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THE ROLE OF FINNISH PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN IMMIGRANTS' INTEGRATION
PROCESS IN FINLAND: IMPACTS AND EFFECTS OF LIBRARY USAGE

Master thesis in the International
Information and Knowledge Management
Master's Programme
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Åbo Akademi University
Åbo 2019

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge people who have contributed in making this master's thesis a successful one.

First and foremost, I would like to show appreciation to my supervisors Gunilla Widén and Eeva-Liisa Eskola for their painstaking efforts at various stages of this thesis. Your efforts are greatly appreciated by me.

I acknowledge the co-operation of the three librarians and the eight immigrants interviewed during data gathering process of this thesis. I appreciate your co-operation, time and efforts in responding to the interview questions.

I am grateful to all my lecturers and staff of Åbo Akademi University for their support and encouragement in the course of this study.

I would also like to show appreciation to my lovely wife and son (Durosinmi Sekinat and Durosinmi Wariz) who together stood by me during my study period at Åbo Akademi University.

Abstract

Subject	Information and Knowledge Management	
Author	Ganiyu Durosini	
Thesis title	THE ROLE OF FINNISH PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN IMMIGRANTS' INTEGRATION PROCESS IN FINLAND: IMPACTS AND EFFECTS OF LIBRARY USAGE	
Supervisors	Gunilla Widén and Eeva-Liisa Eskola	
<p>This study focuses on immigrant integration program and the role of the Finnish public library in the Finnish immigrant integration program. The Finnish immigrant integration program is administered by many organizations and guided by the Finnish integration policy. The Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is responsible for the preparation of issues related to immigrant integration in Finland. The Finnish immigrant integration process is designed according to immigrant needs, immigrant academic background and immigrant profession or work experience of the immigrant.</p> <p>The aim of the Finnish integration program is to integrate immigrants to the Finnish society. In doing this, the Finnish authorities on immigrant integration matters have designed the integration program in a way that it supports immigrant families, and it gives immigrants access to the Finnish labour market. All these activities are not in the hand of one organization, and the Finnish integration program requires a chain of cooperation with different agencies and NGOs.</p> <p>The data for this thesis was collected from two groups of immigrants and librarians from the Finnish public libraries. The two group of immigrants comprises immigrant who have passed through the Finnish integration program, and immigrants who are currently in the Finnish integration program. A qualitative research approach and thematic data analysing tool was adopted for this study. The qualitative research data, and additionally secondary data from statistics Finland are vital in the outcome of this study.</p> <p>In the course of this study, the general role of Finnish public library is examined as well as the role of the Finnish public libraries in the immigrant integration program. The results obtained from this indicates that the Finnish public libraries through their services are active in supporting immigrant in the area of education and settlement in Finland through their services. The Finnish public library offers educational guidance to immigrants through the provision of information about the Finnish educational system and assistance on request about e.g. vocational schools and other kinds of library services relating to education and language studies.</p>		
Keywords	integration, public library, Finland, immigrant, refugee.	
Date: 17.01.2019	Numbers of pages: 68	

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1. CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research Background

The migration structure of many European countries have changed from being countries of emigrants to countries of immigrant. The change in trend of migration in European countries is connected to the fact that European countries are now destination points for various kinds of immigrants from virtually all continents of the world. This trend has not been without side effects on socio-economic and political structure around the world. For instance, immigrants represented 31% of the labour force in Canada, 21% in the United States and 14% in Europe (OECD, 2012).

The Finnish society has its own share of change in migration structure between 1870 - 1945 and 1960 – 1970. The first wave of emigration hits Finland between 1870 - 1954 and about 400,000 people moved away from Finland to different continents in that period. Most of the Finnish emigrants moved from Finland to USA and South American countries. The second wave of emigration hits Finland between 1960 – 1970. This second wave of emigration witnessed the movement of more than 300,000 people out of Finland to Sweden in search of jobs (Statistics Finland; Institute of Migration, 2014). The situation has changed over the years in Finland, according to Statistics Finland, and emigration rate has reduced drastically (Statistics Finland, 2018).

In view of the above, the issue of migration remains one of the oldest topic around the world because it is a verifiable fact that human movement from one point to another is as old as the world. In recent time, due to wars, political instability, drought, and many other natural disasters, the rate at which people migrate from one country to another has doubled. Thus, migration, immigrant and integration have become burning issues and discussed topics on television stations, daily newspapers and in European parliaments. Unlike in the past, tough immigration policies and boarder control policies are considered by majority of countries around the world as immediate solution for combating the negative side effects of migration. On the other hand, attention is equally given to the idea of immigrant integration to create a balance in the society where immigrants exist. The fact remains that despite some benefits of immigrant integration, migration inflow continued to be seen by many host countries as a threat to stability of

host community culture, customs and norms (Huntington, 2004: Coase, 1960 cited in Sarrazin, 2010).

1.2 Area of research

This thesis is engineered by the need to improve the Finnish immigrant integration program and to contribute to the struggle by European Commission and European member countries to create inclusive integration programs that supports social inclusion, social cohesion and social participation on migration and integration matters. As such, the results of this study would be useful for improving the Finnish immigrant integration policy, for improving the Finnish public libraries services, useful to researchers and other relevant integration agencies in Finland and beyond.

1.3 Overall aim of the thesis

The study of immigrant integration has in recent time become a phenomenon among many European countries. In many cases, available researches on immigrant integration focus on the issue of immigrant from the perspective of immigrant health, immigrant language skill, immigrant entrepreneurial skills, immigrant settlement, immigrant information behavior, public library projects, immigrant ethnic diversity, immigrant social inclusion, relationship between public library and social capital, public library as resources for immigrant, library staff feedback, library management feedback, library and non-library users (Caidi & Allard, 2005, Fisher, Durrance & Hinton, 2004, Johnson, 2010, Johnson & Griffis, 2009, Roach & Morrison, 1999).

According to Caidi and Allard (2005), many searchers have focused more on the role of the 'information practices' of immigrants in their integration program. As such, the role of public library on immigrant integration in Finland tends to remain at the level of individual practical experiences or partially documented from the areas of services rendered to immigrants. Hence, the major focus of this study is to explore the role of the Finnish public libraries in the immigrant integration program in Finland and establish a position on the topic. As discussed above, the issues of migration and immigrant integration have become major issues in several research fields. The aim of research fields on these two issues has been to examine various integration processes and come out with recommendations on how to create effective and inclusive immigrant integration programs. In Finland, the aim is not different, the Finnish Government, integration agencies and cooperating organizations are all concerned about designing an

inclusive immigrant integration program and immigration policies capable of addressing the complexities that come with migration and integration processes in Finland. To add to this knowledge, this thesis seeks to examine the services rendered by the Finnish public libraries to the Finnish larger society comprising of students, organizations, authors, publishers, immigrants and other public library users in Finland. The primary aim of the thesis is to gain a better understanding about the role of the Finnish public libraries in the Finnish immigrant integration program. The aim of this thesis is approached by examining the Finnish integration program and the Finnish integration policy with the aid of relevant literature. The literature review section will create the possibilities to compare the results of this thesis with previous studies in the area of immigrant integration, the Finnish public library service and other studies relating to immigrant integration.

1.4 Research questions

This study addresses three different research questions and each of the questions provides information about the objectives of this study. To answer the research questions comprehensively, three different interview guides with each containing 10 questions were designed. Below are the three research questions designed for this study.

Research Question 1

What is the role of Finnish public libraries in the immigrant integration program in Finland?

This question seeks to examine the role of the Finnish public libraries in the immigrant integration program and it is addressed to the librarians in the Finnish public libraries.

Research Question 2

What are the benefits of public library usage during the immigrant integration program in Finland?

This question seeks to examine the benefit of the Finnish public libraries to the integration program and it is addressed to immigrants who are currently in the Finnish integration program.

Research Question 3

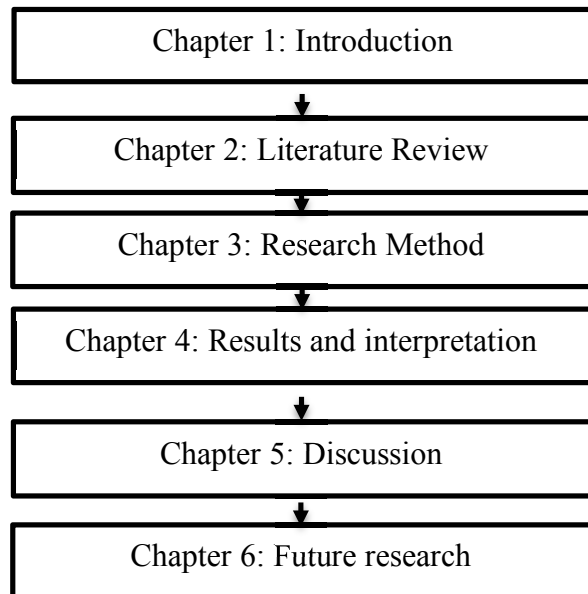
What are the impact of Finnish public library usage on the integration process?

This question seeks to provide answer to the impacts of the Finnish public library usage on immigrant integration program and the question is addressed to immigrants who have passed through the Finnish integration program.

1.5 Thesis Structure

The structure of the thesis is shown in figure 1.5.1 below. Chapter 1 gives brief discussion on background information of the topic, chapter 2 deals with literature review which gives direction to this study reckoning view of previous researchers on this and similar topic. Chapter 3 of this thesis talks about research methodology adopted for this study explaining reasons for the adoption of the methodology. Chapter 4 deals with data analysis and findings of the study while chapter 5 entails discussion of the results and processes of the study while last chapter presents possible future research.

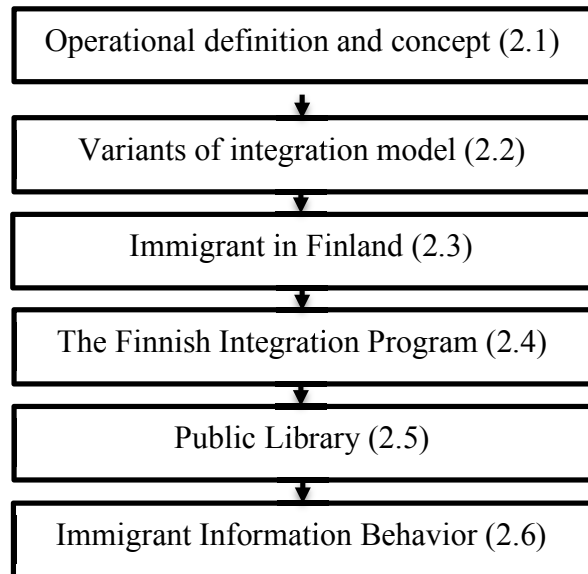
Figure 1.5.1: Outline of Thesis Structure



2. CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

In this chapter, definitions, concepts and supporting literature for this study will be discussed in details. Figure 2 gives information about the structure of this chapter of the thesis.

Figure 2: Outline of Chapter 2



2.1 Operational definition and concept

2.1.1 Immigrant/Migrant

The definition of the terms immigrant and migrant is considered necessary for this study, that is to understand who is an immigrant in the context of an immigrant integration program.

According to the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), an “*immigrant refers to any person who lives temporarily or permanently in a country where he or she was not born, and has acquired some significant social ties to this country (UNESCO, 2017).*”

The definition lays emphasis on some basic points which requires special attention when classifying someone as an immigrant. According to the UNESCO’s definition, to be considered as an immigrant, a person must live outside his/her country of birth either on temporary or permanent basis, and have a social tie with his/her new country of residence. The Finnish Immigration Service, which is the body responsible for regulating immigration matters in Finland, defines immigrant as a person who moves

from one country to another (Finnish Immigration Service, 2018). Unlike the definition of UNESCO, the Finnish Immigration Service definition appears very short and precise without much elaboration on the classification of immigrants. The International Organization for Migration (2018) also defines a migrant as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border or within a state away from his/her place of residence. According to the International Organization for Migration, neither the migrant's legal status nor the reason for moving into another country, whether voluntary or involuntary, or the length of the stay in the country, influence the definition of a migrant.

The different definitions show that there is no standard or generally accepted definition of the terms migrant and immigrant. The definitions have different criteria attached to the terms and the definition by UNESCO is broad and includes key words, such as, social ties, which makes it different from the other definitions.

Having discussed the terms migrant and immigrant, it is important to examine the factors influencing migration of immigrants. According to Keeley (2009), people migrate on permanent and temporary basis for reasons, such as search for better job opportunities, search for better life, search for quality education and to ensure safety of life (Keeley, 2009. p. 12). According to Constant and Massey (2002), people migrate primarily to search for better job and good living conditions. In most cases, reasons for migration and duration of migration account for classification of immigrants which varies from one country to another.

According to the International Organization for Migration (2018), about half of the world adult population is on the verge of migrating abroad for economic reasons or self-protection. Though, both economic migrant and people seeking for protection, are collectively referred to as immigrants, but factors influencing their migration separate them in integration context. International Organization for Migration also estimates that about 170 million people all over the world have the desire to migrate abroad within the next 12 months. These figures and description are based on the results of survey data gathered between 2010 and 2015 by the International Organization for Migration. According to the organization, further analysis of the collected data shows that one third of adults have a plan to migrate to one of the developing countries while two thirds are

set on migrating to the USA, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and South Africa (International Organization for migration, 2018).

2.1.2 Definition of Refugee, Asylum and Asylum seeker

According to the Finnish Immigration Service, a refugee is a foreign citizen who left his country with a well-founded fear of being persecuted over issues bordering on ethnic, religion, membership to a particular social pressure group or political party (The Finnish Immigration Service, 2018).

The UN Refugee Agency equally defines a refugee as somebody who has been forced to flee his home country over the fear of persecution over religious belief, race, expressed political opinion or political participation. According to UNHCR, a refugee is a person who meets the eligibility criteria under the applicable refugee definition, as provided for in international or regional refugee instruments, under UNHCR's mandate, and/or in national legislation (UN Refugee Agency 2018). The definition of International Organization for Migration is:

A refugee is who "owing to a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinions, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country. (Art. 1(A)(2), Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, Art. 1A(2), 1951 as modified by the 1967 Protocol). In addition to the refugee definition in the 1951 Refugee Convention, Art. 1(2), 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention defines a refugee as any person compelled to leave his or her country "owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order in either part or the whole of his country or origin or nationality." Similarly, the 1984 Cartagena Declaration states that refugees also include persons who flee their country "because their lives, security or freedom have been threatened by generalised violence, foreign aggression, internal conflicts, massive violations of human rights or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order." (International Organization for migration, 2011).

Furthermore, UNHCR (2006), defines asylum seeker is an individual who is seeking international protection in countries with individualized procedures. Similarly, the International Organization for Migration (2011) defines asylum seeker as a person who seeks safety from persecution or serious harm in a country other than his or her own and awaits a decision on the application for refugee status under relevant international and national instruments.

The above definitions are very important to this study because of the need to understand which the kinds of immigrants there is in Finland. Also, these definitions are necessary due to poor usage of these terms in public discussions. It is common to hear the terms 'refugee' and 'migrant' used interchangeably without given attention to the legal side which differentiate the two terms. Using these words interchangeably can cause confusion for refugees and asylum-seekers concerning their status. Also, misuse of these two terms can cause problems in the host countries because of the possible misunderstandings in the discourse of asylum and migration. Regardless of the confusion created by the way the both terms are used, the issue of refugees has remained a global phenomenon as the world continue to witness displacement of people in virtually all continents of the world, owing to political instability and fear of persecution. Asylum-seeker is someone whose claim has not yet been finally decided on by the country in which he or she has submitted it. For instance, these definitions have shown that not every asylum seeker will be recognized as a refugee but every refugee is initially an asylum-seeker. These definitions show that there are differences between asylum seekers, refugees, economic migrants and international students against the backdrop of referring to these group of migrant as refugees.

2.1.3 Immigrant Integration

There is a growing interest in issues associated with immigrant integration and migration upon in many quarters: academic, intellectual and government. As a result, literature on immigrant integration and migration issues is growing all the time. Despite the availability of literature and different theoretical frameworks about immigrant integration and migration, the debate about the issue of immigrant integration and migration has continued to swing back and forth in the areas of policy formulation. Immigrant integration is a term which reflects different perspectives when it is wrongly used. While some authors view immigrant integration as a one-way adaptation to the host society lifestyle, some authors see immigrant integration as a two-ways adaptation which requires input from both the host community and the immigrant involved.

Ikonomu (1989) opines that there are more than 30 terms that can be used to describe immigrant integration. The broad usage of the term 'immigrant integration' can be attributed to its arbitrary conceptualization by some users. The arbitral use of the term occurs mostly in social science and the term is often used interchangeably with other

terms, such as, acculturation, adaptation, assimilation, pluralism and multiculturalism (Ikonomu, 1989 cited in Schunck, 2014. pp. 179-199). Before going into detailed discussion about the theoretical models adopted for this thesis, a few clarifications are needed about the term ‘immigrant integration’.

According to Infopankki (2018), the Finnish immigrant integration program is drawn up by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment. The Finnish immigrant integration program is designed to prepare immigrants in Finland for settlement and integration into the Finnish larger society (Infopankki, 2018). This definition encapsulates the idea behind the Finnish immigrant integration policy programs which are supervised by the Finnish Ministry of the Interior and the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Employment. According to Esser (2003), immigrant integration is not a one-way program, it can either be approached from micro-sociological angle or macro-sociological perspective. Esser (2003. p. 36) asserts that the micro-sociological perspective of immigrant integration sees immigrant integration program as an individual integration process. The argument for this form of integration is that, individuals have different skills and such skills must be considered when drawing up integration programs to achieve success. On the other hand, the macro-sociological viewpoint refers to immigrant integration as two-or multi-task activities that are designed to cement the relationship between immigrant groups and their host communities, and by which peaceful coexistence can be achieved (Esser, 2003. pp. 8-10). Not disagreeing with Esser’s consideration of immigrant integration from the individual viewpoint, the collective viewpoint and the institutional viewpoint, as well as the legal, political, social and cultural aspects of the immigrant integration cannot be over-looked. The inability to give attention to legal, political and social and cultural angles can create complexities which may cause migration problems: societal division, social vices, unrest and pressure on public services (UNHCR, 2006). Lucassen (2005) states that immigrant integration is a sociological mechanism which explains the way how the immigrants and non-immigrants can co-exist and settle in a new environment (Lucassen, 2005. p. 300). Lucassen’s definition shares similarities with Esser’s definition of integration, the social mechanism definition of integration equally embraces immigrant integration from the perception of immigrants’ social, legal and political status. Heckmann (2006) defines Immigrant Integration as a long lasting process through which inclusion of an immigrant into core institutions is ensured in

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immigrant's new environment. Tentatively, there is no time limit to the period of integration and duration of immigrant integration. This is the case with many immigrants in Finland, some immigrants continue to attend the Finnish learning classes for 2 to 3 years all in the name of integration.

Act 1386/2010 of the Finnish constitution Section 3 (3 §) defines integration as a way of interactive development that involves immigrants and their new society, with the aims of providing immigrants with basic knowledge and skills needed to get along in society, improve immigrant working life with the possibilities to maintain their cultural heritage and language (Integration Act, 1386/2010). The purpose of this Act and other integration acts and legislations is to support and promote the Finnish integration and to make it easier for immigrants to take active role in Finnish society: labour force, economic growth, education and job creation.

Buonfino, et al., (2007), define immigrant integration as a dynamic process by which immigrants and host society learn to co-exist and create unification. According to this definition, integration is a process which revolves around learning how to live in a new society. The definition by Buonfino et al. (2007), shows that immigrant integration can take different forms, but is often designed according to the situation of the immigrant or person involved. According to Van Oudenhoven, Ward, and Masgoret (2006), immigrant integration is an avenue to create intercultural relationship in multicultural society without the application of force. Integration should not be seen as a win-win approach where immigrants have to lose everything in their background: culture, norms and values. However, immigrant integration does not imply unconditional acceptance of all of the migrants' norms and customs. The fact remains that laws, values and human rights draw the line between what is accepted and what is not by the host community. For instance, the immigrant host societies reserve the right to set the boundaries based on their social norms and their applicable laws inasmuch as they know and understand the immigrants' culture, made available the chance to establish a dialogue or negotiate the differences of certain social norms and customs. This is why it is important to provide civic, cultural education and introduce immigrants to Finnish culture at the early stages of the integration process.

In spite of all the above definitions, many people are still confused about what constitutes immigrant integration. The misconception about the meaning of integration

by many immigrants may be attributed to the fact that the term integration is largely used across different disciplines. Thus, the term ‘immigrant’ can be misinterpreted for its usage in other disciplines. Lacroix (2010), asserts that immigrant integration is all kinds of cultural and social behavior program that promote giving up immigrant background and creating a sense of belonging with a new environment (Lacroix, 2010. p. 6). The fact remains that integration reflects different perspectives in the areas of goals and reason for its establishment. While integration is taken as the most favorable relationship between migrant and the host society in some quarters, some authors see integration as one-way adaptation to the host society and some authors chose to address the barriers to immigrant integration and see discrimination as major issue. The above definitions are however necessary to pinpoint the differences and similarities in immigrant integration and its results.

2.2 Variants of the integration models

There are different forms of integration models. This this study chose to focus on two models: assimilation and multiculturalism. The root of the both integration models can be traced to the pre-colonial administration era in Africa. After the decolonization of the African countries this system did not go into oblivion because Africans and other nationals continued to move into the European countries in search for better life, job and safety, thus, the policy resurfaced in another forms. Nevertheless, there are significant variations in today’s integration program when compared with what was obtainable during the colonial era. Mostly, the variation exists in terms of scope, types and government perception. Aside from these, the variation can also be attributed to the fact that each country sees the challenges and benefits of the immigration and the integration differently. While some countries see the immigrant integration from the angle of the immigrants’ contributions to workforce, and the socio-economic environment, some countries see the integration programs as waste of resources and pressure on their public infrastructure. For instance, in recent past, the Cambridge economic expert Robert Rowthorn is of the opinion that large population of immigrant will lead to a situation where the current financial gain of immigrant population will be out weighted by immigrant population pressure in UK (Rowthorn, 2015. pp. 4-6). According to Rowthorn, many other authors have written carried out insightful analysis of this topic, for example, Goodhart (2013) and Collier (2003).

2.2.1 The policy of assimilation and integration

The policy of assimilation was characteristic for the French administrative system during the colonial era in the African sub-regions and in the State of France. Under this system, the State of France recognized and accepted the presence of minorities in her territory, but did not tolerate that they challenged the majority's monopoly over religion, language and cultural heritage. Under the system, religion, language and cultural rights of the minorities which constituted of immigrants were allowed to exist only at the private level because it was not allowed to dominate the religion of the host community. Despite the success of the policy, many of its assumptions faced strong criticism from many contemporary authors and socialists. For instance, the concept of total assimilation was totally faulted for its ethnocentric projections (Alba & Nee, 1997; Brubaker, 2001). According to Alba and Nee (1997), ethnocentric projections are capable of creating religious imbalance in the country where such policy is adopted (Alba & Nee, 1997). Rudiger and Spencer (2003) consider that the policy of assimilation approach is designed mostly for a homogeneous majority culture with the aim of creating single identity for all the people within the state. One of the oldest definitions of assimilation is the one of Park & Burgess, who defined assimilation as a process of interpenetration where the immigrant is made to acquire the memories, sentiments and attitudes of other persons or groups, as well as to share their experiences (Park & Burgess, 1921. p. 735).

The policy of assimilation is characterized by many issues from the view of the immigrants. According to the policy, the immigrants are expected to adopt the ways of life of the host community without an opportunity to retain their own identity in any form. Though, the policy of assimilation does not include the arrangement of language and culture learning, it also embraces friendship development, engagement in political process and voluntary activities. It is seen as a long time integration system as the form of integration continues through several generations. The assertion is that the more this form of integration moves on through the generations of immigrants the more equality is achieved in the society where assimilation is practiced. Though, these forms of integration approaches seem not to be working any longer, not even in France where it originated. Mainly, the policy of assimilation remains unwelcomed due to the migration of immigrants with heterogeneous background and high passion to retain their own cultural identities in the new countries.

Despite many clarifying definitions of the concepts of assimilation and integration, till date, the concepts remain as a topic of debate among scholars. Some scholars claimed that the concept of integration can be directly likened to the French policy of assimilation adopted during the dark periods of the colonial era. Lacroix (2010), is of the opinion that many of the critics of the concept of assimilation are bitter because the concept deprives the immigrants their cultural identities through a carefully designed program that compels them to jettison their own culture and take to norms and values of the dominant majority in the new society (Lacroix, 2010. p. 8). Some authors claimed that the idea of the French policy of assimilation are evident in the structure of various integration programs as they include the national language and the culture and traditions of the receiving society. Lindo (2005), posited that the concept of integration de-emphasizes and ignores the complexity of cultural interplay, immigrant identity, social status and individual interaction skills and styles which may produce counter result against the objectives of integration. In summary, the policy of immigrant assimilation entails that the ways of life of the host society has to be accepted in order to become a full member of the society. Though, people may drop their culture, background and other things to get integrated, but the fact remains that one's identity is a thing of the mind more than a physical appearance. For instance, many French footballers often put on the symbols of their countries of origin while representing France in football matches.

2.2.2 Multicultural society and integration

Though, the many European countries now adopt the multicultural integration approach, it was first adopted in Canada. The Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 21st of July 1988 which became law on July 21, 1988 covers four vital areas of the immigrant integration. The Act is used to address the problem of racial discrimination, to ensure that the diverse populations are well represented in Canada, to promote the sense of belonging by all Canadian citizens and to enhance the cross-cultural understanding in Canada (Canadian Museum of Immigration, 2018). These four cardinal points of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988 serve as a guide for the whole Canadian immigrant integration policy. According to Castles (2006), multicultural integration recognizes the right to cultural maintenance and community formation and it links this right to social equality and protection of immigrants from discrimination. The idea of the multicultural society integration approach appears good to the countries with people from

different ethnicities and religious backgrounds. The general perception is that multicultural integration is a solution to the issue of ethnically and religiously diversified societies. Ikäläinen et al., (2003), have detailed information about the Finnish multicultural policy, and integration program. The idea is that multicultural integration aids the accommodation of people with cultural variety by guaranteeing the needs of minorities and immigrants and by promoting the cross-cultural understanding in a new society.

Though, there seem to be no concrete theoretical information about the pattern that must be followed to implement the multicultural integration approach. Joppke and Morawska (2003), consider that unlike the real situation where people in a state hold different opinions about the societal issues, the concept of integration assumes that the society is made up of individuals and groups who exist by consensus and are perfectly structured by the state. The European Commission defines multiculturalism as the public acceptance of the immigrants and the minority groups as distinct groups or communities whose languages, social behaviors, associations, and social infrastructures differentiate them from the majority (Meinhof & Triandafyllidou, 2006 cited in Xhelili Rogova, 2014, p. 16).

In some quarters, there are suggestions that the multicultural integration policy does not give rights to any ethnic group. It is assumed that the multicultural form of integration only recognizes ethnic identity and gives rights and sometimes approves funding to members of ethnic. Most of these assumptions are not in real life situations, thus, they put the concept of integration and notion of society in a problematic and unclear position. In support of multicultural integration, Schinkel (2010) asserts that integration should not be for the immigrants alone. He believes that the larger society equally has a part to play and needs to be integrated in same directions with the immigrant. According to Schinkel (2010), the integration aims can only be achieved when the immigrants and the host communities are active in the integration processes. Brubaker argues that people opposed the policy because it is seen as being politically disreputable and intolerant to the immigrants' cultures (Brubaker, 2001). Despite this view, Brubaker (2001) maintains that the policy of assimilation is an essential tool for measuring similarities and differences that exist in our societies. Also, there are several positions by authors and analysts about all forms of integration policy, integration is seen as the

only way to bring the immigrants closer to the people and it continues to be a subject of debate among parliamentarians, authors, government agencies and non-governmental organizations around the world. The noticeable factors against the policy of assimilation arise from the suppression of immigrant cultures. However, the multiculturalist and the assimilationist perspectives form the basis for many integration policies around the world, but with paying attention to integration measures, integration focus, integration objectives, integration implementation and its end results.

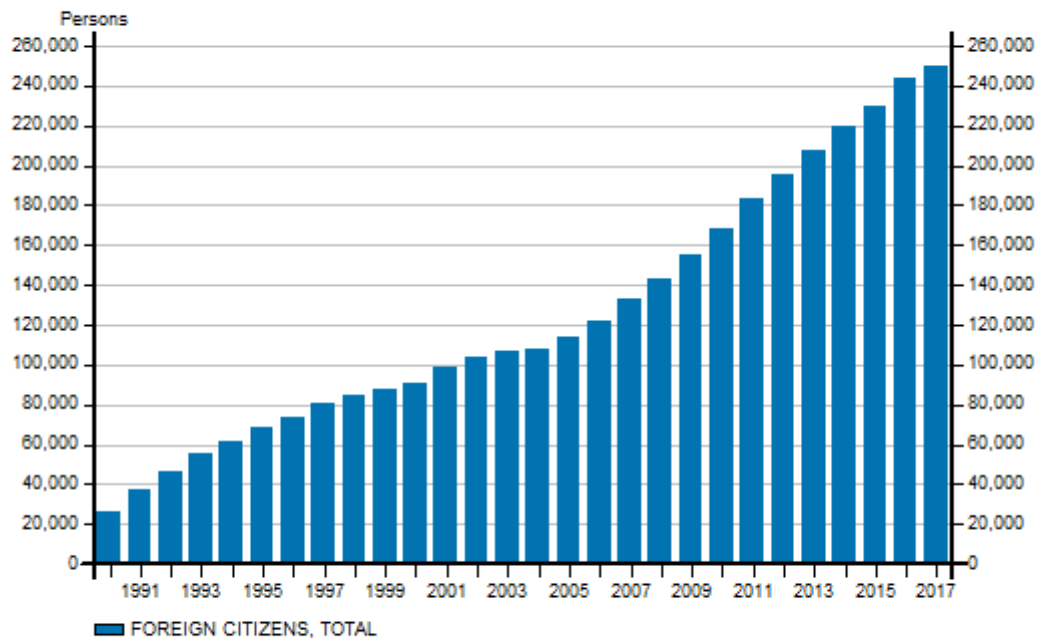
2.3 Immigrants in Finland

The issue of immigration was relatively new to Finland before the 1970s. Thus, Finland has a short history of receiving international migrants when compared with some European countries like France, Germany, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The first group of refugees arriving to Finland were those from Chile and Vietnam in the 1970s and 1980s (Forsander, 2002, p. 86). Afterwards, a large group of refugees arrived to Finland from Somalia in the in early 1990s (Forsander, 2002. pp 81-118). Finnish migrants before the 1990s were classified as economically motivated migrants who came to Finland to take up professional jobs in various Finnish companies. Afterwards, Finland has been receiving immigrants from virtually all the continents of the world. According to Statistic Finland (2018), influx of immigrants remains one of the major reasons for cultural diversity in Finland.

The report of the United Nations from year 2016 shows that high numbers of people have been forced to leave their home countries during the year 2014 and 2015 and seek for refugee status in numbers of European countries including Finland. The biggest refugee groups according to the United Nations report came notably from Sudan, Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan and Syria. Among these countries, refugees from Iraq form the biggest group, followed refugees from Somalia, Afghanistan and Syria. In the area of asylum, Finland recorded the highest numbers of asylum seekers in year 2015. In 2015, the number of asylum seekers in Finland was 32,476. Before then the numbers of asylum seekers in Finland was fluctuating between 1,500 and 6,000. (UNHCR, 2016).

Figure 2.1: Immigrant Population in Finland

Population by citizenship 1990-2017
FOREIGN CITIZENS, TOTAL



Statistics Finland / Population structure

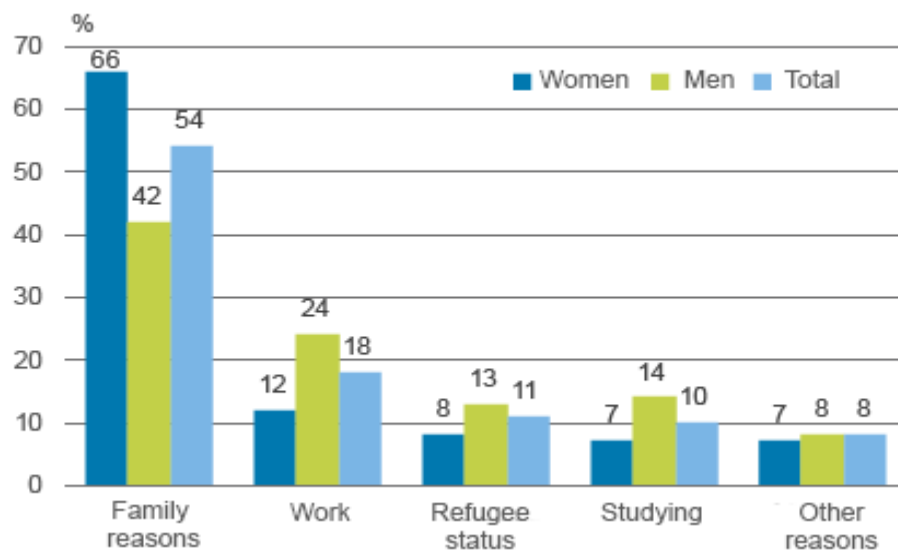
Figure 2.1 above shows how the population of immigrant in Finland has increased heavily between 1990 and 2017, although, the growth stagnated between 2003 and 2004. The continuous growth shown in Figure 2.1 can be attributed to the increase in the number of applicants for family reunion by people who had family ties with the immigrants living in Finland, the raised refugee quota, the number of people who moved to Finland as a spouse to a Finnish citizen or as professionals and workers and for studying in Finland.

2.3.1. Characteristics of Immigrant Population in Finland

The most common reasons for migrating to Finland are return migration, asylum seeking and marriage reunion and family ties (Jasinskaja-Lahti et al., 2002. p. 17), which is supported by available information from the Ministry of Interior of Finland supports the position of Jasinskaja-Lahti et al. According to The Finnish Ministry of Interior, between the year 2000 and 2014, Finland has received 1,500 - 6000 asylum seekers yearly, but the number went as far as 32,476 in the year 2015. The rapid growth in the number of asylum seekers between the periods can according to the Ministry be attributed to the global crises around the World, in particular, the crisis dubbed “Arab Spring”. Afterwards, Finland has become a popular destination country for different

kinds of immigrants. The large influx of immigrants into Finland in the 90s has been traced to the Finnish economic breakthrough. The Finnish economic breakthrough is unconnected with the influx of immigrants to Finland, but happened as a result of the country's heavy investment on internet during that period which may have launched Finland in the league of the most competitive economies around the world and of the membership of the European Union in 1995. However, economic migration remains relatively small in Finland when compared to countries like Germany, Sweden, United Kingdom and France.

Figure 2.2: Migration means in Finland (2014)

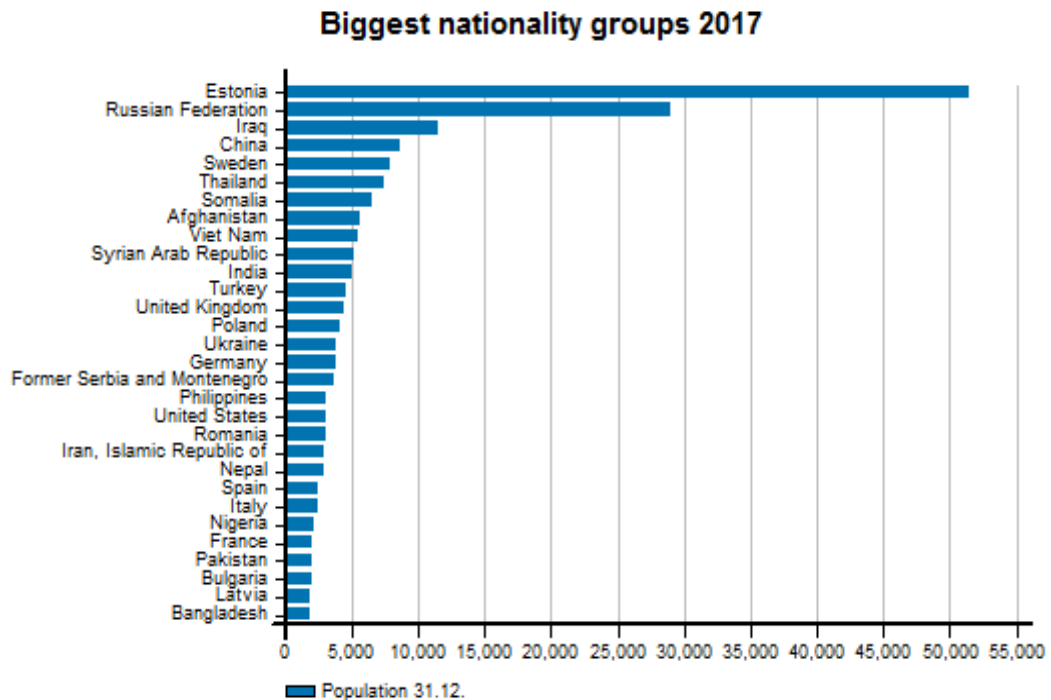


Source: UTH survey, Statistics Finland 2.

From figure 2.2 above, family reunion as a reason for migration accounts for 66% of immigrants in Finland, while work accounts for 24%, refugee accounts for 13%, study accounts for 14% and other reasons accounts for 8%. In view of the above, one can assert that the immigrant population in Finland is composed of diverse group of people with different reasons of migrating to Finland. Also, there is a clear indication that coming to Finland through different means and having different backgrounds have its challenges and effects integrating into the Finnish society and culture. The task of providing solutions to these obvious challenges cannot be left in the hand of the new immigrants. Thus, the government of Finland is compelled to draw up strategic integration plans that will ease and quicken the absorption of the new immigrant into the larger Finnish society. It should be noted that this data is emanated from the data

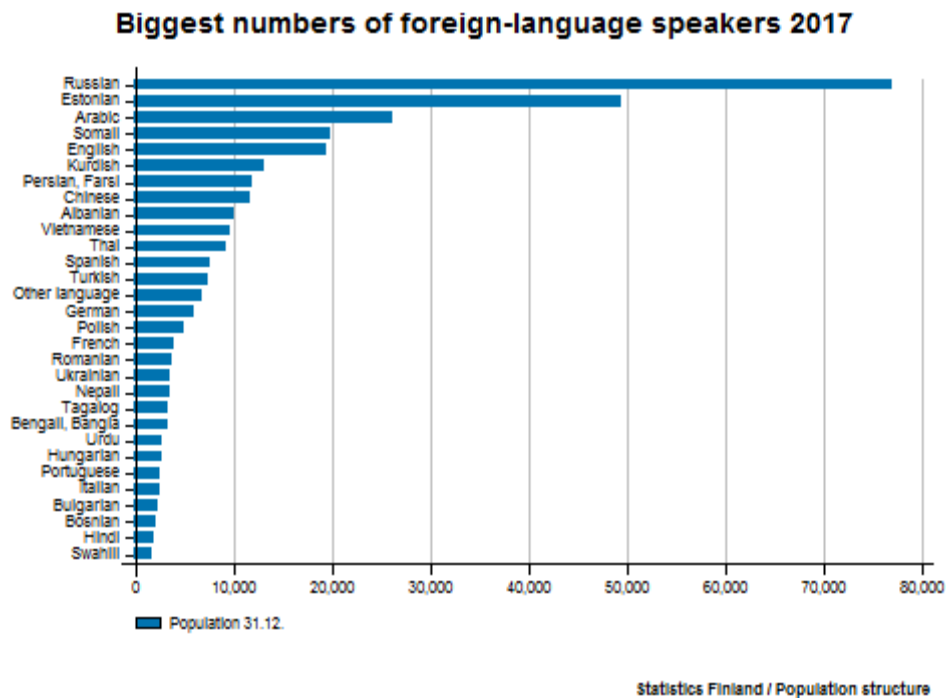
base of Finnish Immigration Service and based on the granted residence permit and accepted refugee in 2014 (Statistic Finland, 2015).

Figure 2.3: Graphical representation of Nationalities in Finland



Statistics Finland / Population structure

There is a great diversity in the nationality of immigrants in Finland. In 2017, the majority group of foreign nationals in Finland were Estonians (20.7%), Russians (11.7%), Iraq (4.7%), China (3.5%), Sweden (3.2%), Thailand (3.0%), Somalia (2.7%), Afghanistan (2.3%), Viet Nam (2.2%), Syrian Arab Republic (2.1%) India (2.1%), Turkey (1.9%), United Kingdom (1.8%), Ukraine (1.6%) and others accounts for (34.8%) of total population of immigrant in Finland which stood at 249,452 in 2018 (Statistic Finland, 2018). Estonian citizens with population figure of 51,539 remain the largest group of foreigners in Finland and followed by Russians with population of 29,183.

Figure 2.4: Foreign language speakers in Finland

It is rather surprising to know that despite Estonia being a majority group among immigrant in Finland, Russian language speakers continue to be the highest foreign-language speaker in Finland. The second largest language is Estonian language, followed by Somali, English, Arabic, and others. These languages show diversity in the population of immigrants in Finland. The better side of the immigrants' diversity is that it creates a multicultural society and diversity of people expands the potential of country's economic development (Lazear, 1998).

2.4 The Finnish Integration Program

The Finnish integration processes requires extensive collaboration and partnership with multiple organizations; public, private and non-governmental, and various disciplines and areas, including education, employment, housing, social assistance, health, culture, sports, violence, and local communities. The Finnish immigrant integration program covers a lot of activities such as education, culture, local community, health, labour market, social assistance, housing and host of other activities that help in the process of immigrant settlement in Finland (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland, 2018).

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The general perception may be that the Finnish integration program is open to every immigrant who are legally living in Finland. Contrary to this viewpoint, this study shows that there are criteria to be fulfilled before participating in the Finnish integration program. Unlike the other class of immigrants, the Finnish integration program is open to refugees and immigrants with family ties to persons living in Finland.

As mentioned earlier on, the criteria to participate in the Finnish integration program differs for different groups of immigrants. Unlike the other groups of immigrants, the employed immigrants do not have direct access to the Finnish integration program until such employed immigrant becomes unemployed and maintain unemployment registration for a stipulated period with the Public Employment and Business Services (TE Services), an agency belonging to the area of responsibility of the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment in Finland (Ministry of Employment and the Economy, 2013). Though, every immigrant upon receiving residence permit and social security get basic information about the Finnish society, Finnish working life, Finnish weather, immigrants' rights and obligations in Finland. The mentioned information can also be obtained through the Finnish public libraries. Though, these kind of services are not part of the Finnish integration program, they are rendered by various organizations in Finland.

In Finland, the responsibility of immigrant integration is not in the hand of a single agency. The duty of immigrant integration is shared among several Finnish agencies and each of the agencies plays active role and work in cooperation with other agencies in order to achieve the general integration objectives as set out in the Finnish Integration Act. The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment is responsible for the integration of immigrants, the Centers for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment and the Municipalities are responsible for integration in their own region. The reception centers are responsible for providing asylum seekers with initial orientation and the Finnish Immigration Service is responsible for providing quota refugees with initial orientation (Finnish Immigration Service, 2018).

The Finnish immigrant integration program does not start immediately. An initial assessment of immigrants and this is referred to as "alkukartoitus" in Finnish language is a preceding program. The assessment of immigrants is considered important because it is upon it the immigrant integration plan is drawn. In drawing the immigrant

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integration plan, the following assessments are considered paramount; educational qualification, skills, work experience and language skills. In most cases, the immigrant assessment is conducted by the Employment and Economic Development Office located mostly in an immigrant's local municipality. The Finnish integration plan gives detail information about the actions necessary for immigrants to achieve proper integration into the Finnish society. On the other hand, immigrants can prepare the integration plan together with a job counselor at an Employment and Economic Development Office or TE office (TE-toimisto) or with a social worker at a Social Office. Upon the design of the integration plan, the TE-office and Social Insurance Institute (KELA) will determine if the immigrant qualifies to receive unemployment benefits or income support during the integration program. Though this situation is rare, it is possible for an immigrant employee to assist the immigrant in integration by helping to pay for Finnish language courses and equally help settling housing and other issues that immigrant may need help with. This sometimes happen in a work where an immigrant without any Finnish skills is employed.

The basic Finnish integration training starts immediately after the decision is made about the integration plan and the financial support. The immigrant integration training is coordinated by Finnish municipalities, Employment and Economic Development Office and many educational institutes across Finland. The training usually includes studies in Finnish or Swedish language and with an introduction to the Finnish society, culture and working life. One good thing in the Finnish integration structure is that, during and after the Finnish integration training, the immigrants retain their own culture, language and religion. This implies that the Finnish integration program is not the same as the policy of assimilation as discussed earlier on. Under the Finnish integration program children from immigrant background have the opportunity to learn own languages and culture.

In Finland, learning Finnish or Swedish language is considered as the first and most important aspect of the immigrant integration program. The idea behind the teaching of Finnish/Swedish language is to enabling immigrants to communicate and interact freely with natives of Finland (Infopankki, 2018). According to Krolak (2005), language and literacy instruction has also been a traditional library service for both immigrant and non-immigrant members of the society (Krolak, 2005. p. 6). The Finnish language

learning program contains sections classified into three levels: basic, intermediate and advanced level. The basic level is for beginners and it enables participants to manage day-to-day interactions with the native speakers. The intermediates use Finnish fairly well, better than those at the basic level. The third level, advanced is for professional users. Immigrants often start integration process attending a course on basic level which courses are offered by municipalities and many language course schools. This level requires the use of textbook and the Finnish public library offers free services to immigrants registered in the integration program. The Finnish public library has additional chargeable services to the general public including immigrants in the integration program, such as, photocopying and dealing with borrowed material returned late. These free services are seen as a gateway to learning Finnish language and individual knowledge improvement.

According to section 7 of the Finnish Integration Act (493/1999; amendments up to 324/2009 included), to promote and support immigrant integration, the employment office and the Finnish municipalities shall:

- 1) Provide guidance, advisory services
- 2) Provide information about Finnish society and how it functions
- 3) Provide Finnish and Swedish teaching opportunities
- 4) Provide instruction in reading and writing, and teaching to augment basic education
- 5) Provide adult skills training and take appropriate labor market policy
- 6) Provide interpretation services
- 7) Take measures and provide services to promote equality in all its forms
- 8) Take measures and provide services to meet the special needs of immigrant minors
- 9) Take measures and provide services for special needs groups
- 10) Take other measures and provide services that encourage immigrants to acquire for themselves the skill and knowledge needed in the society (Ministry of Interior, Finland, 2009).

2.5 Public Library

There are many definitions of a public library in the academic domain and many of the available definitions focus on different parts of the public library. As a result, there are different viewpoints about what a public library entails. Also, it is difficult to find a generally accepted definition for library and public library. However, this thesis adopts

the definition of a public library by UNESCO because of its wider coverage and level of its acceptance in academic space. UNESCO introduced its first definition of a public library in 1949. The definition of public library given by UNESCO in 1949 was later revised in 1972 in the organization's manifesto (UNESCO, 1994). UNESCO defines public library as an organization which preforms library services without fee from users, open to all public users, finance with state and government fund, intended as an auxiliary educational institution providing a means of self-education which is endless and houses educative and informative materials giving reliable information freely and without partiality (UNESCO, 1994).

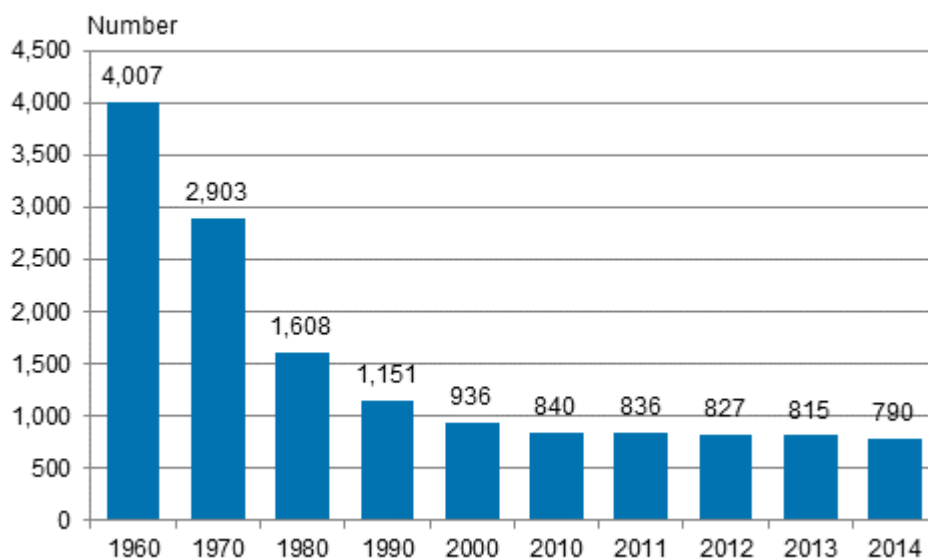
The origins of a public library in Europe can be traced to the 18th century when enlightenment movement started across Europe. Since then, public library services across Europe have continued to witness different reforms in areas of services and operation. According to Jaeger et al. (2011) the change of public library operation and services around the world can be attributed to the need of public libraries to reflect and align with the changes in society to maintain their changes. These changes are in the areas of services rendered to the public and promotion of intercultural existence stemmed from the wave of migration. Now, public libraries are required to have materials in many immigrant languages.

2.5.1 The Finnish Public Library

Like other European countries, the Finnish public libraries have long historical background. They are non-profit making institution financed by Finnish municipalities and provide services to individual, students, researchers and other library users (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2018). The Finnish public libraries have in the last 60 years witnessed series of reforms in the areas of operation and services to library users. Many of the reforms witnessed by the Finnish public libraries are mostly for repositioning the Finnish public libraries in alignment with the changes in the Finnish society and the world in general. The reforms have helped not only to align the Finnish public libraries with societal changes, but also to evaluate the Finnish public library services, to check conformance of public library with Finnish government policy direction, to measure and address the Finnish public library issues in the area of information, cultural and educational development in Finland (Finnish Library Services, 2018).

The 2015 Public Library Policy covers new public library users' expectations and made Finnish public libraries for the first time to be in a situation where it has to compete with other actors in the field of information provision (Ministry of Education and culture, 2016). It should be understood that the above reformation is targeted at formulating and implementing public library strategies. The strategies are towards the direction of presenting visions and objectives of public library regarding access to knowledge and culture, it identifies challenges and developmental needs. Also, with the aim of detailing measures aimed at securing information services for all citizens including pupils, and the roles of local authorities and the state in public libraries operations.

Figure 2.5: Public libraries in Finland, 1960–2014

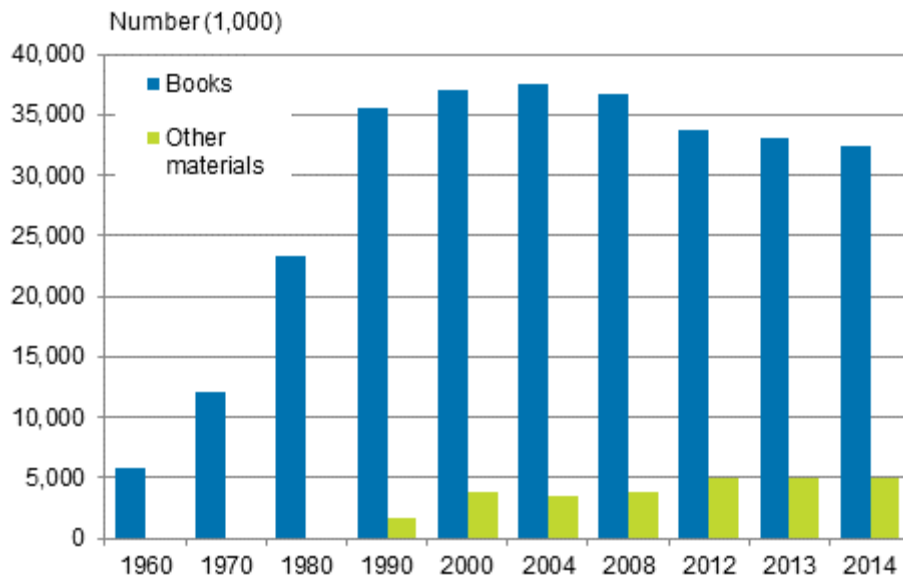


Source: Statistics Finland, 2018.

According to Statistic Finland, there were 4,007 public libraries in Finland in 1960, but the number continued to dwindle afterwards. In 1980, the number of Finnish public libraries reduced to 1,608 and the last survey shows that the number of Finnish public libraries were 737 in the year 2017 (Statistics Finland, 2018). Figure 2.5 also shows a sharp decline in the number of public libraries across Finland between 1960 and 2014. The reason for the fall in the number of public libraries in Finland between 1960 and 2014 as shown in Figure 2.5 was due to the political decision by the Finnish Government to merge smaller municipalities into large municipalities. This equally

caused merger of smaller public libraries into bigger units across Finland (Statistics Finland, 2018). Knowing the possible effects of the merger of public libraries merger, the Finnish government responded to this by establishing mobile public libraries. The Finnish mobile public libraries serve users of all ages and also provide opportunity for people who cannot visit the libraries to use the public library services. The Finnish mobile public libraries operate on schedule which in most cases is once in a week. Like other conventional public libraries, the Finnish mobile libraries operate under the regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture which is also responsible for the national library policy in Finland (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2016).

Figure 2.5.1: Number of public library materials collections in Finland, 1960 – 2014.



Source: Statistics Finland, 2018.

The Finnish public libraries witnessed growth in books collections between 1960 and 2004, but from 2008 till 2014, the book collection started to diminish. The growth of the public library collections between 1960 and 2004 can be attributed to the improved public libraries services offered to library users. On the other hand, the drop in public libraries materials collection witnessed between 2008 and 2014 as shown in figure 2.6 may be attributed to the digitalization of the Finnish public libraries which facilitated the access of books and other materials online through internet. The Finnish public library users seemed to prefer electronic materials which does not require library users'

visit to a library. Despite the digitalization of the Finnish public libraries, the role of the Finnish public libraries remained unchanged and not impaired by the changes in the Finnish public libraries operations: merger of the Finnish public libraries, digitalization of public libraries and the advent of internet.

According to Mäkinen (2001), the establishment of the mobile library and the constant improvement of the library services influenced the rapid growth of the Finnish public library between 1960 and 2000. Mäkinen (2001) further refers to the annual book circulation rate from 1960 to 1994 to justify his statement of the growth of the Finnish public library. In early 1960, the annual book circulation rate per person was 3.4, in 1970 it was 7.1, and in 1980 15.1. The level of 20.2 was reached in 1994. This illustrates that every Finnish citizen has been borrowing around 20 volumes annually from the local municipal public library (Mäkinen, 2001. p. 116).

2.5.2 Administration of the Finnish Public Library

The operation of the Finnish public library is regulated by the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture through the enactment of Public Libraries Acts. In Finland there has been several Public Libraries Acts, but this thesis discusses the Finnish Public Libraries Act (1492/2016) to explore some information about the Finnish public libraries. The Finnish Public Libraries Act (1492/2016) lay down provisions on the Finnish public libraries' operations, promotion at the local, regional and national level, as well as on the cooperation between the public libraries (Finnish Public Libraries Act,1492/2016). Particularly, this thesis is more interested in the cooperation activities of the Finnish public libraries as discussed in the Act (1492/2016) to examine the organizations involved in the public libraries cooperation.

The operating model of the Finnish public library appears clear and easy to understand. This assumption is premised on the fact that the Finnish public library services, structure, responsibilities, finance and administration are clearly stated in the Finnish Public Libraries Acts. In Finland, the Ministry of Education and Culture is responsible for the public library policy formulation and development programs. The Finnish municipalities are responsible for the financial and operational responsibilities of the public library within their jurisdiction. Aside from the Act, there are additional legislation concerning the public libraries, for example, about the state subsidy for municipalities i.e. the Finnish municipalities can get financial assistance from the state

to provide different services. The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture plays a key role in the development of the public library by formulating the national library policy in Finland and by presenting the library the policy statement to the Parliament for implementation. The committee of the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture identifies challenges of the Finnish public libraries and proposes solutions.

The Finnish Council for Public Libraries is a central body in the field of library work in Finland. The task of the organization is overseeing the coordination and co-operation between the public libraries on a national level. The organization also represents them in issues relating to the activities and the development of the national library networks. Further joint activities between the other library networks and interest groups are important tasks.

2.5.3 Finnish Public Library Reformation

The Public Libraries Act (1492/2016) came into operation in the beginning of 2017. The basic objectives of the Act are to promote active citizenship, to improve Finnish democracy and freedom of expressions in the Finnish society. As a precaution to ensure smooth implementation of the Finnish library reform, the 2016 Libraries Act takes into account the changes that have occurred in the Finnish municipalities and regional structures. The mergers of bigger municipalities with smaller municipalities also caused the mergers of smaller public libraries. As part of the Finnish public library reform, the Libraries Act take into consideration the changes in the Finnish society, such as, the age structure of the population, the internal migration and the effect of immigration effect on the public libraries. As a result of all these changes, the Finnish public libraries are now required to provide activities and services that are more pluralistic and multicultural than before the public library reform. The Libraries Act lays down provisions on the tasks of municipal public libraries, the national and regional development tasks, and the special task, library users' responsibilities, suspension of borrowing rights and user rights, library user regulations, and qualification requirements for library staff.

The Finnish public library helps through its services to mitigate the societal changes and to improve the societal information system. The services from the Finnish public library are vital for creating an informative society. The services are broadening and influenced by a host of factors among which are the technological improvements, the, influx of

immigrants and the need to cater for diverse groups in society including refugees, asylum seekers, workers, students and a lot of other library users. According to the information on the website of The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, the Finnish public library as an information center for language studies provides materials and books to different library users in different languages (The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, 2018).

2.5.4 General Services and Role of Finnish Public Library

According to recent studies, there has been interest in the particular role that public libraries, as municipal institutions, play in the immigrant settlement and integration (Ashton & Milam, 2008; Frisken & Wallace, 2000 cited in Macdonald, 2012). The President of the American Library Association described the public library as “the most promising of all measures for social integration” (Crunden, 1980. p. 90). To understand the services rendered by the Finnish public libraries from the viewpoint of the public libraries objectives, this thesis adopts the Finnish Public Libraries Act 1492/2016.

According to the Act 1492/2016, the Finnish public libraries shall strive to perform the following services: to promote equal opportunities and unhindered access to educational and cultural information, to make information access and usage readily availability for all groups of people living in Finland, to promote reading culture and versatile literacy skills in the Finnish society, to create opportunities for lifelong learning and competence development among people in Finland, and to promote active citizenship, democracy and freedom of expression (Finnish Public Libraries Act, 1492/2016).

The same Act enumerates the duties of the Finnish public libraries as follows: provision of access to materials, information and cultural contents to all library users, maintenance of public libraries versatility and up-to-date collections for library users, promotion of reading culture and literal works, provision of information services, guidance and support in the acquisition and use of information and in versatile literacy skills among library users, provision of premises for learning, recreational activities, working, and civic activities and finally promotion of social and cultural dialogue (Finnish Public Libraries Act, 1492/2016). UNESCO also emphasized in its manifesto that public libraries are concerned with the refreshment of human spirit through the provision of books for relaxation and pleasure (UNESCO, 2004). The public libraries’ collections for library users’ relaxation and pleasure include literature, recorded materials, music materials, materials related to the different forms of arts, such as,

paintings, dance, sculptures and other collections that provide knowledge and soothing effect to all library users.

Public libraries have strong history of responding to natural disasters and humanitarian crises through the provision of a welcoming environment to library users, by serving as a place of refuge for body and soul, and as a source of information to all in the society (Public Library Section, IFLA, 2015). According to the Finnish Public Libraris Act 149/2016, the Finnish public libraries play a key role in the development and maintenance of a democratic society through giving the populace access to a wide and varying range of knowledge, ideas and opinions on democratic processes. Public libraries are able to sustain and improve democracy by providing the citizen free access to information and useful knowledge, such as, rights to vote and civic responsibilities as stated in the constitution.

According to Krolak (2005), language and literacy instruction has also been a traditional library service for both the immigrants and non-immigrant members of society (Krolak, 2005. p. 6). The Finnish public libraries also act as information center for language studies through the provision of books to library users in different languages. As part of library services, Naficy (2009), cited that libraries sometimes serve as interpreters of government online services for immigrants (Naficy, 2009. p. 162).

2.5.5 Finnish/Swedish language and Finnish Public library

Cultural awareness and language skills have proved to be two important aspects of immigrant integration (Roth & Åslund, 2006 cited in Bradley, et al., (2017). To achieve the objectives of immigrant integration, proper attention should be given to the issue of host community culture and language. Learning of Finnish or Swedish language is considered as the first and most important aspect of the Finnish immigrant integration program. Ability to learn and speak Finnish enables immigrant to communicate and interact freely with natives of Finland. Just like in Finland, the backdrop to the integration of newly arrived migrants in Sweden is the new Language Act introduced by the Swedish government in 2009. The law backs the individual's right of access to language (Lindberg, 2009 cited in Bradley, et al., (2017). Some aspects of the Swedish Language Act are parallel with the Finnish language learning procedure for immigrants, some are not. The Act in Sweden allows everybody living in Sweden to have access to

learn the Swedish language while in Finland the immigrant is required to fulfil some criteria before having access to the Finnish language learning.

2.6 Immigrants' information behaviour and immigrant integration in Finland

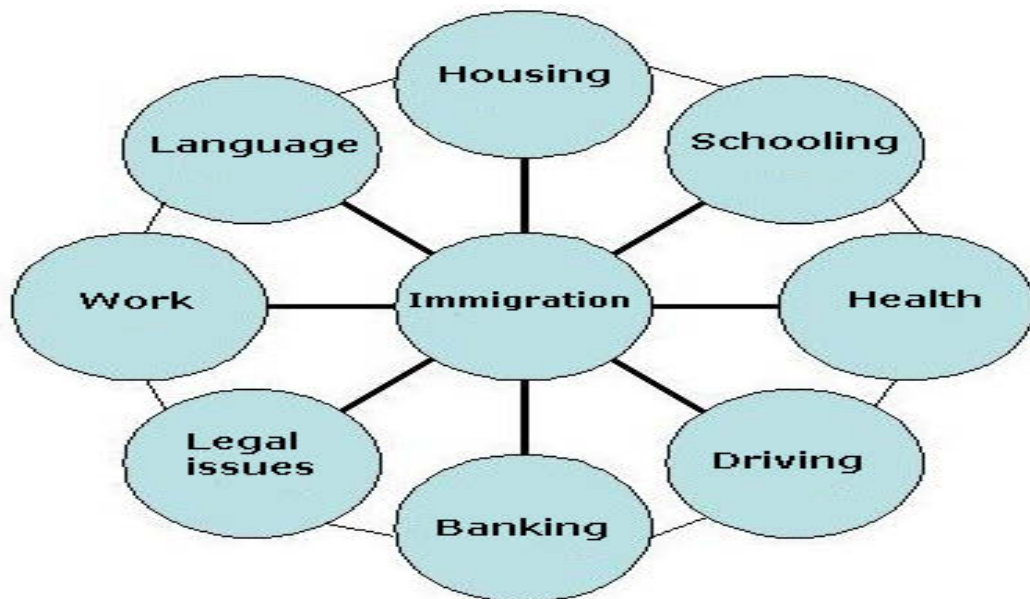
The term information behavior is symbolic to the issue of immigrant integration because it shapes settlement of immigrants in new environments. According to T. D Wilson information behavior enunciator, he opined that information behavior is the totality of human information behavior as regards to human information sources, information seeking approach and information channels (Wilson, 1999. pp. 249-270). In support of this position, Pettigrew, et al. (2001), also defined information behavior as the manner adopted by people in seeking information, sharing information and using information in different context (Pettigrew, et al., 2001, pp.44-78).

Amanda Spink's book named "Information Behavior: An evolutionary instinct" shows undisputable fact that the study of information behavior is not new to human race as it appears. According to Spink (2010), the documentation of human activities since the existence of human being forms the bedrock of what is now known as human information behavior. Spink is of the opinion that human information behavior started to take shape as soon the human search for life fulfillment began (Spink, 2010). Spink discusses various aspects of information behavior, such as, evolutionary foundation, instinct versus environment, human cognition and social behavior, lifetime development and information behavior over the ages. With Spink's discussion on these topics, he emphasizes the need for behaviorists to develop a stronger theoretical framework for information behavior (Spink, 2010). So, the context of immigrants' information behavior in a new environment is not different from the context where information behavior originally was developed. As the need to settle down in a new environment arose, immigrant information behavior started to take shape. Settling down in a new environment demands a lot of information and inability to access the key information affects immigrant settlement and integration in a new environment. According to Caidi, Allard and Quirk, immigrants' unhindered access to basic and timely information is important for fast integration and settlement in new environment (Caidi, Allard, & Quirke, 2010). In view of this, information behavior, immigrant integration and immigrant settlement can be said to be complementary factors.

2.6.1 Immigrants' information needs and information sources in Finland

It is important to re-emphasize that immigrants in Finland consist of diverse groups of people as shown in figure 2.2. According to figure 2.2, immigrants in Finland comprise, students, workers, refugees, asylum seekers and family tie immigrant and that's why their information needs and sources are bound to differ at some points. Rather than discussing their information needs of immigrants in isolation, this study chose to consider their information needs in Finland. So, immigrants' information needs can be pictured by the below picture which illustrates information needed by immigrants in their new environments. As shown in figure 2.6, immigrants' information needs embrace seeking information on housing issues, schooling issues, health matters, driving matters, banking, legal issues, work and language.

Figure 2.6.2: Immigrants' information needs



Some information is needed in order to meet immigrants' daily information needs, such as, getting familiar with the new environment, understanding bus and train schedules and locations, population registration centre, KELA (The national social security institution) and other important establishment. Outside of other sources, the mentioned information can also be obtained from the sources familiar to an immigrant, such as, other immigrants who have lived in the environment for some years. Acquiring

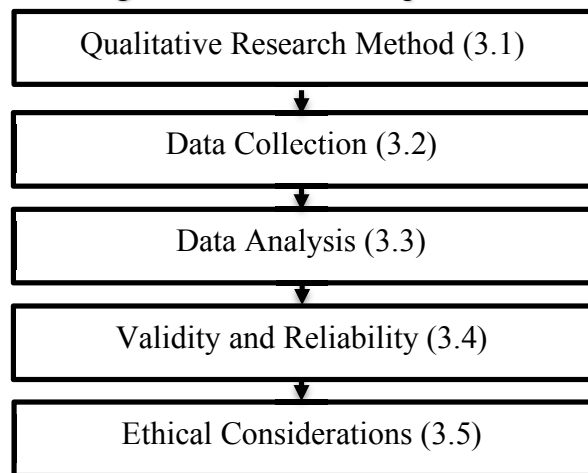
information from the familiar sources can be likened to Chatman's ideal of small worlds of immigrants (Chatman, 1991).

Chatman's small worlds information seeking approach may not be capable of explaining all information needs of immigrants. Without undermining the importance of Chatman's small worlds concept, it can be commented that in the integration process also information needs and sources change. Chatman's small worlds concept may be good for responding to the primary information needs of immigrants because such information is the key to immigrants' daily life activities in Finland. As immigrants' information needs change from daily information needs to integration information needs, the search and the sources of information takes another dimension. Such information can only be obtained from the appropriate agencies with duties to provide information. Immigrant integration information can be obtained from the following sources in Finland: The Finnish Immigration Service, the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Centers for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, the Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish Municipalities, NGOs and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and other co-operating organizations (The Ministry of Interior, Finland, 2009). Most of these organizations are by the Finnish integration Act given the duty to respond to immigrants' information needs about the settlement and integration program in Finland.

3. CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter is divided into several parts, and it presents in detail the process of how this study has been conducted. In this chapter the selected methods are motivated and presented, such as the data collection method, and the method for data analyses. Also, reliability and validity, ethical considerations and limitations of the study are presented in this chapter. The outline of the chapter is presented in figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Outline of Chapter 3



3.1 Qualitative Research Method

A qualitative research method is adopted for this thesis and according to Denzin and Lincoln (2005), qualitative research methods are suitable for studying things in their natural forms with the aim of making sense and enable the researcher to interpret situations in the direction of meaning which people bring to them in the course of an interview (Denzin and Lincoln, 2005. p. 3). Punch (1998) underlines that qualitative research is an empirical research method in which generated data does not need to be in numerical form while data is formulated by e.g. interviews (Punch, 1998. p. 4). Mason (1996), posited that qualitative research approach may use quantification but it is not central for the analysis (Mason,1996. p. 4). It is important to emphasize that the main idea behind this study is not to arrive at a generalization, but to gather reliable data and information which can help to shape a better understanding about the research questions listed in the first chapter of this thesis.

3.2 Data Collection

Data collection is an important part of academic research, and as such, it must be given proper attention to avoid negative influence on the results of research. According to Dörnyei (2007), data for qualitative research is mostly gathered through interviews and questionnaires. In this situation, the interviewee can be reached by means deemed fit by the interviewers and the interviewees (Dörnyei, 2007. p. 132 cited in Alshenqeeti, 2014). Though, there are both advantages and challenges of these means of data gathering, there is a preference for interviews as a means of gathering data rather than using a questionnaire as a means of gathering data as explained by Kvale (1996). According to Kvale (1996. p. 33) and Cohen et al (2007. p. 143), unlike a questionnaire, using interviews as a means of data gathering allows researchers to comprehensively understand respondents' views better than questionnaire as a means of data gathering for a research. This implies that unlike a questionnaire which restricts respondents to the direction of the question asked, an interview as a means of data gathering gives room for further discussion on some questions that are vital to the research. Interviews give the respondents opportunities to be and they can clearly express their thought and position of Berg (2007). This position is in line with the aim of this study to examine the role of Finnish public libraries in immigrant integration process in Finland.

According to McNamara (n.d), interviews are timely and useful for accessing and recording story behind interviewee's experiences. With interviews, the interviewer is able to get in-depth and detailed information around the chosen topic. Interviews are sometimes considered helpful and useful for a follow-up on interviewee's responses to questionnaires, and thus, help to further investigate already collected responses (McNamara, n.d.). Creswell explains that interviews is mostly used in qualitative research and particularly if the researcher needs to asks one or more participants the same, open-ended questions and takes recorded answer(s) either in view audio or writing during the course of the interview (Creswell, 2007).

None the less, an interviews as a means of data collection also has its own problems. Some of its difficulties arise in the fixing of interview appointments, the time and places and getting the needed respondents for the interviews. Some of the mentioned interviews problems have been eased by with innovations such as video call, skype and other audio-visual innovations for interviews. The innovations to conducting interviews

are well conducted is well documented and analyzed in Pauwels (2011) and Rose (2001). Having looked at all these viewpoints and other benefits of interviews as a means of gathering data for research over questionnaires, this thesis makes a choice for interviews because interviews are when examining questions that seek information based on experiences of respondents on the issues of immigrant integration and library usage. In addition, interviews give room for accurate screening of information and an opportunity to completely capture the words of the respondents during interview.

3.2.1 Recruitment of the interviewees

Due to the difficulty in reaching the target interviewees for this thesis, the researcher adopted snowball sampling method to reach those immigrants who are currently in the Finnish integration program and some of those immigrants who have passed through the Finnish integration program. According to Atkinson and Flint (2001), snowball sampling is a technique for gathering research interviewees through the identification of an initial interviewee who provides contacts of other possible interviewees. For this study, several interview requests were made through e-mail and phone calls to librarians and immigrants. Four of the interviewed immigrants were known by the researcher who had learned to know them during a Finnish language course at Edupoly. Edupoly is a vocational and language school in Finland. Edupoly mainly organizes language classes and vocational courses for immigrants as part of the integration program. With the aid of the snowball sampling method, securing the interviews with the immigrants was a bit easier than getting the interview opportunities with the Finnish librarians because the snowball approach did not work well with the librarians. In the process, a number of e-mails were sent out to the librarians at Finnish public libraries, unfortunately, many librarians did not reply to and a few of them who replied claimed that they did not have enough time for such an interview. Also, some interview appointments were cancelled in the process and few rescheduled. There was one particular case when an interview appointment was cancelled after arrival at the selected interview venue for what the interviewee claimed to be an “unforeseen situation”. Sadly, a reschedule was refused and the emails were never responded afterwards. Despite this and other difficulties confronted during the data collection stage, in overall, the interviews can be said to have been successfully conducted. This is because the respondents showed signs of happiness and readiness to share their experiences during and after the interviews as contact details were exchanged for further discussions through e-mail if necessary. At

the end, a total of twelve interviews were conducted, three interviews with the Finnish public librarians, four interviews with the immigrants currently in the Finnish integration program and five interviews with the immigrants who have completed their integration program. The last interview was stopped having reached a point where similar results were received as from the previous interviews.

3.2.2 Interview process

The interview questions for this research were all written in English language which is the researcher's study language. The interviews were conducted in offices, libraries, cafeterias and classrooms and via Skype. The choice of venues were sole decisions of the interviewee because the interviewer is flexible with the choice of venue in as much as the place is convenient for the interviewee. The first two interviews were conducted in the librarians' offices while the last interview was conducted in a conference room in the library. The decision to have the interview in the conference room was because of the fact that the librarian shares office with other staff members. On the average, each of the interviews lasted between 55 minutes and 1 hour.

Before commencing each of the interviews, the researcher assured the interviewee of the fact that their names or other information unveiling the interviewees' identities will not be used in this thesis. Though, little attention was given to the question about age, but they were willing to give it, with exception to three interviewees who resisted the question about age.

3.2.3 Categories of Interviewees

Three groups of interviewees are used for this thesis. These three group of immigrants are selected to examine the three aims of this thesis: to examine the role of Finnish public libraries in immigrants' integration program in Finland, to examine the benefits of public library usage during the immigrant integration program and to examine the overall impacts of Finnish public libraries usage on the Finnish integration process. The interviews with the librarians are relevant for examining the role of the public library in immigrant integration in Finland with the support of relevant literature from previous research on Finnish public libraries and the Finnish immigrant integration program. The interviews with the immigrants who had passed through the Finnish integration program helped to understand the benefit of using the Finnish public libraries during and after the integration program. The views of the immigrants who had passed through the

Finnish integration program are used to examine the possible of differences in the views expressed by the new immigrants who are currently in the Finnish integration program. The researcher was able to conduct three interviews with the librarians from the Finnish public library in Porvoo, the public library in Turku and the public library in Helsinki. Another four different interviews were conducted with immigrants who had passed through the Finnish integration program and five different interviews with the immigrants who are currently undergoing the Finnish integration program.

Table 1: Interview Participants' demographics

Respondents	Gender	Age	Nationality	Location	Position
Respondents 1	Female	-	Finnish	Porvoo	Librarian
Respondents 2	Female	-	Finnish	Helsinki	Librarian
Respondents 3	Female	-	Finnish	Turku	Librarian
Respondents 4	Male	23	Nigerian	Porvoo	Immigrant
Respondents 5	Male	37	Afghanistan	Porvoo	Worker
Respondents 6	Female	30	Pakistan	Porvoo	Worker
Respondents 7	Male	26	Syrian	Espoo	Immigrant
Respondents 8	Female	20	Syrian	Sipoo	Student
Respondents 9	Female	19	Syrian	Porvoo	Immigrant
Respondents 10	Male	40	Congo	Helsinki	Immigrant
Respondents 11	Male	37	Somalian	Lahti	Worker
Respondents 12	Female	29	Somalian	Helsinki	Immigrant

3.2.4 Group of respondents 1, Librarians

Though, the first interview was conducted without audio record as the researcher chose note-taking over audio recording due to the noticeable malfunctioning of the audio gadget. Much effort was not put into rectifying the audio problem because the interviewee requested the interview questions few days before the interview day. So, the interview day appears like a formality, thus, the note-taking style was effective for the first interview as every question was answered without much deviation from the topic of discussion.

The two subsequent interviews with the public librarians were different as the interviews were recorded. The decision to make audio record of the two subsequent interviews with the public library librarians is influenced by the need to create eye-to-eye contact with the respondents.

3.2.5 Group of respondents 2, Immigrants in the integration process

This category, as stated earlier comprises immigrants who are presently in the Finnish integration program. Interviewing this category of immigrants was difficult due to their tight and change prone schedule which was caused by their integration program arrangement. Nevertheless, four interviews were conducted with the category of these immigrants. After a failed appointment, the first interview was conducted in the agreed place and it took 45 minutes to conduct the interview. In conducting the interview, the researcher adopted taking notes and audio recording to facilitate the clarity of the interview. The respondent took time to clearly answer the interview questions; the communication went well because of the respondent's fluency use of English language. The second, third and fourth interviews were conducted in the same day, but with some time management difficulties.

3.2.6 Group of respondents 3, Immigrants who have completed the integration program

The interviews with the immigrants who have completed the Finnish integration program came last. On the average, most of the respondents in this category have lived in Finland for approximately 10 ten years on the average. Though, the length of the stay in Finland is not necessary for this study, rather the emphasis in the completion of the integration program. This is because, completion of integration program is unconnected with the years of residence in Finland. Some immigrants start the integration program after living in Finland for years. Mostly, many of this group of immigrants already have Finnish citizenship and are currently working in various Finnish companies. The first two respondents came to Finland as asylum seekers, the third respondent came to Finland as a refugee, the fourth respondent came to Finland through family reunion and the last respondent came to Finland through university exchange program from Germany.

3.3 Data Analysis

Thematic analysis is adopted for interpreting the generated interview data for this research. The adoption of thematic analysis is motivated by the fact that it is one of the most used approach for analyzing interview data. Also, it fits well to the purpose of this study which seek to examine the role of the public libraries in the immigrants' integration program in Finland. Thematic analysis is used because it provides rich and detail information which enables a researcher to gain a deep knowledge from the interview data gathered as emphasized by Braun and Clarke (2006). According to Braun and Clarke, the thematic approach is effective for insightful analysis that answers particular research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006. p. 97).

According to Boyatzis (1998. pp. 4-5), thematic analysis is a way of seeing, a way of making sense out of unrelated materials, a way of analyzing qualitative information generated for research purposes, a way of systematically analyze person, group and organization information and above all, a way through which qualitative information can be converted into qualitative data.

The steps suggested for thematic analysis presented by Braun and Clarke (2006), are adopted for this study. According to Braun and Clake (2006), it is important to get familiar with the data. To ensure working with this guide, the entire data was thoroughly read several times to get familiar with it and avoid any misconceptions. Upon getting familiar with the data, the researcher was able to generate initial codes which facilitated sorting of relevant phrases and words from the data. The relevant codes enabled identification of the themes and sub-themes. Upon completion of this, the themes and sub-themes were reviewed to see if they were any clear patterns. These activities guaranteed the possibility of re-evaluation of the data by the researcher and upon these patterns the report was written.

Furthermore, Daly, Kellehear, and Gliksman (1997) underline that thematic analysis focuses on the identification and description of both explicit and implicit ideals during interviews and thus supports in-depth analysis of the transcribed interviews which in most cases could take 1 to 2 hours (Daly, Kellehear & Gliksman, 1997. pp. 611-617). Thematic analysis is considered as a good approach for analyzing qualitative research data because the method takes both explicit and implicit responses to the interview questions into consideration.

During the data analysis, the researcher uses thematic analysis codes to identify common words, sentences, phrases, concepts and key words and reflections after reading the transcribed interviews series. The researcher deemed it fit to create the consistency with the choice of coding and themes along the line of research questions in this approach.

3.3.1 Interview Transcription

Creswell (2007, pp. 179-182), says that preparing interviews' data for analysis is started by transcribing the recorded interviews or discussions. Transcription will help to reduce and convert the conducted interviews into data by creating themes through a process called coding. Thus, Creswell (2007), ideas are adopted for this study as they suit the situation at hand.

In view of the above, transcribing the first interview was easier than the two subsequent interviews with the librarians. The first interview was redrafted into another booklet for elaboration. The two subsequent interviews were listened to repeatedly to be able to understand the respondents' views and creating the themes with the use of coding as described by Creswell (2007).

The interviews with the second and the third groups, the immigrants that have passed through the Finnish integration program and the immigrants currently undergoing the Finnish integration program were conducted using a record device to aid the capturing of all the opinions shared about each of the interview questions.

First and foremost, it is important to say that generating data from the first interview where note-taking was adopted, was fast and easier when compared with subsequent interviews. The transcription requires great deal of attention from the researcher and that makes it cumbersome and time consuming. There was a need to get myself familiarized with the interview replies by listening to them over and over to be able to fully understand the respondents to determine the coding pattern that suite the adopted thematic approach. So, getting familiar with the interview questions was informed by the readiness and the need to achieve quality transcription and to generate genuine data from the conducted interviews. For this research, it was relatively easy to do the transcription and coding because the interviews were all conducted in English.

3.4 Validity and Reliability

Researchers must also be concerned about the issue of reliability and validity because the concept of reliability and validity reinforce the findings of a research and ensure wider acceptance of a research results.

3.4.1 Reliability

Basically, reliability seeks to explain the extent of exactness, consistency and accuracy of research over a period of time. Reliability of a research can be ensured only when the response to the following questions come with “YES” as an answer (Kirk & Miller, 1986).

1. Will the measure give the same results on other occasions?
2. Will the data generated be valid for similar observations?
3. Is there transparency in data processing procedures?

Apart from the general positions about reliability by Yin (1989), Selltiz et al. (1976) and Kirk and Miller (1986), this study recommends and proposed five approaches of Silverman as a good means of enhancing the reliability of research processes and results. These are reputational analysis, constant data comparison, comprehensive data use, inclusive of the deviant case and use of tables (Silverman, 2009. p. 472). These five proposals by Silverman are used to measure both internal and external reliability of this research.

Nonetheless, research reliability can still be achieved according to Corbin and Strauss (1990) when a researcher digresses from the major criteria of research. It is only important that the reason and how the researcher digresses from the major research criteria must be clearly stated in the research (Corbin and Strauss, 1990. p. 20). There is no any form of digression from the research specified criteria aside the conduct of the first interview in which audio recording of the interview was not used, other criteria are strictly adhered to in this research.

The reliability of this study is demonstrated by a good display of the adopted research method, succinct explanation of data sources and analysis. The sources of information used in the study are clearly quoted and well referenced in the reference section to enable prospective readers to evaluate, make judgment and reference this study in their further research on this or similar topic. This study is conducted with free flow connection between the data and theories therein.

3.4.2 Validity

Validity can be considered under broad categories of internal and external validity as propelled by Campbell and Stanley (1966). They have defined by both authors at some various types of validities that succinctly cover internal and external validity. Many other authors have also made their positions about validity known in various books and journals. According to Silverman (2000), validity is a means to measure the degree of truth and how a research reflects the real situation of the topic under researcher's consideration (Silverman, 2000. p. 175). The following authors emphasized the influence of validity on the value of research: Benner (1985), Brink & Wood (1988), Corbin & Strauss (1990), Field & Morse (1985), Glaser & Strauss (1967), Kirk and Miller (1986), Kuzel & Like (1991), Lather (1986), LeCompte & Goetz (1982), Leininger (1991), Lincoln & Guba (1985), Miles & Huberman (1984), Sandelowski (1986). According to these authors, validity is used to validate the concept of research, research method and the issue examined in the research.

This study is in consonance with the principles of validity. All the information used for this study represents free and fair views of the interview respondents to the interview questions. This study also covers triangular interview sources of information to juxtapose the obtained information and to strengthen the study's judgment about the Finnish integration program and the role of the Finnish public Library. A triangulation of information sources enables the researcher to juxtapose the obtained information from the chosen three sources; Finnish public librarians, immigrants currently in the Finnish integration program and immigrants who have passed through the Finnish integration program.

The only noticeable limitation to the issue of reliability and validity of this study is the inability of the researcher to put the interview questions in Finnish and Swedish languages which are the official languages in Finland.

3.5 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are an important part of research that must be given proper attention when conducting research. Aside other factors, ethical considerations help to protect the dignity, rights and identity of the research participants. As a research principle, ethical considerations protect a researcher from satisfying his/her own interests, avoid the bias influence on research results, it promotes research soundness, it

enables a researcher to manage research risk, and it protects confidentiality of research. These are in line with the positions of Denscombe (2007) on ethical considerations as a means to ensure soundness and protect research participants (Denscombe, 2007. p.141).

As a way of aligning with ethical principles of research, the researcher pre-informed each of the interview participants that anonymity, privacy and secrecy will be maintained about the information given during the research. It is further disclosed to each of the interview respondents that traceable information will not be published in this research. In order to make the interview respondents feel free and give as much information as they may have, some fundamental information about the research were disclosed to them. For instance, the interview respondents were told about the reason for conducting this research, how the information given will be used and will help to shape the Finnish integration program. It is the researcher's belief that these disclosures have positive influence on the interview respondents' responses to the interview questions.

3.5.1 Limitations

There are possibilities that the results of this study may not translate to be the same when a similar study is conducted outside Finland. If a similar study is conducted outside Finland, the differences in the results may be attributed to the structure and services of the public library and the immigrant integration program in other countries. Similar results can only be achieved and guaranteed in countries with similar immigrant integration programs and public library services.

Another noticeable limitation of this study is a lack of previous studies on a similar topic conducted in English language in Finland. Though, there are several academic studies about immigrant integration in relation to various factors, but only some available studies on the roles of Finnish public library in immigrant integration in Finland. This implies that this study has created channels for further research on the topic. Notwithstanding, with a few availability of research on similar topic, the results of this research will require further study to validate some of its findings.

Also, the issue of appointment fixing with the participants is another limitation for this study. The researcher got three responses after sending almost 13 interview requests to the public librarians in Finland. The poor responses cast shadow and created a feeling that there may be result differences if more librarians and immigrants were interviewed.

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Language proficiency of the interviewees is another factor that may influence the result of this study in some ways. Language barrier surfaced during the interviews with the second group of migrants to whom it was previously referred to as new migrants. Some of them neither spoke Finnish nor spoke English fluently. Thus, some of the interview questions were not well responded to.

Lack of access to statistics that can help to identify who the library users are may affect the result of this study in the aspect of identifying the numbers of immigrant library users. For instance, the available statistics only show the aggregate of some library users in Finland. With this available statistics, the researcher is unable to get individual statistics about library users. If comprehensive statistics about the Finnish public library users were available, it would have enabled the researcher to juxtapose the viewpoints expressed by the librarians on the level of the immigrant patronage of the public libraries.

4. CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 Introduction chapter

This chapter discusses the results of the thesis based on the interviews conducted with the immigrants who are currently in the Finnish integration program, the immigrants who have passed through the Finnish integration program and the Finnish public librarians.

4.2 Public library and immigrant integration program

The aim of this study is to examine the role of the Finnish public libraries in the immigrant integration program in Finland. To achieve this aim, this study examines the Finnish immigrant integration program and the Finnish public library services. On the quest to establish a tangible link between the Finnish integration program and the Finnish public libraries, this study look into the various phases of the Finnish integration as stated by the Finnish Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment to comprise: guidance and advice for immigrants, initial assessment of immigrant, drawing of immigrant integration plan and integration training. Finnish public libraries are not involved in the first three phases of the integration processes. The role of the Finnish public libraries can be traced to the last phase which is the integration training. It is important to know that there is no document stating the role of the Finnish public libraries in any of the listed integration phases, but the results of the interviews with the librarians show otherwise.

On the other hand, this study was able to establish a link between the Finnish integration program and the Finnish public libraries through services of the Finnish public libraries in the area of enhancing learning and ensuring access to information for all library users in Finland. Through the two mentioned services, the Finnish public libraries are able to provide immigrants with access to language materials, provide immigrants with literacy information which has influence on the success of immigrants' integration into the Finnish society. Caidi & Allard (2005) discuss how libraries can promote the social inclusion of immigrants by helping them to fulfil their information needs.

The interviews showed that the Finnish public libraries are not directly involved in the immigrant integration program, still the public libraries have a role to play.

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“We are not directly involved in the immigrant integration program, but we are in partnership with some organisations who are active players in the immigrant integration process”.

Respondent 1

“We help immigrants who come forward with questions about their information needs, such as helping to guide them to books that will promote their study of Finnish language.”

Respondent 2

“Immigrant seems to prefer visiting Finnish public library because they enjoy other facilities like internet and able to get books in various languages in the libraries. We help immigrant who seek assistance to get what they need through our info desk and link them with appropriate places where needs can be attended to”.

Respondent 3

According to the responses of the conducted interviews, books are available in many languages: Finnish, Swedish, Russian, Swahili, Africana and many other languages. The library workers also assist immigrants with language translation assistance on documents written in Finnish/Swedish language. The libraries also organise Finnish/Swedish language learning for immigrants in collaboration with other actors. The libraries give access to photocopying and the internet.

4.3 Public Library Users

This study seeks to understand if there is any priority for particular library users in Finland. The results can be used to examine the possible effect of the public library priority for any library users in terms of available materials or services in the Finnish public libraries. This questions will help to understand if the all public library users are treated equally.

The responses from the librarians indicate that there is a distinctive view between the Finnish public library and the multicultural library in Finland. As such, this study arrived at the conclusion that while the Finnish public library is open to everybody in Finland irrespective of their status: citizens, immigrants and visitors in Finland.

“We do not have a priority for any of our library users, we are here to give service to everybody who wants to use the library”.

Respondent 1.

“Our doors are open to everybody around here, our services are for every library users across Finland”.

Respondent 2.

“Though we are open to every library user, but we have a section that focus mainly on refugees and asylum seekers among the immigrants”.

Respondent 3.

The librarians believe that the services of the Finnish public libraries are open to everybody in Finland. And that there is a reason to give priority to any library users as the library materials are there to meet up the needs of all library users.

4.4 Challenges of the Finnish public library

The librarians have different views about the challenges of the Finnish public library in the discharge of their services. One of the participants identifies the need to train the staff of the Finnish public library on handling multicultural materials and issues. Also, inadequate staff is another challenge being mentioned by one of the participants.

“Educating the library workers about multicultural issues and how to help immigrants is a big challenge here. Evaluating and developing the library towards the demands and needs of the immigrants in the integration process”

Respondent 1

“Improvement is needed in the area of integration materials and technical gadgets such as scanner and other equipment promoting immigrants’ integration. We currently have one shelf for integration information, I think this is not enough”.

Respondent 2.

There is need for improvement in our info section, improve web library and more cooperation with other actors in the Finnish integration program. Our relationship with the refugees’ reception center need to be clear and improved because we do not have a clear integration plan for immigrants.”

Respondent 3.

These respondents understand the need to improve the libraries’ services to optimize their service to the library users which include the immigrants in the integration program. This viewpoint is in line with the fact that the recent past influx of immigrants into Finland added a great deal of responsibility on the Finnish public library as users

are bound to increase over period of time. Thus, more books and other basic facilities will be required to effectively serve the customers from time to time.

4.5 The perception of the Finnish public librarians about library users.

This study seeks to understand if the librarians have any perception about library usage of the immigrants during their integration program in Finland. This question appeared to be a very difficult question to answer by the librarians as the researcher had to repeat the question many times before getting the answer. It is obvious that the interviewed librarians find it difficult to share their perception about the immigrant library users because there is no data to back their view or position on that question.

“Though we do not have feedback about our services from customers, but we want to believe that they find our services good for them because they keep coming to the library”

Respondent 1.

“We do not have resources to identify the users of the libraries because we do not keep records of library users. Maybe we can understand this when we check our loaned book data base”.

Respondent 2.

“We do not have library users’ data but we render good services to immigrants who approached us for help”

Respondent 3.

From the respondents’ shared views, this study arrives at the conclusion that the Finnish public library has no clear data the about library users, but the fact remains that immigrant return to the library from time to time and that signifies that the library services are good for them.

4.6 Immigrants and the Finnish public libraries

After the interview with the librarians, nine immigrants were interviewed. The respondents comprise immigrants who have passed through the Finnish integration program and immigrants currently undergoing the Finnish integration program. Among the nine interviewed immigrants, five came into Finland as refugees, three came into Finland as students and the last one refused to disclose the information about the reason why he came to Finland. On the average, an immigrant who had passed through the Finnish integration program had lived in Finland for 8 years. The second group of immigrants were those who currently are in the integration program.

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These two groups of immigrants were asked different questions as displayed in the appendix section of this study. The first group of immigrants who are referred to as new immigrants in this study was asked questions about how to evaluate of the Finnish public library. The questions asked were about the usefulness of the Finnish public library to the integration program. The responses to this question are diverse as the respondents seemed to have different viewpoints about the questions. On the other hand, the responses of the interviewed immigrant are similar concerning their usage of the Finnish public libraries. Both the immigrants who are in the Finnish integration program and the immigrants who have passed through the Finnish integration program agreed that the Finnish public libraries played a vital role in their efforts to master the Finnish/Swedish language after arriving to Finland. Mostly, the interviewed immigrants use the Finnish public libraries when borrowing and reading books and this helped to develop their linguistic skills. As extra services to immigrants, the Finnish public libraries through their info desks hand out the Finnish area maps to the immigrants to enable them to locate places and also help them in their language problem by interpretation. Below are some of the expressions of the respondents about library usage of the immigrant during and after the integration program.

“Immigrants were told to register at the library when starting the integration program and mostly they did not understand that they should to it, because they did not know any word in Finnish language”

(Immigrant currently in the integration program)

“The library is good for me because I get books that is helping me to study Finnish language”

(Immigrant currently in the integration program)

“The library is a good place to learn a lot of things, the library gives books to me and I learn Finnish with the book”

(Immigrant who have passed though the integration program)

“People in the library do not understand my language and I do not know Finnish, so I don't go there”

(Immigrant currently in the integration program)

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“Yes, the library is good because I collect CDs and books for learning Finnish from the library”

(Immigrant who have passed though the integration program)

“The library is good because we meet there for some discussions with our friends and some people”

(Immigrant who have passed though the integration program)

“Library was very helpful during my integration program because I got many information through the library and the staffs helped me on many occasions and even on some personal matters”

(Immigrant who have passed though the integration program)

In view of the above responses of the immigrants who are currently in the integration program and the immigrants who have passed through the integration program, it is glaring that the immigrants use the Finnish public library more during the integration program than they do after passing through the integration program. The noticeable fact behind this is that the immigrants' information needs change as they continue to live in Finland. Thus, usage of the Finnish public library facilities by the immigrants who have passed through the integration program reduced considerably after their integration program elapsed. Though, some of the immigrants who had passed through the integration program agreed that the Finnish public library still continue to serve as a good source of information to them till date.

The results of these interviews indicates that the Finnish public libraries are important sources of information for all including the immigrants in the Finnish society. The results also show that many immigrants use the Finnish public libraries as source of information before integration program, during and after the integration program in Finland.

5. CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The study focuses on immigrant integration program and the role of the Finnish public library in the Finnish immigrant integration program. The Finnish immigrant integration program is administered by many organizations and guided by the Finnish integration policy. According to the Finnish Act on the promotion of immigrant integration (1386/2010), the Finnish immigrant integration program covers settlement of immigrant in Finland, teaching of immigrant Finnish or Swedish language, evaluating immigrants' previous knowledge and professional skills and promotion of intercultural activities.

The research questions and research objectives for this study are addressed through the examination of the Finnish immigrant integration program and the Finnish public libraries services. By examining the Finnish integration program and the Finnish public library services, the researcher is able to relate the theoretical part of this study with the responses of the interviewees on various interview questions

5.1 Results

The result of this study indicates that both the immigrants who are currently in the Finnish integration program and the immigrants who have passed through the Finnish integration program are frequent users of the Finnish public libraries. According to Caidi, Allard & Quirke (2010), immigrants need information at various stages of their settlement and lack of such information can negatively affect all aspects of immigrant life. The result of the interviews conducted with the two groups of immigrants shows that immigrants' visits to the Finnish public libraries reduces over time. This study further traced that the reason behind the reduced visiting the public library by mostly those immigrants who had passed through the Finnish integration program is as a result of change in their information needs and information sources as discussed under immigrant information behavior. The fact remains that after the integration program, some immigrants into working life, some into vocational schools and some, mostly women remain at home. According to Naficy (2009), the public library renders assistances either online or in the library to an immigrant who wants to understand government services either online or in the library (Naficy, 2009. p. 162). Few studies conducted on the role of public library in the lives of immigrant found that the library facilitates and creates contacts between groups, for example between majority groups

and minority groups and satisfy the basic information needs of newcomers (Elbeshausen and Skov, 2004; Fisher et al., 2004; Caidi and Allard, 2005; Audunson et al., 2011).

There are numbers of essays, articles and researches about the contribution of public library to language learning and the authors are well known and recognized for their works on the importance of public library in language learning, for example Celano & Neuman (2001), Clay III (2007), Krolak (2005), Rasmussen & Jochumsen (2009). Finland has two official languages which are Finnish and Swedish languages. So, language study is an important part of the Finnish integration program. Immigrants are expected to learn one of the languages during the integration processes in Finland. The idea why the language learning is in the integration program is to achieve the aim of integrating an immigrant fully into the Finnish society and Finnish working life. In this aspect, the Finnish public libraries play a huge role by providing immigrants access to Finnish language books and audio visual materials that improves immigrants' information literacy. This indicates that the Finnish public libraries have moved from being a passive keeper and place of storage of books and other old and very important things to an information house that caters for all classes of people in the Finnish society and the world at large. According to Dali (2013), libraries throughout the world have taken an active role in the integration process and developed their services, acquired information sources in different languages, organized interaction programs and services to different groups of refugees and immigrants. Also, according to Krolak (2005), citizen in industrialized countries get access to modern information technology through library services. According to the responses of the immigrants to the question about their uses of the public libraries, the result shows that immigrants use the Finnish public libraries as meeting points for various kinds of discussions (official and unofficial) because of the friendly environment, free internet and availability of ICT tools that aid access to language instruction for the immigrants.

The Finnish integration program is wide and it involves many organizations as discussed in the literature review section. The organizations involved cut across different agencies in Finland: The Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment, the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, the Ministry of Education and Culture, Finnish Municipalities, NGOs and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (Ministry of Interior, Finland 2018). Each of these organizations are

essential to the Finnish integration processes because of their functions. The Centre for Economic Development, Transport and Environment is in charge of preparing for large-scale influxes of immigrants at the regional level in Finland. The Ministry of Education and Culture is in charge of development and training of immigrant at different level of education and also responsible for immigrant issues in the area of culture, sport, youth work and religion (Ministry of Interior, Finland, 2018).

The findings of this study show that several immigrants are unaware of the relevancy and the information available in the Finnish public libraries. Their lack of awareness of the availability of materials in various languages is attributed to their inability to ask questions. This situation is common among women from Arab countries who seemed to be too shy to ask questions about library services. As such, many women immigrants hardly visit the Finnish public library. Thus, their major source of information is the Finnish local authorities such as the local offices of Kela, the social insurance institution of Finland and the TE-services, the public employment and business services. These organizations often help immigrant in sorting out issues about their finance and integration.

The result of the interviews conducted with the two groups of immigrants shows that some immigrants are unaware about the good integration services that can be obtained from the Finnish public library. This can be attributed to unavailability or poor usage of library services in their home country. Four out of the nine immigrants interviewed claimed not to have visited the library before their arrival in Finland. Therefore, there is a need to further stress the importance of the Finnish public library to immigrants during or before starting the integration program in Finland. The result of this study further establishes that successful integration can only be achieved through Finnish language knowledge. This shows that immigrants' knowledge of foreign languages enables communication and promotes integration with the local community. Based on this study, the Finnish public libraries and libraries in general have the potential of being an important information ground for immigrants irrespective of their country of settlement.

Having established the following findings:

- This study establishes that the Finnish public libraries are actively involved in immigrant integration program in Finland.
- This study equally indicates that the Finnish public libraries are in cooperation with some active players in the Finnish integration program. Mostly, in the area of language learning and teaching.
- The results of this study show that immigrants use the Finnish public libraries more during integration program than after integration program.
- The results of this study show that the Finnish public libraries serve as link between the immigrant culture and Finnish culture.
- The findings of this study indicate that the library contributes in the creation and promotion of inclusive society.

5.2 Limitations

First and foremost, the researcher would seek to improve the sample size for this study so as to improve reliability validity of this study. The researcher would also seek to narrow the scope of the study by focusing only on the role of the Finnish public libraries in immigrant integration without focus on the impact and effects of public library usage in immigrant integration program. These two factors sometimes divide the attention of the researcher and somehow affected the design of research question as researcher was forced to make sure that the interview questions cover the three focus points of this study.

The result of this study is somehow affected by lack of literature about the role of public libraries in immigrant integration program in Finland and the inability of the Finnish Integration Acts to explicitly define the role of the Finnish public libraries in the Finnish immigrant integration program. Mostly, the role of the Finnish public libraries in immigrant integration program remains at the individual practical experience. This is one of the shocking revelations of this study. It is surprising that despite the active

participation of the Finnish public libraries in immigrant integration program, little attention is giving by researchers in Finland.

The literatures review section of this study is sketchy and most of the literatures used are gathered mostly from studies in the field of immigrant integration and public library services. As a result, there is limit to the extent to which the results of this study can be compared with result obtained from previous studies in Finland or elsewhere. Another possible drawback on the result of this study is the sample size. Twelve interviews are considered little and having more interviews may influence the result of this study. A key concept is saturation and the law of diminishing returns (Kvale, 1996). At a given stage, new interviews yield little new information.

6. FUTURE RESEARCH

In Finland, very little attention is given to the study about the role of the Finnish public libraries in the immigrant integration program. Researchers in Finland focus mostly on the Finnish integration policies, immigrant information behaviour, immigrant entrepreneurship skills and other aspects of immigrant integration. This study recommends that more attention should be given to the research about the role of the Finnish public libraries in the Finnish immigrant integration program. Particularly, the Finnish integration agencies should be more concerned about this topic because it is vital for improving the Finnish integration policy formulation.

The researcher recommends further research to validate some of above listed findings. The researcher is of the opinion that further research on this topic with expanded sample space will not only validate these findings but create possibilities for other findings about the role of the Finnish public libraries in immigrant integration program

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Appendix 1.

Interview Questions for Librarians

1. Which group of these group of immigrant are the targets of this library for integration program?
 - Students
 - Refugees
 - Asylum seekers
 - family unification
 - All of the above
 -

2. Is there priority for any of the above immigrants group? If yes, why?

3. What type of basic integration information is offered this library this to immigrants?
 - Language learning
 - Culture understanding
 - Job search
 - Location: offices and shops
 -

4. How can you rate the accessibility of Finnish language learning textbooks information by immigrants?
 - Easy
 - Difficult

5. How often does immigrant seek/loan integration materials from the library?
 - Daily
 - Weekly
 - Monthly

6. What kind of challenges do immigrants face when accessing integration information from the library?

7. Do you think this library is achieving its immigrants' integration programmes objectives?

8. Is there need to improve on current integration information in the library?

9. Does the recent past influx of immigrants into Finland affects the library integration information plan in place? If yes, how? And if no, why?

10. How is the library bracing up for the challenges posed by increased influx of immigrants into Finland?

Appendix 2

Interview questions for immigrants who arrived Finland two years ago and currently in the integration program

1. Have you been to a Finnish public library?
2. How did you get to know about the library?
3. What kind of information do you get from the library?
4. What do you like most about the library?
5. How helpful do you think the library is for your information needs and integration into the Finnish society?
6. What kind of challenges did you face while accessing information from the library?
7. Do you get help from the library workers?
8. How has the library helped in your learning of Finnish language?
9. In your opinion, what can be done to improve immigrant integration process through the Finnish public library?
10. What do you consider as the most important part of your integration process in Finland?

Appendix 3

Interview questions for immigrant that have lived in Finland for more than 5 years and have gone through the integration program

1. How long have you been living in Finland?
2. How did you arrive in Finland?
3. Can you share your present living status?
4. How was your integration process?
5. Did you know about the Finnish public library during your integration program?
6. How did you get to know about the Finnish public library and their roles?
7. Did you get help from the Finnish public library during your integration program?
8. What kind of integration help did you get from the Finnish public library?
9. What is your perception about the Finnish integration and the contribution of the Finnish public library to your integration program?
10. Is there any need to improve the role of Finnish public library in foreigners' integration process?