



GÖTEBORGS UNIVERSITET

Department of Social Work

Parenting in the Context of Immigration:

A Cross-Cultural Investigation among Ethiopian Immigrant Parents in Sweden

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Abstract

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The aim of this study was to explore the experiences and views of Ethiopian immigrant parents about raising children in the context of modern Swedish culture. Departing from a small 'ethnographic observation' on the problem area, the study investigated the challenges faced by the parents and the adaptive mechanisms parents are following. Four research questions were posed and discussed: How the immigrant parents experience raising children in the context of the modern Swedish culture? What challenges they faced and how they adapt to the Swedish ways of parenting? In what ways has migration influenced their parenting roles? What are the parents' views about their children being grown up in Sweden?

Data was collected through an in-depth qualitative interview with ten parents (four mothers & six fathers) living in the city of Gothenburg and its surroundings. A meaning focused qualitative data analysis method was employed. Analysis was made based on five intertwined themes developed from the interview material. Two theoretical frameworks provided a lens for the analysis work: the ecological systems theory and the cultural change & acculturation theory.

The findings of the study showed that in various forms intercultural conflicts have been recurring problems for the parents. Language problems as an impediment to effective communication between the immigrant parents and their children were also observed. The psycho-cultural make up of the children is more of Swedish than Ethiopian and the children's knowledge of their heritage language is limited. On the other hand, the immigrant parents' command in Swedish language is inadequate to express deep feelings and emotions, all these create communication gap between parents and their children. The study also showed that the immigrant parents are satisfied with the education of their children. But parents are also equally concerned about the loneliness and cultural identity of their children.

As conclusion, the experiences of the parents show that the processes of acculturation in terms of adapting to the modern Swedish values of child upbringing are apparently on the move. Influenced by the mainstream Swedish culture, the immigrant parents have adopted various non-punitive disciplinary methods such as intensive dialogue. However, compared to the time of stay of the parents, this acculturation process is low and much remains to be done to better incorporate them.

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Chapter One

Introduction

1.1 Points of Departure

This research took its departure from practical observation on the problem area. My interest to study this topic emerged from my little ‘ethnographic observation’ in a holiday invitation to an Ethiopian family in Sweden to celebrate the Ethiopian New Year (2002). Enjoying with the festivity, we have had an interesting discussions about issues that come to our mind. Then I was impressed by a story told by the father that once happened to him. That story sparked my interest and motivated me to think about and explore through what the experiences of other immigrant parents looks like. In short, the story goes like this:

One evening the father was very annoyed by what his 8 year old boy was doing. The boy was painting on the wall of their home. The father saw that and told the boy to stop. He explained calmly that he should not do the painting on the walls and instead gave him a paper to write on. But the boy didn’t listen that rather he continued brushing on the walls. Still with patience, the father sought another option. He took away the marker and put it on the shelf. But the boy didn’t stop. While trying to reach it up climbing by the sides of the shelf to get the marker, the boy made another mistake. The drinking glasses from the shelf fall down to the ground and break up into piece. This time the father was so raged, lost temper and spanked the child on the arm with a belt. The child had a small mark. The father told me “I can’t tell you how I was worried that night. It was terrible. I didn’t have good sleep at all. I was praying all the night that the scar be cured.” I was surprised to hear that and asked him, “Why are you worried this much?” The father replied “because of the scar. If the boy reported the situation to the teacher at the school, I will have bad record which I don’t like.”

In fact, the father told me that he regretted for what he did. He kept on telling me more interesting stories about raising children. He said, “Children are like flowers in the garden. If you properly nurture and cultivate them, you will have the kind of flower you would like to get.” Indeed, we can generally say that good parents are gardeners and guardians of their children.

Back to the purpose, the whole journey for this study departed from this seemingly small story but that sheds moments of truth and realities going on around many families of immigrant parents. I was fascinated to go through and explore how Ethiopian immigrant parents find it to bring up kids in the modern Swedish culture which is different from their own upbringing and socialisation.

1.2 The Problem Area

While starting up an established family life one of the challenges that immigrant parents face, among others, is the task of raising their children properly in the 'new' cultural environment in which they didn't have any experience and most importantly in a markedly different context than their own upbringing. Given this fact, it is necessary to pose the question of how immigrant parents raise their children in the context of the host culture. Culture in its holistic conception as shared values, attitudes and behaviour patterns, significantly shapes and dictates the socialisation patterns of parents. Patel, Power & Bhavnagri, (1996) suggested that one particularly useful way of studying the impact of culture on childrearing practices and development is to study immigrant families. In an extensive review of literatures on immigrant families, Kwak (2003) observed evidences about the impact of sociocultural changes upon family relations, particularly the relationship between immigrant parents and their adolescent children. Changes in intergenerational family relations were observed that sometimes strained the relationships as the children sought more autonomy and independence than their parents are willing to grant them.

As highlighted by Kagitcibasi (2007:316), for immigrants different aspects of the host environment may assume varying degrees of importance. For instance, in cultural contact situations some aspects of values or conventions brought by the immigrants may clash with those of the host environment but others may not, leading to demands for change in some behaviour patterns and outlooks.

Several studies have indicated that often immigrant parents are confronted with "totally different child-rearing practices and ideologies held by the socialising agents of the host culture" (Roer-Strier, 1996, Shimoni, Este & Clark, 2003). To be critical against such loosely formulated statements, one can not foresee "totally different" practices of child socialisation patterns because there are certain universal features of parenting shared by all cultures and society. Anthropologists such as Naomi Quinn (2005) argue that there are certain universally shared cultural models of childrearing patterns that together explain how society everywhere turns children into certain adult human being. Socialising the child into the certain important values, keeping the constancy of those values by various techniques of emotional arousals (through approval or disapprovals of specified behaviours) are said to be universal. Quinn's (2005) argument is based on the idea that the differences are on the *methods of how they teach and the contents of what they teach* in order to 'create' the child into a certain culturally 'valued adult person' in that community or society. However, as Levine (1980) suggested although everywhere parents share common goals for parenting, proper attention should be paid to cultural differences in parental goals, values and behaviours in order to understand 'effective parenting' in a society.

A vast amount of variation is, therefore, observed with regard to the specific question of how parents turn their children into a certain adult being. Referring to Teitjen, Liamputtong (2007) stated that in all societies, parents raise their children in a manner that is generally congruent with the demands of their physical environment and economic systems as well as the systems of beliefs and cultural ideologies that have developed over time. However, these cultural and environmental demands of the host culture are often incongruent and incompatible with the cultural values that immigrants bring with them. Often immigration involves complex processes of transition that affects the stability and continuity of family roles (Roer-Strier,

Roni Strier et al., 2005). Such transition processes, according to Fong (2004), can both directly and indirectly impact the adaptation process of immigrant families and the identity formation of their children. Furthermore, Fong (2004) added that immigrants are often in the margins of two cultures, swaying 'here and there' but they can never truly be in one.

Depending on their cultural background, immigrant parents in Sweden are confronted with various challenges of child upbringing. As stated by Bernhardt, Bijeren, & Goldscheider (2007) one of the profound issues of challenge for Sweden in the next decades to come is whether and to what extent immigrants and their children remain culturally, politically and economically distinctive. According to Bernhardt et al. (2007:7) Sweden can be viewed as "an extreme example of the potential for clashes between immigrants and the native born population on family related issues". Immigration can be a source of cultural tension because the culture that immigrants bring contradicts with the host culture. In order to successfully raise their children, parents have to undergo extensive changes and adjustment or adaptations to the demands of the host society's cultural values, its laws and regulations. Anders Broberg, has clearly articulated the consequence of migration on parenthood reiterated as follows:

Successful parenthood depends on the adults being rooted in the fabric of values, customs and habits which support their parental authority and how secure they feel in their parental role. A good parent is differently defined in every culture, and migration can threaten parental roles if the prerequisites for the maintenance of parental authority are removed in the new culture (Quoted in Hindberg, 2001:19).

Many immigrant parents coming to Sweden found those parental authorities removed. In some ways their parental roles are challenged and changed. This is particularly true in the case of Ethiopian immigrant parents because the fabrics of those cultural values which the parents have been socialised and brought up are markedly different from that of the demands of Swedish value system. The Ethiopian immigrants came from the society where parent-child relationships are hierarchical and the society predominantly patriarchal, authoritarian parents and physical punishment commonly used instrument of child socialisation and culturally condoned practice (Poluha, 2004; Bar-Yosef, 2003; Girma, 2001; and Levin, 1965).

However, the Swedish cultural system doesn't uphold or tolerate any of those child socialisation values. The Swedish society is extremely egalitarian (Bernhardt et al., 2007), and the use of physical punishment as modes of child socialisation is legally banned since the implementation of the anti-spanking law of 1979 and its subsequent reforms (Hindberg, 2001, Durrant, 2003). As a result, Hindberg (2001) stated that many parents of foreign origin feel that they lack the necessary equipment for child-rearing in the Swedish context without the use of physical punishment. Besides as Dahlberg (2002:122) stated "obedience and subordination to parents' authorities, which earlier characterised the child's position in the family, has changed to a more reciprocal relation in which children and their requirements are respected." The traditional authoritarian and patriarchal outlooks have been counteracted in favour of more egalitarian and democratic ethos in the modern time.

As highlighted in the point of departure for this paper, the Ethiopian immigrant parents have problems to properly raise their children in the context of the modern Swedish culture. What are the underlying problems and how do the parents adapt to raise their children in accordance with the modern Swedish values? This is the question that I attempt to tackle in this research.

1.3 Aims and Objectives

The general purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of Ethiopian immigrant parents about raising children in the Swedish context. The values and practices the immigrant parents adopted from the host culture will be discussed. The specific objectives of the study are:

- To explore the experiences and parenting practices of the Ethiopian immigrant parents in Sweden
- To investigate the challenges that the immigrant parents face and how they adapt to the Swedish ways of parenting
- To describe the views of the immigrant parents about their children being grown up in Sweden?

1.4 Research Questions

Migration influences the parenting behaviour of immigrants whereby the norms and rules of the host culture demand parents to rethink about their parental roles differently than the traditions they grew up with. Earlier child socialisation values that parents knew might contradict with the norms and rules of the host culture. On the other hand, parenting in migration context can be both (an opportunity) and a challenge for immigrant families to socialise their children in a multi-cultural setting where several experiences can be learned. As minority groups in a multicultural society, the tendency to maintaining some cultural traits is common among immigrant families. The Swedish state also seems to encourage this because it provides the opportunity for immigrant children to study their mother tongue language (in Swedish Hemspråksundervisning).

In line with these facts and the previously stated objectives of the study, in this research I have attempted to address the following questions:

- How do the Ethiopian immigrant parents experience it raising children in Swedish context?
- What challenges related to child upbringing do the immigrant parents face and how they adapt to the Swedish ways of parenting?
- In what ways has migration influenced the parenting roles of the immigrants?
- What are the views of the immigrant parents about their children being grown up in Sweden?

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study has specifically focused on one immigrant groups (Ethiopian parents) in Sweden; and it explores the views, experiences and challenges they face. The approach taken is a comprehensive portrayal of the problem. By identifying the main challenges faced by the parents, the findings would be helpful in many ways. First, the local municipality of Gothenburg, the school and other agents working with support and incorporation of immigrant families can better benefit to intervene and support. In this regard, the school as the main socialising agent of the children about modern Swedish culture can take special role. In Sweden immigrant parents are seen as partners of the school. This idea of partnership is

founded on the belief that immigrants need to be adapted to the Swedish parental role and modern Swedish culture (Dahlstedt, 2009). The findings of this study can give input on how to better incorporate and adapt the Ethiopian immigrant parents in partnership with the school and the general society. Second, social workers and practitioners working with immigrant children and immigrant parents can gain better understanding on how to deal with intercultural family conflicts with Ethiopian immigrants in particular and other African immigrants in general.

Chapter Two

Previous Research / Review of Related Literature

This chapter contains three parts. First I will begin with a background review on the cultural contexts or the general child socialisation patterns in Ethiopia. In the second part, I have explored earlier researches and the major findings in the areas of immigrant families and parenting. And finally, I have attempted to focus on literatures related to immigrant parents in Sweden.

2.1 Background: Modality of Child Upbringing and Parent-child Relationships in Ethiopia

In this section I will briefly describe the general feature of child socialisation patterns, its cultural perceptions and parenting in the Ethiopian context. For an Ethiopian reader, this will be too general because with a population of over 80 million, Ethiopia itself is a country of diversity comprising different cultural, ethnic, linguistic and religious groups. In short it is a mosaic of cultures and people. The Oromo, the Amhara, and the Tigre are three dominant groups. So when I say something about Ethiopia, it can in no way represent all these different ethnic and cultural groups. However, here the purpose is to provide readers with general impression about the common cultural practices related to the socialisation of children in order to give clues to the cultural background of the Ethiopian immigrants and their experiences of upbringing. Most of the parents gave their reflections of being a parent in Sweden in a comparative way. Therefore, including this part furnish readers about the cultural background that the immigrant parents were brought up, how they can raise their children in the context of another culture, and what possible cultural conflicts they might experience.

An Ethnographic study among children in Addis Ababa by Eva Poluha (2004) provides an interesting portrayal of the cultural values about child upbringing and the power structures in the family and its continuity over the generations. In her book, *The Power of Continuity*, Poluha(2004) took the argument that in Ethiopia child upbringing or the patterns of relations between children and adults are clearly hierarchical. The relationships have the character of super and subordination in that adults exercise control or supervision over children. An earlier classical book, *Wax and Gold*, by Professor Donald Levine (1965) contains detail accounts of the Amhara culture, predominantly the traditional rural families. According to Levine (1965:253) the most characteristic forms of interaction in the Amhara people is domination, domination in the sense of not only nobles and commoners, officers and soldiers but also husbands and wives, parents and children. The overall child socialisation in the Amhara culture as characterised by Levine can be summarized as follows:

Obedience and politeness are the overriding goals in bringing up children among the Amhara. After a prolonged and indulgent infancy, the Amhara child from about three years on is subjected to a regime of discipline and repression. He is taught to fulfil without question any request made by any older person. He is conditioned to stand quietly whenever guests are present and to stand facing the wall while his parents or guest eat their dinner. If addressed by elders, especially those outside his immediate family, he is expected to reply in a barely audible whisper.....children who are noisy and disrespectful are referred to contemptuously by the term *bálagé*, meaning 'rude'. (Levine, 1965:266)

More than four decades have passed since Levine's classical work depicted these dominant modes of child socialisation, but still recent studies (Poluha, 2004 & 2007, Alemayehu, 2007) have showed the continuity of the hierarchical nature of the parent-child relationship. For instance, Alemayeh (2007) argued that the hierarchical relations are persistent both in rural and urban areas though the extent and degree may vary. Thus, the modality of parenting is that parents or other seniors have the sense of responsibility to instil cultural values into the child in such authoritarian parenting style¹.

When a child misbehaves or turns out to be 'deviant', the mechanism of controlling and correcting often involves the use of force or punishment (corporal or psychological punishment). However, most of the time, the children complement these authoritarian relationships with deference to and obedience for their parents and other seniors or authority figures. According to Poluha (2004) although relationships are said be affected by factors as age, adult status, physical size, gender and social status, any relation that involves children and adults always maintains power differences. This is principally reflected in relations with parents, teachers, siblings and other adults. The children grow up in a hierarchical family system where they extensively learn to be obedient and respectful. Parents are more strict and dogmatic adhering to certain cultural codes of conduct or behaviour, with instructions coming from the top down to the children.

According to Poluha (2004) to be obedient never carried any negative implication. Children have to do what their parents told to do and fulfil any duty assigned to them but obeying itself also bears respect because obeying without respect is quite different from obeying with respect.

So culturally valued behaviour traits such as respect and obedience are inculcated through rigorous training and strict disciplining of the child (Girma, 2001: 108). In other words, punishment in its sense of using force (both physical and psychological) is the predominant mode of child control and/or socialisation pattern. Poluha's(2004) study among the Addis Ababa school children showed that the children didn't oppose punishment rather they see it as a sign of parental duty. In her study, Poluha found the following:

No children in the interviews criticised their parents for having punished them, instead they appear to understand it as both the right and the duty of the parents to do so. According to the children's way of reasoning, their parents did it because they cared for them not because they wanted to harm them. (Poluha, 2004:84).

In the view of Poluha, it seems that punishment as way of child socialisation method is culturally accepted and 'institutionalised' norm even the urban areas of Ethiopia. Children and their ideas are mostly neglected, their ideas not taken into account.

¹¹ Psychologists have developed different Parenting typologies- the most common typology is the one that was developed by Diana Baumrind(1973). Baumrind identified three parental authority typologies: authoritative, authoritarian and permissive parents. While *Authoritarian parents* emphasised on the strict control and obedience of the child, *authoritative parenting* styles are more liberal and democratic that demand little obedience of the child. On the other hand, *Permissive parents* de-emphasis on the importance of parental authority, and do not expect much from the child. Sometime a fourth typology, *indifferent parents* is added in which parents are neglectful and do not assume their parental role but rather give priority for their own needs than the child's. These typologies basically reflect power structures and parent-child relationships and whether these involve affection and warmth or control.

Notwithstanding the above phenomena, it should be understood that there are rapid changes that are brought about by modernisation and expansion of education which affect the modes of child socialisation. An earlier research by Zeleke and Tadesse (1998) has identified these changes. In their study of parenting among four ethnic groups (Oromo, Amhara, Gurage and Harreri) Zeleke and Tadesse found that authoritative parenting was most predominant among these ethnic groups. The possible explanation the authors gave for these changes was the rapid socio-political changes witnessed in the country during the past two decades which often resulted in cultural changes thus impacting the traditional mode of child socialisation. Most importantly in this study, the researchers also found educational background of parents, and number of children in the family as factors that determine parenting styles. The more the parents are educated, the more they follow the authoritative style meaning more liberal towards the children and less restrictive and obedient demanding.

2.2. Migrant Families and Issues of Cultural Conflicts

Migration has become one of the most widely discussed research agenda among social scientists. If we ask about *how* immigrant parents raise their children, the next question that deserves attention is what problems or challenges the immigrant parents encounter due to cultural differences. Most literatures on immigrant families have focused on the intercultural and intergenerational conflicts, the issue of cultural continuity and value transmission, and the role of immigrant parents in fostering the ethnic and cultural identities of their children (Patel, et al., 1996; Nauck, 2001, 2005; Kwak, 2003; Su & Costigan, 2009), as well as the subsequent acculturation changes and acculturation stresses (Berry, 1997; Ying, 2009). The sociologist Bernhard Nauck has extensively studied on the intergenerational cultural transmission and continuity among various immigrant groups in Germany (immigrants of Italian, Greek and Turkish origins in Germany). Though much of his study is restricted within European immigrants, he explained the problem with the notion of '*cultural distance*', the degree of cultural variations between the origin of the immigrants and the host society. So the idea can be borrowed to explain immigrants from Africa such as Ethiopia, who have greater cultural distances, to explore how successfully transmit their cultural resources to their children.

The desire and practice of value transmission to the next generation is the fundamental nature of immigrants. As Nauck (2005) pointed out intergenerational relationships among immigrant families are inherent and eminently vital in terms of cultural and institutional arrangements, in terms what parents and children 'mean' to and expect from each other and how they 'value' each other. For the 'understanding' of parents and children and the perpetuation and continuity of preferred traditions, norms and customs, immigrant parents have the mandate to pass over those cultural resources to their offspring. However, the transmission process is neither easy nor complete because, as Nauck (2005) stated, it never results in a perfect reproduction of the culture in the respective generation. Rather cultural transmissions are always followed by strained relationships at two extremes, from complete transmission to absence of complete transmission. Successful value transmission occurs when children are aware of their parental value and accept them as their own (Su and Costiga, 2009). In the midst of the transmission processes, the larger society's cultural influences have significant roles because it determines the parenting strategies that immigrant parents follow. Based on an extensive review of earlier researches, Kwak (2003) postulated three general findings about intergenerational relations of immigrant families and their children: first, immigrant

adolescents more easily accept new cultural values and practices than do their parents. Second, both the immigrant parents and their children undergo extensive negotiation process in terms of the transmission of core values, their ethnic and cultural heritages. Third, the children may have a delayed or less consolidated self-concept due to the simultaneous experiences of acculturation, that of the new culture and from their parents.

Distinctions are drawn between intercultural conflict and intergenerational conflict both of which characterise immigrant families and their children. According to Nauck (2001) intercultural conflicts signify the conflict resulting from two cultural contacts (culture of origin and the host culture) and it can be explained by the often debated four outcomes of the acculturation processes: integration, assimilation, segregation and marginalisation (I have explained more each of these concepts in the theoretical section in chapter 3). Nauck has an assimilation perspective for value transmission and intergenerational continuity of immigrant parents.

Intergenerational conflicts, on the other hand, appear between parents and their children due to gaps in knowledge, skills, and value orientations. Whereas immigrant parents retain more of the original normative values and become reluctant for change partially or fully, their children progressively adopt more quickly the mainstream culture. In other words, intergenerational conflicts develop as a result of differential rates of acculturation between parents and their children (Ying, 1999, Kwak, 2003). Two contradictory factors have been identified that catalyse for these intergenerational differences: the independence/autonomy sought by children and the interdependence/embeddedness in the family expected by the parents (Kwak, 2003; Kagitcibasi, 2007). As a result of the rapid adaptation to the values and cultural ethos of the host society, immigrant children usually seek more autonomy and independence than their parents are willing to grant them. In a review of several researches, Kwak (2003) found that for all immigrants regardless of ethno-cultural background or immigration status, such intergenerational conflicts are related to the issues of parental authority and children's rights. In their monograph about Vietnamese immigrants in the United States, Zhou & Bankston (2000) pointed that cultural conflict between parents and children born or reared in the United States is common phenomena. The children want to fit with their social surrounding and tended to be more 'American' in order to get more acceptances by their peers which brought them in conflict with their parents who want to retain cultural values from their home country. In this study, Zhou & Bankston (2000) identified four major sources for intergenerational conflicts between immigrant parents and their children. First, parents and children disagree on the extent and nature of parental authority. Second, the modes of teaching and punishment that parents use have no acceptance in the new society. Third, Parents and children have different views on what aspects of the host culture are acceptable and desirable. And fourth, the role reversal of parents and children contradicts with the expectations of the parents' roles. Because children are more often adapted to the mainstream culture, immigrant parents usually experience the sense of loss of parental authority over their children.

2.3. Reconsideration of Parental Roles

On another spectrum, previous researches about immigrant parents paid significant attention on the issues of gender and the reconsideration of parental roles in the context of the host society. Often immigrant families are challenged by parental role changes that come about

by the potential family generational break and the construction of roles differently by the host society. As a result, relationships between parents and their children, or husbands and wives are often strained as changes occur at home, at workplaces and in the school (Bernhardt et al. 2007; Fong, 2004). An in-depth qualitative study by Roer-Strier, et al., (2005) among immigrant fathers to Canada and Israel who were in the midst of cultural change showed fathers having deep expression of commitment, concern and responsibility of their fatherhood as opposed to their experiences in their country of origin. At the same time these fathers sometimes showed strained relationships that allowed for the re-assessment of the meaning of fatherhood. However, the study challenged the widely held notion of immigration itself as a risk. Rather the researchers suggested that immigration in the family context might be better understood both as a set of obstacles and opportunities to exercise parental roles in the new country. Fathers in the study appeared to be highly committed to 'invest time' with their children, engage in the daily routines of the children by accompanying them in different activities as well as progressively supervise and follow their education. While this was considered as positive opportunity to exercise paternal roles by the fathers, it was also observed that there were senses of loss of parental authority due to changes in the domestic division of labour in the family and lack of adequate knowledge about the system of the host society. The study also demonstrated the tendency of the fathers both to retain cultural values of fatherhood from their country of origin and adopting new ones from the host society. The researchers also noted one critical point, that the rethinking of the fathers about their parenting roles in the context of the new culture and this was related to the degree of similarity or cultural distances between the country of origin and the host culture. This study also showed that immigration to western countries effected the involvement of the fathers directly in the care of their children, educational supervision and recreational activities.

Research by Patel, et al. (1996) among Indian immigrant parents in the United States showed the value preferences of parents for their children. According to this study, gender disparity on the value orientation of parents for their children was apparent. Fathers' value preferences were highly acculturated in favour of American value systems (such as English language preference) while at the same time they strongly uphold to certain traditional values from their country of origin, expecting their daughters to be deferent to authority, well-mannered and polite. In this study the researchers suggested the fact that highly acculturated fathers preferred traditional values indicated the selective feature of acculturation i.e. maintaining traditional values regarding interpersonal relations at home while at the same time adopting the host cultures values in other contexts.

Research by Su & Castigan (2009) among immigrant Chinese parents to Canada showed that parents have strong emphasis on family obligation expectations and this served to keep the children close to the family which helped to transmit and preserve the ethnic and cultural identity of the children. However, this study also showed pronounced gender difference. More mothers than fathers showed the feelings and responsibility of being 'cultural educators', teaching their children more about their ethnic and cultural backgrounds. According to the suggestions of the researchers, this may be due to the fact that mothers usually shoulder the greater role of parenting by spending more time at home with the children.

2.4 Challenges and Adaptive Mechanisms of Immigrant Parents

Research showed that often migration is accompanied by several problems and immigrants are subjected to the processes of continuous adjustment with the demands of the host culture. According to Fong (2004) the challenges of the immigrant families and their children are manifold, ranging from structural macro problems such as discrimination, racism, problems with immigration laws, language difficulty and poverty, meso problems (role reversals with children and parents or husband-wife relationship). At the micro level, the problems are prevalent both for the parents and the children. Fathers experience the loss of the traditional parental authority and the children may also have conflicts due to the necessity to interpret for their parents and the mounting pressures to achieve and hurry through childhood (Fong, 2004).

However, contending with these challenges immigrant families often go through processes of continuous adjustment are often accompanied by what is known as 'acculturation stresses' (Berry, 1997). According to Berry, acculturation stresses could be behavioural or psychological effects experienced by acculturating immigrants due to cultural conflicts, language difficulties or other related problems. For immigrant parents, the problems are multifaceted. In addition to negotiating their own cultural adaptation, they also face the challenges of raising children to be successful in multicultural context as well as fostering the ethnic and cultural identity of the children (Su & Castigan, 2009).

According to Kagitcibasi (2007) there are different adaptive processes as many as there are immigrants because each individual's experience is unique. However, there also appears common pattern that reflects systematic variations among individuals and groups. Empirical investigations on adaptive mechanisms of immigrant parents showed different patterns of adaptation. Roer-Strier (1996 & 1997) identified three most common coping strategies that are typically used by immigrant parents: the traditional '*uni-cultural*' style, culturally disoriented '*assimilation*' style, and the mediative '*bi-cultural*' style. As the name implies, immigrant parents who apply the traditional uni-cultural style are conservative and change resistant. They raise their children following their country of origin values, norms, and traditions of child socialisation practices. Such parents consider themselves as the chief socialising agents of their children. Immigrant parents who use the culturally disoriented assimilation style tend to disqualify itself as the chief socialising agent and allow the rapid assimilation of their children into the host society's culture. Roer-Strier also remarked that these parents are also likely to maintain their original 'adaptive adult' image and latter resent the influence of the host culture when conflict arises. Parents adopting the bi-cultural style recognise the major differences between the values and socialisation practices of their home culture and the 'new' culture of the host society; and raise the child according to the two cultures. Their goal is to enable the child benefit out of the two cultures. Outside home, children are expected to behave and act like the 'other children' according to the culture of the host society but inside the family, children are expected to conform to the culture of their original country. In order to facilitate the child's adaptation, parents allow the child to explore the values and behaviour of the new society

2.5 Immigrant Parents in Sweden

So far most of the studies about immigrants in Sweden focused on the economic aspects in terms of the labour market participation and employment opportunities of migrants. This economic life of immigrants was widely discussed and debated with the issues of integration, social inclusion and exclusion discourses (Westin, 2003). As Bernhardt et al. (2007) pointed out little research has been done on the issues of family relationships among immigrant parents. Few have been studied about the experiences of immigrant parents, how they raise their children in the context of the mainstream Swedish culture. As stated above, immigrants in other countries suffer a lot of problems and immigrant parents in Swedish welfare state are not exception to that. They have to grapple with a lot of problems along the struggle to 'learn the Swedish norms' of parenthood as well as maintain their cultural ethos. For example, Bernhardt et al. (2007) investigated the family patterns and transition to adulthood of Turkish and Polish immigrant children born in Sweden. This study highlighted the intergenerational tensions between immigrant children born in Sweden and their parents during the transition process as the children struggle to shape their lives to become more 'Swedish'. Shift in generational relationships were likely to challenge the successful integration of the children into the Swedish society. According to Goldscheider et al. (2004) Sweden can be regarded as an extreme example of the potential for clashes between immigrants and the native born population on family related issues. These potential clashes on family related issues are expected to be higher when the cultural differences and social expectations of places of origin and destination are greater. In other words, in Nauck's (2001) concept, the greater the 'cultural distances', the higher the gaps between the origin of the immigrants and the mainstream Swedish culture and the greater the cultural clashes that parents experience.

In his article on *Parental Governmentality*, Dahlstedt (2009) investigated the involvement of immigrant parents in Swedish schools as partners and collaborators of the teachers. In this article, Dahlstedt argued that the rhetoric of the Swedish state to include immigrant parents as partners is founded on the idea that immigrant parents need to be adapted to Swedish parental role and the modern Swedish culture. Referring to official government document from the late 1990s entitled Support in Parenthood, (in Swedish, *Stöd i föräldraskapet, SOU*), Dahlstedt (2009) showed the effort waged by the Swedish state to provide immigrant parents with special supports about parenting in the Swedish context. According to Dahlstedt, the state's claim for the need to special support is based on the idea that 'tensions and conflicts that are said to arise when families immigrate to a country whose family patterns conflict with those of the immigrant family' (pp.199). Dahlstedt's arguments highlighted that immigrant parents have to be re-socialised in order to socialise their children according to this 'modern' Swedish standards and ways of upbringing. Many of the previously taken-for-granted family values such as the authority of husbands and fathers, ideals of child upbringing, obedience or control are no longer approved or tolerated. To cite Dahlstedt's quote, the perceived consequences about the way immigrant parents bring up their children:

Swedish norms and values of raising children often invoke fear. [...] Uncertainty regarding what the consequences might be if they give in to their children's demands leads many parents to strengthen and exaggerate the ideals of child-rearing that prevails in their home country (SOU 1997, in Dahlstedt, 2009:199).

Apparently not all immigrant parents equally suffer from these problems of cultural clashes and uncertainty panics. Specific immigrant groups can be singled out that would be more prone to such problems based on Nauck's (2001) idea of 'cultural distance' between the origin of the immigrants and the host society. Dahlstedt also has noted this by stating that although the SOU report didn't explicitly mention by name, those non-European immigrants were affiliated with the problems of cultural deficit. According to Dahlstedt, non-European/non-Western immigrant parents, understandably Africans have always been labelled as 'problematic', authoritarian and uninterested, uninformed and semi-lingual. The idea of the partnership between the school and the parents was inspired by the presumption that engaging these immigrant parents in the ongoing activities of the school often means transforming their alleged distrust, dependency and passive 'mentality' and raising them to the standards of good parenting when it comes to commitment, trust and initiative. In short, it was aimed at the creation of motivated, willing and able to incorporate the established ideals of a 'good Swedish parenting' to make them their own (Rose, 1996 cf. Dahlstedt, 2009).

With regard to Ethiopian immigrants, despite that hitherto no previous research has showed, problems are expected to be higher because as stated above these immigrant groups came from the society where parent-child relations are hierarchical with predominantly authoritarian parenting style and patriarchal social systems (Poluha, 2004; Bar-Yosef, 2003; Girma, 2001; Levin, 1965). Most of the cultural values and child socialisation systems that the immigrant parents grew up and 'brought' with them are at odds with the mainstream Swedish pattern. The Swedish cultural system doesn't uphold or tolerate with most of the cultural values that Ethiopian immigrants 'brought' with them. As a result, intercultural conflicts and discrepancies within the immigrant families are expected to be prevalent. This often happens when the immigrant parents tend to fall back to their original values of child socialisation.

Chapter Three

Theoretical Frameworks

In this chapter I will describe the theoretical frameworks of the study. Theoretical frameworks are the lenses through which we look into the social world. A theory, in its social sciences sense is “either a provisional explanation, sometimes in the form of hypothesis that can be tested; or a broad framework of concepts and ideas that provides a basis for interpreting the world” (Gilbert, 2008:515). In this understanding theories highlight an explanation to research puzzle. In my view the current research questions or problems under investigation can be tackled from different perspectives. Different theoretical frameworks and models can explain the concept of parenting in the context of migration. The choices depend on the glass through which the researcher wants to look into.

For this particular purpose, I took a cultural approach. I wanted to look at those cultural values that the immigrant parents ‘brought with’ them and how they synchronise it in the context of the current culture. Towards that end I have taken two theoretical approaches, the ecological systems theory of the psychologist Urie Bronfenbrenner (1979) and the cultural change and acculturation models. While the former takes spatial consideration of the problem, the latter provides an insight into the cultural adaptation of the immigrant parents in the host cultural environment. Eldering (1995) stated that the culture-ecological model is particularly useful to describe the situation of immigrant parents, their childrearing patterns in bicultural settings, and the undergoing changes and acculturation processes. This is mainly based on the fact that immigration involves a long standing interaction processes between the immigrant groups and the receiving society.

When choosing these approaches I intend to look the challenges and cultural contradictions that the immigrant parents might face. The mainstream culture that surrounds the immigrant families and the various social systems that the children and parents are engaged in and exposed to (such as schools, churches, day care centres, public health institutions etc) would have significant influence on the child socialisation patterns and parenting behaviours of the parents. Putting these different social/socialisation agents together and looking their influences in shaping and challenging parenting practices would be vital and necessary. The ecological systems theory views these different agents together and gives us an insight on how each integrates with the other, which ultimately influences the development of the child.

My idea is that such problems are the results of eco-cultural differences that the immigrant parents have experienced. By environment, I mean the physical, social and cultural dimensions all of which impact the parents’ child socialisation practices, parenting behaviour and beliefs. I believed that such approach would serve to explain the purpose of the study, make the analysis of data much easier. The ecological approach is based on the notion that the ecological environment in which the child grows up has strong influence on her/his behaviour and development (Eldering 1995). This being the case, environment along with biological factors would have significant influence on the development of the child. However, I also argue that parents as primary agents of socialisation and taking the earliest control on the child’s environment have the greatest share on the environmental impact of the child. Under normal circumstances, parents are the stewards of their children. They engineer,

structure and avail the child's environment into certain patterns concomitant with the surrounding community or society. As Quinn (2005) noted, our environment is culturally patterned, a pattering that is continuously impinging upon our experiences and being reproduced in our behaviours and acts. Thus, not only children's behaviour but parents' behaviour, experiences and beliefs about their children are also influenced by the ecological environment. I strongly believe that parenting experiences, beliefs and child socialisation patterns are intricately intertwined with the cultural environment that parents have dwelled and/or are currently residing. And each of these cultural patterns is part and parcel of the child's environment and one cannot be studied without the other. They are mutually inclusive, tightly integrated and inseparable.

When we propose the impact of the environment on the child's development and parenting behaviour and beliefs of parents in regard of migration, the next most important question is the acquaintance and adaptation of the immigrants to the new environment. The other theoretical approach that I used is thus the theory of acculturation.

3.1 Ecological Systems Theory

The ecological systems theory locates the growing child and its parents at the heart of the spirally nested components of the system. Bronfenbrenner (2005) identified the micro, meso, exo and macro systems as the constituents of the ecological system each of which is highly interrelated and directly or indirectly affect the growing person. According to this model the *micro-system* comprised the immediate social and physical environment, patterns of activities, roles and interpersonal relationships experienced by the growing person in face-to-face situation. The *meso-systems*, like that of the exo-system comprise the linkages and processes that take place between two and more settings that contain the developing person. For example, the relation between homes and the schools, schools and work place. This is the system that bridges the micro system with others systems. The *exo-system* encompasses the linkages and processes that take place between two or more settings at least one of which doesn't directly contain the growing person. An example would the relation between the home and work place as affecting the child growth or the relation between the home and neighbouring communities affecting the parenting behaviour of parents.

Bronfenbrenner (2005) explained the *macro system* as the outermost layer of all the other subsystems that includes the cultures and subcultures, personal and background characteristics of those who take care the child as well as belief systems, resources, hazards, lifestyles, life course options, and patterns of social exchange structures embedded in each subsystem. As Eldering (1995) highlighted the unique feature of the macro-system is that it does not refer to concrete context but to the general, prototypes that originate from religion or some other sources existing in the culture or subcultures. Bronfenbrenner (2005) himself has mentioned two distinguishing features of these cultures or subcultures of the macro-system. First, it encompasses the highest-order, overarching macro-structures that comprised all other intra-cultures. Second, the beliefs and behaviour patterns that characterise the macro-system are handed down from one generation to the next through socialisation processes carried out by the various institutions of the culture such as the family, school, church etc.

Bronfenbrenner later added the dimension of time to contextually observe the change in each of the other four components. He called this subsystem as the *chrono-system*. The chrono-system incorporated the methodological construct to look the changes in time each of the

other four theoretical subsystems making the entire paradigm complete. The ecological model can be perceived as spirals of nested components each expanding outwards from the centre (micro) to the exterior (macro-system) with a series of connections built up by the meso and exo-systems. The growth, maturity, and development of the child also expand along these series towards an adult person in the society.

Primarily, Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory is about the development of the child in a given environmental context, and the influence of the society's cultures or subcultures (the embedded belief systems, social exchange structures etc). *How useful would the theory be for this particular purpose of the study?*

When choosing this theory, I wanted to look how the two macro-cultures (i.e. Ethiopian and Swedish) interact and merge to function within the immigrant family. The immigrant parents' experiences of child socialisation and parenting should be understood in the context of the host culture as contrasted with the original culture, both of which impact the development of the child. Bornstein & Cheah (2006) also argued that children do not and cannot grow up as solitary individuals and parenting constitutes the initial and all-encompassing ecology of child development. For the immigrant families, the experience of parenting is rooted in two cultural fabrics, and the bicultural perspective would be a powerful explanatory tool to understand the context under which the child develops.

Here the macro-system is particularly important because it contains those cultural belief systems and ideologies that influence the childrearing practice and parenting behaviour of the immigrant parents. The immigrant parents might have been influenced directly via the family laws, regulations and ideologies of the 'new' host society and indirectly by the public attitudes and values about parenting in the Swedish society all of which might lead to acculturation process. This might prompt gradual processes of change towards the adoption of Swedish ways of parenting and childrearing practice.

Furthermore Bronfenbrenner(2005:159) suggested that any research design that includes a macro system contrasts should consider the subculture where one was raised or the subculture that one lives in two different subcultures as in the cases of minorities or immigrant groups. Fong (2004:12) also stated that the behaviour of immigrants have always been and continues to be affected by the social environment from which they come, and as a result they are encountered by a lot of problems in the new environment. These problems are common to both the old and new immigrant families and range from macro (such as discrimination, poverty), meso (role reversal with children or husband-wife relationships) and micro levels (such as a father loss the role of authority). At the macro levels are poverty, discrimination, language problems etc; and at the meso-level are the struggles families with role reversal such as husband-wife tension. At the micro-level, a father may problem with his traditional role as head of household and loss of authority

3.2 The cultural Change and Acculturation Model

Many immigrant parents are confronted with a lot of challenges in their parenting practice and daily walks of life simply because two different and perhaps incompatible cultures have come in contact. Immigrants usually have the difficulty of adapting themselves with the demand of the host culture. Another theoretical perspective that I take into consideration is thus the cultural model of acculturation that was originally proposed by anthropologists and

extensively discussed and used by the psychologists John W. Berry for the study of immigrant families. This model describes the contact of two cultures and the process of change that comes as a result of the contact. It is understood that immigration leads to long process of interaction between immigrants and the receiving society with different possible outcomes (Eldering, 1995). According to Berry (1997) acculturation is the dual process of cultural and psychological change that takes place at group and individual levels respectively as a result of two cultural contacts. In the words of Harzing & Hoerder, (2009:104) “acculturation is double process, a stepwise approach by the migrant to the society or segment of it while retaining some elements of the culture of socialisation, modifying others, and discarding yet others, and an often reluctant or belated adaptation of the receiving society to the new comers”. Thus acculturation is the cultural learning process that involves changes at individual and group levels. These changes have been viewed as complex and multifaceted that included changes in attitudes, feelings, beliefs and behaviours (Phinney, 2006). According to Berry (1997) the individual (psychological) acculturation involves changes in a person’s behavioural repertoires through gradual long-term processes while the group acculturation involves the changes in social structures and institutions in cultural practices. Although it may sometimes be hard to distinguish between individual and group level changes particularly among immigrants because each individual migrant has unique experiences, there appear some common patterns that reflect the systematic variations across individuals and groups (Kagiticbasi, 2007:319).

Berry (1997) identified fourfold acculturation strategies employed by immigrants as responsive to the interaction with the host culture; and each strategy are related to two essential components: *attitudes* and *behaviours* (i.e. preferences and actual outcomes) of the acculturating individuals and/or groups. They are integration, assimilation, separation and marginalisation. When individuals and/or groups do not wish to maintain their original cultural and instead have stronger orientation towards the new culture it is referred to as the *assimilation*. On the other hand, when individuals emphasis to cling into their culture of origin and detach themselves from the host culture it is known as *separation*. On the other alternative when individuals/groups have the interest to maintain their cultural values while at the same time engaging and adopting values of the host culture, it is called *integration*. Finally, for various reasons when there is little possibility and/or interest in preserving original cultures and little interest in having relations with the new culture, it results in *marginalisation*. In the migration discourse, each of these concepts is hotly debated among scholars and politician because a number of factors have to be taken into account such as the openness of the host culture, migration policy, reason of immigration etc(Berry, 1992, Sigad & Eisikovits, 2009). It is not my intention to go in detail to these debates because that is beyond the purpose of this research. But I briefly describe how Berry and other have conceptualised each of these concepts and how they can be related to this current research.

Of all the four, evidences suggest that the most commonly used acculturation strategy is *integration*, preserving one’s cultural heritage while at the same time seeking participation with the mainstream cultural group (Berry, 1992). In the definition of ‘acculturation’ the emphasis is on the concept of change, change in the sense of the ability of the immigrants to adapt to the value systems of the host society. Several factors are also determinants during the process of change such time of stay, the behaviour or attitude subjected to change, (Phinney, 2006) reasons for immigration, the variation between the culture of origin and the host culture (Berry, 1997). Thus, acculturation changes are the outcomes of adaptive

responses by the acculturating individuals and/or groups. Adaptation, specifically cross-cultural adaptation as used by Sigad & Eisikovits (2009) is a generic term that encompasses a wide spectrum of possible responses to the new cultural contexts ranging from total adoption to complete rejection of the host society's values. With regard to immigrant families, Berry (1997) stated that parents and children sometimes have different views about their relationships during the acculturation processes for example on issues of family obligation like responsibilities for various chores. According to Eldering (1995) many immigrants in North Western Europe from the developing countries are raising their children in two cultural models. They have constant links and want to preserve their traditional cultural values and norms while "at the same time they participate in the institutions of the new society based on different cultural principles." (Eldering, 1995:134). According to Harzing & Hoerder (2009) the concept of acculturation can best suit to understand the experiences of migrants and involves the continuous negotiation between the views and practices acquired during the culture of socialisation and the exigencies of receiving society in certain segments such as workplaces, schools or neighbourhoods.

Therefore, the main purpose of the acculturation model is to identify and describe the Swedish ways of parenting values that the immigrant parents have adopted. It enables to observe the cultural adaptation or the-fit-with the environment of the immigrant parents. This in turn highlights the biculturalism tendency of the parents, to give the 'best out of the two cultural worlds' to their children.

Chapter Four

Methods and Materials

In this chapter, I will dispose the methods part of the study, the processes of data collection and analysis, the rationale for the methodological choice as well as the ethical concerns and limitations of the study. Due to the nature of the problem area, qualitative interviewing was the method that I choose.

4.1 Rationale for Qualitative Method

Two research methods that sometimes considered as contrasting are endemic in the social sciences researches: quantitative and qualitative methods. Their distinction mainly falls on strive to explain or measure the social world in terms of quantity (numeric measure) or quality (values and attached meanings).

In this research I used qualitative method, particularly the qualitative interviewing method. In fact, it is argued that there is no one best research method or design and the choice depends on the nature of the research and available resources (Gilbert, 2008). This study mainly aims at exploring the child upbringing experiences of Ethiopian immigrant parents in the context of migration, with a cross-cultural emphasis. The purpose is to capture the lived experiences, and reflections of the parents about raising kids in a foreign culture and the challenges they face. Therefore, qualitative method than any other method is more justifiable. Two factors are taken into account for choosing qualitative method. First, as the nature of the study is exploratory and descriptive, qualitative interviewing than any other method is more useful to capture the experiences of the immigrant parents. As stated by Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) qualitative interviewing enables us to grasp the social world from the subjects' point of view, to unfold the meanings of their lived experiences. Second, the study has a cross-cultural nature and qualitative method is mainly used for cross-cultural studies to investigate similarities and differences.

4.2 Data Collection Procedure

The Study Participants

A total of ten Ethiopian immigrant parents (four mothers and six fathers) participated in the study. The participants lived in and around the city of Gothenburg. The median age for the mothers was 39 and the median age for the fathers was 45. All the interviewed parents are currently intact. Most of the interviewed parents have had long period of experiences in Sweden. Majority of them have stayed in Sweden for more than 20 years. Two of the mothers coded as Etsegenet & Sara have four children, and the other two mothers coded as Frehiwot & Ruth have two children. On the other hand, two of the fathers, Tamrat & Abebe, have three children; one of the fathers, Legesse has two children. The remaining three fathers, Zegeye, Alula & Gebre have one child each. (For more see tables 1&2 in chapter 4). In total the ten parents have twenty two children and the average age of the children was nine years old (ranging from 2 to 22 year olds).

The process of selecting the participants was done with the help of home language instruction teacher. I established a rapport with the home language instruction teacher through my own personal networks. I discussed with the teacher how I can get in touch with the parents and finally we decided that the appropriate way was to send an invitation letter via the children. Then a letter of informed consent that briefly describes the purpose of the study was distributed to the parents through their children. In Sweden, immigrant children have the right to study their mother tongue and Ethiopian immigrant parents are one of the groups who benefit this opportunity. Children of 5th to 9th graders who attend the home language instruction were chosen by the help of the teacher to deliver the letters to their parents. The letters were also collected back through the children. About 20 informed consent letters were sent out, of which 10 were turned in with positive reply. Parents who agreed for the interview signed and gave their phone number. Afterwards each parent was approached by phone to get appointment for interviewing. In cases where parent have more than one child, the first/oldest child was the subject of discussion during the interview. However, children were not interviewed.

The Interview Process and Tools

There are different interviewing tools: standardised or structured, semi-standardised and non-standardised also known as unstructured or focused interviews (Fielding & Thomas 2008). As the names imply, in structured interviews, the wording of the questions and the order in which they appear are the same for each interview and the method of asking is rigid whereas in semi-standardised interview, the questions asked are same but there is flexibility to alteration of the sequence with probing questions posed for more information. The interviewer can adapt the questions to the respondent's level of comprehension. In the third, non-standardised interviews, the interview questions are simply lists of guiding questions for the conversation, and the interviewer is free to phrase the questions as she/he wishes. According to Fielding & Thomas (2008), the term interview guide is used for the non-standardised interview.

In this research, the non-standardised interviewing technique was used to find out what is happening on the ground. More open-ended interview guides questions were used. Participants were given more opportunity to express their experiences as I didn't have any prior knowledge about the live situation of the Ethiopian immigrant parents in Sweden. However, the themes of the question revolved around five concepts formulated from the literature reading and pilot interviews done to get entry into the ground. The interview guide consisted of about 20 items focused on broader themes such background information related to the immigrant parents and their children, experience and challenges they faced as well as their reflection about raising kids in Sweden (See Appendix B).

The interview situation was quiet smooth. Before start of the interview, participants were briefed about the purpose of the study, how data will be handled and their consent for audio taping. During the interview process, mainly I used the 'interviewer as traveller metaphor' (Kvale, 1996) where the interviewer "wanders along with the local inhabitants, ask questions that lead the subjects to tell their own stories of their lived world". My approach was to follow the road map that journeys me toward the unknown world, how the Ethiopian immigrant parents found it to be raise children in this western Swedish standard.

The interview session lasted for about 1 to 2 hours per person. Places for the interview were fixed in agreement with the parents. Four of the interviews were held at home of the parents, three at their work places, two at open air space and one at church. Except for one, all the interviews were conducted in English which minimised the risk of translation. But for one father, the interview was conducted in Amharic and I translated into English. During the interview process, I used the method of note taking as supporting to the interview material. Back home after the interview, I did the transcriptions myself.

Transcription Process

The transcription or the process of converting the oral materials into written texts was one of the tedious and laborious parts of the study. Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) suggested that there are no standard rules for transcription and the process depends on the purpose of the investigation, availability of time and resources. However, verbatim transcription and selective transcription are commonly used. Verbatim transcription involves a detailed transcription including the emotional expressions, laughs, pauses, and repeated words etc while selective transcription emphasis on the main, selective interview data. For this study, I used verbatim transcription but without emphasising much on pauses, and repeated words. I did this with the intention that the analysis is mainly focused on summarisation and condensation of the meanings expressed by the respondents. As Fielding & Thomas (2008) suggested, despite that it is tiresome, verbatim transcription is advantageous because no data is lost that may be significant in the analysis process. Totally about 85 pages of single-spaced, nine font sized transcript text was produced.

4.3 Methods of Data Analysis

One of the problems with qualitative methods is that there is no hard-and fast tool for the analysis of the interview data, for which criticism is often labelled on the ‘scientific status’ of qualitative inquiry. In qualitative research, ‘data’ are conceived those ‘counts of words captured through *Inter Views*, inter changes of views between two persons, the interviewer and the interviewee conversing about a theme of mutual interest (Kvale, 1996). To analyse the interview data would simply mean to get the essence of those ‘words’ conveyed during this process of inter changes or exchange of views. But there is no hard-and –fast tool that tells the exact method of how to analyse these data. However, Kvale & Brinkman (2009) provided several modes of interview analysis which are broadly grouped into three as meaning focused analysis, language focused analysis and general analysis(eclectic and theoretical analysis). Each of these groups contains several concepts within it, and their difference is based on the *focus of analysis* that the researcher takes. Meaning and language are intertwined but for the purposes of interview analysis distinctions are made. Meaning analysis entails making grasp or sense of the interview data at the surface by capturing the recurring themes and patterns. Analysis based on meaning includes such as meaning coding or categorisation, meaning condensation or summary and meaning interpretation. In the language focused analysis, the focus is to go deeply beyond the surfaced meanings into the structure and order of the conversation language. It includes linguistic, conversations, narrative, and discourse and deconstruction analysis. I do not intend to explain these concepts here but I attempt to show the meaning focused analysis that I used in this paper.

The analytic method that I used in this paper is meaning focused analysis particularly meaning categorisation and condensation or summarisation. As Kvale & Brinkmann (2009)

stated, the advantage of categorisation and condensation methods is to provide structure and overviews for extensive interview texts. They are more convenient when the interview materials or interview texts are bulky and/or when several people are involved in the study. As I followed an in-depth interviewing and verbatim transcription, the interview material produced was bulky. So the method of analysis that I followed is condensation and categorisation of similar patterns. For example, to analyze the immigrant parents' move towards adopting Swedish ways of parenting, I used the category 'liked/accepted versus disliked' to identify the themes favoured by the parents. Then similar patterns were summarised into tabular forms.

Meaning condensation entails the abridgement of the meanings expressed by the interviewee into shorter formulations and themes without distorting the 'real' or 'natural meaning units' expresses by the subjects (Kvale & Brinkman, 2009). The whole process followed the same trend, identifying strong expressions, themes, patterns, similarities and differences both within and across the different interview text. These patterns and themes are further analysed by giving proceeding or subsequent explanations for the condensed texts. This was also further substantiated with the selected theoretical frameworks and/or findings of previous research.

After thoroughly reading the interview texts, I have developed five themes that deal with 1) intercultural conflicts, 2) communication deficiency, 3) methods of correcting child misbehaviour, 4) parents' concerns about the cultural identity of their children and 5) the problem of loneliness. These themes are supported by the direct utterances of the subjects which I treated them as "strong expressions" that glean the meaning of the themes. For example, to show that there was a communication problem between the immigrant parents and their children, I extracted the direct utterance by one of the respondent as saying "*I am caring Swedish children....I cannot plant an Ethiopian mentality*". The remaining strong expressions that highlight the theme are provided at the start of the analysis chapter. Therefore, the entire analysis work is mainly anchored on these themes. However, these analytic themes are neither complete nor mutually exclusive rather they are meant to elucidate the interview materials with certain rigors of finding contextual understanding of the interview material. In some cases, short conversation episodes directly extracted from the transcription are used to highlight the direct intonations expressed by the subjects.

4.4 Ethical Considerations

An ethical issue was considered in the entire process of the research. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) suggested that, in qualitative research, ethical concerns extend in the entire process of the research starting from the design of the study, the interview process, transcription, analysis and final delivery of the findings. All these issues were considered in this study. To get the signed consent of participants, a letter of informed consent specifying the purpose of the study, how data will be handled and analysed was sent out (see Appendix A). Before the start of the interview, participants were briefed about the purpose of the study and whether they are willing for audio taping. Participants were informed that they can quit the interview even after the start of the interview session if they feel uncomfortable. However no one quitted any interview session.

In the analysis stage, ethical issue was highly considered. To keep the confidentiality and privacy of the respondents' data anonymous, pseudonyms selected by the interviewees

themselves at the interview spot is used. Therefore, the name shown in tables 1 and 2 of the background section of chapter five are pseudonyms. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) recommend that the consequences of the study should be addressed in terms whether it is harmful or beneficial to the participants. No damage is expected for any participant in this study as far as the confidentiality is ensured.

4.5 Validity, Reliability and Generalisation

Reliability, validity and generalisation of the results are contesting issues in qualitative research. In broader sense reliability and validity denote the “goodness of measurements” that the researcher followed (Gilbert, 2008). While reliability concerns about the consistency and trustworthiness of the measurement to repeatedly yield the same result when done at other times by other researchers, validity focuses on the accurateness or correctness of the measures. Kvale & Brinkmann (2009) have well- explained these issues in the context of qualitative research. In qualitative research, reliability is related to the question of “whether the interview subjects will change their answers during the interview and whether they will give different replies to different interviewers” (p.245). These questions of reliability and validity span at the different stages of the interview process, thematising, interviewing, transcribing, and analysing process. In this research I was aware of the reliability and validity issues at the different stages. During the interview process, I used several confirmatory questions to check the consistency of the respondents’ answers. To minimise biases, I avoided asking leading questions which are often said to downplay the reliability of qualitative results. In the transcription process, the issue of reliability concerns whether the same text will be produced if transcription is repeated. I feel that this is well ensured because I followed verbatim transcription and above all there were no sound barriers that could hinder transcription. The interviews were done in calm environment (most of them in home and work places of respondents) that increased the quality of taping. If transcript texts are reliable, the reliability of the analysis is a derivative of careful presentation and interpretation of transcript data.

As to the validity of the results, I still justify myself with the confirmatory questions that I constantly followed in the course of the interview process to check the respondents, statements. This is what Kvale & Brinkmann (2009:249) called as “validation in situ” where the correctness of statements is validated right in the interview situation. Besides to this, I was also conscious of the theoretically inspired analysis and interpretation which still adds to the validity of results.

If we say that the study results are reliable (meaning it can produce same results when repeated several times) and valid (meaning it has correctly measured what it intend to measure), the next question is ‘for how many population can the results be represented or generalised for’. Kvale & Brinkman argued that regardless of for how many populations can the results generalise for, in qualitative investigation analytic generalisation can be produced from the analysis. Analytic generalisation rest upon adequate contextual description and the argument provided by the researcher how the finding can be transferred to other subjects or situations. In this study, the analytic aspect of generalisation was much sought. I am aware that this finding may not be generalised for the whole Ethiopian immigrant families in Sweden. Any generalising statement or remarks are addressed to specifically describe the

target groups or participants involved in the study. However, I also strongly believe that the results can have significant implications to show the scenarios of many Ethiopian immigrant families on the issue of raising kids in particular and even to some other African immigrant families in Sweden.

4.6 Limitations of the Study

One limitation of the study is that the data about the children provided by the parents were not substantiated from the children themselves, which otherwise might change or would have produced better results. In this regard, the views of the immigrant parents on the loneliness of the children and the issues of cultural identity are particularly relevant. The other drawback is related to the fact that parents with less educational background are technically excluded because those with better education were particularly targeted. This might affect the result.

Besides, a methodological limitation can be considered. This study only relied on data secured through in-depth face-to-face interviews. However, I admit that the inclusion of other qualitative methods such as focus group discussion (FGD) would have yielded better results and understanding to the problem area. I have attempted to conduct FGD but it was not possible to bring the subjects together for such discussions because they live in different districts and they work in different places.

Chapter Five

Results and Analysis

The purpose of the study was to explore the parenting experiences of Ethiopian immigrant parents in Sweden with an emphasis on the cultural aspects. In this chapter, the findings of the study with the respective analysis are presented. After listening to the narratives of the interview subjects and thoroughly reading and understanding the interview materials, I have identified the following underlying themes that show experiences felt by the parents. The analysis work is mainly anchored on these themes. However, the analytic themes are neither complete nor mutually exclusive rather they are meant to elucidate the interview materials with certain rigors of finding contextual understanding that can help to achieving the purpose of the study. Otherwise, each theme can be decomposed into smaller components or understood and interpreted in relation to other themes.

Theme 1: Intercultural conflict **“It is hard...the children have too many rights”**

Theme 2: communication Deficiency: **“I am caring Swedish children....I cannot plant an Ethiopian mentality”**

Theme 3: How to correct misbehaviour: **“It is only through dialogue, the only way...talk to him”**

Theme 4: Cultural identity: **“I am disappointed....they don’t consider themselves to be Ethiopian...”**

Theme 5: Loneliness: **“sometimes it seems like he is a fish out of the river.... you cannot help him much with this”**

Before directly working on the analysis of the themes, I would like to start with a brief presentation of the background profile of the respondents. This provides further information to better understand the views and experiences of each respondent.

5.1 Background Information of Respondents

As presented in the following tables, a total of 10 parents (4 mothers and 6 fathers) have participated in this study. Some background profiles of the respondents collected systematically during in the interview are presented. The respondents’ views and experiences may be influenced by each of these socio-demographic variables. Often immigrants and their process of acculturation to the host culture may be subject to their educational background, employment opportunity as well as the length of stay in the host culture. For the sake of clarity, the fathers and mothers’ data are presented in separate tables but the analysis is made jointly.

The tables below present the demographic characteristics of the immigrant parents. As we can see from the table, majority of the immigrant parents have quite longer periods of experience in Sweden. Most of them came to Sweden between 1990s and 1995. The 1990s was a period of political instability in Ethiopia when the socialist regime of the Derge was overthrown and the current EPRDF (Ethiopian People’s Revolutionary Democratic Front)

government came to power. During this political instability, several Ethiopians immigrated to Europe and USA.

From the tables below, we can also observe that most of the immigrant parents have good educational backgrounds, with university degrees and diplomas. Besides, all the respondents have employment and are currently working parents. Regarding their marital status, all are married and currently intact.

Table 1: Background information of the immigrant fathers participated in the study

Name/code	Age	Education level	Current Job	Religion	Lived in Sweden	Number of children
Abebe	49	Medical doctor	General practitioner	Protestant	15	3
Tamrat	44	Diploma	Administrator	Orthodox	20	3
Gebre	46	BA degree	Management	Christian	21	1
Legesse	38	Diploma	Quality engineering	Orthodox	20	2
Zegeye	62	BA degree	Elderly care	Orthodox	30	1
Alula	45	BA degree	Nursing home	Orthodox	7	1

From the above table 1, it is also clear that majority of the fathers have smaller household size. All but one of the fathers has lived in Sweden for more than fifteen years. Three of them, Tamrat, Gebre and Legesse have stayed for more than 20 years and they are fathers of three, one and two children respectively. on the other hand, Alula, a father of one child, has relatively shorter period of experience in Sweden, only seven years of stay while Zegeye who is also a father of one child has the longest experience, 30 years. In terms of religion, Alula, Zegeye , Legesse and Tamrat are adherents of the Ethiopian orthodox church, while Abebe is a devoted follower of protestant. Not strictly affiliating to any sect, Gebre simply considered himself as Christian.

Table 2. Background information of the immigrant mothers participated in the study

Names/Code	Age	Education level	Current Job	Religion	Year in Sweden	Number of Children
Etsegenet	42	Doctor	Family doctor	Protestant	15	4
Frehiwot	39	Diploma	Accountant	Orthodox	12	2
Ruth	40	BA Degree	Kindergarten	Orthodox	20	2
Sara	39	High school	Cleaning	Muslim	22	4

As shown in the above table 2, all of the mothers participated in the study were within the age ranges of 39 and 42 and have good educational backgrounds. Currently, they all have employment, working in different sectors of professional and non-professional jobs. A devoted protestant and mother of four children, Etsegenet holds doctorate degree in medicine and currently works as a family doctor. Etsegenet, believed that the nature of her of gives her the chance to meet different Swedish families from whom she also learned the Swedish ways of parenting. Both Frehiwot and Ruth are followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and they are mothers of two children. While Frehiwot holds diploma and works as an accountant, Ruth has a BA degree and works as kindergarten teacher. On the other hand, a follower of Muslim and mother of four children, Sara, completed high school and she works as cleaner.

In total the ten parents had twenty two children and the average age of the children was nine (ranging from 2 to 22 year olds). Children were not interviewed.

Having stated the background information, I will present the analysis work in the following section. The major problems experienced by the immigrant parents can thematically be viewed as culture related and language related problems. In different contexts, these issues were widely discussed by the interviewees as challenges.

5.2. Intercultural Conflicts

Theme1: “It is hard.....the children have too many rights”

Among immigrant families cultural conflicts between parents and their children are common phenomena. Research on immigrant families has showed that disagreement or more formally ‘intergenerational conflicts’ between parents and their children are related with the issues of parental authority and children’s rights (Kwak, 2003; Zhou & Bankston, 2000). Phenomena that demonstrate ‘intercultural conflict’ or conflicting values were apparently witnessed from the narratives of the parents. The sources of these ‘conflicts’ are cultural by nature. Most of the immigrant parents emphasised the significant variations between Sweden and Ethiopia in the area of child socialisation values. For those parents who tended to follow the child socialisation patterns from their original culture, it turned out to contradict on several occasions. As shown in the background section of chapter two, in Ethiopia parents have the full authority and control over their children. The parent-child relationships are often marked with super-and subordination and children are supposed to live up to the expectations of their parents with full obedience and deference (Poluha, 2004). In this study it was found that those parents who initially expected and tempted to follow the Ethiopian values have often been faced up with an unusual, strange and fierce reaction from their children. The case of Abebe can vividly illustrate these phenomena:

One of the cultural problems I mention is..... I demanded hundred percent obedient in the beginning, for example, they don’t talk back to me ... as a father my tendency was living my father here.... I was living like my father here psychologically without realising that it didn’t work. I tried to raise my voice and say stop! And the children said “why? Why are you shouting?” Then I get to myself and say okay I should not do this. They are not like me as I was to my father. They just don’t understand why should be like this and they are very advanced than their age actually ... because of the films or the books they read, they are very advanced and they challenge you. They sometimes want to tell you how to be a parent; how to be a good father this is an

advanced time, advanced society, advanced childrearing situation, challenging. So this was the challenge, this was practical problem. (Abebe)

From this story it is obvious that earlier hierarchical relationships expected by the father are challenged by the responses of the children. The parents' initial expectations of obedience and acceptance of parental orders are counteracted by the "unexpected" responses from the children. The children do not fulfil any parental orders without questioning rather they reacted against it. A startling lesson that the immigrant parents learned is that the "negative reaction" by the children are not deliberate acts of resistance against their parents' demands. Rather the children simply do not know why their parents are so emotionally impulsive towards them. They needed an explanation for everything that they are forbidden from doing. This fact was more echoed by another interviewee father, coded as Tamrat who said:

Most of the time there is clashing concerning that, when I say clash, I mean accepting or not accepting that....there are some things that I cannot describe to you now, for example when you say him, 'don't do this' he[the child] asks you "why you say like that?". They need reason for that. Of course I don't simply say 'don't do that' without having the reason, and if you have the reason for it and if they believe that, they accept it but you have to be able to convince them. You don't have to inhibit them anything without having the reason why you inhibit them.....so I have to convince them, give reason and its solution, and most of the time they accept me when I do that. (Abebe)

The "negative reactions" by the children created a positive influence on parents. It initiated a "self-revision of parenthood" among the immigrant parents in the sense that parents reconsidered their parental expectations, authority and relationship with the child. This gave an opportunity for the parents to 'self-learning' about parenting in the contexts of the host culture. They have realised to rethink what to do and not to do and how to deal, interact and communicate with the child. This self-learning and awareness simulated from the kids' signals highlights the path to a rough process of acculturation, psychological and behavioural change that the immigrant parents undergo. In the first case, Abebe's realisation that "I should not do this, they are not like me as I was to my father" explicitly indicates that the children's negative reaction" has produced "positive influences" on his parenting behaviour. In view of ecological systems theory of Bronfenbrenner, this can be perceived as the bi-directional influences of parents and children. As stated by Paquette & Ryan (2001), at the micro-system, the child affects the behaviours and beliefs of the parents and vice versa creating a bidirectional influences on both parent and child. According to Paquette & Ryan (2001), interactions at the outer macro levels can still have impact on the inner structures and relationships which in this case depends on the acculturation level of the immigrant parents with the mainstream Swedish cultural norms. The actual relationships observed in these narratives are reciprocal, equal and non-hierarchical founded upon negotiation and mutual discussion which earmarks a shift in attitudes and behaviours of the immigrant parents. Acculturation involves multifaceted and complex processes of changes in attitude, beliefs and behaviour patterns of immigrants by modifying or discarding former behaviour patterns and adapting new ones(Berry, 1997; Phinney, 2006).

Cultural conflicts also happened not only due to the immigrant parents' tendency to use former child socialisation patterns but also due to the fact that children have got "excessive rights". In view of the majority of the interviewees, "in Sweden the children have got a lot of rights, they are aware of these rights and they want to fully exercise their rights". Although all the interviewed parents said that these children's rights are important and necessary, however, it also contradicted that quite a large number of them said sometimes the children

use their rights wrongly. This was considered by the parents as problematic because parents cannot dictate on what the children are doing or want to do. In other words, the immigrants are challenged by the children, their parental authority being questioned. The following narrative by one of the fathers, coded as Alula, asserts these phenomena.

In Sweden *it is a little bit hard because the children have got too many rights*, they talk a lot about rights... when he wants to talk, he can talk, when he wants to go out, he can go out, you cannot judge him, you are this you are that....you know, I cannot dictate him, I only have to say what I have to say but more than that I am not like my father to say “no you are wrong, this is the right thing.” I cannot say that. He doesn’t accept if I say so..... So it has to be in agreement, well-mannered.....he has so many rights here, he can plan his own time, time budgeting you know, he can decide but I can say only some little things. But it depends on how he tries, on how he wants to live. (Alula)

In a slightly different context, Sara, a mother of four children, also described the difficulties of the children’s claim of “too much rights” in terms that the parents have to be stronger, equipped with ways of working out with the problems.

here I feel like the challenge that you have to be more strong because this claiming the children that they have freedom and then they might not be listening and taking the things the way you want them to take from you..... so that is the challenge which I have to, I am aware of that one, so I have to find my own way of coming to them because it is not going to work the way we are in Africa. I feel that is the challenge because already as the children small they know that they have a right, so that to come through them, to come to that point which I want them to understand so that is a challenge which I have. (Sara)

The above discussions suggest that intercultural conflicts have been common experiences for the immigrant parents. These conflicts took various forms, meanings and patterns in the parent child interaction. In general the sources of the conflicts can be explained at two levels. First for those parents who tended to follow the traditional Ethiopian role of parenthood, parents automatically detected that it didn’t function. It was complemented by negative reaction from the children. But this negative reaction produced positive outcome on the parents. It made the parents to think again. Second, the fact that children have rights paved the way for parents to settle and deal with the conflicts through negotiation than any other means. From the ecological systems perspective, in both cases the interplays of the macro-cultures (of the past/native and host) are shown with a positive effect. It produced a shift in behaviour, roles and parent-child relationships. The immigrant parents tended to act in the context of the host culture after realising that former patterns do not function.

5.3. Communication Deficiency

Theme 2: “I am caring Swedish children.... I cannot plant an Ethiopian mentality...”

No doubt that good child upbringing practice is founded upon effective communication between parents and children. Language is a key for successful communication. However, in immigrant families, this effective communication is often limited due to language gap between parents and their children that often results in loss of power for the parents (Espin, 2006:248). According to Espin(2006) immigrant parents’ lack of fluency in the new language and their children’s lack of fluency in the mother tongue often subverts the parents’ authority and the children become ‘cultural brokers’ for their parents.

One practical difficulty that appeared during the course of this interview was communication barrier between parents and their children. The interview data showed that some immigrant parents cannot adequately express themselves and their feelings with their children in Swedish as they want. Despite that most of them have stayed in Sweden for longer times, the Swedish language proficiency of the immigrant parents is poor. On the contrary, the children's knowledge about their parents' native language is poor. Language has been identified as an obstacle that blocks successful communication between parents and their children. As they are born and grown up in Sweden, the children are more fluent in Swedish than Ethiopian languages (Amharic or Tigrigna) and they prefer to talk in Swedish than Amharic. However, the parents' knowledge of Swedish is limited, and parents cannot play with their children as they wish. This problem was eloquently stated by one of the interviewee fathers, coded as Abebe, who is a father of three children (14, 12 & 7 year old) and has stayed in Sweden for about 15 years. Abebe says:

Here you are taking care of Swedish children, *I am caring Swedish children*, actually. They are not, they don't have this Ethiopian mentality. *I cannot plant an Ethiopian mentality* but I am obliged toand when it comes to language, it is very difficult. I cannot say what I want in Swedish, exactly what I wanted. I cannot joke with them and they cannot understand it if I say it in Amharic. When I try, sometimes I try to read a Bible verse in the family as a routine, they don't understand Amharic. Then I have to read it in Swedish, then my Swedish is not that good, imagine I came 15 years ago, then it is challenging actually, communication problem, cultural problems.

Abebe's experiences illustrate that the children are more of Swedish than Ethiopian in terms of their psychological makeup, attitudinal and behavioural traits. Their overall cultural mentality is Swedish. This was described with optimism by all immigrant parents that the children are more of Swedish than Ethiopian. When I asked how his children consider themselves to be, Abebe said "clearly Swedish, they have the Swedish mentality."

Another interviewee, a mother of 4 children coded as Etsegenet, has similar opinion that Swedish language is always a problem for effective communication with her children. The children can listen Amharic but they are not fluently to speak. Although the commonly spoken language in the family is Amharic, the children have difficulty of replying.

No, they are not as such fluent but they just improve every day. I mean it is natural for me to speak Amharic you know when I try to speak in English or Swedish I have to think, I have to formulate, I have to think twice. So Amharic is just flow that is easy we have at home... [And for the children] ... to understand it is okay but to reply not easy. Talking is not easy for them but I just don't give up, I just keep on trying all the time teaching them. (Etsegenet)

As revealed by another father, coded as Tamrat, language anomaly and inconsistency among the children is clearly shown. Sometimes, children resist speaking Amharic because they are not fluent. However, when they are able to speak, they make up their parents' problems with Swedish and shift to Amharic to communicate with their parents. This in itself shows that parents do not communicate in Swedish. This was shown by Tamrat, as saying:

We do a lot that they have to know their language, they don't have to forget Amharic, and they are studying that, at home we commonly speak Amharic and the children also accept that....but sometimes they fight not to accept but we do our best that they have to know the language and now they have accepted that. When they are with us, automatically they speak in Amharic and when they meet Swedish, they speak in Swedish. This was more problematic causing misunderstanding and emotional limitations between parents and children. It was like caring 'Swedish children' by Ethiopian parents to be both Swedish and Ethiopia.

Two points can be drawn from these phenomena. First, the children do not fluently speak the native languages of their parents although parents have the desire to improve the language proficiency of their children. In a way the children's bilingualism is incomplete or partial (full Swedish and half Amharic). On the other side, the immigrant parents' knowledge of Swedish is poor, not enough to express their internal feelings and emotions and communicate with their children as they want. This has become a significant challenge for the parents.

However, the problem of language was not only a matter of intra-family concern. It was also evident that it has farther implications about the immigrant parents' knowledge of the Swedish family laws and regulations which in turn have a significant role in the daily parenting practices. A father of two children coded as Legesse, has stayed in Sweden for more than 20 years. He says he is aware of himself about the laws but he knows many foreign parents have problems because they don't know the language and the Swedish system:

I know many foreigner mothers and fathers are facing challenges because of that they don't know the rules, the laws of the society, and most of the foreigners who I know any ways is that they are try to follow their upbringing. So I think that is the problem. most of the parents they don't know their rights, they don't know the language, the language is a big issue here, if they don't know the language, they cannot contact the teacher they cannot talk to other kids..... I think the problem is the language, Swedish language..... If they don't know the language they cannot talk to different government offices too.....So I think that is the problem.(Legesse)

The communication problem revealed here can be contrasted with the legally permitted child controlling methods of the Swedish system. All the immigrant parents involved in this study said that "dialogue" is the only accepted way of correcting the child. This practically requires parents to have a good command of the Swedish language in order to be able to effectively communicate, discuss and deal with the children. However, as the above stories showed, parents are not good at Swedish. This language barrier can even be a source for other problems such as misunderstanding and the sense of powerlessness or emotional detachments among the parents.

5.4 The Move towards Adapting Swedish Values of Parenting

One possible way to know the acculturation or adaption process of the immigrant parents is to investigate the positive or negative influences induced by the mainstream child socialisation values of the Swedish society on the day-to-day parenting practices of the parents. The influences of these socialisation values can be gleaned by examining how parents reacted towards those Swedish modalities, values, ideals, and practices of child upbringing. I framed a question that addressed the immigrant parents' views on the 'typical Swedish ways of parenting' that they appreciate and how they would like to accept or reject. The interview results showed that the majority of the immigrant parents acknowledged that Swedish parents have good child upbringing systems. They suggested that most Swedish parents have the "special knowledge and psychological capability" of caring children. Swedish parents have the ability and skills of listening the internal feeling and emotions the child. The respondents pointed out what they admire about Swedish parent. On the contrary, the respondents also pointed out that there are several 'unnecessary' things that Swedish parents do for their children. Majority of the respondents said that they do not like, for example, that children are given "excess" rights to decide on each and every detail. In view of the respondents this lets the kids to go beyond control. Following is the summary of the

results provided by the respondents to the question “*Tell me those Swedish ways of parenting (or methods of child teaching) that you liked and want to accept. And those that you don’t like and never accept.*”

Table 3: values identified as common Swedish ways of parenting by the immigrant parents that they wanted to adopt and those that they don’t like.

	Swedish ways of parenting liked/accepted by the immigrant parents	That the immigrant parents disliked/ do not want to accept
1	Parents give autonomy & independence for the child, build up its self-reliance since infancy (Tamrat, Ruth, Frehiwot)	Letting the child extremely to decide on everything, the children go over control; discussing in each and every detail with the child before coming to decision which is not necessary. It has to be balanced (Abebe, Etsegenet, Legesse, Gebre)
2	Parents have the ability, patience to calmly communicate with child, find out its feelings, and solve problems through discussion. (Sara, Gebre, Tamrat, Abebe)	Parents give too much access for the child to do its selfish things; Selfishness, egoistic that the child learns saying this is mine, that yours (Gebre, Tamrat, Legesse, Frehowot)
3	Parents believe in solving problems by discussion not force, have patience to talk with them, give them place in the family. (Zegeye, Legesse, Etsegenet, Abebe)	The community or society intervenes in your child upbringing which should have to be private (Legesse)
4	Parents have too much respect for children, they know their needs, they have follow up (Zegeye, Etsegenet, Sara, Gebere)	Not all but some parents don’t care when the children are still 17 or 18 and they smoke or children as small as nine or ten stay out which is not good especially for girls.(Zegeye, Etsegenet, Gebre,)

The above table shows a summary of the immigrant parents’ narratives about the child socialisation values of Swedish parents. The values are condensed versions of the views and ideas reflected by the individual respondents. Autonomy, independence, self-reliance, respect to the child, or otherwise excess right, selfishness etc are direct utterances by the interviewees. Detail explanation of each of these values would be beyond the purpose of this study. Here I take them as indicators of the acculturative or adaptive and non-adaptive behaviour patterns of the immigrant parents.

Autonomy, Independence and Self-reliance of the child:

From the interview results it was evident that most of the Ethiopian immigrant parents participated in this study said that Swedish child socialisation heavily relies on such values as the promotion of the autonomy, independence and self-reliance of the child as well as respect for the child. Majority of the interviewed parents have a positive outlook towards these values of autonomy, independence and construction the child’s self-reliance. They have the desire to depend on and apply them in their daily childrearing practices. Comparing the situation to Ethiopia, Ruth, a mother of two children, expressed how Swedish parents

build up the self-confidence and autonomy of the child since early childhood period as follows:

That I appreciate about Swedish parents is autonomy, they work hard to make the child to be self-reliant and independent starting from early childhood.... parents have this idea that children have to be independent after they are eighteen but in Ethiopia you can be with your parents even when you are thirty. But here parents motivate their children to be self-reliant, for example, as a child you have to put on your shoe by yourself, you have to clean your room, etc you know doing many of the things by yourself,...they tell you early that you prepare yourself for your future life. (Ruth)

Similarly, Frehiwot, a mother of two children described her views as follows:

It differs from family to family but in general they make the child to be autonomous by building up his self-confidence, they want the child to be independent since early childhood. One problem in Ethiopia is that since infancy we make the child dependent by putting on his clothes and shoes and then take to the school and so on. But here they don't do that, they give the fork so that he eats by himself since he is one. (Frehiwot)

In the views of Ruth, Frehiwot and other respondents, the positive attitude and acceptance of the autonomy and independence of the child is expressed only partially as a way of preparing the child to the future. However, from the point of view of the respondents, autonomy and independence have only been understood with narrower meanings. In its individualistic sense, autonomy and independence as the right to self-decision making of the child was seen, by some of the interviewee parents, as extreme, inappropriate and unnecessary. Some of the study participants argued that they do not want and they are not supposed to discuss with the child on each and every matter before arriving at a decision. Rather they believe that they know what is 'best for the child' and thus they can make 'good decision' independently without discussing with the child. The following episode with one of the interviewee mothers clearly illustrates this:

Etsegenet: they [Swedish parents] just allow to decide in each and every aspect of the child right I mean I don't have to ask the child about every detail. There are so many things that I decide before I ask my child. But the Swedish people ask each and every detail, they discuss it with their child before they come to decision. I don't think that is necessary.

Abay: and you don't like that?

Etsegenet: No, I just omit that. I mean there are so many occasions that I discuss with my kids but I just, I don't want to discuss about each and every detail, deep each and every little details with the kids to make a decision. I don't have to. I know what is best for them. So I just decide in good way before they do it.

Abay: In which cultural values do you prefer your children to grow up with then?

Etsegenet: uhhaa, I am a person like I just take the good part from both cultures, so I just try to balance it between Ethiopia and Swedish way of bringing up a child. So there are no standard ways of bringing up a child in Ethiopian way or Swedish way. I just have my own standard.

Abay: What is that standard you have?

Etsegenet: I think I have made my own from both culture. This too much rights in Sweden, I just limit that and I don't want them to be like remnant part of our family members either. I just allow them to be part of the family here and I don't give excess rights either. So they are just in the middle. So that is my standard way.

In the above short episode, it is quite clear that Etsegenet realises that discussing with the child is important but not always on each and every matter. She clearly disagrees to grant the

child full autonomy and rights on each 'small' business. Rather she wants to balance and limit these by developing and following her own standards. As shown above in table3, these rights are seen by the parents as manipulative letting the child to go beyond control, as echoed by Abebe, as follows.

Abebe: they are extreme... letting your child decide, go over control and manipulative, doing other things, it is not an acceptable way of childrearing in Sweden either and that is the risk. I tend to be conscious of it.

Abay: and you don't want to do such things?

Abebe .no, not at all

In other instances, in Sweden the role of parents was also described as 'incomplete' as a result of these 'excess' rights of the child. In some of the respondents, it was clear that the immigrant parents felt that they are not exercising their parenthood. They thought that parents should lead and guide instead of allowing the child decide about everything. This idea was reflected by one of the interviewee fathers.

Gebre: the role of parents is not complete in Sweden. It is not complete. If you give a child too much access to do his own selfish things that is not right, that is not a good education. The right to decide okay but there should be a balance. If you teach your child to govern your father, mother that is not the right thing I mean I believe that it is very important to give a person the right but it is very important also to have a leader. So these thing is a very trauma, I can say it. They give a very access to selfishness I mean to decide by themselves. I believe a person has to decide by self but it depends how old he is growing and how she is full of knowledge to do that....you cannot know everything when you are ten year old, fifteen year old.....to give your child the right to do everything is not correct. You have to have the right to do your fatherhood.... that is the problem we have here but because they have that governmental right to do whatever they like so they decide while they are living with their parents.

Abay: you said trauma, in what ways?

Gebre: for example, if the government gives the child to decide, it holds time to do something. That is trauma.

Abay: trauma for you?

Gebre: yes, as a father I have to teach, I have to take part or I have to lead to show the right thing. This I mean like from the teenage or from the early age or childhood to give your child the right to do everything is not correct. You have to have the right to do your fatherhood in that area that is the problem we have here.

This short episode with Gebre clearly indicates the phenomena of loss of parental authority, leadership and sense of powerlessness. His parental roles and fatherhood duties as teacher, guider and decision-maker seem to be incomplete and construed. Apparently, this has caused traumatic experiences on him. Similar to the previous respondents, Gebre is not in favour of letting the child exercise her full autonomy and self-decision making rights rather he concedes with the idea of setting a balance.

Patience to Talk and Respect to the child

Another interesting concept that emerged from this study is the idea of *respect to the child*. As opposed to Ethiopia, the immigrant parents pointed out that in Sweden children are respected by their parents and they are given privileged position in the family. In Ethiopia, as culturally sanctioned norm, children are expected and obliged to respect to their parents.

Expectations of respect and obedience from the child are most cherished values of the socialisation system in the family than the other way round.

As shown in the above table, respect to the child was identified by the respondents as an important child socialisation value rooted the Swedish cultural systems. The immigrant parents pointed out that Swedish parent have high respect for the child, giving it proper place in the family. The views and opinions of the child are respected and much worth in the family. All of the interviewed parents remarked the importance of respecting the child and giving adequate time to be with the child.

Zegeye: the good thing that I like about Swedish upbringing is that parents respect the child. Whole time they respect them, they know their need, they follow up. Respect is extremely important. I am not, you don't have to include the exceptional who abuse certain things, I am not talking about them but in general parents have respect for the children. They communicate with them, they respect them.

In the same way, Etsegenet also described her appreciation about respecting the child as follows:

Etsegenet: they give too much respect for the kids and I like that. Children have a place in the family. Those two aspects, I have very big appreciation.

Legesse also commented on the importance of giving respect for the child and spending time with the child as follows comparing how it was in Ethiopia:

It is hard to make generalisation.... but one that I really admire of the Swedish parents is that they are patient. They have the patience to listen to what the child says. The other important thing is to spend time with the children, play with them. When I think of it now, me as a child I have missed such opportunities you know in Ethiopia most parents think that if children have enough food or clothing or such material things that is enough. Our parents think like that which is of course wrong. That is why I am always happy to be with my kids. Of course I have quality time with them and I really enjoy being with them. (Legesse)

In general, the above discussions suggest that majority of the respondents have a positive outlook towards the rights, autonomy and independence as child socialisation values used by Swedish parents. However, the meanings of these values have only been understood narrowly, in terms of preparing the child for an independent future adult life. In its individualistic sense, autonomy and independence as the right to self-decision making of the child were disputed, narrowly understood and partially accepted. Several of the study participants do not liked the way Swedish parents do on issues such as granting too much right for the child and discussing on each and every matter pertaining to decision making about the child. There are tendencies of 'resistance' or reluctance to fully accept and apply them. Rather respondents preferred a 'balanced approach' or middle ground on autonomy, independence and rights of the right.

This result is consistent with several previous researches showing the main differences between immigrant parents and their children being over the questions of child autonomy and independence that children seek more autonomy than their parents are willing to grant them (Kwak, 2003; Kagitcibasi, 2007). On the other hand, respect to the child, communication and patience to talk to the child as used by Swedish parents were welcomed by the majority of the immigrant parents. These results can further suggest the 'selective acceptance' as a way of acculturation to the host Swedish system.

5.5 How to Correct Misbehaviour

Theme 3: “It is only through dialogue... the only way...talk to him”

As highlighted in chapter 2, in Ethiopia the modality of child upbringing is rooted in what psychologists call as authoritarian style of parenting. When a child misbehaves or turns out to be ‘deviant’, the mechanism of controlling or correcting often involve using force or punishment (both corporal and psychological forms of punishment). Behaviour disciplining are indicted through reprimand and physical punishments such as hitting, pinching and spanking, shouting, ridiculing and threatening are often common (Girma, 2001; Poluha, 2004).

The majority of the parents participated in this study also asserted that they grew up in a family environment where physical punishment was one part of upbringing. As a child most of them admitted that they have been punished a lot. Etsegenet, a mother of four children narrates that she was grown up in a restrictive home environment. She describes it as follows:

I mean if I take my own family, my mother was a single mom I mean she was a widow. She brought up by her own, you know Ethiopian way of upbringing kids, very strict mom. She doesn't allow you to go outside without her permission. She was very restrict...Very strict when it comes to schooling. So you have to seat and study well. If you don't do that you get very 'good punishment'. So punishment is one part of our upbringing. But here [in Sweden] it is not like that. If you punish your kid then they can report it to their school and you can get a punishment. They can put you in prison. (Etsegenet)

The experiences of another interviewee mother show that she has been subjected to corporal punishment. She recalls the situation as follows:

I really got too much physical punishment, but the only thing I remember.... I was whipped, kneel down, turning my face to the wall, and my hands up... I remember that. But apart from that I was not punished, that means I was not making too much mistakes.....any way I don't support that punishment because it only makes them to be aggressive, and they keep it on that behaviour for the next generation. (Ruth)

All the other respondents have nearly the same experiences. They were subjected to corporal punishments of various kinds sometimes in their childhood at home by their parents or at school by their teachers.

Being themselves grown up in such repressive family environment, all of immigrant parents participated in this study showed negative attitude towards punishment as a form of child upbringing. And all of the parents are aware that in Sweden corporal punishment as a form of child upbringing is illegal and doing so has serious consequences. Here my purpose is not to investigate attitudes towards corporal punishment per se rather I am much interested to look into the *practical work*, the alternative forms of punishment that the immigrant parents use in practice. Emphases on such practical aspects help to investigate the adaptation of the immigrant parents towards the application of non-punitive child disciplinary techniques. When asked the question “what alternative forms of punishment do you use when your child misbehaves”, interestingly the responses indicate that most of them seem to have adapted to the Swedish ways of parenting notwithstanding the limits of practical knowledge.

The immigrant parents pointed out different alternative forms of disciplining or controlling techniques that they used when a child misbehaves. Dialogue, timeout(separating the child temporarily until emotions calm down), declining to fulfil promises or favours, prohibiting

the child from watching TV, using computers etc are some of the alternative disciplinary techniques mentioned by the parents. Out of all these, a theme that emerged as the most salient feature across the entire interview materials is the concept of “dialogue” or communication as alternative form of disciplining. Dialogue was described as the appropriate, legally accepted and commonly used method of correcting misbehaviour. In view of the respondents, dialogue involves a continuous conversation with the child, explaining the misbehaviours that the child is doing or has done, why and how it is wrong to do that. Regarding this ‘dialogue’ as alternative form of punishment, Zegeye, one of the interviewees and father of 12 year old boy said the following:

It is only through dialogue. The only way is dialogue, talk to him. One has to talk and explain why he is doing wrong? Why it is right? Why it is wrong? You have to show it in terms of things that are concrete, in terms that he can understand. Is that right? Ask. I say to him, if you don’t do this, I don’t do that thing, you know I say him like that. In terms of his interest. (Zegeye)

In the same token, a father of 14 year old daughter interviewee comments dialogue or mutual negotiation as viable method of solving parent-child conflicts, as follows:

You deal with communication, conversation. So conversation is not just the way you act your opinion over the child but you have to get ideas from him or from her and you bring it together and you take the balance to solve it. (Gebre)

Etsegenet, one of the interviewee mothers of four children said the following about how advices her 12 year daughter:

I just sit and talk to her, I just point out that this kind of behaviour is not good, so I just tell her to get rid of it.

Timeout as an alternative form of correcting misbehaviour is not always effective. This was early detected by some of the respondents. For instance, Sara, mother of four children said timeout is not always effective and educational because when repeated several times, the children see it as routine. The children expect to get what they were prevented soon after the time elapsed. This means it is always effective to prevent potential misbehaviour.

We always try to give time out that is like even from him we use to say, no computer, no TV, and just to take those things which they like or if he supposed to go to the friends’ party or anything then he is not allowed to go. We think that sometimes if they lose those things then they will think. Sometimes it helps sometime they don’t, after doing it for long some of them they say, uha okay today no TV then they will give us back. So sometimes it works, sometimes not but that is the way I am trying to get them attention. (Sara)

Giving timeout itself has an element of force, a non-physical force in the sense that the interests of the child are compromised. From the ideas of the respondents, it was also evident that ‘timeout’ as an alternative form of correcting has negative effect on the children because the children felt that they are not good people or that they are not welcomed or accepted. These consequences are indicated by one of the interviewee father:

Misbehave ...actually when they were very younger we tried to a kind of punish them in the family, shutting them in the room but that was not positive actually. That we did it once or twice in the children, not more than five times may be then we come to the conclusion that it is not actually developing good character in the child. That showed that they are not welcomed, they are not good people, they are not accepted as they are and it is very negative side of things. Then we left it. We tried to talk to them actually and we tried to show them that we are offended or try to tell them that we are emotionally hurted when they disobey or misbehave and we tried to show them that it is not good for them not only for the family. And finally we come to the conclusion that they say that they are sorry. (Abebe)

In general, from the views of the respondents, it is noted that dialogue is relatively better and effective form of correcting child misbehaviour. According to interviewees, the children tended to listen when adequate explanations are given. The following narrative by one of the fathers, Tamrat, illustrates a success story about this:

okay there are such things, for example once my older child he wanted to smoke and started it but I tried to stop him not by force but through discussion and communication, and I was successful to stop him but you know there is this peer pressure that I most often see, if your friend smokes then you also smoke...yea, doing what your friends do but I have solved it in order that not to happen through open discussion

The great majority of the respondents also have a negative attitude towards the use of corporal punishment. Most of them are happy that children are not punished both at home and at school. When I asked whether they use corporal punishment, most of them said they hate physical punishment. Sara, a mother of four children said the following:

I never liked which the way we used to be at school, at home and I am very happy that they are not punished here in the school and home. I never and I will never do that. (sara)

In the same way, Ruth expressed her opinion as following:

No, I don't like that, no physical punishment

Similarly, Zegeye and Tamrat also have the same idea. They say that they don't believe in corporal punishment.

I don't believe in punishment. I don't want to punish. I don't believe in physical punishment, corporal punishment.(Zegeye)

No, no, I don't believe by punishment, I hate that. (Tamrat)

On the other hand, a comment from one of the interviewee fathers, Legesse, shows not only that corporal punishment is bad for the children but also that the children will not have respect for their parents because the children already know that punishment is prohibited by the society.

I think it is good that children should not be punished but when some parents very angry and punish like if they pinch them, beat them lightly, I don't argue why they do that. You understand, sometimes parents or relatives can do that but me I try not to do that. The children are aware this punishment that it is illegal and they are told about this at school. If you are punishing them they know that you are doing something that is prohibited by the society and I mean they also will not have also respect for you because they know that you are doing against the law. Instead of doing this you know, you have to be smart, you can simply prohibit what they want and no government will accuse you for doing this. There is nothing that you gain by hitting the main thing is to punish them this can be in terms what they want. (Legesse)

To sum up this part, the interview results indicated that the majority of the immigrant parents participated in this study have negative attitude towards corporal punishment not only because it is illegal to do but also they don't believe that it is good way of correcting misbehaviour. Here the influence of the host culture on behaviour and attitude of the immigrant parents can be observed. Instead of physical punishments, the parents have depended on adopting alternative forms of punishments such timeout, declining promises or continuous dialogue supported by good explanation of reasons for the child. Dialogue as a form of controlling child misbehaviour was the preferred method. The respondents mentioned dialogue as the technique commonly used by Swedish parents.

5.6 Parents' Views on the Advantages and Disadvantages for their kids

Being grown up in Sweden

Knowing the parents' feelings about how their children are fared by the mainstream Swedish society and what problems they foresee helps us to better understand the immigrant parents' experiences. This issue was widely discussed in the interview session. During the interview several important issues were raised by the respondents and discussed at length. The narration of the parents focused on the educational opportunities of their children, problems of social isolation or loneliness, discrimination and the question of identity. In short, the immigrant parents explained the pros and cons for the children being born and grown up in Sweden.

5.6.1 Opportunity to Quality Education

When I asked 'what do you think are the benefits for your child being born and grown up in Sweden', the respondents replied education. All the parents participated in this study reported that education is one of the big opportunities for their children being born and grown up in Sweden. The parents are happy and satisfied with the quality of education that their children are getting. Free schools, quality education and abundance of educational facilities were repeatedly mentioned by the parents as the benefits for their kids. In the views of the respondents, much of the parents' responsibilities about the education of the children are taken by the state and parents do not have to exert a lot of effort in this regard. The parents said they do not have to "sweat" a lot for the education of their children because education is free and guaranteed for all children. During the interview, parents also emphasized the peace of the environment and the freedom that the children enjoy. A narrative by one of the fathers, Alula, father of 12 year old boy clearly illustrates the case how the immigrant parents explain the educational opportunity of their children.

Alula: They have good education systems, economically every need [of the child] is fulfilled, the only thing expected from him [the child] is to focus on his education. ...the only thing that he has to think is about his education.... He gets quality education. The delivery of education is very good, the responsibility of learning is on you, on the students, I mean it is you who decides not the teacher.... Students discuss on every issue equally with their teacher, they can even challenge to the teachers, I mean it is not like that one plus one is two that you have to simply accept it. You can argue on the facts. On top of that he has got good opportunity of what a modern person gets, when I say modern man I mean one who is guided by knowledge, who stands for truth, who has democratic way of thinking....he will not be a kind of person who accepts everything that he is told, I mean he won't be like the empty tin can to be filled out by everyone....he himself will be able to think, and reason out. Here they have the education system that makes you to be that kind of person.

Several other respondents also share the same idea with Alula. In the interview discussion respondents emphasised that in Sweden the education delivery system is student-centred. This is what made parents happy because their children are getting better education than they themselves got. Greater responsibility is on the students which make her/him to be self-motivated, interested and concerned. The students can challenge their teacher; argue on facts and knowledge instead of passively receiving everything told by the teacher. The majority of the respondents also commented that their children are so lucky to grow up in the Swedish and European education systems because they have got special privileges, opportunities and access to education based on practice that instils scientific knowledge, guided by rationality

and democratic values. This idea is reflected by one of the interviewees, Zegeye, a father of 12 year old boy, who says:

The education system is very important, I like their system. They don't brainwash.....He has already developed to understand with reason, tell them some facts. He has begun to convince, thinking in terms of facts. This is very interesting. I am very happy. I can discuss things with him, concerning his problem, concerning his school, but I have to always think... not only this one, then what is important is there are a lot of possibilities, the culture of reading, and libraries are everywhere and they have the culture of reading from very beginning, from childhood there is a culture, there is attitude that children must go to the library.

Similarly, Etsegenet, a mother of four children, spoke the following on the benefits for her children being grown up in Sweden.

I mean the good part, they don't have for example when it comes to education I don't have to pay for them, I don't have to sweat for them like to go to the school, to go to the university, the system, the whole system is made to that all the kids are able to come to the school and if they are successful in elementary and high school, they can go further to the university. So education is one important thing. And freedom, there are I mean, freedom has got its own advantage and disadvantage but sometimes the freedom they got here I think it is good. The good part is good and the bad part is bad. (Etsegenet)

From the reflection of the parents, it is obvious that the children have wide educational opportunities or possibilities to pursue their future careers of their choices as far as they are interested. The children are more motivated for education; develop the "culture of reading" since early childhood period. And above all, the parents' arguments show that their children are more advantageous because they have got the opportunities and access to practice-oriented education which inculcates scientific knowledge and democratic values. But it has to be noted that the respondents explained this by comparing their own childhood experiences and the school systems in Ethiopia and how the teachers were dictating them. The school system in Ethiopia is quite different from Sweden. The teaching-learning process is more of authoritarian, a sort of top-down transfer of knowledge where the teacher is responsible to give everything while students expected to attend carefully. In my own experiences as brought up through Ethiopian school system, I have the same idea with the respondents. It is very rare that a student will argue against or challenge her/his teacher in class. A study on Ethiopian school children by Poluha (2004) also showed that students were not expected to take their own initiatives in class or be critical or argue for a point of view (Poluha, 2004:121).

However, in terms of future career employment in Sweden, the respondents expected to be more difficult for the children. Some of the respondents commented that the children would be expected to work double than the Swedish children in order to compete with them for jobs. This was suggested by Frehiwot, a mother of two children as follows:

It might be disadvantage, there may be disadvantage but I don't see it. But she [her daughter] has to work double than the other Swedish people I know because if there are two people that have the same point I can say may be they prefer the other one because she is Swedish and in terms of work I think she can get but if she don't do that, I don't think she will succeed (Frehiwot).

In parallel with the educational opportunity afforded to the kids, the respondents also narrated several actual and possible problems that the kids faced or have to struggle with. Several issues were identified and the common ones are the problems of limited social networks and friendship as well as the possibility of cultural loss and identity crisis.

5.6.2 The Problem of Loneliness

Theme4: “sometimes it seems he is like a fish out of the river.... you cannot help him much with this”

Usually the life of immigration is characterised by limited social interaction and interpersonal relationships that often lead to the problems of social loneliness, isolation and even alienation. This problem seems to have a double impact for the immigrant families when their children are not having many interactions with the outside multicultural world because it is not easy for the children to find friends of their similar cultural background.

In this research, the problem of child loneliness appears to be a serious concern for the interviewed immigrant parents. When I asked *what you think are the disadvantages for your children being grown up in Sweden*, the parents' responses highlighted that their children are not in their real culture, they don't meet other children of the same background (Ethiopian), the risks of discrimination and the possibility of self-loosing. Each of these variables may need to be verified statistically. However, in general, many of the Ethiopian immigrant parents participated in this study pointed out that their children are not having good interpersonal contacts and friendships with other children of the same ethnic, national, linguistic and cultural backgrounds because there are no many Ethiopian children. Even with the already existing ones, the possibilities for the children to meet each other are limited. This problem of child loneliness was a serious concern for the parents who have one child. Out of the ten of my interviewees, three parents have one child. Two of the father, Alula and Zegeye expressed the seriousness of this problem.

The story of Zegeye, a father of twelve year old boy, illustrates as follows:

I am fully aware that he should not be like us. He must have the right environment in terms, for example, I am fully aware people have to be exposed to certain social activities. So first thing, his own group, it is not easy to get children to play with him specially in a place I lived before, there are few[...] but they didn't match him in age, they didn't match him in culture and it was difficult, you see, then we start to go to the church so that he can meet other children, but personally I am not that much religious person but I know how much it is important especially in such society, you see, I know the only thing people get belongingness is there. Individually, it is only few that he can meet. So for his own sake, his mother, she is interested in the Orthodox Church. We started to go there, you know, I am old, I am tired I need rest.... So it is difficult, you know, sometimes he expects you to play with him as a child. He says, "come and play with me, talk to me, come"....[when he is alone] he is playing with this TV, what they call play station. How many hours he play, what does it mean? A lot of electronic things here, almost some children are handicapped they don't go out. Even I sometimes talk with some colleagues in the work place, some of their children are grown up 20, 25 but still watching TV. This I tell you a very serious problem, computer, 'play station' and so on. This is the environment. You can't ignore it you see....you will be surprised. It is shocking what he is playing with the machine..... They seat many hours means they cannot read, they cannot go out, contact [with] others, it affects the social development....playing football and other sports. (Zegeye)

From the short story of Zegeye, it is obvious that for the children it is not easy to find friends by themselves that matches them in age, ethno-linguistic or cultural background. Having a limited social interaction with the outside world is offset by indoor, secluded and solitude obsession with electronic stuffs. The children seat longer hours watching TV and playing various computer programs. The parents more worried that this indoor seclusion might restrict the social and interpersonal development of the children. As can be inferred from the

views of the parents, this problem poses greater responsibility on the parents in that they have to fulfil the social need of their children which otherwise could have been met by the children themselves.

Similarl, Legesse, a father of two children expressed the problem in terms of its impact on language improvement and creating friendship.

What I think might be disadvantage is for example because there are no many children who speak the same language. I think for the language this has its own disadvantage. For example there are no many Ethiopian children with whom they can play and have friendship.

From the responses of the parents it was also understood that many of the interviewed parents do not prefer their children to build friendship with other children of foreign background probably due to the fear that they will be 'contaminated' or victimised to various behavioural problems such as crimes, drug addiction and so on. This condition was also more clearly expressed by another respondent, a father of 13 year old boy as follows:

Alula: it is a little bit difficult because socially the only people he meets is his families and without that Swedish people are not that much friendly, so he is not having friends, so what he can be a friend with is then with other immigrant children and that is also another problem because it matters from where they come, their background and culture...sometimes I want to check what kind of friends he has, if they are not good, I have to dig something, I have to say to him in a wise manner not directly. For example, I see one of his friend [immigrant background] who wants to be seen all the time in the city, in the place which he doesn't belong,...so he can't have Ethiopian friends.... the only people that he can meet are those Ethiopian families with whom we have relationships and even in that there are no many Habeshas[Ethiopian] So the only thing he feels sometimes loneliness, *sometimes it seems that he is like a fish out of the river, and you cannot help him much with this* but you tell him that it is up to you. It is up to you. We have got a country we will return but I don't know when but we will return for sure, we don't end up here. I tell him so, a little bit psychological makeup. (Alula)

In general, from the above discussions the main sources for the loneliness of the children are multifaceted. First, parents prefer their children to have friendship with other children of the same background (cultural, ethnic, and linguistic) but there are no many other Ethiopian kids. Even for the existing ones, it depends on inter- family contacts, social bonds and frequency these of contacts. Besides to the inter-family contacts, community membership and belongingness (such as church members), schools (home language classes) are the other opportunities of for the kids to meet other children of the same background. As expressed by the interviewees, without these inter-family relationships or community memberships, it is less likely for the children to establish interpersonal contacts and friendships by their own that matches them in age and ethno-cultural background. Second, the social loneliness of the child can be correlated with the size of the family. Parents with single child appeared to have more burdens in terms of fulfilling the social needs of the child which the child would have achieved by itself. In some of the parents, this problem of loneliness is offset by indoor seclusion of the child playing with various electronic materials about which parents are more worried about the social development of the child.

From the ecological systems perspective, we can observe the impact of the exo-system on the development of social connections (friendship) of the child. As stated in chapter three, the exo-system comprised the linkages that take place between two or more settings that affect the child's development. For instance, the child's possibility of meeting friends of the same cultural background is influenced by the parents' membership and belongingness to the

church. Here the effect of the immigrant neighbourhood should be taken into account with reference to the segregated nature of the immigrant residence in Gothenburg. The respondents in this study reside in different districts of Gothenburg. Unless they belonged to the same congregation or ethnic affiliations, I think many of the respondents do not know each other very well or have contacts with each other or their children.

The immigrant parents concerns about the limited social and interpersonal contacts of their kids are also justified by the parents' concerns about the cultural and ethnic identity of their children.

5.6.3 The Question of Cultural Identity

Theme 4: Cultural Identity: "I am disappointed...they don't consider themselves to be Ethiopian"

The issues of cultural identity and identity crisis emerged out of the interview material as the parents' concerns about their kids being born and grown up in Sweden. The respondents viewed these issues as possible problems or disadvantages for the kids. Originally this research didn't give much attention to these problems. However, in the course of the interview, it cleared out itself that quite a large numbers of the immigrant parents are concerned about the cultural identity of their kids and possible problem of identity crisis. Here I only discuss it scantily and quickly in relation to the parents' concerns. Schwartz, Montgomery, Briones (2006) defined cultural identity as the sense of solidarity with the ideals of a given cultural group and to the attitudes, beliefs and behaviours manifested towards one's own and other cultural groups as a result of this solidarity. In the context of immigration, cultural identity is seen as an aspect of acculturation which focuses on the immigrants 'sense of self' rather than the behaviours and attitudes (Phinney, 2006). In this latter sense it consists of both ethnic identity and national identity.

In the views of the respondents, both meanings of cultural identity as a sense of self and a sense of group solidarity are expressed. The respondents pointed out that "the time may come when the children find being different while considering themselves being Swedish" which, according to some of the respondents, might result in "identity crisis". When I asked 'how the children consider themselves to be', majority of the respondents said "clearly Swedish" but also with some traits of Ethiopian. As reported by the parents, the cultural mentality and psychological makeup of the children is also more of Swedish than Ethiopian. The way the children think, the way they act and behave is more Swedish than Ethiopian. The expression given by one of the respondents, Etsegenet, the children being like "Brown Swedish, Swedish by blood Ethiopian by colour" can better explain the situation of dual but unbalanced self-identification. Even for some of the parents, the children's perception of themselves as Swedish than Ethiopian created a sense of disappointment. Legesse, a father of two children and who has stayed in Sweden for over 20 years, expressed his view as follows:

In this regard *I am a little bit disappointed* because *they do not consider themselves to be Habesha* (Ethiopian). They take themselves as Swedish. Actually it is only their colour that is non-Swedish otherwise they are Swedish I mean they are born and grown up here. ... they also display many characters of Habesha (Ethiopian), even from what we tell them, from what they observe during visits to Ethiopia they connect themselves with that society. But because that is far away from them and children make sense more of that

which is near to them, they have the consciousness that they are not white but they also feel that they are from this (Swedish) society and the way they think and act is like the Swedish people. (Legesse)

On the other hand, a remark given by Zegeye, a father of 12 year old boy, points the children's inconsistency to clearly "identify themselves" as Swedish because of the discrimination or limited acceptance they got from Swedish children. He starts by replying how the children consider themselves:

Mostly Swedish, their way of thinking and acting is also Swedish but we have to be careful about one thing. It is not easy, remember the story I told before, he was only six when one of his friend plotted against to exclude him. And once he saw the children running away from him, he said, "now I know why they don't want to play with me because I am an African". You see, at the age of six he said this, so how do you see your question of how he considers himself at the age of 12? He knows how much acceptance he has but he also likes this country, he likes the systems and he wants to live here but he reflects that he is from Ethiopia; he knows that his origin is Ethiopia. His overall view is that even if he was born here and he wants to live here, he knows his origin and from where his identity is. You see, it seems that from now he has such kind of identification, to identify himself this way and to know the limits. He knows that he will be seen as second citizen, not as first citizen. The disadvantage is, you know, it is not easy, for a person from background of outside family. You know, every time they feel it. He felt it since he was a little child.... Not only has this, though born and grown up here, at schooled the teachers or anyone they ask them where they come from, where your parents are from.

Abay: maybe they are identified easily and also there is colour that cannot be hidden?

Zegeye: No, it is not that they are identified, but the situation of this country is different. For example, in America I have friends they tell me that there is no such kind of questioning. You see, the situation of here and there are different. What we find there in America is that all have immigrant background... here they don't have such experience and the society is narrow minded, they are small in number and they didn't have long time contact with other people.

This "self-realisation" of the children as being different due to their colour, and the limited acceptance that they get from the mainstream Swedish society was also clearly illustrated by the following narrative by Abebe, a father four children:

Well, the risk of racism is one issue even though it is not open. They can feel that they are second citizen here as children up to 12 or so, they feel as if they are Swedish totally. When they come to 16, they feel, they tend to draw to their colour and that shows that they, I think, they experience a kind of exclusion of segregation, except it is not that open. The possibility is there. Our world is not perfect.

The children start to identify themselves that they are different quite early at about age six. They start to draw the lines and realise that they different due to their colour. Knowing the limits and acceptance that they (will) have and whether they will be seen as first citizen or second citizen poses a challenge to their future identity development. From the narratives of Zegeye, it is known that the children also recognise the origin of their parents. They have the sentiment and interest about Ethiopia. But their choice of place to live is Sweden, the birth place of their country. The self-identification of the children as "being Swedish" and the simultaneous recognition of the limited acceptance they have in Sweden is something contradicting. The children's identification of themselves as being Swedish but also at the same time having the feelings, sentiments and belongingness and to certain level character traits of Ethiopian acquired from their parents or occasional visits mean more problem for the kid to "clearly locate" themselves in either of the two cultures. The concerns of the immigrant parents seem to stem from these facts. Some of the respondents even worried that at times the problem of "identity crisis" might happen. This was well reflected by Alula, father of 13 year old, as disadvantage in the long run for his boy being grown up in Sweden as follows:

disadvantage.... self-losing, he may lose his identity, the big challenge is that something that causes identity crisis may happen, unconsciously you may consider that you are Swedish but then the time may come that you get confused because at the end of the day you are not Swedish.....such things might happen (Alula)

Here Alula's concern on the question of identity should be seen with the previous remark he gave about the loneliness of the child expressing it metaphorically as "like a fish out of the river". Being within one's own "real" cultural environment where you are surrounded by family members, friends, and relatives and above all with people of the same colour where you never realise that you are different means feeling of fullness, sense of security and self-confidence. Loss of friendship or interpersonal contact is not merely an immediate problem of solitude rather it might have irrecoverable consequence on the development of one's "true identity". Hence, the immigrant parents' concerns about the cultural identity of their children should be interpreted together with the problem of isolation and parents' insistence on the cultural identity and heritage language of their children. Language is a constituent of culture and a tool towards the continuity of the cultural identity of a group (Phinney, Romero, Nava & Huang, 2001). The immigrant parents' emphasis on maintaining the heritage language of their children seems to emanate from the desire to keep the cultural identity. That is why all of the respondents are sending their children to the home language classes. However, as I have stated somewhere else, the children's proficiency of their heritage language is poor.

To close up this section, the respondents clearly expressed both advantages and disadvantages for their children being born and grown up in Sweden. All of the respondents explicitly stated that access to quality education is one of the big opportunities their children afford. Growing up in the Swedish and European education system, the parents believed that the children have got an opportunity of what a modern man has to get, knowledge based on reason, rationality and democratic values. The immigrant parents also mentioned that much of their responsibilities about the education of their children are taken by the school in terms of providing material facilities.

Even though the immigrant parents expressed that their children are fortunate to grow up in Sweden, they also feel frustrated that they are/ might be exposed to various problems. These problems included loneliness or limited interpersonal contacts, the question of cultural identity and the possible identity crisis.

Chapter Six

Discussion and Conclusion

6.1 Discussion

This study has a transnational character in that the views and experiences of the immigrant parents are motivated to and entertained in a cross-cultural fashion. The respondents shared their experiences and reflections in a comparative perspective between their native culture (Ethiopia) and the situation in the host culture (Sweden). The original purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of the immigrant parents the challenges they face while bringing up kids in the advanced western Swedish culture as contrasted to their own upbringing. Four questions were posed to exploring these experiences

- How do the Ethiopian immigrant parents experience raising children in the context of modern Swedish culture?
- What are the challenges they face and how they adapt to the Swedish ways of parenting?
- In what ways has migration influenced their parenting roles?
- What are the views of the immigrant parents about their children being grown up in Sweden?

In the previous analysis chapter, I have attempted to respond to my research questions in different ways. The main body of the analysis work addressed the issues in cross-cultural perspectives between Ethiopia and Sweden. The difficulties that the immigrant parents confronted are the intended or unintended consequences of cultural variations between the immigrants' native culture and the host Swedish culture. In this chapter I shall discuss the summarised results together with the research question.

How the immigrant parents experienced bringing up kids in the context of the modern Swedish culture?

The overall analyses results showed that for the immigrant parents, bringing up children in the context of the modern Swedish culture is not easy because it needs more than doing the traditional Ethiopian parenthood. In the first place, parents have to continuously reintegrate their parenting styles, patterns and behaviours in the context of this modern Swedish or European culture. As the analysis results indicate, most of the socialisation values that the immigrant parents brought with them do not and cannot roughly fit into the western based Swedish values. The cultural variations also known as cultural distances (Nauck, 2005) are wide and that the immigrant parents are engaged in constant readjustment of their parenting practice to conform to the demands of the host culture. The differences in terms of parental authority, the rights and freedoms of the child as well as its position in the family are looked into and re-examined to meet up with the norms and values of the mainstream Swedish society. Interactions and structures at the micro-level within the family between parents and children have been mediated to a more egalitarian level of relationship. At the meso-level, relationships are built up and solidified with the school because in Sweden the school is a closer partner of the family. At the macro-level are those family related laws and rules such

as the law against corporal punishment which positively affected the parenting behaviour of the immigrant parents. The interview results showed that the immigrant parents are aware of the anti-spanking law and they don't use reprimand punishments to discipline a child. Rather they have adopted other alternative forms of punishment that is founded on continuous dialogue and discussion.

Although most of the respondents have stayed in Sweden for longer periods even before giving birth to their first child, the acculturation level of the parents seems still to be lower but on continuous processes of change. During this processes of change, the immigrant parents have encountered several challenges as a result of cultural differences that parenthood bears in the modern Swedish culture and the traditional Ethiopian culture. However, as described below, these challenges have produced positive outcomes by initiating the parents for readjustment and/or adaptation in the context of the Swedish culture.

What are the challenges faced?

The majority of the immigrant parents participated in the study have encountered several problems in their daily childrearing practices. The origin, nature, context and forms of these problems or challenges are complicated, intertwined and multifaceted. However, generally the genesis for the problems are attributed to the intercultural contacts of the traditional Ethiopian values that the immigrants brought with them and the modern Swedish values both of which conflate within the family.

The results of the study showed that the immigrant parents who originally tended to follow the traditional Ethiopian socialisation patterns have been confronted with an unexpected responses or reactions from their children that bear 'disrespectful' or negative connotations. The children, as they are already Swedish, didn't mildly comply with or take the parents' orders and fulfil. The immigrant parents realised that the Ethiopian style of parents' dominance, hierarchic and patriarchic or super and subordinate relationships (Poluha, 2004) which demand a high level conformity of the child have no place in this modern Swedish culture which rather is founded on non-hierarchic, egalitarian relationships (Bernhard et al. 2007, Dahlberg, 2002). However, these "negative reactions" by the children culminated in a positive outcome because it initiated a change on the parents in the sense that parents re-examined their parental expectations, authority and relationships in the context of the mainstream Swedish culture. The immigrant parents' adjustments of their parenthood in the context of the host culture embarked on a rough process of acculturation or change.

Intercultural conflicts also appeared due to the fact that the children have got rights, which some of the respondents referred as "excessive". The idea expressed by the respondents in relation to these conflicts associated with the autonomy, independence and freedom of the child are more complicated and self-contradictory. As opposed in Ethiopia, children in Sweden have got a lot of rights and these rights are fully and legally protected that the immigrant parents cannot take them away. However, the majority of the immigrant parents were critical of what they called "excessive rights." According to the respondent, these "excess" rights of the child are unnecessary, that have to be moderated or balanced. In general, issues of child rights, autonomy and independence of the child were acknowledged and regarded as important. Paradoxically they were also disputed over the meanings and setting of limits. The immigrant parents are critical of Swedish parents for giving "excess" autonomy and rights for the child to decide on every matter. Respondents sought a middle

ground or “balanced” approach. The idea that “after all children are children” holds to prevail among the respondents.

The problem of language was another difficulty faced by the immigrant parents. Despite the immigrant parents stayed for longer periods, their Swedish language proficiency is poor and lagging behind the children. Due to this parents’ poor Swedish language and the children’s inability or limited fluency in the heritage language of their parents, effective communication between parents and children is hampered. A sense of emotional detachment was observed among some of the immigrant parents because parents cannot adequately express themselves in Swedish. In a way the immigrant parents felt that they are raising ‘Swedish children’ to be an Ethiopian and Swedish person or what they labelled as “brown Swedish”. Therefore, growing up bilingual and bicultural children in the context of the modern Swedish culture appears to be more challenging for these immigrant parents. In some of the parents I observed that different languages are spoken (Amharic, Tigrigna, & Swedish). These mixtures of different languages often created inconsistency in one language and ‘influenced’ in the other.

In what ways has migration influenced the role of the parents?

Often immigrant families are confronted with parental role changes, sometimes expressed as “role reversal” (Zhou & Bankston, 2000; Bernhardt et al., 2007) due to the differential construction of roles in the host culture which might lead to the loss of parental authority. This study also showed that a phenomenon of authority loss or erosion among some of the immigrant parents. Some respondents experienced that their parental roles and duties as teachers, guiders and decision-makers seem to be eroded or construed.

From the analysis we can also observe that migration has positive influence on the roles and parenting behaviours of the immigrant parents in many ways. First, as stated above, the intercultural conflict itself is one arena where positive changes took place. The “negative reaction” from the children has produced a positive outcome on the parents’ roles and behaviours because parents reconsidered their parental expectations, authority and relationship in the context of the mainstream Swedish culture.

Another important point found from the study is linked with the issue of child control or disciplining. Being themselves grown up in a family where physical punishment was predominantly part of child upbringing, majority of the immigrant parents have negative attitude towards corporal punishment not only because it is illegal to do but also they no longer believe that it is good way of correcting misbehaviour. The old norms of chastisement are drastically avoided in favour of non-punitive disciplinary techniques of correcting. Parents adopted various alternative forms of correcting misbehaviour from the mainstream Swedish culture. For instance, dialogue that involves continuous conversation and explanation for wrong behaviour was seen as effective form of correcting misbehaviour.

What are the views of the immigrant parents about their children being grown up in Sweden?

The finding of the study showed that growing up in Sweden as a child from a foreign family background has got its own advantages and disadvantages. Practical benefits and actual and potential risk or problems were pointed out by the respondents. The entire immigrant parents participated in this study explicitly stated that access to free and quality education is one big

opportunity for their children. The immigrant parents believed that if they make use of it, the children have got an opportunity of what a modern man has to get, knowledge based on reason and democratic values. They believed that the education system is good because the learning-teaching process is such that greater responsibility is on the student which in turn makes students to be self-motivated.

However, a large number of the respondents also described problems that their children have faced or would possibly face them up some time in the future. Social loneliness or limited interpersonal contacts and problems related with the identity development of the children were among the topics discussed by the interviewees. The loneliness of the child depends on the amount of social networks or community membership of her/his parents. As the immigrant parents have limited social networks with people of the same national origin and the wider multicultural world, it is not easy for their children to find friends that suit them in terms of age and similar ethno-cultural background. This phenomenon was more accentuated by those immigrant parents who have only one child. The problems of loneliness might be explained as an impact of the predominantly individualistic living pattern of the western world.

The other issue discussed by the immigrant parents is concerning the cultural identity of the children. The analysis results showed that the psycho-cultural make up and behaviour patterns of the children are more of Swedish than Ethiopian. The children consider themselves as Swedish than Ethiopian but simultaneously they also affiliate with Ethiopia and have the spirit and sentiments of Ethiopian. The “near culture” where the children are really immersed but shallowly (due the racial discrimination they face) and at the same time the influences of the “far culture” acquired from their parents and occasional visits would have significant repercussion on the easy of their identity development. As can be inferred from the views of the respondents, the ‘dual identity’ is on the process of making but some of the immigrant parents are worried that sometime confusion might happened. In relation to this, several earlier researches (Su & Castiga, 2009; Schwartz et al., 2006; Phinney, et al. 2001) also found that the ethnic and cultural identity of immigrant children has always been a concern for immigrant parents.

6.2 Concluding Remarks

By taking a comprehensive approach, this study has explored and brought into fore the challenges experienced by the Ethiopian immigrant parents in Sweden. The findings are generally consistent with other previous studies common in immigrant families. The problems of intercultural conflicts between immigrant parents and their children appeared in different forms and contexts causing challenges for the parents. However, this study has further showed the impacts of the conflicts in the parent-child interactions, the parenting behaviour and practices of the immigrant parents. The parents’ initial expectations of their children, which were counteracted by negative reactions, have produced positive effects by initiating the parents for readjustment process to fit with and act in the context of the host culture. Language problems as an impediment to effective communication between the immigrant parents and their children were also observed.

Furthermore the study showed that there are issues that deserve special considerations. When dealing with the incorporation or integration of immigrant parents, the influence of culture and intercultural contacts should always be considered as permeating into the individual immigrant parent and child but with different implications.

As conclusion, despite that the Ethiopian immigrant parents came from society that is quite different from the mainstream society, the experiences of the parents show that the processes of acculturation and adaptation to the modern Swedish values of child upbringing are apparently on the move. The parenting roles of the immigrant parents are influenced by the mainstream Swedish culture in a number of ways. The immigrant parents have adopted various non-forceful forms of correcting misbehaviour such as continuous dialogue. However, compared to the time of stay of the parents, this acculturation process is low and much remains to be done to better incorporate them.

Suggestions for Further Research

Taking one immigrant group, this study has succeeded to excavate various problems faced by immigrant parents in Sweden. Based on the outcome of this study, some issues that could be potential research area for further investigations are identified and suggested.

- The intra-family language problem between the immigrant parents and first generation children is one possible area that needs further investigation. This should be seen as a serious concern with the time dimension because although the immigrant parents have stayed in Sweden for longer period, their Swedish proficiency seems lagging behind.
- The issue of identity (cultural or ethnic or self-identity) and the possible risk of confusion or 'identity crisis' together with biculturalism highlighted in this study is another potential area for future study. Based on this finding retrieved from the narrative of their parents, an empirical research could be done directly with the children.

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Appendix A

Letter of Informed Consent

First, I would like to thank for your willingness and cooperation to participate in this research!

I am an international student in the Masters Program in Social Work & Human Rights at the University of Gothenburg. As requirement for my master's degree, I am currently conducting research project on the child rearing experiences of Ethiopian parents living in Sweden. As part of this study, I am conducting interviews to collect the required information.

The main purpose of the study is to explore the experiences and views of Ethiopian immigrant parents about raising children in the context of the western Swedish culture. All the questions that you will be asked are related to your experiences of parenthood as an immigrant here in Sweden.

In order to insure that my project meets the ethical requirements for a good research, I promise you to adhere to the following principles:

- The collected data will only be used for the purpose of this study.
- You, as an interviewee, have the right to decide whether or not to participate in this project, even after the interview has been concluded.
- The collected data will be handled confidentially and will be kept in such a way that no unauthorized person can view or access it.
- After finishing the project, all data will be destroyed.
- If you feel uncomfortable to give your name, the data you provide will be analysed anonymously (without name).

Interview sounds will be recorded (but no Videos) as this makes it easier for me to document what is said during the interview and for later in analysis. All the information you give are welcome. There is no right or wrong answer. However, your honest answers to my questions will help me better understand situation.

If convenient to you, the interview will be held in English; otherwise Amharic is very welcome! Interviews will be held at your home or any other suitable places to you (such as your children's school); and each interview session will approximately last for 1 hour.

So are you willing to participate in this interview? Yes ----- No-----

Your Name: -----, Address: ----- phone No. -----

In case you have any questions, you are welcome to contact me or my supervisor on the addresses below.

Student name & e-mail

Abay Adhana

Email: abay.adhana@gmail.com

Supervisor name & e-mail

Lars Rönmark

Lars.Ronmark@socwork.gu.se

Appendix B

Interview Guide Questions

A) Background Information

- a. Related to the Parents: 1) Name(Code) ----- 2) sex-----3) Age-----
4) Educational Background-----5) work/occupation ----
6) Duration of Stay in Sweden (in Years) ----- 6) Religion-----
7) Family status----- 8) mother tongue language-----

b. Related to the children:

a) Number of Children -----

Name/code	Sex	Age	School Grade
1.-----	-----	-----	-----
2. -----	-----	-----	-----
3. -----	-----	-----	-----

B) Recalling back to parents own upbringing [childhood experiences]

- 1) Tell me about your own upbringing?
- 2) In your own upbringing, how is a good child described?

C) Parenting in the context of the New Culture [experiences, challenges and changes]

- 3) What is your experience of being a parent in Sweden? Do you think your children are getting what you were getting as a child?
- 4) How do you describe raising children in the context of the Swedish culture compared to your own upbringing?
- 5) Have you ever got any parenting education or advices from the state/local authorities?
- 6) What do you think are your responsibilities as a father/mother for your children?
- 7) What do you think your children expect from you as a parent? What do you in return expect from your children?
- 8) As part of your parenting role, to what extent do you follow up your children's activities at school?
- 9) Have you ever faced any conflicting ideas related to childrearing practices between your home culture and the Swedish culture? How do you resolve this problem?

- 10) As an immigrant, what problems/challenges did you face related to your parenting practice?
(Depending on the answer: Are you saying that, for an immigrant, raising a child is easy in Sweden?)

D) Parents' Reflections on the new cultural environment

- 11) What are the roles of parents in Sweden? Can you say that being an immigrant has influenced your parental role? How?
- 12) What do you think are the differences between Sweden and Ethiopia concerning the treatment of children?
- 13) In which cultural values do you prefer your children to grow with? Swedish, Ethiopian?
- 14) What aspects of childrearing customs from your native culture do you find beneficial for your parenting practices together with the new Swedish way?
- 15) Tell me about Swedish ways of parenting (or methods of child teaching) that you appreciate/like and accepted? Tell me those that you don't like and never accept them?
- 16) How do you describe your relation with your children at home?
- 17) How do you find the social environment for the development of your children?
- 18) What do you think are the benefits for your children being grown up in Sweden? What about its disadvantages?
- 19) What are the praised behaviours of your child and which are discouraged (punished)? When your child misbehaves, what alternative means of correcting do you use?

E) On the need to transmit Native Cultural values

- 20) Are there any cultural values from your country of origin that you think are important for your children? Why do you think they are important?
- 21) How do you teach your children about Ethiopian culture? What is the commonly spoken language at home? How fluent are your children about Ethiopian language?
- 22) Suppose that you have properly taught your children in both Swedish and Ethiopian culture. When you evaluate his/her behaviour, which cultural mentality they mostly show? How do they consider themselves, being Swedish or Ethiopian?
- 23) Do you have something more to say that I didn't ask but which you think important in parenting experience?

Thank you very much again!!!

