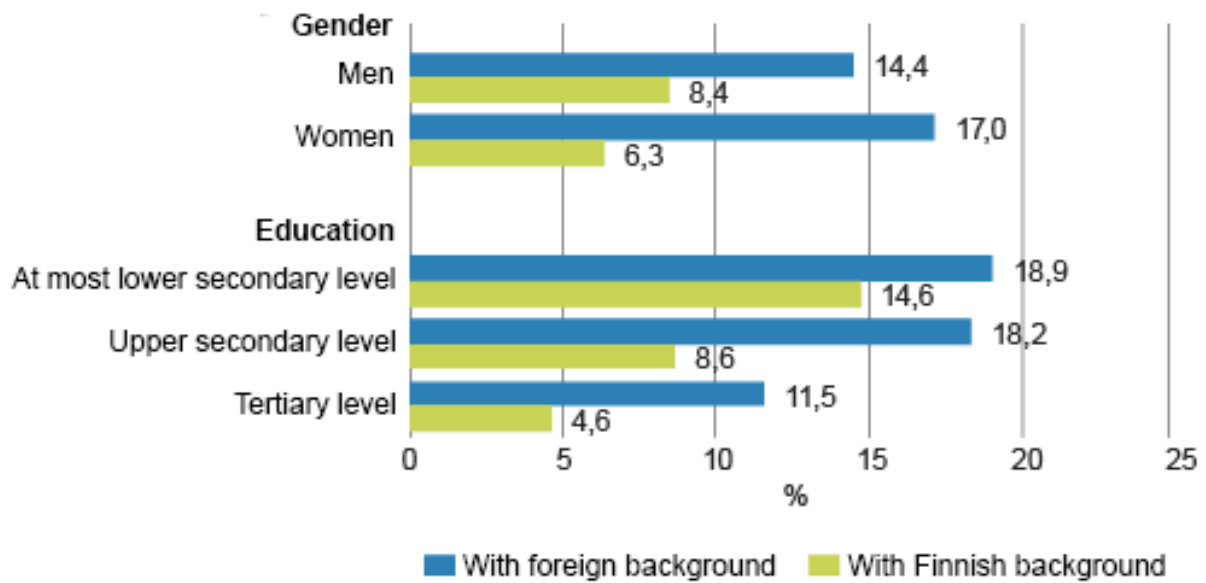
Finland is one of the leading countries in gender equality by having 4th place in European Union's Gender Equality Index (EIGE, 2022). In this regard, Finnish ministry of social affairs and health stresses the high participation of women in labour market, higher level of education of women, and support for balance between family and work. But there are still challenges with gender pay gap, gender stereotypes, gender segregation in labour market, and violence towards women (STM, 2021). Especially, 16,6% wage gap and the violence

towards women are the weakest points of gender equality in Finland (Statistics Finland, 2021; STM, 2021). On the other hand, equal representation in labour market, public childcare, and family leave system are the strong sides of the gender equality (STM,2021). Importantly, it can be presumed that equal representation in labour market may enable women to challenge their partners financially despite the gender pay gap. And family leave may encourage fathers to attend childcare at home.

As regards to immigrants, there are 469.633 people in Finland with foreign background which is around 9% of the whole population (Statistics Finland, 2021). Their unemployment and employment rates do not follow their Finnish counterparts in the same direction. While 73,8% of men and 73,5% of women with Finnish background are employed, the rates for people with foreign background are more remarkable-56,1% of women and 73,5% of men with foreign background are employed (Statistics Finland, 2014). According to statistics from 2020 in Uusimaa region, while employment rates of whole Finnish people are 75%, it is only 49% among migrant women and 60% among migrant men (Saukkonen, 2022). There is not much difference between Finnish and non-Finnish men's employment, but the foreigner women are far behind Finnish women in Finnish labour market (Saukkonen, 2022).

Discrimination and prejudices during hiring practices are the direct reasons of immigrants' vulnerable position in Finland. Since, immigrants in Finland experience stigmatization due to negative discourses around them, their position in the labour market is also low (Nichols & Virsinger, 2021). Due to these challenges, immigrants often suffer from unemployment that's why they generally have fixed term or part-time employment. Even highly educated immigrants experience unemployment so that they change their career to less skilled jobs (Nichols & Virsinger, 2021; Lulle & Balode, 2014; Saukkonen, 2022). As it is shown in the table 1 that while unemployment rate among Finns are 8,4% for men and 6,3% for women. On the other hand, immigrant men's unemploymen rate is 14,4% and immigrant women' is 17% (Statistics Finland, 2014). Moreover, unemployment also prevents their integration since they are not able to make networks with Finns (Nichols & Virsinger, 2021).

Table 1



(Note: Reprinted from “Unemployment rate of population aged 20 to 64 with foreign and Finnish background by gender and level of education in 2014, %”, by Statistics Finland, 2014, *UTH Survey 2014*)

Unemployment rates from 2020 in Uusimaa region is also not much different from the table above. While unemployment rate of Finns was 10%, unemployment among immigrant women was 19% and 14% among immigrant men (Saukkonen, 2022, p.36).

Larja, Warius, Sundbäck, Liebkind, Kandolin, and Jasinskaja-Lahti’s (2012) study has found that Russian job applicants need to send twice more application to be interviewed. Besides that, Ahmad’s (2019) test has revealed that Finnish applicants have the highest call-back rates (39%); in contrast, call-back rates for some immigrant groups were much lower such as, Russians with 22,8%, Somalis with 9,9%. It is also important to note that these call-backs were regardless of the work experience.

Labour market discrimination and prejudices towards immigrants in Finland is stressed by an interview with a recruitment expert in a study that employers are reluctant to hire immigrants because of an understanding that their working style does not fit in the company (Koivunen, Ylöstalo, & Otonkorpi-Lehtoranta, 2015). Another example can be given from a Latvian woman who stresses the importance of having Finnish name in labour market: *“The name is important; it is difficult to find highly qualified work; a qualified Finnish person will be given the first choice. When I was applying for work, it was very*

important not to have a Latvian name, but to have a Finnish one; otherwise, you will not have a chance, it has a lot of impact.” (Lulle & Balode, 2014, p. 83)

Language barrier is another factor that prevents these people to enter the labour market. Language proficiency may be a reasonable excuse during recruitment processes. However, some studies have suggested that language proficiency is used as a legitimization tool for discrimination towards immigrants since “fluent” Finnish is a very objective term (Khan, Maury & Ndomo, 2021).

More importantly, there is a separation between immigrants and Finns in the country. European Commission’ (2017) has revealed that 57% of Finnish respondents do not have any contact with immigrants. Another survey by InterNations (2021) has highlighted that it is hard to make local friends in Finland (57% in Finland and 36% world-wide). Besides these studies, there are studies done with immigrants that presents the division between Finns and immigrants. Migrants describe Finns as unreachable and introvert. Finns have less desire to get to know them individually. Thus, there are many complains from foreigners about loneliness in Finland. (Koskela, 2014, Clarke, 2014).

At this point, it is a crucial question to ask that how immigrants within these discriminative and exclusionist environments manage power imbalance at home. Since labour market discrimination gives the power on resource control to the spouse who have advantage in labour market, the social and gender roles may be easily imposed to the subordinated partner. The lack of social contacts with Finns may even strengthen these roles.

For instance, Clarke’s (2014) study with dependent highly educated American women in Finland points that most of the women who are at home feel that they are pushed to their roles as housewives because of the linguistic, cultural, and structural obstacles in Finland. Moreover, participants felt stressful due to a sense of loneliness and unemployment. Importantly, these issues also caused a communication problem at home and effected their marriage life. They complain that their Finnish husbands do not understand the experience they face, and they do not give enough support to their spouses. On the other hand, possible consequences of divorce make the women even more stressful because custodial arrangements of the children are in favour of the Finnish husband.

3. Gender Roles and Migration

Gender provides great information, and role expectations for a culture's perceivers from its members. Gender is done by social interactions, discourses, or daily practises (Dion and Dion, 2001, p. 511). Thus, meaning of gender for a culture does not stay stable all the time. Moreover, industrialized countries encourage women to participate in labour market to reduce the burden of the welfare system and to supply labour force demand. Consequently, gender roles, behaviours and power relations also change (Huschek, de Valk, Liefbroer, 2011, p. 165). In case of migration, changing gender roles within family relationships may cause issues between partners due to different expectations of the partners and different social structure (Dion & Dion, 2001).

In this chapter, I am going to introduce construction of power relations between men and women. Then, I will present some existing studies which concentrate on new power relations and gender roles of immigrants.

3.1 Power Equality between Partners

In psychological terms, power refers to one's capability to change the other person's condition, mental state by supplying, holding resources, or giving punishments. The resources could be exemplified such as financial instruments, knowledge, or food. The punishments may be -for instance- physical harm or termination of one's work contract (Keltner, 2016).

First, resource control is very gendered dimension of power. Especially, gender segregation in labour market leads wage gap and that's why occupations typically men do are more paid than women. Moreover, men earn more than women even within same occupations. In case an occupation becomes male dominant to female dominant-e.g. secretary-, wages and status of the occupation declines with it. Therefore, men who benefit from gender segregation in labour market also gain a social status and power at home (Pratto & Walker, 2004, p. 248).

While women cannot take control of resources as much as men due to wage gap or being underpaid, women reach these resources by marriage. In this sense, women and men do not enter the marriage life with equal power relations. Since men are given control over resources, women are expected to fulfil some other obligations such as domestic work and caregiving. Moreover, these obligations even limit women's personal goals and opportunities

to gain power over resources (Tessler, Rosenheck, & Gamache, 2001). As pointed out in previous chapter, immigrant women in Finland have much less employment rate than immigrant men. Thus, it may be presumed that immigrant women may lose their power at home towards their partners in case of unemployment due to immigration to Finland.

Many studies have shown that healthier relationships are based on equal division of power (Knudson-Martin and Mahoney, 2013, p.5). In those relationships where is unequal division of power, the partner who hold the power in the relationship less care about their subordinated partners' concerns and needs. Power is not visible to those who hold it and that's why the other partners needs are ignored (Parker, 2009). As seen in Clarke's (2014) study, American women in Finland had a similar point. Since intimate relationships are based on mutual support of the partners, power imbalance causes distressed relationships which focus on the interests of the partner having the power (Knudson-Martin, 2013, p.6).

Since male power is normative or taken for granted in traditional gender norms, this imbalanced power relations are also invisible for both partners. Male authority is still expected although women earn more or have better job than their partner (Knudson-Martin, 2013, pp.6-7). Normative male power still forms gender roles at home and still stays invisible for partners. In this regard, Knudson-Martin, and Mahoney's (2005) study reveals that although couples say that gender is not a thing that shapes the roles in their relationship, women keep silent and usually accommodate their partner in the end. In case the male partner feels power imbalance, he may use violence to correct the "imbalanced" power relationships. Especially, men who do not feel active in decision making processes -due to lower financial, occupational statuses than their wives- tend to be more violent against their wives (Pratto and Walker (2004). In case women find advantage in a new labour market than their partners, they may face violence from their partners.

Steil (1997) describes power equality in relationships as a perception of one's capability to influence her/his partner. Thus, in those relationships where power is not equally divided, the subordinated partner goes throughout sideways to influence the other partner- such as hinting instead of direct communication. In case there is a perception of equal power in the relationship, direct-open communication becomes easier. Hence, a healthier relationships becomes possible and it positively affect the well-being of partners-e.g fewer depression, anxiety symptoms. Beavers (cited in Knudson-Martin, 2013) explain this fact that

power interrupts intimacy since “top dog” tend to avoid displaying his weaknesses and the “underdog” avoid upsetting the other partner (p.8).

As regards to migration of the partners to a new country, power balances may change due to a new social structure in host country. However, within this changing power dimensions, the partner who is used to have power at home country may not be willing to participate in role adjustments. For instance, it is found that men who feel status loss are reluctant to take care of housework (Bittman, England, Sayer, Folbre, & Matheson, 2003; Arrighi & Maume, 2000). Or women who participate in labour market suffer from double burden which comes from job and house responsibilities (Noh, Wu, Speechley and Kaspar, 1992) Thus, the relationship may face new challenges due to changes in power relations caused by migration.

3.2 Changing Gender Roles and Migration

As implied earlier, the immigrant women might find advantage in a new labour market and become breadwinner. The men might lose his breadwinner position or might stay at home to take care of their children. Since this kind of role power change leads to gender role change between couples, some issues may rise between couples (Falicov, 1998). This kind of role change may also lead to mental health of the migrants. In this chapter, I am going to introduce some studies that are done among immigrants. The findings are crucial to understand how gender roles occur after migration and the possible consequences of changing gender roles.

Noh, Wu, Speechley & Kaspar (1992) investigated what factors led Korean immigrant’s depression rates in the context of changing gender roles. In their study, they compared two hypotheses which are “double burden hypothesis” and “power hypotheses”. Double burden hypothesis suggests that psychological distress at home is more related to work overload because of migrant women’s participation in labour market, childcare, and housework. In contrast, power hypothesis points that employment of immigrant women leads positive psychological outcomes since employment gives power to the immigrant women (Noh, Wu, Speechley & Kaspar, 1992, p.578). Although it may be presumed that employment of the immigrant women may increase her ability in decision making, employed Korean wives had eight times higher incidence of depression than their employed husbands. On the other hand, there were no significant difference in the rates of depression between

unemployed Korean wives and husbands in the context of gender. According to the Noh, Wu, Speechley & Kaspar's (1992) findings employment had negative psychological outcomes for the immigrant Korean women in Canada since they also had to fulfil their traditional gender roles at the same time.

Lim's (1997) study in USA among Korean working couples focused on immigrant wives' challenges towards male dominance at home after they started financially contributing to their family. In the study, she focused on professional working couples, non-professional working couples and family business couples. Interestingly, the study points that the traditional view over gender roles were more prevalent among professional high class Korean immigrants. While man had the primary breadwinning role, the wives had the voluntary and secondary breadwinning role in the group. On the other hand, among non-professional, and family business families, breadwinning was an equal responsibility for each family members. However, the belief that housework is the wives' responsibility was still common belief among all the group of Korean immigrant families.

In the study (Lim, 1997), although Korean wives attempt to challenge their husband's dominance and ask them to contribute to housework, they were still reluctant to cross some borders to reverse marital hierarchy. In the following excerpt one of the wives defends his husband's position despite she attempt to some changes at home:

"I don't think it is desirable for a woman to henpeck her husband even though she works outside the home. I want men to lead everything in his family. I think the authority of a family head needs to be secure at home." (Lim, 1997, p.40).

On the other hand, one of the wives stresses her work overload due to her work and his husband's reluctance:

"I had always told him, Isn't it ethical and humanistic for you to help me with family work when I feel tired? I can't manage it. Of course, I know that women are responsible for it. But I have to leave home to make money. I am doing the things men are responsible for. However, when I return from work to see family work left undone, as it was when I left home, I have to work twice as hard as you do." (Lim, 1997, p.41)

It is also mentioned in the study (Lim, 1997) that Korean husbands are warned by others that Korean wife's attitude changes after immigration.

“After she started working her voice got louder than in the past. Now, she says whatever she wants to say to me. She shows a lot of self-assertion. She didn't do that in Korea. Right after I came to the U.S., I heard that Korean wives change a lot in America. Now, I clearly understand what it means. However, it's wrong for women to think that they can control men in their own ways.” (Lim, 1997, p.38)

The study overall reveals some challenges that Korean families face after migration to USA in the context of gender roles. The Korean women were even expected to be “superwoman” who work and take care of the family. Although these women expect more egalitarian gender roles at home, their expectations were confronted by traditional gender role expectations (Lim, 1997).

In case of Chinese immigrants in USA, Yu (2006) found that Chinese wives who are highly educated become more traditional after migration. They have given up their careers and became stay-at-home moms for the stability of their families. Although those wives had more egalitarian gender ideology prior to migration, they have developed a new traditional gender ideology which has given them a stable marriage. For those participants in the study who preferred to work tried to find a job that help them to adjust family and work together.

The transition to traditional gender roles among highly educated Chinese wives were due to immediate family situations. The participants in the study expressed that they had to take care of their children because they did not have anyone to rely on and there was no child support system in USA. The participant's parents could take care of their grandchildren so that they could focus on their work instead of home, but they could not visit USA for long periods. As a result, those wives preferred their children's and family's future and gave up their own career. Furthermore, the study reveals that the marital satisfaction and peace in the family increased after the wives become housewives (Yu, 2006, pp.105-106).

Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner's (1992) qualitative study on Mexican families' experiences reveals the impact of family stage immigration on gender roles on Mexican men and women. In the process of family stage immigration, Mexican men leaves his family and moves to USA to find work. Then, the other members of the family follow him. The findings reveal that family stage migration changes the gender roles since there are long separation between spouses. The Mexican men in USA learned domestic work-such as cooking and cleaning- during separation from wives. The Mexican women who are left in Mexico gained a sense of autonomy during the absence of the husband. After the family is unified, it is found

out that gender role behaviours also changed. And the housework was less traditionally divided. The following extract from the study presents how these gender role changes happened during the family stage immigration. In the first quote, a Mexican woman express how her struggles back in Mexico changed her. And in the latter extract, a Mexican man expresses how he learned domestic work in USA due to necessity.

“When he came here [to the United States], everything changed. It was different. It was me who took the responsibility for putting food on the table, for keeping the children clothed, for tending the animals. I did all of these things alone, and in this way, I discovered my capacities. And do you know, these accomplishments gave me satisfaction.” (Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner’s, 1992, p. 402)

“Back in Mexico, I didn't know how to prepare food, Iron a shirt or wash my clothes. I only knew how to work, how to harvest. But when I found myself with certain urgencies here, I learned how to cook, iron my clothes and everything. I learned how to do everything that a woman can do to keep a man comfortable. And the custom stayed with me... I now know how to prepare American food and Mexican food, while back in my country I didn't know to cook at all. Necessity forced me to do things which I had previously ignored.” (Hondagneu-Sotelo & Messner 1992, p. 408).

Liversage’s (2009) study focused on Turkish marriage migrant women’s struggles in Denmark. According to the findings of the study, Turkish women’s traditional gender roles were reinforced by language abilities since they had to spend their lives in a limited locations. Those women who moved to Denmark based on family reunifications spend their time with other Turks and parents-in-law who “brought” Turkish wife from Türkiye to keep traditional values. Therefore, the mobility of Turkish women was restricted by parents-in-law. Moreover, their language learning in Danish courses were also interrupted due to housework demands or childbirth. Thus, Turkish women stuck in jobs where they do not necessarily use Danish language. Besides these, Turkish women expressed in the study that they had no connection to other Danes, and they did not even have a Danish friend. In the following extract, a Turkish women express how her expectations was before she moved to Denmark and what she found in terms of gender roles.

“I was very modern [when I came]. And I thought this would be a place where ... where people read book, are active, do things... That was what I hoped for. But then I came – and it

was not like that at all... The women all sit at home – cook, care for children, gossip. Nothing else... It is worse than a Turkish village.” (Liversage, 2009, p.235).

Clarke’s (2014) study explores highly educated American women’s experience in Finland. According to findings, most of the married American women experienced more gendered position in Finland after migration. Limited job opportunities, lack of networks with Finns, and language threshold are the main reasons how her participants become from highly educated career-oriented women to traditional housewives. Thus, the participants in the study could not develop a sense of belonging to Finland and that’s why could not consider Finland as a permanent place to live. However, their husband’s job opportunity and fear of losing children due to divorce are the main reasons why they keep living in Finland. The following extract from the study show how career loss after migration resulted in being a housewife for a participant.

“I guess I had this idea that I was going to have a career. And I think that times are much different. You don’t start and end with the same thing. I thought that by the age of thirty-five, I could say that I was a such-and such. I can’t really even say that I’m a social worker because I haven’t done it in years. I think had I stayed in the U.S., I would have been running an agency by now. I would probably be heavily enmeshed in the community I was living in. I mean if I had stayed in the States, I would never have stayed home with the kids.” (Clarke, 2014, p.57).

In a similar study, Chang and Holm (2017) focuses on highly educated Taiwanese women living in Finland. The findings are also very close to Clarke’s (2014) study mentioned above. Language barrier, discrimination and unemployment are the main challenges that those women face. The study stresses that immigrant women in Finland are in the most vulnerable position and do not benefit from social equality ethos in Finland (Chang and Holm, 2017, p.173). In the following except, a woman express how she become housewife in Finland.

“We Asian women are usually stereotyped as being submissive, unassertive, and dependent, unlike so-called tough and independent Finnish women. Unfortunately, I am kind of going to end up fitting the stereotype because I chose to have a better quality of life by relying more on my husband. Nowadays I only take part-time jobs. I don’t need to please anyone! You know, I have no expectations and won’t get disappointed. I don’t need to deal with any annoying co-workers. I am much happier. Since my husband has a secure income, it doesn’t

change my life whether I have an income or not. Migration life has shaped me from a modern career, Taiwanese woman into a dependant Asian woman. I know, some might think I just try to rationalise my laziness and weakness. Well, whatever, I don't care. Being a practical nurse is a dead-end job anyway. I was so tired of receiving little recognition. At least, my husband really appreciates how I take care of our household work. I always get positive feedback from him, although I make little economic contribution.” (Chang & Holm, 2017, p.170).

Karimi's (2020) study on Iranian families in Finland focuses on the relations between children and parents after migration. Although the study is not directly related to gender role change, some of findings of the study are important to note. According to the results, Iranian wives had peacekeeper and caregiver position in the family. But they were not able to satisfy their own needs due to their traditional position in the family. On the other hand, fathers in the study felt status loss after migration due to their new position in Finnish society. The most important finding in the study is that welfare system reduced their influence on children since they were not dependent on them financially anymore.

It is interesting that the challenges between partners were because of the wives' participation in labour market in North America. They were facing double-burden issue because of their job and housework (e.g. Noh, Wu, Speechley & Kaspar, 1992; Lim, 1997). In contrast, women's unemployment was the main issue in studies that are done in Finland and Denmark. (e.g. Clarke, 2014; Liversage, 2009). Therefore, those women in Denmark and Finland experienced that they lost their power, and their roles became more traditional after migration. Those women who seek for more egalitarian and free way of life in Europe seems disappointed in their experiences (Clarke, 2014; Liversage, 2009; Timmermann, 2006).

4. Turkish Migrants

Turkish immigrants with their descendants are the largest migrant group-in total around 4 million- in Western Europe. While about 2.8 million of them lives in Germany (Adıgüzel, 2011, p.7), the rest are mainly located in the Netherlands, France, Austria, Belgium, Switzerland and Sweden (Milewski, 2011, p.180).

The first flow to Europe-mainly towards Germany- began after 1961 guest worker agreement. These first immigrants were mostly male from rural areas with very low education level (Abadan-Unat, 2007). According to statistics from 1971, 73% of the Turks in

Germany had only primary school education, 3,4% had secondary school education, 2,6% had vocational school and only 0,8% had high school education. Moreover, illiteracy was also common among them (Türkdoğan, 1977, p.36-37).

Furthermore, this immigrant group moved to Germany directly from their small villages to big European cities without living in a city Türkiye. Therefore, they have moved to Europe with their very domestic traditional values/cultures to Europe (Abadan-Unat, 2007).

Second wave started in 1973 when the global petrol crisis hit the Europe. Decline of the labour demand caused restrictions on the migration legislations. In return, illegal immigrant workers increased. Turkish migrants began bringing their wives and children by family reunifications (Abadan-Unat, 2007, pp. 5-7).

The third wave was quite different. There was a military coup in Türkiye in 1980 which caused a refugee flow to Europe. But these refugees were mostly highly educated left-wing people from the urban part of Türkiye (Başkurt, 2009, pp.82-83). 57.913 people has moved to Germany only in 1980. More importantly, this migration led more diverse immigrant Turkish group in Europe since previous migrant groups were less educated, and traditional people from rural parts of Türkiye (Abadan-Unat, 2007, p.8).

Although immigrant Turks improved their conditions educationally and economically starting from 1961, this hardly applies to Turkish women. Their share in labour market in Europe is still very small comparing to majority since they become full time mothers at early ages (Heath, Chuang, and Smith, cited in Huschek, de Valk, & Liefbroer, 2011). Gender roles among them remains as “traditionally Turkish”. Only 2% of Turkish women never get marry and voluntary childlessness is an exception (Ergöçmen & Eryurt, 2004). And, early marriages are considered as part of “Turkish family culture” in Europe (Milewski, 2011, p.179).

4.1 “Turkish Family Culture”

Historically, Türkiye has been a transit country between East and West, thus there are various social and cultural patterns around Anatolia. Besides dominant ethnic Turks, there are other ethnic groups such as, Armenians, Greeks, Sephardic Jews, Roma, Kurds, Laz, Syriacs, Circassians and many more. While Turkish is the only official language, there are various spoken languages among minority groups like Kurdish, Ladino, Laz language etc. Moreover,

Islam is the dominant religion across the country with its Sunni and Alevi forms (Sunar & Fişek, 2004, p.3).

Türkiye is established as officially secular state in 1923 by the fall of Ottoman Empire. Türkiye remains as the only country that officially adapted a “secular system” of administration among those Muslim dominated countries. Additionally, since Turkish constitution order secular and democratic social state, Turkish women also gained their right to vote in 1934. And, 12 years compulsory education is supported by the state for both men and women in the same classes. Especially, Türkiye was very progressive in gender equality during its nation building process to reach “modern civilization” ideals of the newly established country (Sunar & Fişek, 2004, p.2).

Despite these changes, interpersonal relations and specifically family relations with its cultural norms did not progress in the same way. Therefore, Turkish culture is still portrayed as patriarchal and traditional in which men take care of the family financially. The women take care of home and children. Brothers and fathers are responsible of their wives and daughters since they are the public representative of them. Moreover, marriage is considered as an alliance between families-family of the husband and wife. Typically, women leave her family to live with her husband’s family (Timmermann, 2008, p. 590).

“Namus”- may be translated as honour- is a core value in which daughters and wives act according to sexual norms. And these norms are under responsibility of brothers and husbands. According to these norms, females are virgin until marriage, they act modestly outside, put distance with potential sex partners excluding family members (Timmermann, 2008, p.591).

It is important to note here that these gender roles and expectations declined by industrialization-urbanization for the society at large while these changes have been far less common among those from rural part of Turkish population (Huschek, de Valk, Liefbroer, 2011, p. 166).

Importantly, labour division at home regardless education level or urbanization still mostly remained as women’s responsibility according to a study (Çopur, Erkal, Doğan, & Şafak, 2010). Thus, many women pursue economic independence and career to diminish the necessity of marriage to be able to be more powerful.

Immigrants generally put effort on cultural maintenance, which includes gender-role expectations (Dion & Dion, 2004). Therefore, second generation Turks in Europe more tend to marry to a partner from Türkiye and especially from the same town-region where parents come from. In this way, they can preserve their traditional, cultural norms against dominant culture they live in (Timmermann, 2008). So that, traditional gender roles and norms can be strengthened by the migration of the partner from the country of origin by family unifications.

Turkish wife who moves to her partners home has the lowest position in the hierarchy. However, when the male partner come from Türkiye and marry to another Turkish partner in Europe, this hierarchy changes due to his migration. Since he does not have breadwinner role due to his language skills or migration legislations, he loses his status in the relationship (Timmermann, 2008). His dependence to his wife changes the traditional gender roles and lead to role negotiations. Moreover, this role negotiation for men may cause some challenges since men who encounter status loss resist doing housework and childbearing. More interestingly, at some cases women also do not give control of the household to men due to threat to her femininity (Huschek, de Valk, Liefbroer, 2011, p. 167).

4.2 Collectivism and Gender Roles

Individualism oriented cultures encourage individuals to focus on their personal goals and consider individuals as independents from the community they belong to. In contrast, collectivism value individual with their interdependent roles in the social system and prioritize group interests over personal ones (Killen & Wainryb, 2000, p.5). However, this does not mean that cultures are either individualist or collectivist. Both patterns can be seen - more or less- among every culture (Triandis, 1995). That's why, instead of a dichotomy, individualism and collectivism can be considered as "two ideal types or idealized cultural scripts at opposite poles of continuum" (Killen & Wainryb, 2000, p.9).

Importantly, collectivist cultures do not necessarily be patriarchal. There are two forms of collectivism and individualism-vertical collectivism/individualism and horizontal collectivism/individualism. While the vertical one stresses hierarchical relations, the latter one stresses to equal relationship (Moon, Travaglino, Uskul, 2018). For instance, Chinese business families in catering sector in Finland were not necessarily patriarchal in their everyday life despite the common belief about the Chinese culture. Women in the study were

active in resource control for the common goals of the family (Katila, 2010). Another study that indicates that gender differences was more stereotypical among Finns than Peruvians (Silfver, 2007). Although it is presumed that Peruvians are more traditional and collectivistic, Finnish women were more disposed to guilt and shame than Finnish men. On the other hand, there were no gender difference seen among Peruvians.

In some cases, commitment to common goals may lead to marital equality since it makes both women and men to be attentive in the relationship (Quek, 2009). According to Moghadam, Knudson-Martin, and Mahoney's (2009) study among Iranian families reveals that there is a sense of equality among some Iranian women. Since both parties attend the relationship in a way for a common goal, participants described meaning of equality in collectivist way that they both fulfil their roles.

In this regard, Turkish culture is more defined with its collectivist patterns such as commitment to group, intragroup harmony, strong sense of interdependence, controlled individual behaviour by the group-e.g. namus. On the other hand, industrialization in urban areas in Türkiye created a culture that includes both individualistic and collectivist elements as mentioned above (Kağıtcıbaşı, 1996).

5. Method

This study attempts to explore the experiences of Turkish immigrants who live in Finland. Specifically, the focus was on how Turkish married men and women experienced their gender roles and power relations after their migration to Finland. The results are based on semi-structured interviews among Turkish married male and female migrants.

Importantly, this study focuses on heterosexual family relationships where participants position themselves with binary gender roles. That is why, the language used in this study has been also binary.

5.1 Participants

I began looking for interviewee candidates in early 2021 first time. However, this was not an easy task. The topic (gender roles, family life, power relations between spouses) were regarded sensitive for many people I contacted for recruitment. Specifically, it was difficult

for me to explain the aims of the study during recruitment. When I translated some of the terms-such as gender roles, power relations- in this study to Turkish, it was not clear for them what these terms mean and what I am aiming for. Therefore, the recruitment began through my personal networks. However, I intended to exclude my acquaintances later in the study to avoid any ethical issue. Thus, I just used my acquaintances for reaching potential participants aiming at snowball sampling by expanding my network among the Turkish community in Finland.

I also attempted to reach potential participants on a Facebook group that Turkish immigrants, expats, or students who live in Finland use for communication, networking, or informative purposes. But the post I shared did not get enough attention there. Social media was not an ideal place in my case to find an interviewee candidate since the trust between me and the potential participant was difficult to build there. It could have been more attractive to offer e.g. money or another reward for an interview, but it was not possible in this case. However, having networks helped me to interview and develop trust among the interviewees. They were happy to help me in these interviews.

Finally, I was able to interview six Turkish immigrants-three of them were males and other three were females. Especially, it was difficult to reach Turkish women at the beginning, but I was able to reach three married Turkish women in the end by snowballing. The participants were relatively highly educated immigrants. Two of them holds doctoral degree, two holds bachelor's degree, one of them have vocational school education, and the last one has high school education. two of the participants had moved to Finland based on a work residence permit and then brought their families to Finland based on family reunification residence permits. Three of the participants moved to Finland based on family reunification. Two of these participants' spouses had already Finnish permanent residence permit and Finnish nationality. The last participant moved to Finland based on entrepreneur residence permit. His spouse moved to Finland based on family reunification. The sample is rather small and heterogeneous due to limitations, but it revealed various aspects of the lived experiences.

In table 2, I shared some of information about the interviewees to present what kind of sample I have. The names have already changed due to ethical issues. However, since Turkish minority is relatively small in Finland, I have hidden or modified some of the

information such as exact occupation, the town they came from in Turkey, years in marriage, and years they have lived in Finland.

Table 2

Participant's Demographics

Pseudonym	Age	Gender	Number of Children	Current Occupation
Kaya	45-49	Male	2	Employed
Gökçe	35-39	Female	2	Unemployed
Beyza	30-34	Female	0	Unemployed
Hakan	50-54	Male	2	Self-Employed
Toprak	35-39	Male	1	Self-Employed
Ahsen	40-44	Female	2	Employed

5.2 Interviews

The first interview is done in July 2022. The other 5 were interviewed in December 2022, January, and the beginning of February 2023. While some of the interviews were done face to face, some other were done by video call or text messages. One of the interviews took place in the participants' workplace while he was not working. The other interview was in a library. One of them is done in the participant's home. The other one was in a cafe. One of the interviews was done by a video call. And lastly, one of the participants preferred the interview by text messages. In her case, the interview required a couple of days since she wanted to take time to answer the questions. All other interviews were recorded for transcription purposes.

I asked verbal consent of the participants at the beginning of the interviews. The interviews lasted approximately 20-30 minutes depending on the participant. The shortest interview was 21 minutes and 23 seconds. And the longest one was 32 minutes and 43 seconds. The medium length was 24 minutes and 42 seconds-excluding the text message interview. All the interviews were Turkish language. The extracts that were used in this study

were translated to English by me. All the participants live in Finland with their Turkish spouse and children.

The face-to-face interviews were recorded by a smart phone. The video call interview was recorded by a Zoom feature that allowed me to record the video call. The text message interview was conducted and recorded by WhatsApp. I also informed all the participants that I will destroy the interview recordings after I have made the transcriptions. I have also promised that I am going to be the only person who see or listen to interviews. And lastly, I informed them that their names will be anonymised in the study.

The interviews were semi-structured based on Knudson-Martin and Mahoney's (2009) "*contemporary couples study interview guide*" which includes 11 interview questions. The guide helps to understand some of the aspects of couple relationships such as gender equality, decision-making, conflict handling, and how gender and power plays its role between couples in different cultural contexts (p.6). The interview guide is as follows:

"1. Begin by sharing your "story." How did you meet?"

2. What to you constitutes a "good" relationship?"

3. How would you know if there was a problem in your relationship? What might be signs that it wasn't working the way you wanted it to?"

4. How would you determine if a relationship was fair to both persons? Is equality important to you? Why or Why not? In what ways?"

5. How much time do you spend apart and together? How do you decide? How well is this balance working for each?"

6. How do you divide work and household responsibilities? How did you decide? How well is this division working? What interferes? What causes problems?"

7. How do you divide time and responsibilities with your child(ren)? What do you see as your role as mother? Father?"

8. How is the emotional work in the relationship divided? Who notices the needs of the other? How do you respond?"

9. *Traditional relationship models gave men power and authority in relationships.*

How would you say that power plays out in your relationship? Who changes schedules to fit the other or doesn't do something because the partner doesn't like it?

10. *What kinds of decisions have you had to make during your relationship? How did you deal with them? How have economics influenced your decisions?*

11. *Think of a time when there was a conflict between the two of you? How did you solve it?" (Knudson-Martin & Mahoney, 2009, p.8)*

By asking these questions, the study attempted to understand gender equality, gender-power relations, and decision-making aspects among Turkish participants in the context of migration. But specifically, I focused how these aspects have changed, or experienced after the participant moved to Finland. After asking some general questions such as age, education, how, when, and why they moved to Finland, I began asking the interview guide's questions. However, I modified or followed the guide's, interview questions with another question regarding migration. For instance, some of the questions from the guide were "*How do you divide time and responsibilities with your child(ren)? What do you see as your role as mother? Father?*" or "*Traditional relationship models gave men power and authority in relationships. How would you say that power plays out in your relationship? Who changes schedules to fit the other or doesn't do something because the partner doesn't like it.*" (Knudson-Martin & Mahoney, 2009, p.8). I have followed those questions with "How these roles would be if you were in Türkiye?", "How the roles or responsibilities changed after you migrated?", or "How do you think your power to influence your partner has changed after your experiences in Finland". I have also modified the question "*What kinds of decisions have you had to make during your relationship? How did you deal with them? How have economics influenced your decisions?*" (Knudson-Martin & Mahoney, 2009, p.8) as "How did you decide to move to Finland. Was it your choice? How did you deal with the migration issues with your partner?". Depending on the participant's answers, I asked follow-up questions to make the participant elaborate her/his answers. In case the participant did not feel comfortable about the question, I have skipped the question and opened another conversation.

The interviewees were more willing to talk about migration and its effect on their life. However, the participants were less open to answer questions when the questions were about their relationship with their partners. That's why, I have asked those questions in different forms to get a proper answer.

5.3 Ethical Issues

During the recruitment process, it was relatively hard for me to explain the aim of the study for some potential participants as mentioned earlier. Although I translated the terminology in the study correctly to Turkish, the potential participants were not familiar with the terms. For this, I had to well elaborate and explain what I do in the study. To clarify everything, I simplified the technical terms, and the aim of the study from the very beginning by using words that were easier for the participants to understand. I also provided examples to clarify what exactly is meant. In-depth explanation of the purposes of the study was necessary to gain consent of the participants for the research.

Some of the potential interviewees rejected the interview after explained the aims of the study. While some did not want to discuss their relations with their partners, one blamed me for spreading feminist ideology. Although I explained I had no other intention than doing research for a master's thesis, some terms I used such as gender equality may have offended some people. However, it was crucial to go through the purposes of the study in detail before interviewing helped me to avoid potential problems during the interviews.

I had an additional ethical issue with an interviewee's partner. After I contacted a potential interviewee, she intended have an interview with me. However, I got negative answer after she mentioned about it to her husband. Although she also told me to do the interview without her husbands' consent, I have cancelled the interviews not to cause any issues between partners.

5.4 Analytic Procedures

Due to explanatory nature of this study, I analysed the material with qualitative thematic analysis which is a method "for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data." (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79). The broad research questions related to gender roles,

power relations and migration experience guided reading of the material since I approached it inductively without any definite theoretical framework. I read the data and identified the themes by their semantic meanings. Thus, I did not go beyond what was said, but I limited myself to what was explicitly meant by the participant.

I have followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) suggested six phases of thematic analysis (p.86). First, I transcribed the interviews the voice recordings on Microsoft Words' transcription tool. After reaching 102 pages of transcription, I was able to read and reread the data to familiarize myself with the material. I also wrote initial notes, which led to the rest of the analysis.

In the second phase, I have begun coding where I organized the data into significant parts such as gender roles, migration experience, or power in the relationship. Since my data set is quite small, I did not need any software. I have coded similar features of the data manually by colouring the text.

In the third phase, I looked for broader meanings of these codes. I reviewed the features of these codes to form general themes, then I have reached initial potential themes (e.g. dissatisfaction of the migration, career loss, solidarity between couples, changing gender roles, changing power relations between spouses).

In the fourth phase, these initial themes had to be reviewed many times to ensure the extracts are coherent. In other words, I checked that the extracts have a consistent theme and whether there is enough data for the theme. In case the extracts did not fit into a theme, I removed the extract, or the theme as a whole. If there is a chance to make other themes from that theme, I have added a new theme. For instance, the "changing gender roles" was wide theme at the beginning. Later, I realized that this might be reflecting the questions of the interview scheme that were all touching the issue of gender roles. Thus, the extracts seemed too diverse. I reviewed and re-analysed all the accounts of "gender roles". Consequently, I integrated some of them in already existing themes and created new themes such as the status loss, or rejection of traditional gender roles. Another example would be that "career loss after migration" was an initial theme at the beginning. Then, I have combined the extracts for a broader theme. Finally, after this refinement process, I have made sure that these themes are consistent with participant's accounts and represents a meaning from the dataset.

In the fifth phase, I begun with the final refinement. In this process, I identified “willingness to move back” as a sub theme in the “status loss” theme. Then I realized that it can be another theme since it was also very common not to be a sub theme. Furthermore, as part of this phase, I defined and identified what these themes represents, or what kind of knowledge is there. So that I was able to give final names to the themes according to my research questions.

As a final sixth step, I report the final themes in the analysis below.

6. Results

In thematic analysis I was able to identify four themes that best describe my participants experiences of gender roles in the context of their migration. These themes were: “status loss after migration”, “status loss and willingness to move back”, “loneliness after migration”, and “rejection of traditional gender roles”.

6.1 Status Loss After Migration

As expected from the previous studies (e.g Karimi, 2020, Huschek, de Valk, Liefbroer, 2011, Clarke, 2014), status loss after migration appeared as a dominant theme in most of the interviews- especially in those who moved to Finland by family reunifications. While some of the participants pointed that their status loss increased solidarity and empathy between spouses, some stated that their relationship was negatively affected after they migrated to Finland. In the following, a female participant who has lived in Finland for four years describes how dramatically her life changed after migration in Finland. For instance:

Gökçe: I used to have my own business back in Türkiye as cosmetician/hairdresser. I used to be independent woman there. I was not rich or anything, but I could stand on my own feet. Now I am not.

Interviewer: Why don't you continue your career here?

Gökçe: I tried to learn Finnish. I failed after having second child. One friend invited me to try a course (for hairdressing). I could not understand people much there because I do know the language much. I did not like people treated me like I had no idea about anything also. I lost my motivation. I do

not have energy. At least I have more time to spend time with my kids. Maybe later I can try.

The extract presents language barrier and people's treatment as obstacles that immigrant women may face. Besides difficulties as an immigrant, giving birth is another barrier that prevents language education.

Similarly, Beyza mentions she does not get enough respect.

Beyza: I am much qualified nurse than most of the nurses here. I do this job since I was 16... I was not happy in Türkiye because economically Türkiye goes bad all the time. I used to think that Finland would be a good option for me. Everyone respects each other there. But what I found is very different.

Beyza: ...I have become a housewife here.

She had high hopes before she migrated, but now there is a big disappointment. Her career change from a professional nurse to a housewife is one of the reasons for her dissatisfaction. Because of the disappointment, she states that she has more empathy for his husband who experienced immigration before her.

Beyza: ...Now understand him quite well than in Türkiye. I used to think he was stupid like other Turks in Germany. Now I see that I was the stupid one.

Her husband had lived in Finland then moved to Türkiye before the marriage. They moved together to Finland after marriage because of her will despite her husband's objection. She used to think she was not going to fail in Europe like other Turks in Europe. She felt "stupid" because she used to think Turks in Germany was not successful because they were "stupid", and she did not know how it was to be immigrant. She points out how her empathy increased towards her husband and other immigrant Turks.

As regards to male participants, only one of the participants moved to Finland by family reunification. Like other participants who moved to Finland based on family reunifications, he also felt status loss due to his career loss and disappointment from scarce career opportunities in Finland. His situation is interesting because the gender roles at home reversed for him because of his career change. He expresses his feelings as follows:

Toprak: When we were living in Türkiye, I could afford a nanny to take care of our child. Now I am the nanny for my daughter. In my free time, I do

deliveries (food delivery). I would not imagine the life would be like this here. We have everything we need here. I do not want to complain. I have more time for myself and my daughter, but this was not what I expected here to be.

He obviously lost his main breadwinner position in the family after migration. He is disappointed of the country and his new role as nanny. More importantly, the sense of status loss also led dissatisfaction from the marriage.

Toprak: We help each other much more than before. We share more responsibilities together. I used to enjoy my new life here for a while. But I am tired of this kind of lifestyle now. It is too boring...I think about divorcing sometimes when I have nothing to do...

The participant describes his life as a househusband as too boring and mentions the option of divorce to solve the issue. Although he admits that they share more responsibilities together after the immigration, the new situation become mentally tiring for him.

Besides those participants who moved to Finland based on family reunification, Hakan has been already living in Finland before he got married. He states that he lost his self-respect as father/husband after he bankrupted because he could not provide the life standards that he promised to give to his wife and children. However, the status loss still did not affect any change in gender roles in his relationship with his wife.

Hakan: We had difficulty for 2-3 years when I bankrupted. Maybe at that time I felt I was not a good father. I could not afford luxury things like before. We continued our life by social benefits.

Hakan: She (his wife) asked me if she could work also but I did not let her work in some other restaurant than ours.

Despite the financial crisis in the family, he resisted his wife's demand to work. Instead, he tried to find some other ways to earn money. In this way, he might be trying to be save his father image only breadwinner.

Lastly, Ahsen and Kaya are highly educated and skilled immigrants comparing to other participants. They both lived in other countries before moving to Finland. They did not explicitly state that migration to Finland arose any sense of status loss for themselves and towards their wife or husband. However, Kaya had another issue with his wife.

Kaya: ... for example, we (he and his wife) have been keeping alcohol away from home and our children. But he (the son) goes to parties, comes home drunk. Sometimes he brings it home. I try to be tolerant not to cause any issue between him and me. But she (the wife) is too sad sometimes to see my son like this. She is not happy to live here because our son is exposed to very different kind of life here. That put a bit of pressure on me.

Interviewer: Does it make you feel that you are not good parent or husband?

Kaya: I think it is normal in his age. She tells me I need to do something as father to protect our son. She is quite worried I know as mother. That's normal also. I try to comfort her. These days we are all fine. I believe they (children) are going to have better opportunities here..."

Kaya states that his wife was worried about their son since he was acting in a opposite way then their religious, cultural values. At some point he mentioned that his role as father is questioned by her wife because he did not interrupt his son's behaviours in the new environment in Finland. In return, he presented himself more as rational person, but put her wife in a traditional position. At some point, he mentioned that his wife's behaviour was normal as mother. Notably, he believes that his children had a better life in Finland to defend his role as father.

6.2 Status Loss and Willingness to Move Back

Another theme that emerged in the participants' talk in relation to the status loss was willingness to move back. As seen above, those participants or their spouses who feel status loss, or less powerful more eager to move back from Finland. Even though moving back was not possible for them, they expressed that they were not happy to live in Finland. While Gökçe, Beyza and Toprak pointed that they were not happy in Finland due to their career opportunities, Kaya's spouse-as he stated- were not happy in Finland because she was not able to protect his son from the different lifestyle in the country. Interestingly, the common point about them is that they all moved to Finland based on family reunifications.

During the interviews, it was common among participants that they were not sure if Finland was a permanent place to live.

Beyza: Even those people who studied here cannot find a job. How can I do it?... I forced my husband to move here. Now I am a bit shy to tell him I want to go back. Maybe I try a bit more. Maybe there is some other opportunity than being housewife. But I do not think so..”

Beyza stated that her intention was to live in Finland permanently, but she changed her mind after she realized that she was not able to find a job in Finland. On the other hand, she also mentions her responsibility that maybe she needs to try harder.

For those who have children, moving back was relatively tricky issue since the future of them makes it harder to decide what to do.

Gökçe: ...my husband has spent many years here already before we got married. But he could not save much money. He had bad addictions before he became father... I insist him to move back to Türkiye for his and our families' future. That's our main issue here. He wants to stay and save more money. I am suspicious about that. He is right in a way but, hard to decide on your own when you have a kid.

The participant pointed a dilemma between staying in Finland or moving back to Türkiye. She stated that she wanted to move back to Türkiye for the future of her family, but her husband wanted to stay to save money. Having a kid was an obstacle for the spouses to decide that option.

Toprak who was thinking about divorcing was also in a similar dilemma.

Toprak: Yes! I can divorce and move back. I can save my career. But it is not right while you raise a kid. I would not feel comfortable about it. That's why I said later.

Divorcing and moving back to from Finland is an option to rescue his career from being a nanny. However, he did not accept that kind of father role who leaves her kid for his own interests.

6.3 Loneliness After Migration

Many participants who moved to Finland based on family reunifications stated that they feel lonely. Thus, loneliness appeared as one of the most recurrent themes that participants brought up.

The sense of loneliness caused some issues between some of the participants' spouses. On the other hand, the lack of networks or friends in the new country was sometimes described as something that brought the spouses closer together, as one of the participants describes. Ahsen stated that his husband who moved to Finland based on family reunification want to do more activities with her than before.

Ahsen: ...I could be able to make networks and friends due to my job at school

Interviewer: What about your husband?

Ahsen: He does not have many. He works at home and take care of children. That's why he is a bit bored.

Interviewer: Did it affect your relationship after your migration? Do you spend more time together now?

Ahsen: Of course, he wants to do more activities with me than before. I guess because he does not have any other option than me anymore.

Although now spouses spend time together, it is not described as a positive phenomenon because of migration but as something inevitable and forced due to husband's loneliness.

Loneliness was handled in many ways. One of the participants described in the following extract how his wife who moved to Finland based on family reunification handled loneliness.

Hakan: "I did not oppose that she works here with me because I know how she would feel as a total stranger only at home. It was good for her she spends some time here so that I do not have to listen much at home."

He mentioned that his wife spent time at home as a stranger in the country. As he is the only connection that his wife has, she might inevitably ask for more attention from his husband. The situation seems like Ahsen's case above, but Hakan did not seem happy that he had to manage her loneliness at home. Instead, he allowed her wife to work in his own restaurant so that she did not feel lonely. In this way, he found a solution for both partners.

Giving birth was sometimes mentioned as a justification for increased loneliness. As one participant explained in the following extract, giving birth to a second child prevented her connections to others.

Gökçe: I had friends there in Finnish classes. It was nice to meet other people until I got the second one. Other than that, I did not have any chance to meet other people except the Turkish people we already knew.

Loneliness is not only caused by having children in some participant's talk. One of the participants who did not have any children describes that getting a Finnish friend was considered as a challenge.

Beyza: There are Finnish people I know but not as a friend. My friends are mostly other immigrants and Turks.

Interviewer: Why?

Beyza: Maybe I do not speak good Finnish or English. It is hard to be friends with Finns also.

She again takes responsibility for loneliness because of her language abilities, but also blames Finns as a reason for it.

6.4 Rejection of Traditional Gender Roles

In contrast to typical view over Turkish families (e.g Timmermann, 2008; Huschek, de Valk, Liefbroer, 2011), most of the participants explicitly rejected normative gender roles. Thus, it was a dominant theme in the participants' talk. In the following, one of the female participants describes how she is the head of the family.

Gökçe: I am the powerful one in the family. I make the plans and manage everything. He does not have much voice.

Interviewer: Why?

Gökçe: He was gambling and lost a lot of fortune. That's why I am the one who controls everything.

Interviewer: How do you do that for example?

Gökçe: I have the passwords for the bank accounts. I give him pocket money. I decide what is going to be bought and stuff.

Gökçe presented herself as the one who has the authority in the family. But the justification of the reversed gender roles comes from his husband's addiction.

Beyza also stated that they were equal in the relationship although she take care of most of the housework. However, it is not because she is traditional woman but because she has nothing to do.

Some of participants underlined the equality between her spouses. The unequal division of housework between spouses could be justified on women's unemployment as in the following extract:

Beyza: No. We are equal in the relationship.

Interviewer: How do you share responsibilities at home?

Beyza: I have become a housewife in Finland. Otherwise, we are not that kind of couple. We decide together and do things together. The home is my responsibility now if I do not work.

Beyza suggested that although the gender roles in the family looked like traditional, she did not obtain any traditional gender ideology. Besides housework, she pointed that they make decisions together. She justified the new roles by her unemployment which gives her house responsibilities.

Some of the participants avoid explaining the division of housework between spouses with traditional values. Rather they present it as an issue that is not related to the culture but more to the natural role of mothers:

Ahsen: "I do not think he has that kind of authority in the family. My father had a lot but not him. He tries to take care of home and children as much as he can. But still my kids ask more of my attention. I cook after I come home and make sure everything is alright. Maybe because it is the traditional role of mothers. I have not realized that before actually. But I do not complain".

It is especially interesting in her case that the men's authority in the family diminished through generations. However, women are still the main responsible in the private sphere with housework and children.

One male participant described how the gender roles reversed and he became a househusband:

Toprak: No. We did not have that kind of relationship. I left my business in Türkiye because of her career. I have become a housewife. I do not think I have that kind of authority in the family.

Interviewer: How was the situation back in Türkiye?

Toprak: I guess it was more equal at that time.

The statement reflects that the participant considers the changing positions between couples as unequal. He presented his career loss and being househusband due to her wife's career opportunity as a reason why they did not have traditional gender roles.

Religion and traditions are sometimes explicitly rejected as the explanations of gender roles and division of work as one participant explains in the following:

Kaya: Because of my work, we make plans based on my schedule. Yes we have more religious family life and traditional values, but it does not mean I am authoritarian with a lot of power. She can work and do whatever she wants. But who is going to take care of our disabled children then? We just share responsibilities...

Although the participant accepted the role of the religion and traditions in his family, the participant rejected his position as a dominant breadwinner. Moreover, he justified the gender roles division in the family with practical reasons to avoid the potential counter claims and made his statement stronger.

7. Discussion

The aims of this thesis were twofold. First, this study wanted to reveal how Turkish married men and women experience immigration and gender roles in Finland. The second aim was to focus on their experiences of power relations at home after migration. In order to find answers to these questions, I have conducted six semi-structured interviews with married Turkish migrants in Finland. Then, I analysed the interviews with thematic analysis. As a result, I was able to identify four themes in my participants talk that points their experiences on changing gender roles and power relations in the context of migration: status loss after

migration, status loss and willingness to move back, loneliness after migration and rejection of traditional gender roles.

The results of the study found that status loss is a dominant theme among Turkish immigrants. Particularly, the migrants who moved through family reunification felt status loss intensively. This status loss led to changes in gender roles within the family as seen in the experiences of both male and female participants in the study.

As status loss after migration and willingness to move back and loneliness themes illustrate, female participants in the study faced several barriers such as language, discrimination, lack of networks which prevented them from pursuing their careers in Finland. This caused a sense of dissatisfaction since they were not able to stand on their own feet. As a result, Turkish women's position in the family became more traditional. It is important to note that Clarke's (2014) study among American women and Chang and Holm's (2017) study among Taiwanese women in Finland had very similar findings since migrant women in Finland suffer from unemployment more than their counterparts (Saukkonen, 2022; Statistics Finland, 2014).

The experiences of changing gender roles and the sense of loneliness did not only concern female participants. One of the male participants who was the only participant who moved based on family reunification had a similar sense of status loss due to his inability to pursue any career in Finland. That's why gender roles in family reversed and he took more responsibilities at home. However, this led to marital dissatisfaction and the new role became mentally tiring. As previous studies suggested (Bittman, England, Sayer, Folbre, & Matheson, 2003; Arrighi & Maume, 2000), men who experience status loss become reluctant to take care of housework. In this regard, the study found a similar tendency in that part.

In contrast, the study highlighted that those migrants who moved based on work residence permits did not experience status loss in the same way than others. However, they have pointed that their spouses who moved on family reunification feels loneliness and less desire to live in the country.

During the interviews, many participants expressed uncertainty about whether Finland is a permanent place to live for them. Especially those participants who felt status loss wanted to fix the issue by leaving Finland. For those with children, moving back was a more complex question since the future of their children makes it harder to decide what to do. Clarke's (2014) study on American women in Finland had a similar point that those women

were forced to live in Finland since divorcing and leaving the country may result in losing children due to custodial rules.

Loneliness was referred in relation to migration among Turkish immigrants. Especially, those participants who moved based on family reunification expressed most often a sense isolation and disconnection from the majority. This feeling of loneliness is reinforced by factors such as language barriers and lack of opportunities to make networks with Finns. Participants also described how it affected their relationships with their partners. For some, the lack of social connections led to a greater reliance on their partners for companionship and support, which could strain the relationship. In some cases, the experience of loneliness brought partners closer together since they had no other option. Clarke's (2014) had similar points that those American women were seeking more support from their husbands, and this caused strains in their relationships.

The results additionally shows that participants reject traditional gender roles. Most participants attempt to reject the role of traditions and culture on their gender roles. And they presented themselves as having equal authority in their relationships. Even in cases where the division of labour appeared traditional, participants emphasized that it was not due to adherence to traditional gender ideology, but rather practical circumstances such as unemployment. Moreover, a female participant controlled all the resources in the family due to his husband's addiction. In this sense, Turkish families did not show absolute patriarchal relationship, but they were more committed to common goals. Similar points were also found among Chinese families in Finland that Chinese women were more active in resource control for the common goals of the family (Katila, 2010). As previously mentioned, Quek (2009) suggests that commitment to common goals lead to marital equality since both partners share responsibilities to reach their goals. Maybe that's why, the participants in this thesis felt that they have equal authority in the family. The sense of equality was also common among Iranian families due to commitment to common goals although their gender roles were traditional (Moghadam, Knudson-Martin, & Mahoney, 2009).

7.1 Limitations and Future Research

The study has many limitations because of the small number of participants, limited time frame, and resources. The analysis is based on the experiences of six Turkish participants. Thus, the results cannot be generalized to whole Turkish community in Finland.

Even if the sample is small, it is an important endeavour to understand their challenges in family formation and integration in the new society. Understanding these obstacles may provide better tools for integration policies.

Data collection was another challenge that I faced during recruitment and interviews. The sensitive topic limited my recruitment, and it may have prevented my participants to talk freely about their experiences in their relationships. My position as a Turkish male interviewer may also have affected their talk since, I am also a part of Turkish community in Finland. That's why they may not have been open to talk everything they experienced despite the consent I obtained.

The findings of the study are coherent with the existing studies. Moreover, the study adds that the residence permit types (e.g family reunification, or work) effect immigrants' integration, wellbeing, and family life regardless of gender. Better sample and research on the topic have a potential to contribute to gender and migration studies. Instead of blaming or ignoring migrants' family life due to "cultural" reasons, it is important to make further research on what factors contribute to immigrant's gender roles, power relations and family formations. Besides focusing on immigrant's socio-economic integration to society, the family life of migrants may lead to better public policies to overcome integration issues.

7.2 Conclusion

Overall, the study reveals that migration can have significant impacts on individuals' power relations, status, and gender roles within their families. Understanding and addressing these issues is essential to ensure successful integration and well-being of immigrants in their new homes. The theme that emerges in the participants' talk about status loss and willingness to move back reveals that those who feel a sense of status loss or powerlessness in Finland are more eager to move back to their home country.

The study highlights the importance of social support and labour market opportunities for those who migrate based on family reunification. It is important to recognize that loneliness can have a significant impact on individuals' well-being and integration to Finland. While loneliness makes the person dependent on their partner emotionally, unemployment increases their dependence on their partner financially.

It is crucial to note that some participants justify their traditional roles by practical reasons such as unemployment, or career opportunities. Therefore, the women immigrants who had professional career prior to migration experience that their traditional roles are reinforced after migration. It is important to note that moving to societies with more so-called gender equality may rather limit than increase their opportunities. Thus, the study stress that gender roles cannot be explained only by “culture” but many other social- structural factors.



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