‘BETTER’ INTEGRATION THROUGH HIGHER EDUCATION?

A STUDY ON THE LIFE COURSE OF HIGHLY EDUCATED TURKISH BELGIAN WOMEN

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

GT	Grounded Theory
TIES	The Integration in Europe Survey
US	United States of America
WFC	Work–Family Conflict

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Being a woman is hard in a patriarchal society. Being a migrant woman is harder still. With this dissertation, I wanted to present a slice of life from a group of women who have fought against all the odds. I would, therefore, like first and foremost to thank these women, who have made this long and (sometimes) painful journey more meaningful. I am especially inspired by (and proud of) all the women who have felt strong and empowered enough to speak up and share their personal stories with me.

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SUMMARIES

English Summary

A lot has been studied about the integration of children of immigrant parentage born in the country of migration in Western Europe. Among these groups, the integration of children of Turkish immigrants has received considerable attention in theoretical debates. The general aim of this dissertation is to contribute to these debates—specifically, to our understanding of integration—by analysing the key interrelated life events of highly educated, second-generation Turkish Belgian women.

The first part of this dissertation is a conceptual study that offers a critical analysis of the literature on classical assimilation theories and the theoretical and empirical research on specific domains of integration. This overview shows that integration has been typically analysed as domain-specific and in a highly phased fashion, which, I contend, limits our understanding about integration experiences through the life course. In addition, integration theories have been dominated by a highly structuralist perspective that has not explored the subjective dimensions of the integration experience sufficiently. The dissertation is thus an attempt to begin to bridge these gaps.

The second part consists of a series of empirical chapters, which are based on data collected through in-depth qualitative interviews with a group of highly educated Turkish Belgian women. Focusing on the experiences of this group in different life stages offers several insights. First, while the (relatively limited) existing literature on the highly educated children of immigrants tends to focus narrowly on macro-level impacts—particularly on patterns of upward socioeconomic and professional mobility. This dissertation, therefore, seeks to go beyond this, by examining other, more micro-level dimensions, such as balancing work and family, and life events like getting married and having children. Second, while integration research often tends to assume that higher levels of educational attainment translate unproblematically into 'successful' integration, the findings of this dissertation suggest that the relationship between higher education and 'successful' integration across all dimensions–including family life—is far from straightforward or, indeed, linear, at least for this group of women. Third, given the group has come from a strong family system and dense co-ethnic

community, it is possible to focus on it to analyse the integration experiences of women and the influence of traditional gender roles across different life domains.

The findings of this dissertation suggest that while this group certainly aspires to greater self-realisation and autonomy than previous generations, the (theoretically expected) cultural and demographic transition is not straightforwardly evident, and these women appear to experience various challenges in pursuing their life goals. The two core structural factors at play here are the *characteristics of the ethnic community*—such as a strong collectivistic family system, family socioeconomic background, religious socialisation and the density of the co-ethnic community—and the *host society context*, which includes institutional structures, patterns of exclusion and discrimination, neighbourhood effects and the characteristics of schools and other educational aspects. The core findings also indicate that the effects of these structural factors differ across the various life domains women function within, which are distinct but interrelated. In other words, a factor that might hinder someone in one life domain (such as career) could well provide opportunities in others (such as child-rearing). In addition, the findings in the present dissertation underscore the fact that women are *active agents*, who can make choices, negotiate challenges and find strategies that help them to realise their goals. However, the kind and degree of choice might vary according to the life-course stage.

Theoretically, the findings of this dissertation suggest the benefits of combining analysis of immigrant integration with the life-course approach. More concretely, they indicate that *different life stages are connected*, and that individual behaviour might be better understood as one step within an *evolving history of behavioural decisions and choices*. In addition, some life events, such as partner choice, seem to have long-term influences on the life stages that follow. A life-course perspective also suggests that the same factors can have a different (i.e., variable) influence over the life course. Although the present dissertation was not primarily developed using a life-course perspective, towards the end of the research, the findings in empirical chapters helped to develop an understanding in analysing and presenting different dimensions of integration from a life-course perspective.

Dutch Summary

Er is veel onderzoek uitgevoerd naar de integratie van migrantenkinderen die geboren zijn in West-Europa; de regio waar hun ouders naar immigreerden. Onder deze groepen heeft de integratie van kinderen van Turkse immigranten veel aandacht gekregen in theoretische debatten. Het algemene doel van dit proefschrift is om bij te dragen aan het begrip van integratie door het onderzoeken van de belangrijkste intergerelateerde levensgebeurtenissen van hoogopgeleide, tweede generatie Turkse Belgische vrouwen.

Het eerste deel van dit proefschrift is een conceptuele studie, waarin literatuur over klassieke assimilatietheorieën en het theoretisch- en empirisch onderzoek naar specifieke integratiedomeinen kritisch worden geanalyseerd. Dit overzicht toont aan dat integratie doorgaans wordt geanalyseerd als domeinspecifiek en op een zeer gefaseerde manier, wat ons inzicht in de integratie-ervaringen via de levensloop beperkt. Daarnaast zijn de integratietheorieën gedomineerd door een zeer structuralistisch perspectief dat de subjectieve dimensies van de integratie-ervaring in aanzienlijke mate beperkt.

Het tweede deel bestaat uit een reeks empirische artikelen die zijn gebaseerd op gegevens die zijn verzameld via diepgaande kwalitatieve interviews met een groep hoogopgeleide Turks-Belgische vrouwen. De focus op ervaringen van deze groep in verschillende levensfasen, maakt verschillende inzichten mogelijk. Ten eerste, terwijl een beperkt aantal studies over de hoogopgeleide kinderen van immigranten de neiging heeft zich vooral te concentreren op de effecten op macroniveau, met name op patronen van opwaartse sociaal-economische en professionele mobiliteit, probeert dit proefschrift dit te overstijgen door andere levensgebeurtenissen te onderzoeken, zoals het evenwicht tussen werk en gezin, trouwen en kinderen krijgen. Ten tweede, terwijl integratieonderzoek vaak de neiging heeft aan te nemen dat hogere niveaus van onderwijsresultaten zich zonder problemen vertalen in 'succesvolle' integratie, suggereren bevindingen van dit proefschrift dat de relatie tussen hoger onderwijs en 'succesvolle' integratie in alle dimensies - inclusief het gezinsleven - niet eenvoudig is - althans voor deze groep. Ten derde maakt deze groep, afkomstig uit een sterk familiesysteem en een dichte co-etnische gemeenschap, het mogelijk om de integratie-ervaringen van vrouwen en de invloed van traditionele genderrollen in verschillende levensdomeinen te analyseren.

De bevindingen van dit proefschrift suggereren dat hoewel deze groep zeker streeft naar meer zelfrealisatie en autonomie dan de vorige generaties, de (verwachte) culturele en demografische transitie niet eenvoudig is, en deze vrouwen verschillende uitdagingen lijken te ervaren bij het nastreven van hun levensdoelen. De twee belangrijkste structurele factoren die hier spelen zijn de kenmerken van de etnische gemeenschap (zoals een sterk collectivistisch familie systeem, familie sociaaleconomische achtergrond, religieuze socialisatie en de dichtheid van de co-etnische gemeenschap) en de gastsamenleving context (waaronder institutionele structuren, patronen van uitsluiting en discriminatie, nabuurschapseffecten en de kenmerken van scholen en andere educatieve aspecten). De kernbevindingen geven ook aan dat de effecten van deze structurele factoren verschillen voor de verschillende levensdomeinen waar vrouwen in functioneren; domeinen die verschillend, maar met elkaar verbonden zijn. Met andere woorden, een factor die zou kunnen hinderen in één levensdomein (zoals carrière) kan kansen bieden in een ander domein (zoals het opvoeden van kinderen). Bovendien tonen de bevindingen in deze dissertatie aan dat vrouwen actieve agenten zijn, die keuzes kunnen maken, onderhandelen over uitdagingen, en strategieën vinden die hen helpen om hun doelen te realiseren. Het soort en de mate waarin ze keuze ervaren, varieert naargelang de fase in hun levensloop.

Theoretisch gezien, suggereren de bevindingen van dit proefschrift de voordelen van het bestuderen van integratie van immigranten vanuit een Life-Course aanpak. Meer concreet suggereren de bevindingen dat verschillende levensstadia met elkaar verbonden zijn en dat individueel gedrag beter kan worden begrepen als één stap binnen een evoluerende geschiedenis van gedragsbeslissingen en keuzes. Daarnaast lijken sommige levensgebeurtenissen, zoals partnerkeuze, op lange termijn een invloed te hebben op de levensfasen die volgen. Een levensloop perspectief toont ook aan dat dezelfde factoren een andere (veranderende) invloed kunnen hebben op de levensloop. Hoewel de focus van dit onderzoek niet in de eerste plaats werd ontwikkeld als een levensloop perspectief, hielpen de bevindingen in de empirische hoofdstukken, tegen het einde van dit doctoraatsonderzoek, tot het ontwikkelen van een begrip bij het analyseren en presenteren van verschillende dimensies van integratie vanuit een levensloop perspectief.

1. INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is focused on exploring the key interrelated life events of highly educated, second-generation Turkish Belgian women. More specifically, it looks at the experiences and strategies related to educational and occupational attainment, getting married, having children and establishing work–life balance. In so doing, it seeks to explore the relationship between higher education and integration processes by considering the influences of the ethnic community and broader structural conditions in the host society.

Immigrant integration is generally conceived of as the long-term process by which immigrants and their children strive for economic mobility and socio-cultural inclusion in a new society. In the case of Belgium, it has been more than 50 years since the first Turkish immigrants arrived, settling in the initial period as guest workers. Although the children of Turkish immigrants born in Belgium do not have a migration history per se, their experiences have (for the most part) been studied through the lens of migrant adaptation. In addition, differences between 'immigrants' and 'natives' have dominated the theoretical debate about the second generation.

Studies in the area of integration have focused to a greater or lesser degree on the two 'strands' of integration that are implied in the definition stated above—namely, socioeconomic and socio-cultural integration. Moreover, research has been concerned with the question of how these two strands interrelate—that is to say, how they support and reinforce one another in the overall integration experience of second-generation migrants (Hagendoorn, Veenman & Vollberg, 2017). In so doing, the literature has shed much-needed light on how the children of immigrants have experienced incorporation.

A closer look at the literature on integration, however, reveals a number of gaps and shortcomings. First, the literature has typically analysed integration through the life course in a highly phased and segmented fashion. As a consequence, our understanding of the immigrant integration experience is quite siloed and limited to the various life domains, such as education, employment or media and culture (Martiniello & Rath, 2010). To put it differently, the

literature has carried the (often implicit) assumption that modes and patterns of integration differ, depending on whether the domain in question is 'private' or 'public' (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Phalet, Van Lotringen & Entzinger, 2000). This approach tends to ignore interactions between domains and limits the development of a more comprehensive understanding of how the children of immigrants experience integration over time and what happens to individuals during the process of integration. Observing different life domains[1] (e.g., education, work, family) together also allows for the identification of the changes in determinants of integration across life domains over time.

Second, integration has typically been studied from a highly structuralist perspective, treating integration outcomes as a product of pre-given social constraints and opportunities. As a consequence, subjective dimensions that bear directly on the question of individual agency—particularly those related to personal feelings, responses and thoughts—have remained understudied. For this reason, our understanding of how actors negotiate, navigate and respond to the existing social barriers and opportunities to realise preferred outcomes is as yet highly limited (e.g., Aparicio, 2007; Meurs, Pailhé & Simon, 2006; Portes & Hao, 2004; Simon, 2003). Several studies touch upon immigrant agency with regards to individual responsibility to adapt to the cultural, social and value system of receiving countries (Goodman, 2010; Joppke, 2007) and acknowledge human agency through 'selective acculturation' (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001). However, such a focus limits the power of agency and tends to overlook the dynamic interplay between agency and social context that informs individual choices and responses (Evans, 2007; Shanahan, 2000). Although some other studies (see Crul & Schneider, 2010; Esser 2004) explicitly present immigrants as agents who can actively make choices, the agency-approach is far from common in the literature. Therefore, there remains room for more micro-level research on integration to enhance our understanding of integration processes at the individual-level (Favell, Feldblum & Smith, 2007).

Third, research on highly educated children of immigrants has been rather limited partly because of the overwhelming scholarly focus on 'problematic' groups. While this has been changing recently, the burgeoning literature on the highly educated children of immigrants has

[1] Throughout the thesis, the concepts 'life domain', 'life event' and 'life stage' recur. Life domain means the area in which people live and interact (e.g. work and family domains). Life events take place in domains and signify a change in one's situation (e.g. getting married, having children). Life stage, on the other hand, means a phase in one's life (e.g. childhood, adulthood). The concept of life stage can cover more than one domain and various life events.

tended to focus narrowly on the macro-level impacts, particularly on patterns of upward socioeconomic and professional mobility (see Crul, 2013; Crul, Schneider & Lelie, 2013; Keskiner, 2013; Keskiner, 2015; Konyalı, 2014; Pott, 2001; Rezai et al., 2015; Schnell, 2013). Although integration research often tends to assume that higher levels of educational attainment translate unproblematically into 'successful' integration, (limited) indications in research imply that the relationship between higher education and 'successful' integration *across all dimensions*—including family life—is not straightforward, at least for some ethnic groups (De Valk, 2006; González-Ferrer, 2006; Hartung et al., 2011; Huschek, De Valk & Liefbroer, 2012).

Fourth, traditional migration and integration theories are gendered insofar as they implicitly assume that the vast majority of international migrants are male workers and that women primarily migrate to join their husbands (Ghosh, 2009). Although very limited, there are studies challenging this traditional assumption and show that women migrate for a variety of complex reasons and they experience integration in different ways (see Anthias, Kontos & Morokvasic-Müller, 2012; Kontos, Haferburg & Sacaliuc, 2006; Kovács & Melegh, 2007). The predominant economic analysis of migration hinders a social interpretation embedded in culture and gender norms that influence the experiences of women in the incorporation process (Waldinger & Feliciano, 2004). Research explicitly addressing gendered aspects of integration has been relatively rare (Maas, 2013). Although the aim of this research is not to offer a gender analysis by comparing the experiences of men and women, further research with a gender focus is needed to understand the integration processes of women.

With these limitations in mind, this dissertation takes up the question of the integration experience of highly educated Turkish Belgian women through an analytical framework that foregrounds *integration as a multi-dimensional and dynamic process*. It thus presupposes that integration is neither linear nor governed by some ultimate 'end'—it is an 'ongoing' process that is shaped by the interaction between two broad factors: the *characteristics of the* e*thnic communities*—such as the family system, norms, values, culture/religion—and *host society context*, which includes integration discourses, institutional arrangements, discrimination and exclusion. Moreover, it assumes that women and men are likely to experience adaptation and integration differently due to (traditional or cultural) gender role expectations. Finally, although conditioned—at least to some extent—by social context, individuals are assumed in

the present dissertation to be active agents who can make choices in negotiating and responding to the challenges they face.

I focus on highly educated Turkish Belgian women because research indicates that women who have grown up in strong, group-oriented families are less likely to experience a straightforward structural and cultural incorporation in host countries (De Valk et al., 2004; De Valk & Liefbroer, 2007). Although studies on the educated second-generation are bourgeoning (Crul, 2013; Crul, Schneider & Lelie, 2013; Keskiner, 2013; Keskiner, 2015; Konyalı, 2014; Rezai et al., 2015), the experiences of educated Turkish women in European countries are largely understudied. By focusing on this group, this dissertation can address this gap in research and zoom into internal variations within the group to better understand their educational trajectories and how their educational attainment influences their future experiences.

1.1. Integration Context for Children of Immigrants

The context in which immigrants and their children experience the process of integration is crucial in shaping their lives, decisions and choices. Considering my research questions and the research population, I found the host society context and the second demographic transition across Europe to be two important contexts that influence the experiences of highly educated Turkish Belgian women.

1.1.1. External Pressure: Host Society Context

Unlike North America, European states have not really considered themselves to be countries of immigration (Martiniello & Rath, 2010). In all Western countries, however, international migration has—especially since 9/11—been viewed through a 'social problems' lens including terrorism, unemployment, high crime rate, unsafety and public health (Martiniello & Rath, 2010).

In the political arena, integration has been used variously in different contexts, but typically refers to "a loose collection of policies towards immigrants and post-migration minorities" (Phalet & Swyngedouw, 2003, p. 7). Various measures have been designed by

states to manage the longer-term consequences of immigration. Although the list of integration policy measures is very long, the most common ones are: legal and social protection; citizenship; multicultural educational policy; anti-discrimination laws; the creation of ethnic organisations; provision of adequate housing opportunities and religion; and language and cultural courses (see Favell, 2010; Soysal, 1994; Vertovec, 1997).

Immigrants and their children in Western Europe have often been associated with high levels of unemployment, religious extremism, high crime rates, and higher incidence of school drop-out and lower levels of educational attainment (Vasta, 2007). Other media and public discourses have claimed that children of immigrants do not want to integrate (ibid.). Hence, the experiences of children of immigrants are particularly important to Western European governments. The concern is whether the children of immigrants—who constitute a growing share of youth in Western European countries today—are contributing to or endangering social cohesion. These discourses and concerns have been translated into broader structural constraints including discrimination, exclusion, segregated neighbourhoods and schools and institutional arrangements influencing educational and occupational outcomes of children of immigrants.

Hence, children of immigrants have been exposed to various integration discourses through policies and media, which are likely to influence their perceptions about and distance to values and ways of life in host countries. In this highly tense context, the children of first-wave Turkish immigrants grew up and started their own families and had children. Coming from an ethnic community that is perceived to have 'integration problems', highly educated Turkish Belgian women—with their higher degrees and occupations—are likely to face (in)direct external pressure to 'better' integrate into the socio-cultural life of Belgium. Therefore, the aforementioned tense atmosphere and perceptions about migrants in European countries seem to influence their experiences, life choices and decisions.

1.1.2. Internal Pressure: Demographic Transition and Cultural Shifts

The children of first-generation Turkish immigrants have grown up during a period in which Western Europe has experienced a significant demographic transition and far-reaching cultural change. Family patterns have changed dramatically across Europe since the late 1960s. Here, we can highlight declining rates of marriage and remarriage, higher rates of divorce and separation, increasing age at marriage, postponement of childbearing and an increase in cohabitation of non-married couples (see Kuijsten, 1996: Lesthaeghe & Moors, 2002; Prioux, 2006). Lesthaeghe and Van de Kaa jointly formulated the notion of the 'second demographic transition' in 1986 to refer to these interrelated changes in family arrangements. This idea of transition has been closely linked to various structural (e.g., modernisation and expansion of higher education), cultural (e.g., secularisation and individualisation), and technological changes (e.g., modern contraception techniques) (Van de Kaa, 1994).

Although limited, studies suggest that these demographic transitions and cultural shifts also influence the lives of children of immigrants in Europe. For example, research shows a significant change between first- and second-generation Turkish women in Europe (De Valk, 2006; González-Ferrer, 2006). The level of education and employment is increasing among second-generation women. Structural changes specified in the second demographic transition might explain increasing female employment. Moreover, De Valk (2006) has observed an increase in individualisation among migrant groups. Related to female emancipation through education and employment, unbalanced gender role-divisions seem to be under challenge (Koelet et al., 2009). All these indications are assumed to result in more 'modern' attitudes towards family life with a high rate of inter-ethnic marriage and less parental involvement and social control, and less intergenerational transmission of traditional values. However, research suggests that cultural approval of new and more individualised behaviours does not come automatically (Lesthaeghe & Vanderhoeft, 2001) and pressures might arise due to family background characteristics, gendered expectations, close or dense ethnic networks, family ties, social control, religious and cultural norms and traditional values. Hence, women who are likely to be potential trendsetters of demographic changes in their ethnic community may not experience these changes straightforwardly and might feel more (internal and external) pressure to respond to various expectations.

1.2. General Research Aims

This dissertation aims to explore the experiences of highly educated Turkish Belgian women in different life domains. Empirically, this dissertation has two main objectives. First, I want to come to an in-depth understanding of pathways and trajectories of upward mobility among highly educated Turkish Belgian women. In so doing, I focus on resource mobilisation (and limitations) faced by second-generation women in the various steps taken to improve their socioeconomic and socio-cultural status and how any limitations are navigated—and potentially overcome—in the process. The main theoretical contribution of this approach is to show the relative durability of resource endowments and resource limitations and the extent to which both are transferable in the context of socioeconomic integration.

Second, I focus on these women's family lives. Specifically, I look at how this highly educated group, which grew up in a strong family system, have organised their professional and family lives, how they make their partner choices, and what they expect from their own children. In so doing, I do not consider these domains as separate from each other, but instead, I examine the interrelations between them. Besides examining factors shaping and influencing their family-related choices and attitudes, I also highlight how these women develop strategies to respond to the challenges they face.

I adopt a qualitative approach based on in-depth interviews with highly educated Turkish Belgian women to address these questions. Qualitative research is best suited to the analysis of individual biographies and examines how people subjectively define—and respond to—various social situations. The data were collected mostly in Ghent and Brussels along with some interviews in Antwerp and Limburg.

1.3. Research Overview

The first part of Chapter 2 presents an overview of the theoretical foundations of immigrant incorporation. I start with classical assimilation theories, which were developed mostly in the United States but have also been applied in the European context. After this, I introduce alternative approaches to straight-line assimilation models. I also refer to the transnationalism literature, which emphasises the transnational experiences of immigrant groups that contrast old and new cultural values and practices. Finally, I analyse how ethnic boundaries influence

the incorporation process and how these boundaries are shaped, maintained and changed in different processes of incorporation. With a brief summary of these theories, I evaluate their strengths and weaknesses and present the changes in the history of assimilation research. In so doing, I establish a basis for the next step where I focus on integration research about different life domains.

In the second part of Chapter 2, I give an overview of the theoretical and empirical research on specific domains of integration. I start with theories on socioeconomic and socio-cultural integration. In the first part, I focus on educational and occupational outcomes of children of immigrants and the limitations of these studies. In the second part, I touch upon the literature on partner choice and intergenerational value transmission. I focus especially on empirical research on the children of Turkish immigrants in Belgium and neighbouring countries. At the end of the chapter, I provide a theoretical model for the study of incorporation at different life stages and present an overview of my research questions.

In Chapter 3, I present my research methodology and discuss issues of ethics and analytical reflexivity. Chapters 4 to 7 present the empirical part of the dissertation, with each addressing one of the dissertation's research questions. Chapter 4 focuses on how highly educated Turkish Belgian women have drawn on ethnic-specific networks to pursue educational and occupational success. Chapter 5 analyses how these educated Turkish Belgian women balance their professional and family lives under the influence of a strong family system. This chapter also uses data from native Flemish women to compare experiences across different family systems. Chapter 6 is dedicated to exploring the partner choices of this group and the factors influencing those preferences. Chapter 7 focuses on parental expectations and strategies of highly educated Turkish Belgian women concerning the future partner choices of their children. Finally, Chapter 8 discusses the main findings, theoretical contributions and limitations of this study.

"As a child of immigrant parents,
as a woman of colour in a white society
and as a woman in a patriarchal society,
what is personal to me IS political"
(Mitsuye Yamada—Asian–Pacific American Women and Feminism)

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1. Assimilation Theories

The literature on immigrant adaptation has been largely dominated by the assimilation perspective. In the 1920s, theorists defined a linear incorporation path for all immigrants, regardless of group characteristics or structural conditions in the host country (Lee, 2009). Central to this perspective is the assumption that diverse ethnic groups are able to assert their rights in the host society on equal terms to established groups. It is a natural process where they gradually abandon their old cultural practices and adopt new ones (Borjas, 2006). Therefore, assimilation is the inevitable result of the adaptation process (Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1935). Whereas Park (1928) considered assimilation as a natural process and overlooked the influence of structural conditions, Warner and Srole (1945) emphasised the impact of institutional arrangements and internal group characteristics—primarily race, the language of origin, and religion—on the rate of assimilation.

In *Assimilation in American Life*, Gordon (1964) provided a multi-dimensional concept of assimilation, with cultural assimilation as the first necessary step. However, he noted that cultural assimilation does not always lead to other forms of assimilation. He equated this cultural step with 'structural assimilation', which he defined as "large scale entrance into cliques, clubs, and institutions of the host society on the level of primary interaction" (Gordon, 1964, pp. 80–81). For Gordon, this kind of assimilation is 'structural' because it is the foundation for all other forms of assimilation. Although he was not particularly explicit about the process of assimilation and what might propel immigrants from one stage to the next, he did assert an expectation that all ethnic minority groups would gradually shed their distinctive characteristics and eventually melt into the mainstream society. A central dimension of his expectation was that ethnic minority groups would eventually intermarry and enter mainstream institutions on the same terms as native populations. In this way—and presumably no longer facing prejudice or discrimination—they would come to self-identify as mainstream members of the host society.

In the 1970s, Gans and Sandberg (1973) introduced the notion of 'straight-line assimilation'. This approach focused on cohort drivers, arguing that each new generation would

move the minority ethnic group forward in the general direction of assimilation into the host society. In the face of several criticisms, Gans (1992) adapted his approach, introducing a 'bumpy-line theory of ethnicity', which retained the core idea of cohort drivers propelling integration into the host society, while accepting that change would not necessarily be constant or smooth.

The assumptions and precepts underpinning classic assimilation theory reflected the fact that the bulk of historical immigration to the United States was from Europe. Accordingly, studies indicated patterns of extensive upward social mobility across generations stemming from the apparent cultural proximity of European origin societies to the American host society (Alba, 1985; Chiswick, 1977; Sandberg, 1974). Classical assimilation theory thus remained the predominant sociological approach in the field until the 1960s (Heisler, 2000). However, when new waves of immigration—predominantly from non-European countries—began to arrive from the late 1960s, the classic approach came under critical challenge (Zhou, 1997).

2.1.1. Alternative Approaches to Assimilation

2.1.1.1. Cultural Pluralists

Contrary to the tenets of classical assimilation theory, multiculturalists reject assimilationism and highlight the fact that American society is heterogeneous with different minority and majority ethnic and racial groups (Glazer & Moynihan, 1970). The latter group prioritised the active role of immigrants in deciding their own futures (Conzen, 1991). Moreover, multiculturalists do not assume that ethnic traits are a disadvantage, suggesting that these ethnic qualities can interact with those of the mainstream society and take new forms that can be beneficial to the general community. These scholars study the process of re-inventing ethnicity through interactions between ethnic traits and mainstream culture. However, they remain limited in examining the ways ethnic minorities drive their own acculturation (Zhou, 1997).

2.1.1.2. Structuralists

The structuralist perspective, on the other hand, disagrees with classical assimilation and focuses on the inherent structural system in American society (Bart & Noel, 1972). Scholars

of this school describe American society as a stratified system of social inequalities. In this system, some groups have always laboured under unequal access to employment, education, and housing. Therefore, the degree of assimilation depends on the stratum of American society that immigrants are attempting to enter. This perspective has been viewed as making an important contribution by foregrounding otherwise overlooked structural conditions. However, while recognising this contribution, Zhou (1997) emphasises its limitations in focusing solely at the macro level, at the expense of meso- and micro-level factors.

2.1.1.3. Segmented Assimilation

Segmented assimilation theory is one of the modern assimilation theories that has been branched from classical assimilation theory. The main idea of segmented assimilation theory is that there is more than one way to assimilate into American society (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996; Portes & Zhou 1993; Zhou, 1997). Defenders of this theory criticised the arguments that immigrants and their offspring would "first acculturate and then seek entry and acceptance among the native-born as a prerequisite for their social and economic advancement" (Portes & Zhou, 1993, p. 82). This approach presents a theoretical framework for understanding the process of incorporation where children of contemporary immigrants become incorporated into the system of stratification in American society (Zhou, 1997). Segmented assimilation theory also provides a framework to analyse different outcomes of this process. Based on this, Portes and Zhou (1993, p. 82) identified three possible adaptation patterns that most contemporary immigrants and their children are likely to experience. One of them is the upward mobility pattern through acculturation and "parallel integration into the white middle-class" (ibid.). The second pattern dictates "permanent poverty and assimilation into the underclass" (ibid.). The last pattern is "economic integration to white middle-class and deliberate preservation of the immigrant community's values and tight solidarity" (ibid.).

These scholars are concerned with the question of what makes some immigrant groups inclined to downward mobility and what assists them to address this challenge (Portes & Zhou, 1993). They suggest that both individual-level factors (e.g., education, aspiration, length of residence, place of birth, English-language ability) and structural conditions (e.g., family socioeconomic status, place of residence, racial status) determine to which segment of the society an immigrant assimilates.

Moreover, Portes and Zhou (1993) identified the various types of resources immigrants can use to confront the challenges of contemporary assimilation. The most important are the resources made available through networks in the co-ethnic community. Several studies (see Bankston & Zhou, 1996; Zhou, 2000; Zhou & Bankston, 1998) analyse the relationship between ethnicity and social capital through dense co-ethnic networks, familial and community norms, expectations, and obligations. Zhou (2005) defines this as 'ethnicity as social capital' and suggests that different dimensions of ethnic networks are likely to affect educational and occupational mobility in positive ways.

Segmented assimilation theory has been adopted as a guiding concept by many researchers over the past 20 years. However, an increasing number of scholars have addressed the controversies surrounding it. The first controversy is that it relates assimilation only to educational and economic mobility, while other subjective aspects are overlooked or left underdeveloped (Stepick & Stepick, 2010). Some scholars, on the other hand, criticise the lack of gendered lens applied in segmented assimilation theory, which reduces 'underclass' conditions to the 'fate of black men', overlooking assimilation paths of females (Waldinger & Feliciano, 2004).

A considerable number of studies on ethnic groups in Europe have applied segmented assimilation theory to explain integration and mobility patterns of European immigrants. (see Crul & Vermeulen, 2003; De Graaf & Van Zenderen, 2009; Diehl & Schnell, 2006; Phalet & Heath, 2010; Schneider & Crul, 2010; Silberman, Alba & Fournier, 2006; Vermeulen, 2010), however, its application to European countries is also questionable due to significant contextual differences, including neighbourhood structures (Schneider & Crul, 2012) and the social security system (Phalet & Heath, 2010).

Moreover, rather than focusing on race relations that are embedded in segmented assimilation studies in the United States, integration research in Europe focuses on the role of ethnicity and religion. In addition, segmented assimilation theories have been criticised for overlooking the role of national context on immigrant incorporation (Crul & Mollenkopf, 2012; Crul & Vermeulen, 2003; Fase, 1994; Schneider & Crul, 2013).

The concept of downward assimilation in segmented assimilation theory is both pessimistic and definitive in its claim that it is a characteristic of certain ethnic groups (and not others). However, children of immigrants in Europe, even the ones who do not perform well

compared to other ethnic groups, experience intergenerational upward mobility. For that reason, segmented assimilation theory has been criticised for not paying sufficient attention to internal differences within ethnic groups (Crul & Vermeulen, 2003).

Hence, assimilation theories remain limited in addressing the incorporation processes of immigrant groups in European countries. Contextual features referred in the segmented assimilation theories are relatively different in Europe. Therefore, adopting the segmented assimilation approach might not lead to reliable insights about life courses of immigrants and their children in Europe. Moreover, the built-in pessimism in segmented assimilation theory tends to overestimate the role of context and overlooks the agency of individuals in shaping their own life courses. Much like classical assimilation theories, segmented assimilation focuses mainly on structural incorporation and remains limited in explaining what happens in subsequent life stages. Therefore, it offers limited insight into the overall incorporation processes of the children of immigrants. In addition, a lack of gender focus limits our understanding of how women and girls experience different incorporation processes.

2.1.1.4. New Assimilation Theory

In the 1980s and 1990s, a renewed appreciation of assimilation dominated the social sciences (See Alba, 1999; Alba & Nee, 1997; Higham, 1981; Morawska, 1994). In their recent synthesis, *Remaking the American Mainstream*, Alba and Nee (2003, p. 39) present a new assimilation theory:

> We do not assume that assimilation is a universal outcome, occurring in a straight-line trajectory […]. To the extent that assimilation occurs, it proceeds incrementally, usually as an intergenerational process, stemming both from individuals' purposive action and from the unintended consequences of their workaday decisions.

According to Alba and Nee, therefore, assimilation is not a single outcome for all immigrants but, rather, a process that each group experiences differently. They argue that a variety of mechanisms (individual purposive actions, network mechanisms, forms of capital and institutional mechanisms) operating at different levels shape immigrant incorporation. To put it differently, adaptation outcomes of individuals and ethnic groups are shaped by the interplay

of purposive action by individuals and within closely-knit groups, and the institutional and cultural core in the host society (Alba & Nee, 2003).

Alba and Nee's (2003) neo-assimilation theory offers a well-developed theoretical framework that helps to explain variation in incorporation trajectories. Their theory is also very important in displaying the process of change in assimilation theories. However, similar to segmented assimilation theories, their theory mainly focuses on socioeconomic incorporation and remains limited in providing a framework to explain variations in socio-cultural incorporation which is crucial for future life courses of the children of immigrants.

2.1.1.5. Intergenerational Integration Theory

Esser (2004) has found current assimilation theories unsatisfactory, regarding them as a set of generalised typologies and factors. He has developed a model of intergenerational integration to transcend the boundaries of different contexts. He has focused on understanding the underlying mechanisms behind the existence of different structural outcomes. His model covers a circular linkage between macro- and micro-level outcomes. To put it differently, Esser's model of intergenerational integration suggests that the objective structural features of a social context influence the subjective actions of individuals and the consequences of these individual actions lead to macro-level societal outcomes.

Esser (2004) also mentions two main patterns of individual action: the decision to invest their resources in ethnic community social capital or to put themselves on the path to integration into the host society. In other words, "the basic model of intergenerational integration explains different structural outcomes of immigration—societal assimilation, ethnic inequality/ethnic differentiation, ethnic conflicts—as aggregated consequences of the immigrants' rational situation-logical actions geared to the prevailing circumstances" (Esser, 2004, p. 1139). In other words, the way they choose is shaped by structural disadvantages that create gaps and makes ethnic capital a more secure and accessible option.

Esser (2004) also finds that despite increasing transnationalism and supranationalism, immigrants and their descendants should direct themselves to those national institutional and cultural cores that still play a significant role in integration. He argues that the ethnic resources and forms of capitals derived from these resources can only have limited usability in

incorporation processes. His theory is important in providing an alternative to assimilation theories. It is relevant to my research topic with its attempt to analyse the relationship between structure and agency and its impact on structural outcomes. However, his definition of 'individual action' does not seem sufficient to explain the bounded choices of immigrants which are influenced by complex categories. In addition, it is not clear in which domains ethnic resources or capital are more or less useful.

2.1.1.6. Comparative Integration Context Theory

Crul and Schneider (2010; 2012) have developed a comparative integration context theory which gives more attention to societal context. Based on empirical evidence, they argue that the second generation has different experiences in different local and national contexts. Hence, they highlight the importance of integration context—institutional arrangements, social and political discourses—that influence economic integration in the European context where institutional arrangements are much more diverse than in Canada, Australia, and the United States.

Crul and Schneider (2010) have two different perspectives when looking at participation in key institutions in different European cities. On the one hand, they look at the national and institutional arrangements enabling or hindering ethnic individuals' access and participation in social and cultural life. On the other hand, they see individuals as active agents who can actively make choices and challenge the limited opportunities in the societal context.

Whereas Esser (2004) starts from individual agency—whereby individuals actively choose either to invest in ethnic capital or deploy resources in efforts to integrate into the host society—Crul and Schneider (2010) attach more importance to the structures and arrangements in host societies. Crul and Schneider's theory is relevant to my research in providing a well-established framework about the role of integration context on structural outcomes of the children of immigrants. However, both theories aim at explaining structural integration processes of immigrants and their children, while socio-cultural incorporation and family lives remain understudied.

2.1.2. Social Incorporation and Transnationalism

Focusing mostly on structural incorporation, classical assimilation has not proven useful to analyse the complex identity construction of immigrants; moreover, it overlooks complexities in the ways immigrants—and their values and beliefs—change (Ehrkamp, 2005; Foner, 1997; Gibson, 1989). Despite its well-known arguments about multiple ways to assimilate into receiving society, segmented assimilation thus remains limited in explaining the complexity behind immigrants' changing behavioural patterns.

Foner (1997) describes social incorporation as a process where old and new cultural and social patterns are blended. She further states that this composition shows variability between immigrant groups and has influences on their social, cultural and demographic characteristics. It has been largely accepted that immigrants' values, practices, and cultural symbols are subject to change due to new circumstances in receiving countries. However, this change in no way implies that immigrants simply abandon their home country culture and fully assimilate into the receiving society. The cultures of immigrant groups, according to Foner (1997), are not identical either to the home country culture or that of the receiving society. Rather, something entirely new is created out of two distinct cultures.

Foner (1997) emphasises the role of the family in the process of social incorporation. She argues that "members of the family, by virtue of gender and generation, have different interests so that women/men and younger/older people often try to fashion family patterns in ways that improve their positions and further their aims" (cited in Foner, 1997, p. 962; see, also, Kibria, 1993; Oxfeld, 1993). In addition, it has been mentioned that some factors—including strong immigrant communities and institutions, dense ethnic networks and transnational ties—help preserve dimensions of home culture brought over into receiving countries.

Research on transnationalism explores the ways that immigrants maintain their ties with home countries (Schiller, Basch & Blanc-Szanton, 1992; Vertovec, 2001). Many immigrants in Europe engage in multiple public spheres in their home countries (Ehrkamp & Leitner, 2003), therefore their transnational ties are reinforced with mass media, involvement in transnational political activities, travel patterns and transnational marriages (Aksoy & Robinson, 1997; Østergaard-Nielsen, 2000).

Studies tend to assume that these transnational dynamics are a challenge to the nation-state or ethnicity as sources of identity (Schiller, Basch & Blanc-Szanton, 1992). However, transnationalism is a way to pinpoint and highlight the myriad exceptions to the nation-state centred integration approach (Favell, 2010).

Different assimilation models have often focused on (mostly structural) incorporation processes in host societies and have overlooked the transnational reality of the new second generation and the influence of the latter on individual integration experiences. Transnationalism is relevant to my research topic because transnational practices are crucial factors in how individuals construct their family lives under the influence of different and contrasting cultural and value systems. This influence is more likely to be seen in their partner choices (transnational vs local) and their parental expectations and strategies.

2.1.3. Ethnic Boundaries

Many scholars have used the concept of ethnic boundaries to explain the level of closeness between majority and minority groups. Barth (1998 [1969]), one of the pioneers of ethnic boundary theory, addressed the problems of ethnic groups and their persistence. He explained the persistence of ethnic groups not with enduring ethnocultural differences and the lack of inter-ethnic contact, rather on the maintenance of ethnic boundaries by one or both groups. (Barth, 1996). His main argument was that ethnic groups should be investigated through "the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses" (Barth, 1998 [1969], p. 15). Boundaries are actively constructed by members of groups in each side of the boundary, nevertheless, one side has often more privileges and ability to "impose and transform the relevant idioms" (Barth, 1994, p. 16). Groups continuously dichotomise between "insiders" and "others" and this ethnic dichotomisation is either based on existing cultural differences or the subjective differences groups deem significant. In addition, some cultural differences are highlighted and used as boundary markers (Barth, 1994).

Following Barth's seminal work, a distinction has been made between symbolic and social boundaries (Lamont & Molnar, 2002). Symbolic boundaries manifest in discourse, while social boundaries do so in behavioural patterns. Hence, inter-communal boundaries can be maintained through the construction of symbolic boundaries around distinct communities (Lamont & Molnar, 2002).

Several empirical studies have analysed how both ethnic minority and mainstream groups relate to "boundary work" (Lamont, 1995, p. 351). Boundary work, as defined by Lamont, starts with the identification of cultural differences that are applied to differentiate between 'us' and 'them'. The behavioural dimension of ethnic boundary maintenance has both external and internal dimensions (Van Kerckem, 2014). The externally oriented dimension is about constructing barriers and making within-group resources unavailable to outsiders. This generally takes place through various forms of discrimination. The internally oriented dimension, on the other hand, is more about preserving group cohesion. Minority groups are involved in boundary-making particularly with the aim of preserving their ethnic distinctiveness and sense of moral superiority but also to challenge negative stereotypes assigned to them through mainstream discrimination and exclusion (Van Kerckem, 2014). Within this dimension, ethnic minority groups create rules and expectations for in-group members, which can, in turn, create 'conformity pressure' among members (Lindo, 1996; Van Kerckem, 2014; Zontini, 2010).

Moreover, there is a gender dimension in boundary work. In many societies, women are seen as markers of ethnic and national collective identities and the principal transmitters of culture to the next generation (Billson, 1995; Yuval-Davis, 1997). They have a symbolic role in the construction of ethnic and national identities; their attitudes are therefore of considerable importance in marking and maintaining ethnic boundaries (Van Kerckem, 2014). More specifically, in strong group-oriented family systems, the sexual behaviour of women has been used as a boundary marker between ethnic groups (Anthias & Yuval-Davis, 1989; Dasgupta & Dasgupta, 1996; Espiritu, 2001). Consequently, women experience more social control and pressure to conform to the expectations of their ethnic groups.

Scholars taking an interest in ethnic boundaries have applied an agency-centred approach, focusing on how boundaries are maintained but also how individuals contest and negotiate them in everyday interactions. In this way, agents make and unmake such boundaries, leading to change in their parameters over time (Alba, 2005; Chai, 2005; Korteweg & Yurdakul, 2009; Sanders, 2002; Wimmer, 2008; 2013). Wimmer (2013) provides an inclusive typology of strategies used by individuals in responding to the ethnic boundaries they face, arguing the strategy chosen will depend on the relative power position of the agent confronting the boundary.

Theories of ethnic boundaries are relevant to my research aims in three ways. First, externally oriented boundaries help to explain the *external pressures or constraints* (e.g., integration discourses, discrimination) that the children of immigrants face in different life domains. Second, internally oriented boundaries help to shed light on the *ethnic group and family pressures* that are likely to influence the cultural shifts that the children of immigrants experience, particularly in the family domain. Third, the focus on agency in relation to ethnic boundaries offers a way to explore how the children of immigrants can *negotiate and respond to these pressures*. To sum up, boundaries are crucial in understanding both the socioeconomic and socio-cultural integration of immigrants and their children. The creation and maintenance of symbolic and social ethnic boundaries by both minority and mainstream groups influence the integration outcomes and the level of closeness between ethnic groups.

2.1.4. Summary

This brief overview has summarised the classical assimilation theories on immigrant integration, which mostly focus on structural incorporation. Apart from Warner and Srole, proponents of straight-line assimilation do not pay enough attention to the structural conditions affecting the pace and form of assimilation. Segmented assimilation and new assimilation theories emerged as a response to the perceived shortcomings of classical approaches. These new perspectives no longer see assimilation as an inevitable, linear or smooth path applicable to all immigrant groups. On the contrary, they identify *various assimilation pathways* and argue that each immigrant group assimilates at a different pace. Despite their well-developed theoretical frameworks, these theories mainly focus on the educational and occupational outcomes of the immigrant second generation. In addition, these theories remain limited in addressing transnational practices which are crucial in understanding family lives, choices (e.g., partner choices) and decisions (e.g., parental expectations) of children of immigrants. In addition, the nature of the ethnic boundaries that are inevitably developed by minority and mainstream groups alike—in particular the way both internal and external pressures shape the life course of individuals as they navigate and adapt to these boundaries—are not sufficiently theorised within the assimilation literature.

Although a growing number of studies have shed light on specific cases and groups in Europe, European integration research has not produced a strong theoretical debate equivalent to that which has taken place in North American (Schneider & Crul, 2010). Esser's

intergenerational integration theory and Schneider and Crul's comparative integration context theory are among the most developed approaches in this regard. However, similar to assimilation theories in the United States, they often reduce their focus to structural integration processes. Therefore, socio-cultural integration domains generally remain understudied.

With this brief summary and review of incorporation theories, I aim at showing the process of how the literature on assimilation has changed over time in the United States and how it was adopted in the European context. Although the theories have improved and expanded considerably, there still remains room for an improved understanding of more complex processes of integration some ethnic groups might experience. This general summary implies that *broader structural conditions* in the host society, *transnational practices* of immigrants, actors' *agency* to make choices and decisions and *boundaries* developed by minority and majority groups shape both socioeconomic and socio-cultural integration. This chapter establishes a ground for the next step where I specifically focus on (mostly empirical) research about particular life domains and analyse how determinants of integration can be dynamic in different domains.

2.2. Structural Integration

The socioeconomic position of migrants in the host society has been of great interest to sociologists working on migration. Educational attainment and labour force participation are among the main subjects studied in the structural integration field (De Valk, 2006).

2.2.1. Educational Outcomes

Education is one of the most important indicators for assessing the overall position of the second generation (Crul et al., 2012a). Research has consistently reported salient inter-ethnic differences in educational outcomes among the descendants of immigrants (Crul et al., 2012a; Dustmann, Frattini & Lanzara, 2012; Heath, Rothon & Kilpi, 2008; Timmerman, Vanderwaeren & Crul, 2003). Based on data from Sweden, Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Spain, Austria and Switzerland from the 2007–2008 wave of the 'Integration of the European Second Generation' (TIES) survey, school-level outcomes of second-generation Turks are considerably lower than those of their native peers (Crul et al., 2012a). Among a survey group aged 18–35 years old, Crul and colleagues (2012a) have found that 20.3% of second-generation Turks in Brussels and 27.2% of those in Antwerp obtained a degree from the vocational track, while the rates are 9.4% and 20.3% for the dominant group. The share of second generation who obtained a secondary education diploma with an academic track is 11.6% for Brussels and 5.2% for Antwerp, and are 16.3% and 6.5% for the dominant group. Lastly, the majority of the dominant group (around 59% for Brussels and Antwerp) obtained a higher education diploma, while only 28.7% of Turkish second-generation migrants in Brussels and 31.2% of those in Antwerp obtained a higher diploma. Although only a small proportion of second-generation Turks in other countries are at the bottom of the educational ladder, there appears to be an exception in Belgium, where the share within the second generation that drops out after competing lower secondary school is very high.

2.2.1.1. Factors Explaining Educational Outcomes

Studies have pointed to family background characteristics and the educational levels of parents as the most important determinants of educational success (Schnell, Keskiner & Crul, 2013). Baert and colleagues (2013) show that a major part of the ethnic gap in secondary school

completion and enrolment in higher education is still explained by family endowments. Studies show that first-generation Turkish parents, with their weak social position, are less likely to provide sufficient socioeconomic capital to their children in European countries (Timmerman, Vanderwaeren & Crul, 2003). Some other studies have found that early age at marriage and traditional gendered responsibilities affect the educational trajectories of Turkish girls (Lindo, 2000; Timmerman, 1999). However, a more recent Europe-wide study has shown that second-generation females in most European countries have, to a considerable extent, closed the gender gap in education (Crul et al., 2012a).

Research has found that ethnicity can also act as capital and affect social mobility outcomes of minorities in a variety of ways (Modood, 2004; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Zhou, 2005). Studies in this area build on two particular dimensions of social capital derived from Coleman (1988): 'intergenerational closure' (namely, dense intergenerational ties) and 'norms enforcement'. Modood (2004), on the other hand, focuses more on the influences of shared norms and values in developing educational mobility for British Pakistanis and adopts another concept called 'ethnic capital'. Although he refers to the important role of co-ethnic ties generated by common values in an ethnic community (Shah, Dwyer & Modood, 2010), he is more 'careful' about asserting that dense and closed networks necessarily constitute 'capital', since these might also be restrictive depending on the group, place and time. Overall, research shows that the effects of ethnicity as capital are heavily mediated by different dimensions of ethnic social capital for educational mobility.

A limited number of studies have mentioned the negative influences of close ethnic networks and ethnic solidarity. Crul and Vermeulen (2003), for example, have argued that tight ethnic networks in Turkish communities in Europe mean traditional gender roles tend to be reproduced, negatively affecting girls' social mobility. This social control is said to create extra challenges for girls who try to balance their educational trajectories with family honour and expectations (Dale et al., 2002). Indications in the research show salient gender differences in behaviours within first-generation Turkish migrant families towards their sons and daughters. Phalet and Schönpflug (2001), for instance, contend that Turkish mothers in Germany and the Netherlands have lower achievement aspirations for their daughters and exert less pressure on them to become successful at school.

Structural conditions where (ethnic) resources are (de)activated are also crucial in understanding the educational trajectories of second-generation youth. The institutional

arrangement of education has been highlighted as a relevant structural factor influencing educational success (Crul & Vermeulen, 2003; Fleishmann et al., 2012). Crul and colleagues' (2012a) comparative integration context theory find that the early selection and tracking system, the starting age in school, the number of school contact hours in primary school and the permeability of the school system all influence educational outcomes differently. According to this theory, more open educational systems in countries like Sweden and France better integrate the children of immigrants (Bayram, 2009; Meurs, Pailhé & Simon, 2008; Simon, 2003), while the more stratified school systems of Germany and Austria are more likely to complicate inclusion (Worbs, 2003). Studies show that Belgium and the Netherlands, with their mixed education systems, fall somewhere in between (Crul & Doomernik, 2003; Phalet & Heath, 2010). Related to this, according to a review of research on race and ethnic inequalities in Dutch- and French-language educational systems in Belgium, different discourses on ethnicity and education and broader societal and political tendencies prevailing in these regions affect school practices and policies (Van Praag et al., 2018).

In addition, the neighbourhoods in which the second generation grows up can have positive or negative outcomes for educational mobility. If neighbourhoods lack influential role models and alternative resources, co-ethnic concentration might lead to lower social mobility (Fleishmann et al., 2013). Related to this, some studies have emphasised the negative influence on school outcomes of the concentration of children of immigrants in certain schools (Roosens, 1994; Timmerman, Vanderwaeren & Crul, 2003). It has been suggested that children who avoid concentrated schools are more likely to move on to higher education (Crul, 2000).

Another research tradition focuses on the influences of racism and discrimination on educational outcomes. The majority of these studies focuses on students' experiences of teacher racism and discrimination, including schools' student selection and evaluation systems, the values taught in schools, and the distribution of resources in classrooms (see Stevens, Vryonides & Dworkin, 2018). With time, researchers have also begun to examine the representation of ethnic minorities in educational policy documents (Theodorou, 2014), variability in students' claims of teacher racism (Stevens, 2008), and the way that ethnic identities intersect with gender and social class in developing responses to discrimination at school (Rollock, 2007). This research tradition provides a developed framework to show how racism and discrimination function in educational systems. However, it remains limited in

showing a strong relationship between racism and underachievement in schools (Stevens, Vryonides & Dworkin, 2018).

Empirical research in Flanders shows that expectations from students are more likely to be determined by teachers, rather than educational authorities (Stevens, 2007). This might give more authority to teachers to influence the particular educational track students are streamed into. A previous study concludes that the educational tracking system in the Flemish region of Belgium produces inequality of opportunity and social segregation for children from lower economic classes (Hindriks et al., 2010). Moreover, studying the descendants of immigrants from Turkey in various European countries, Crul et al., (2012) conclude that Turkish minority youth are mostly streamed into vocational rather than academic tracks. These indications suggest that discrimination is still an important factor in explaining educational outcomes among the children of immigrants.

Although research mostly focuses on family background, ethnic networks, racism and discrimination, and other structural conditions to explain educational success (or lack of thereof), there has been relatively little research on the responses and strategies of the second generation in this domain. The limited number of studies taking up the question focus on how limited family resources can be offset with resources from outside the family, such as close friends and teachers (Crosnoe, Johnson & Elder, 2004; Gibson, Gandara & Koyama, 2004; Kao, 2001; Portes & Fernández-Kelly, 2008; Schnell, Kekiner & Crul, 2013). Other studies have shown that girls in immigrant families employ different strategies to challenge the dominant conditions within their ethnic communities and the structural limitations in mainstream society (Basit,1997; Shah, Dwyer & Modood, 2010). Despite these examples, responses at the individual-level are still insufficiently explored in integration research.

Hence, research on the educational attainment of the children of immigrants emphasises the crucial role of family background characteristics and parents' education level. In terms of structural factors, educational tracking systems (including streaming), segregated neighbourhoods and schools, and discrimination in schools are cited as important determinants of educational success. In addition, studies indicate that dense co-ethnic networks and family ties often have positive impacts on successful educational outcomes. Although less frequently mentioned, these ethnic networks also create social pressure and limitations, especially for girls. Therefore, it seems that gender is an important dynamic influencing the determinants of integration as it concerns educational attainment. On the other hand, internally oriented

boundaries created by ethnic communities and families are likely to inform girls' educational outcomes. Lastly, research does not sufficiently mention the micro-level responses and strategies of actors during the school years. This might suggest that developing active strategies is more likely to be difficult at young ages.

2.2.2. Occupational Outcomes

Occupational attainment is another critical measure of long-term socioeconomic integration of immigrants and their descendants. Research shows that labour market representation of second-generation immigrants is not satisfactory, and their mobility is very slow (Behtoui, 2004; Crul & Doomernik, 2003; Fibbi, Lerch & Wanner, 2007; Kogan, 2007; Simon, 2003; Worbs, 2003). The youth unemployment rate of ethnic minorities has been as high as 32% in Belgium (compared to 18% for natives)—one of the largest gaps in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2008). Empirical evidence from Belgium shows that Turkish Belgians have the lowest level of economic activity and are underrepresented in highly skilled jobs (Lessard-Phillips, Fibbi & Wanner, 2012; Liebig & Widmaier, 2009; Phalet, 2007; Phalet & Swyngegouw, 2003; Timmerman, Vanderwaeren & Crul, 2003). In addition, the labour market participation of Turkish Belgian women is lower compared to Turkish Belgian men (Lessard-Phillips, Fibbi & Wanner, 2012).

2.2.2.1. Factors Explaining Occupational Outcomes

Assimilation theory (Gordon, 1964; Park & Burgess, 1921) and immigrant advantage theory (Kasinitz et al., 2008) have been more optimistic about advancement in the labour market. However, indications in the literature show that labour market disadvantages of the first generation are reproduced in the second generation (Heath & Cheung, 2007; Heath, Rothon & Kilpi, 2008; Lessard-Phillips, Fibbi & Wanner, 2012; Neels, 2000). This intergenerational continuity in socioeconomic disadvantages has been mostly explained with low human capital (Chiswick & Miller, 2002), socio-cultural differences (Kalter & Granato, 2007), limited social networks (Waldinger, 2003), and social class (Heath & McMahon, 2005).

In contrast, some studies have drawn attention to the positive role of ethnic networks and ties on occupational mobility (see Volery, 2007; Zhou, 2005). Nevertheless, there is a lack

of theoretical clarity about the importance of ethnic resources in the labour market. It has been argued that ethnic networks lose their importance considerably after high school (Zhou & Kim, 2006). Moreover, findings from studies on Turkish Belgians suggest that intra-ethnic closed networks are likely to retard successful labour market integration (Phalet & Heath, 2011).

In addition, research shows that institutional arrangements in the labour market and discrimination create extra disadvantages for the children of immigrants (Lessard-Phillips, Fibbi & Wanner, 2012; Müller & Gangl, 2003). A recent large-scale study conducted in Belgium provides evidence of hiring discrimination based on ethnicity (Baert et al., 2015). According to this study, applicants with Turkish-sounding names need to send out twice as many applications as candidates with Flemish sounding names to be invited to job interviews. Moreover, Baert and colleagues (2013) find that family endowments and school attainment are limited in explaining the ethnic gap in the transition from school to work in Belgium. According to their research, discrimination is still the major factor in explaining the pure ethnic gap in the transition from school to work.

Although cases of 'failures' among children of Turkish immigrants have drawn attention from researchers and policymakers, there has been increasing interest in cases of 'successful' integration (achievement of high levels of educational attainment and professional achievement) in academic and policy debates both in Western and Northern Europe (For examples for children of Turkish immigrants, see: Crul, 2013; Crul, Schneider & Lelie, 2013; Keskiner, 2013; Keskiner, 2015; Konyalı, 2014; Pott, 2001; Rezai et al., 2015; Schnell, 2013).

Research on successful second-generation migrants often focuses on the role of national institutional arrangements in structural integration outcomes. These studies also call attention to the various strategies individuals have developed to overcome family background disadvantages, institutional challenges, and discrimination in the labour market. Considering strategies, studies show that some people use their perceived difference as an opportunity for employment (Konyali, 2014), some others employ 'sameness and difference' strategy to deal with social and work-related boundaries (Waldring, Crul & Ghorashi, 2014) and others find a balance between intensive relations with family and ethnic community and assimilation into the wider working culture (Schneider & Lang, 2014).

Briefly, occupational attainment among children of immigrants is mostly explained by low human capital, limited social networks, social class, and discrimination. There is limited

understanding of the ways that the family background/system and co-ethnic networks influence employment opportunities in different groups. Although educational attainment and family endowments are mentioned, discrimination is still the most important factor explaining ethnic gaps in labour market entrance. Research on the school to work transition is fast growing. However, the relationship between these two related but different mobility areas is rarely studied comparatively—namely, in terms of which resources and constraints are relevant for which domain (or, indeed, for both simultaneously).

Moreover, similar to research on educational attainment, research on occupational outcomes often focuses on underachieving groups. Although the number of studies on successful second-generation migrants has recently increased, the focus of such studies is mostly centred on institutional structures and forms of discrimination. In addition, there is no clear gender perspective in most of these studies, leaving the specific experiences of women—caused primarily by strong family systems and traditional gender roles—overlooked.

2.3. Socio-Cultural Integration

Cultural integration (often referred to as adaptation) is "a process in which migrants take on the more crucial cultural values, life goals, attitudes and ways of life of the host population […] or in which the host population adapts to the normative orientations of immigrant groups" (Hagendoorn, Veenman & Vollberg, 2017, p. 3), with the latter less likely to happen in cultural integration. Research shows that the socio-cultural distance between ethnic minority groups and the majority group is closely related to acculturation practices. According to this, individual- and group-level conditions are salient factors in the degree of closeness between groups (Güngör & Bornstein, 2009). At the individual level, factors such as gender, generational differences, age, societal position, personal characteristics, and social support mechanisms influence the pace and form of this closeness. At the group level, salient conditions are the type of migration, the characteristics of the society of origin, those of the host society and intergroup relationships (ibid.).

Although more limited compared to structural integration, there has been a growing interest in second-generation socio-cultural integration in many European countries (Fokkema & De Haas, 2015). These studies have mostly focused on the cultural orientations of the second generation. Research in this field is mostly concerned with topics such as cultural values and norms, gender roles, partner choice, child-rearing, female emancipation, modernisation, inter-ethnic relations, religion and language (De Valk et al., 2004; Diehl, Koenig & Ruckdeschel, 2009; Güngör & Bernstein, 2008; Hamel et al., 2012; Lesthaeghe, 2000; Phalet & Swyngedouw, 2003b; Shain, 2000).

The next sections focus on the literature on incorporation in family domains. Namely, they examine research on how the children of immigrants settle their families and transmit their values to their children. These issues stand out as important in the analysis of individual biographies of highly educated Turkish Belgian women and they help to analyse how integration in family domains are studied and which aspects are lacking.

2.3.1. Partner Choice

Demographic behaviour and specifically marriage patterns reflect dominant norms and cultural values which are likely to be transferred across generations (De Valk & Liefbroer, 2007; Lesthaeghe, 2000; Todd, 1985). Research finds that the demographic behaviour of group-oriented cultures includes young age at marriage, low rates of divorce, and high rates of intra-group marriage (Kalmijn, 1993; Lesthaeghe & Surkyn, 1998).

Studies have suggested that the demographic behaviour of migrants is an indicator of the progress made in the cultural integration process (Coleman, 1994; De Valk et al., 2004). Where demographic regimes in the sending country are completely different from the receiving country, a 'demographic experiment' can result, whereby traditional attitudes confront 'radically different' values and norms (Coleman, 1994). Although European immigrants have shared similar demographic characteristics with receiving countries, some other countries, including Turkey, seem slower in catching up with the trend of demographic transition that Western Europe has experienced since the late 1960s (Van de Kaa, 1994). Therefore, research has called attention to marriage patterns among Turkish immigrants and their descendants in Europe.

2.3.1.1. Marriage Types

The partner choices of people with a migration background are generally categorised as either inter- or intra-ethnic. These subdivide further into: 1) a local intra-ethnic partnership in which both partners were born in the country of immigration; 2) partnership with a native; 3) transnational partnership in which one partner has the nationality of the country of origin at birth and then migrates through the marriage, and; 4) second-generation partnership with someone from another migrant group (González-Ferrer, 2006; Hartung et al., 2011; Huschek, De Valk & Liefbroer, 2012).

During the last few decades, research has focused on marriage migration and transnational partner choices of immigrants in Europe (for British Pakistanis, see: Charsley, 2005, 2007; Shaw, 2001; for Turkish migrants in the Netherlands, see: Böcker, 1994; for Turkish migrants in France, see: Autant, 1995; for Turkish and Moroccan immigrants in Belgium, see: Lievens, 1999). Contrary to expectations, the second generation also tends to

marry from the country of the parents' origin. A study based on data from the Belgian National Register comprising all legal marriages and cohabitations between 2001 and 2008 has found that 34.1% of marriages among Turkish Belgian men and women are with a local intra-ethnic partner (Van Kerckem et al., 2013).

Marrying out of one's own (ethnic and religious) group has also been highly debated in research on second-generation partner choices. This can be traced back to the research tradition on assimilation in North America. Gordon (1964) found a strong relationship between inter-marriage and assimilation because inter-marriage is assumed to dissolve the boundaries between immigrants and the majority group. Research suggests that high rates of intra-ethnic marriage are a key factor influencing the social and cultural boundaries between immigrant and native groups (Blossfeld, 2009; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009). It is argued that higher education can blur these barriers since it is seen as a means to change marriage patterns from intra-ethnic to inter-ethnic marriage, which is generally seen as a principal marker of both structural and social integration (Furtado, 2012; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009; Muttarak & Heath, 2010; Rother, 2008). However, research shows that the second generation in Belgium has the lowest proportion of mixed couples compared to other European countries (Hamel et al., 2012).

2.3.1.2. Factors Affecting Marriage Behaviour

Kalmijn (1998) argues that interplay between three main factors shapes the partner choices of individuals: individual preferences, third parties (e.g., family), and the structural features of the marriage market.

The popularity of transnational marriages among first- and second-generation migrants has been explained in several studies (González-Ferrer, 2006; Hartung et al., 2011; Huschek, De Valk & Liefbroer, 2012; Lievens, 1999; Milewski & Hamel, 2010; Strassburger, 2004). However, little is known about what younger family members—especially educated women—think about transnational marriages (Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Research shows that Turkish Belgian women who choose transnational partners are more likely to choose a highly educated one. This finding contradicts the common discourse that Turks 'import' poorly educated brides and grooms from their country of origin (Hamel et al., 2012).

In addition, some studies have reported gender differences in choices of transnational or local intra-ethnic partners. Turkish men choose transnational partners because they consider Turkish women in Europe to be 'too liberated', while Turkish women in Turkey are perceived to be more 'decent' (Timmerman, 2006; Hooghiemstra, 2001). In contrast, several studies in Europe have argued that Turkish Belgian women choose transnational partners because they find Turkish Belgian men overly 'traditional' and 'irresponsible' compared to men in Turkey (Timmerman, 2006). Although there is no longer a numerical shortage of potential partners among Turkish Belgians, there is a perceived shortage of 'appropriate' partners specifically among Turkish Belgian women (Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Recent studies, on the other hand, present an increasing awareness about the risks of transnational marriages, such as being exploited as a migration opportunity (Charsley, 2005; 2007; Werbner, 2002) and concerns about the social and economic integration of their transnational husbands (Gallo, 2006). Hence, Turkish Belgian women can be expected to reconsider adopting the patterns of in-group partner choice that earlier cohorts might have adopted.

Moreover, research shows that inter-ethnic marriages have a higher risk of divorce and instability because of cultural differences (Bratter & King, 2008; Heaton, 2002; Janssen, 2001; Kalmijn, De Graaf & Janssen, 2005) and a high risk of disapproval and lack of social support within the family/ethnic group (Hibbler & Shinew, 2002). It has been implicitly presumed that couples from the same ethnic group will have more successful marriages with cultural similarity and social support. However, Eeckhaut et al. (2011) argue that certain types of intra-ethnic marriages (e.g., transnational partnerships) have a high risk of divorce due to cultural differences in terms of values and norms.

Lastly, marriage is not only a personal matter, but is influenced by wider factors such as religion, family system, traditions, and norms (Çelikaksoy, 2006; Kalmijn, 1998; Kalmijn & Van Tubergen, 2006). The influence of third parties tends to be higher in-group oriented, strongly tied families. Some studies have found that Turkish parents exert family influence to a high degree and are the main actors in arranging transnational marriages (Lievens, 1999; Timmerman, 2006). Although direct parental involvement has decreased over time, studies show that families still favour intra-ethnic partnerships and continue to encourage this actively, while discouraging or advising against inter-ethnic ones (Milewski & Hamel, 2010; Topgül, 2016). Research also shows gender differences in parental involvement, as women experience much more social pressure in strong family systems (Kalmijn & Van Tubergen, 2006; Kulzycki

& Lobo, 2002; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001). The level of social control increases when women choose partners out of their ethnic and religious group (Huschek, De Valk & Liefbroer, 2012).

2.3.1.3. Demographic Transition Within the Turkish Second Generation

The marriage pattern of first-generation Turkish migrants in Europe has been characterised by low ages at marriage (Lodewijckx, 1994), and high rates of intra-ethnic marriages with a partner from the country of origin (Lievens, 1999). Recent studies observe a divergence from this classical marriage pattern in second-generation Turkish Belgians, with a decline in transnational marriages (Van Kerckem et al., 2013), rising marriage age and comparatively high levels of inter-ethnic marriages (Dupont et al., 2017) However, the general assumption remains that descendants of first-generation immigrants follow more traditional lines compared to the native population (De Valk, 2008). Comparing second-generation Turkish women in eight European countries, the TIES survey has shown that those in Belgium and the Netherlands are the youngest to marry (Hamel et al., 2012). Whereas the majority of young Europeans start a union as an unmarried cohabitating partnership (Elzinga & Liefbroer, 2007), men and women of Turkish origin prefer marriage over cohabitation (Milewski & Hamel, 2010). In addition, they tend to marry within their own ethnic groups. These indications suggest that a demographic transition among Turkish second-generation migrants has certainly occurred, albeit very slowly—even among the highly educated—compared to expectations.

To sum up, research often considers partner choice and marriage behaviour as significant indicators of socio-cultural integration. Continuing intra-ethnic choices (either transnational or local intra-ethnic) of children of immigrants are assumed to deepen the distance between majority and minority ethnic groups. However, indications in the research show that the ethnic, religious and cultural characteristics of minority groups are often highlighted as reasons for limited inter-ethnic marriages. Put differently, internally structured ethnic boundaries in the form of ethnic group pressure and family interference are perceived as limiting personal choices. Other structural constraints, such as discrimination, feelings of exclusion, and limited social networks are rarely mentioned. Hence, the individual preferences and agency of actors in balancing contrasting expectations are not sufficiently addressed in the research. In addition, the frequently mentioned relationship between higher education,

marriage type, and fuller integration seems weak and ambiguous, at least for some ethnic groups.

2.3.2. Intergenerational Value Transmission

Although it matters greatly for cultural (dis)continuity—and the consequent socio-cultural incorporation of immigrants—intergenerational transmission has long been omitted from theoretical debates in migration research (Nauck, 2001). Culture, with its dynamic nature, is shaped and reshaped by the ongoing interactions between individuals, groups, and the society surrounding them. Therefore, the process of cultural transmission "falls somewhere in between an exact transmission (with hardly any difference between parents and offspring) and a complete failure of transmission (with hardly any similarity between the generations)" (Schönpflug & Bilz, 2009, p. 212). Both extremes are perceived to be problematic for individuals and society alike because the former sees no change within ethnic groups, widening the gap with the mainstream society, while the latter weakens intergenerational connections (Boyd & Richerson, 1985).

Berry and colleagues (Berry et al., 2002) have mentioned three different pathways of cultural transmission: vertical, horizontal and oblique. Vertical transmission is defined as cultural transmission from parents to their children. Here, parents transmit cultural values, skills, beliefs, and motives to the next generation. Vertical transmission is an important mechanism in cultural continuity among immigrant families (Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001). However, migration conditions complicate the cultural value transmission process. Research shows that immigrant parents face multiple pressures. On the one hand, they feel a strong need to transmit their cultural heritage to the next generation. On the other, the influences of host society culture and the way of life to which their children are exposed to makes this wish difficult to implement in practice (Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001). Despite these challenges, studies show higher vertical transmission between parents and children after migration (Nauck, 1997). Findings show that Turkish immigrant mothers across generations hope that their children will behave 'appropriately' (Leyendecker, Citlak & Harwood, 2002). Although well integrated into German society, most second-generation Turkish German mothers expect their children to maintain close ties with family and extended relatives (Schoelmerich, Leyendecker & Citlak, 2006). Turkish parents in the Netherlands were found to endorse more conformity and fewer autonomy goals for their children (Nijsten, Oosterwegel & Vollebergh, 2006). These

findings create assumptions that Turkish immigrants keep traditional values related to parenting. However, other studies demonstrate that higher educational attainment among parents might change parental practices and the content of intergenerational transmission (De Valk & Liefbroer, 2007; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001). Therefore, the research on the role of higher education on intergenerational value transmission (particularly in strong family systems) can be considered inconclusive.

In horizontal transmission, individuals constantly learn from peers. Lastly, in oblique cultural transmission, people learn from other adults and institutions. If these outside family adults and institutions are in their own culture, this can simply be defined as cultural transmission. However, if the transmission process occurs through contact with another culture, it is defined as acculturation (Berry et al., 2002).

Briefly, previous studies on intergenerational value transmission have focused exclusively on (traditional) value maintenance across generations and potential conflicts between generations. Research in this field suggests that the content and form of transmission between generations are influenced by ethnic group characteristics, the host society culture, traditional cultural and religious values; the role of peers, out-group role models, and institutions in the host country are deemed less salient or receive. The level of parental education is expected to change value transmission patterns but empirical research supporting this hypothesis is quite limited.

2.3.3. Summary

In sum, a survey of the extant empirical research on immigrant integration shows that there are interrelations between different domains and the way in which determinants influence integration are likely to be different across the various domains. For example, while highly salient across domains, the family system influences each in distinct and various ways. The crucial role of family background characteristics is emphasised in educational outcomes. However, while the way in which the wider webs of family connections influence working life has received far less attention. We can offer two reasons for this relative inattention to family-level influences. First, research on socioeconomic integration often focuses on final outcomes—namely, whether an individual has successfully entered the workforce or whether she remains unemployed. These two outcomes are mostly related to structural factors in host societies. Thus, research has focused heavily on these factors, to the detriment of studies on the working life experience of employed women and how they manage work–life balance. Second, the research has remained domain-focused, with this methodological segmentation reifying life experience into 'silos' that forecloses analysis of the interrelatedness between the different domains—in this case, work and family. Moreover, the role of the family is more salient in family domains. For example, the family system and parental involvement are cited as important factors informing partner choices and intergenerational value transmission.

Externally oriented boundaries in the form of discrimination and exclusion appear to be more salient in both educational and occupational outcomes, while these factors are rarely mentioned in family domains. While research indicates the positive impacts of dense co-ethnic networks on educational outcomes, the impacts of these networks on employment are inconclusive. Marriage behaviour—far more than educational and employment aspirations—are subject to the (often strong) rules and expectations that ethnic groups develop to preserve their ethnic distinctiveness through internally oriented ethnic boundaries.

Gender seems to be an important dynamic in educational attainment since the negative influences of dense co-ethnic networks and social pressure are more likely to affect girls' educational outcomes. However, women's specific experiences with employment are rarely mentioned. In addition, the role of gender and traditional gender roles is deemed to be more salient in family domains since ethnic group and family pressure are more likely to affect the partner choices of women. Lastly, indications in research show that gender is an important

factor in intergenerational value transmission among immigrants since mothers' parental expectations and strategies are more likely to be cited compared to those of fathers.

Despite variations, referring to the significance of agency, in general, remains limited across domains. For example, the micro-level strategies and responses are not sufficiently studied in relationship to the school-going years, while studies point out that the children of immigrants develop a wider range of active strategies in navigating working life, presumably since—as fully-grown adults—they have acquired a greater degree of experience and agency than school-age children. On the other hand, although cultural and structural factors conditioning family-related choices of actors are frequently mentioned, the focus on how people negotiate and respond to these conditions remains very limited.

Hence, focusing on domain-specific factors, the existing integration literature remains limited in analysing the dynamic and more complex mechanisms behind preferences, constraints, and strategies that are essential to understanding socioeconomic and socio-cultural incorporation. Therefore, research needs further analysis of the determinants of integration in a cross-domain perspective to provide a more valid assessment about their importance in general and in particular fields.

2.4. Research Questions

By taking a more holistic approach, this dissertation research helps to shed light on incorporation as a complex process, involving different, interacting life domains in which structural/cultural conditions influence—and are influenced in turn by—the strategic actions of individuals. It is not my aim to completely fill the gap in the literature or to create a new theory of integration. What I intend to do is to contribute to the research by analysing the process of integration across life domains. Broadly speaking, three research questions are central in this dissertation:

> **Research Question 1**: How do highly educated Turkish Belgian women experience different but interrelated events in life domains during their socioeconomic and socio-cultural incorporation processes?

Research Question 2: Which determinants of integration (both structural and cultural) influence the experiences of highly educated Turkish Belgian women in different life stages?

Research Question 3: How do highly educated Turkish Belgian women negotiate the influences of these determinants as they confront them in different life stages?

2.5. Overview of the Empirical Papers

The logic of empirical papers (Chapters 4 through 7) presented in this dissertation is determined by a life-course perspective because it more easily shows the connection between different subsequent life domains which are built on each other. However, the focus of this research was not primarily developed as a life-course perspective. Instead, as it is typical in Grounded Theory (GT) analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), the focus of research developed and changed over the course of collecting and analysing data. Although indications in research suggest that different life domains are related to each other, I only developed this insight at the final phase of data analysis. Therefore, empirical chapters in this dissertation explore particular themes within these domains and try to highlight different connections at various stages. The way how this focus was developed is discussed more in detail in methods section (see Chapter 4).

Paper 1 (see Chapter 5): Yilmaz, S., Van de Putte, B. & Stevens, P. A. J.(2018). The Influence of Ethnic-Specific Networks on Turkish Belgian Women's Educational and Occupational Mobility. *New Diversities*, 20(1), 1–15.

This paper focuses on highly educated Turkish Belgian women's experiences of how various forms of ethnic-specific networks developed opportunities and/or barriers for educational and occupational success, and the importance of structural features in which these networks are embedded. It aims to answer the following sub-research questions:

1) How durable/temporal are co-ethnic networks are over time and how transferable are they from one domain of mobility to another?
2) How are accessibility and activation of co-ethnic networks as resources embedded in structural features and how does this embeddedness function in shaping mobility processes?

Paper 2 (see Chapter 6): Yilmaz, S., Van de Putte, B. & Stevens, P. A. J. (2017). Work–family conflict: comparing the experiences of Turkish and native Belgian women. Community, *Work & Family*, 1–18.

Presented at *Demography Day*, 24 March 2015, University of Antwerp, Belgium
Presented at a Seminar organised by CeMIS, 2 June 2016, University of Antwerp, Belgium
Presented at *Turkish Migration Conference*, 12–15 July 2016, University of Vienna, Austria

This paper focuses on work and family domains of highly educated Turkish Belgian women and compares their experiences with native Belgian women to analyse variation in the work–family conflict (WFC) experiences and coping strategies of these two groups. It aims to answer the following sub-research questions:

1) How do strong family systems and social structures influence work and family balance for highly educated Turkish Belgian women?
2) How do women respond to family and work-related challenges?

Paper 3 (Chapter 7): Yilmaz, S., Van de Putte, B. & Stevens, P. A. J. (2019). The Paradox of Choice: Partner Choices among Highly Educated Turkish Belgian Women. *DiGeSt. Journal of Diversity and Gender Studies*, 6(1), 5-24.

Presented at *Hedera Research Weekend*, 11 January 2017, Belgium
Presented at *Sophia Conference*: Gender Studies in Belgium, a State of the Art. 19 October 2017, Brussels, Belgium

This paper explores inductively the kinds of partner choice options experienced by highly educated Turkish Belgian women and the conditions and social processes that stimulate them to (not) choose particular options. It aims to answer the following sub-research questions:

1) How do cultural shifts affect the partner choices of women?
2) What is the relationship between high educational attainment and partner choice?
3) How does social context explain the variability of partner choices women have?

Paper 4 (Chapter 8): Yilmaz, S., Van de Putte, B. & Stevens, P. A. J. Choosing a Partner for the Third Generation: Parental Expectations and Strategies of Highly Educated Turkish Belgian Mothers. Submitted to *International Migration Review*

Presented at *Hedera Research Day*, 31 May 2018, University of Ghent, Belgium

This paper examines highly educated Turkish Belgian women's parental expectations and strategies with regards to future partner choices of their children. It aims to answer the following sub-research questions:

1) How do the expectations of highly educated, second-generation Turkish Belgian women toward their children's (prospective) partner choices differ from the expectations their (first-generation) parents had of them?
2) What strategies do they pursue to realise their expectations for their children?
3) What explains variability in the parental expectations and strategies of these women?

"We loved them. We hated them. We wanted to be them.
How tall they were, how lovely, how fair.
Their long, graceful limbs. Their bright white teeth.
Their pale, luminous skin, which disguised all seven blemishes of the face.
Their odd but endearing ways, which ceased to amuse –
their love for A.I. sauce and high, pointy-toed shoes,
their funny, turned-out walk,
their tendency to gather in each other's parlours
in large, noisy groups and stand around talking,
all at once, for hours.
Why, we wondered, did it never occur to them to sit down?
They seemed so at home in the world.
So at ease.
They had a confidence that we lacked.
And much better hair. So many colours.
And we regretted that we could not be more like them".

(Julie Otsuka—The Buddha in the Attic)

3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Introduction

As Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 17) describe, qualitative research is "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification". More specifically, qualitative research seeks to understand a phenomenon from the perspective of participants. It is a particularly suitable methodology for research like my own, which seeks to develop insights into the behaviours, experiences, values and social processes of a particular population (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). In addition, the requirement for close interaction and rapport between the investigator and the research subject make qualitative methods ideal for exploring sensitive topics. Finally, qualitative methods are more appropriate for exploring and developing hypotheses in a new and relatively understudied field. Qualitative approaches thus offer the best means to unpack the complex reality of a given situation by providing insightful analyses of how people experience the issues under study.

As laid out in detail in the introductory chapter, my research questions attempt to uncover the experiences of a group of Turkish Belgian women and the strategies they employ in their various life domains, including education, employment, partner choice, family life and having children. Given the methodological advantages laid out above, the research problem naturally lends itself more to qualitative approaches, particularly their powerful mechanisms for deep insight into the various factors behind any phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Since my research deals with sensitive topics—such as private family life, personal challenges and the pressures women face navigating the various commitments and responsibilities they have—qualitative approaches allow me to build the necessary rapport with my participants so I can develop a deeper understanding of various phenomena, step-by-step. Lastly, focusing on the impact of higher education on the different life domains among highly educated Turkish Belgian women, my research deals with a relatively understudied topic. As mentioned above, quantitative approaches are better for testing particular hypotheses in a field for which existing knowledge exists, while qualitative approaches are ideal for developing new hypotheses in understudied fields.

My research generally reflects an *emic approach*, which is defined as adopting the insiders' views (Agar, 2006). To put it differently, I prioritise my participants' perceptions of the phenomenon and their own experiences. However, I do not claim that my research is completely free from any *etic perspective*—where the observations and interpretations of the researcher come into play. Scholars have asserted that qualitative research can never be exclusively emic (Watson-Gegeo, 1988) since researchers invariably bring their subjectivity into the research thorough past experiences and ideas (for further information see *Self-reflexivity* section). Rather, adopting the emic perspective in relation to the perceptions of participants concerning the issues under study provides a solid ground for the researcher, from an etic perspective, to draw implications and make meaningful comparisons. Following Agar (2006), I see both perspectives as inherent in qualitative research.

As one of the main qualitative research traditions, I adopted a Grounded Theory (GT) approach at all stages of my research. I followed the characteristics of GT including theoretical sampling (see *Research Sample* section), cyclical process of data collection (see *Data Collection and Analysis* sections), constant comparative approach to data analysis (see *Data Analysis* section) and a particular process for coding data (see *Data Analysis* section).

The following section describes and evaluates the key features of the research sample, the process of sampling and gaining access to participants. This is followed by data collection techniques and analysis of the data. The final two sections are focused on self-reflexivity and ethical considerations.

3.2. Research Sample

3.2.1. Participants

The participant group in this study consisted of 50 Turkish Belgian women and 10 native Belgian women (only as a comparison group for one empirical chapter) between the ages of 26 and 56. The study was limited to highly educated women with at least a bachelor's degree who currently have professional occupations. All Turkish Belgian participants belong to the second generation, either because they were born in Belgium or because they had moved to Belgium before the age of 6.

I choose highly educated Turkish Belgian women for several theoretical and practical reasons. First, the Turkish community in Belgium is one of Europe's largest non-Western immigrant groups, which makes them a theoretically important immigrant group in a Belgian and European context. They also live in a country where anti-immigrant sentiment is among the highest in Western Europe (Strabac & Listhaug, 2008). In addition, the Turkish community generally is characterised by low educational attainment, a strong family system and tight ethnic networks (Kalmijn & Van Tubergen, 2006; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001). Therefore, this small group of highly educated and professional women within the Turkish immigrant community is more likely to experience social mobility in a more complex way due to external (discrimination, social exclusion) and internal pressures (family system, norms and values, social pressure, traditional gender roles).

Second, these women tend to be trendsetters in their ethnic community since they lack prominent role models as professional working women/mothers. Although the educated second generation has drawn interest in recent years (Crul, 2013; Crul, Schneider & Lelie, 2013; Keskiner, 2013; Keskiner, 2015; Konyalı, 2014; Rezai et al., 2015), experiences of educated Turkish women are largely understudied. By focusing on this group, I take the opportunity to study how being highly educated influences different aspects of family life within strong family systems.

Third, research shows that Turkish Belgians experience cultural shifts over time (De Valk, 2006; González-Ferrer, 2006). However, these shifts are not likely to be straightforward, especially for women who are still expected to follow traditional gender roles, at least to some extent. Therefore, with this group, I find the chance to analyse the processual cultural shifts and generational changes these women experience in various integration domains. Furthermore, focusing on this particular group allows me to analyse the role played by traditional and 'modern' values (and their interaction) in this transition.

Fourth, as a woman with a Turkish background myself, there were practical considerations. Choosing Turkish Belgian women as my main focus reflected the more straightforward access that I have to the research population in Belgium and allowed me to build a relationship of trust with my respondents (as they are more likely to see me as an insider or as somebody 'who will understand them and not judge them' compared to researchers who are considered more as outsiders).

I chose highly educated native Belgian women as a comparison group for three reasons. First, the characteristic family types differ across these two communities: Turkish Belgian women are typically socialised in families with stronger ties, and native Belgians are in families where ties are weaker (Alesina & Giuliano, 2010). Second, native Belgian women form part of the dominant social system and this comparison allowed me to examine the role of family systems on work–family conflicts (WFCs). Additionally, this comparative perspective enabled a wider understanding of the differences between a diaspora group and a native one in terms of WFC experiences. I chose to focus on native Belgian women who are in professional careers because these roles typically demand a considerable amount of time and energy, thus impinging on family time and creating WFC.

The interview sample shows variability in terms of age, marital status, marriage type and family composition. Forty women were married, while ten of them were single, six of them were divorced and four participants were cohabiting with a partner at the time of the interview. Moreover, the majority of Turkish Belgian women and all native Belgian women had at least one child at the time of the interview (see Appendix 1). The variability in the ages of participants is theoretically relevant as it allows me to see the differences between older and younger generations in terms of experiences, decisions and responses. Variability in marital status and type are also theoretically important in order to explore different perspectives about marriage and the (difficult) choices women make in their private lives.

Table 1: Family Status

	Married	Single	Divorced	Cohabitation	Children
Turkish Belgian women	38	6	5	1	37
Native Belgian women	2	3	1	4	10

The family background of participants also shows variability in terms of educational attainment and parental occupation. Almost all of the parents of Turkish Belgian participants had migrated to Belgium as guest workers in the 1960s and 1970s to work in mines, textile factories and construction. Only a few of them had moved for other reasons, namely as religious (Muslim) teachers. Educational attainment is very low, especially among the Turkish Belgian mothers of the participants, the majority of whom had no experience working outside the home.

The parents of the native Belgian participants have at least lower secondary education and all of them have had work experiences in various jobs. These features are theoretically important as they influence future experiences of participants in terms of family resources for education and career, parental support, and being role models as working mothers.

Table 2: Educational Level of Parents

	No formal education	Primary education	Lower secondary education	Upper secondary education	Vocational education	Tertiary education
Turkish Belgian Women						
Mother	20	19	4	6	1	-
Father	3	20	12	10	2	3
Native Belgian Women						
Mother	-	-	3	3	3	1
Father	-	-	2	7	1	-

3.2.2. The Sampling Process

Theoretical sampling is a "central tenet" of the GT method (Coyne, 1997, p. 624) and is defined as:

> The process of data collection for generating theory whereby the analyst jointly collects, codes and analyses his [her] data and decides which data to collect next and where to find them, in order to develop his [her] theory as it emerges (Glaser, 1978, p. 36).

I applied *theoretical sampling* procedures throughout my study. Prior to data collection, I decided to sample participants according to a "reasonable initial set of criteria" which is also termed *selective sampling* (Sandelowski, Holditch-Davis & Harris, 1992, p. 302). Following Sandelowski and colleagues (1992), I believe that selective sampling can precede theoretical sampling. Therefore, initially, I specifically selected participants who fulfilled the following criteria:

1) Born in Belgium or having migrated to Belgium before the age of 6;
2) At least a university (bachelor's) diploma;
3) Employed (full- or part-time);
4) Of Turkish ancestry.

While sampling for the first wave of participants, I adopted an approach of *open sampling*, which is "open to those persons, places and situations that will provide the greatest opportunity to gather the most relevant data about the phenomenon under investigation" (Strauss & Corbin 1990, p. 181).

As a general procedure of theoretical sampling, I started eliciting codes from the raw data through *constant comparative* analysis from the start of data collection and I changed the sampling throughout the study (Glaser, 1992). For example, after analysing initial interviews with respondents from the first wave, I also included women who had prior work experience but had taken time out of the workforce for children or health problems at the time of the interview. Their experiences seemed important in understanding work–life balance and how family systems influence women's professional lives.

Furthermore, after analysing additional literature and the first set of interviews, I determined that WFC is more of an issue for women with children. I thus expanded the sample to include more participants with at least one child. Comparing across groups within a population to evaluate and test initial interpretations is another feature of *theoretical saturation* (Glaser, 1978). Therefore, I also added a small sample of native Belgian women to compare the WFC experiences of women raised in different family systems. When analysing partner choices, I expanded the criteria and conducted more interviews with women who were married, single or cohabiting at the time of the interview. In the last round of data collection, I specifically looked for women with children, because the analysis of first 30 interviews gave me insights about the theme of intergenerational value transmission; I added another 20 participants to examine this issue in depth. This choice allowed me to analyse the kinds of parental expectations this group of highly educated women experienced growing up and to compare these with the expectations for their own children.

I did not specify the exact number of participants before the study was conducted. In qualitative research, when new insights stop emerging from the process of data analysis, the researcher has reached a point of theoretical saturation data (Wilson & Hutchinson, 1991;

Marshall, 1996). At this point, the researcher can finalise the process of data collection. Information I gained during interviews helped me to determine the number of participants. To put it differently, I conducted interviews until the data reached a point of theoretical saturation and the data appeared sufficient for me to answer my research questions.

3.2.3. Gaining Access

Gaining access is defined as a dynamic and continuous process of establishing, strengthening and maintaining connections with research participants (Brewer, 1990; Feldman et al., 2003). Feldman, Bell and Berger (2003, p. xi) argue that such access is gained via the researcher's communication and relationship skills, which include "the ability to be flexible, to be persistent without being annoying, and to recognise luck and accept opportunities when they are offered".

When I decided to choose highly educated Turkish Belgian women as research participants, I assumed it would be easier to gain access due to my background as ethnic Turkish. Although I had settled in Belgium two years before my research began, I was not able to build strong relationships with members of the Turkish Belgian community in that period, because I was more engaged with Turkish expats and academics living in Belgium. At the outset of the research, I drew on friends' suggestions as to recruiting research participants.

The aim of qualitative research is to uncover the subjective perceptions of participants about a specific topic. The researcher must, therefore, have prior knowledge about the world of participants and the topic under investigation. According to Glaser (1978, p. 45), in the initial stages of a study, researchers "begin by talking to the most knowledgeable people to get a line on relevancies [which] leads to track more data". Therefore, before designing my semi-structured interview questions, I talked to people with knowledge about the group and searched for relevant literature. To gain more insight, I decided to contact some key figures in the Turkish Belgian community. In 2014, I talked to a Turkish Belgian politician and a psychologist who gave me more insight into the Turkish community in general, and (highly educated) Turkish Belgian women in particular. I shared my research topic with them and sought feedback and suggestions. I also asked them for further contacts. These initial informal meetings helped me to find my first research participants. After reaching out to a number of participants, I mainly continued with the help of intermediaries and the *snowball technique* to find more research participants (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981).

My study population of highly educated professional women in the Belgian Turkish community has *high social visibility*; obtaining access was therefore not generally a problem (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). I directly contacted some highly visible participants without intermediaries, and I could reach only 11 Turkish Belgian participants directly. Although I used snowball sampling, it was not simply "to sit back and allow the resulting chain to follow its own course" (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981, p. 142). I started the first snowball chain with my personal contacts and direct contacts. I asked all participants to refer others and only some of them gave a few names (rarely with phone numbers or e-mails), rather than arranging the connection themselves. Only a few participants were asked to assist with the research regularly. I identified these *research assistants* based on some criteria; first of all, I made sure that they understood the goal of my research and the eligibility criteria; second, I tried to have a variability of these intermediaries in terms of characteristics, occupations, self-definitions about being secular or religious. By doing this, I aimed at avoiding a homogeneous group. In addition, by constantly analysing the characteristics of the participants, I ensured that the sample included a variety of respondents based on the characteristics of the group under study.

In general, the snowball chains were not sustainable, and I had to initiate new chains when original contacts were exhausted. Organising and controlling snowball chains depends on a researcher's active and sustainable efforts. Therefore, I actively searched for ways to contact the names provided by participants and followed up to reach them through intermediaries. Since some members of the research population are highly visible as Turkish Belgian doctors, lawyers and politicians, I identified the names myself, but I sought out intermediaries to facilitate the connection and verify if they are eligible in terms of research criteria.

With native Belgian women, I mainly depended on intermediaries. One of the Turkish Belgian participants explained my research to her native Belgian colleagues and one of them was interested in participating. This is how interviews with native Belgians began. Another friend circulated my call for participants in her network and three participants contacted me to do the interview. For further participants, I asked my Flemish friends at the university and they directed me to some of their friends, but only one was interested in participating. Rather than giving me names to contact—as the majority of Turkish Belgian participants did—native Belgian participants helped me by putting me in direct contact with potential participants.

Overall, I reached native Belgian participants through different intermediaries and this enabled variability within the sample of participants.

Table 3: Participant Recruitment

	Intermediary	Personal Network	Direct Access
Turkish Belgian Women	33	6	11
Native Belgian Women	10		

Although the snowball technique was the most common strategy I used during sampling, I used a variety of other techniques to reach research participants, including email and telephone contact, Facebook, outreach through (migrant and ethnic minority women's) organisations, and newsletter advertising. Table 4 gives an overview of my successful and unsuccessful attempts and response rate in general. Of the 106 women I asked to participate with in-depth interviews, 38 never replied. These were the ones whom I tried to contact through e-mails or Facebook messages. I exchanged messages and phone calls with six women who were eager to participate but could not arrange it due to their busy schedules. Although I arranged an interview and sent reminders, two women did not show up at the interviews we scheduled together. One interview was scheduled at the office of a participant, but when I arrived, she did not open the door or respond to my phone calls. Despite all these techniques, I found it difficult to reach some Turkish Belgian women who are more likely to (publicly) identify themselves only with Belgians (e.g., some politicians, academics). It would be interesting if I could include these women. I tried to reach them through various channels mentioned above, however, it did not work out since they did not respond. Therefore, I decided not to develop a case study with this group.

Table 4: Overview of Response Rate

Successful		Unsuccessful Attempts		
1 interview	2 interviews	Positive	No reply	Cancel
53	7	6	38	2

Overall, most Turkish Belgian participants were eager to help a co-ethnic succeed in her research and assisted me in finding other participants. My research topic also facilitated my access to participants since—as highly educated women—they were happy to talk about their success stories and achievements. Rather than bringing my formal researcher identity to the fore, I approached them as a young, highly educated Turkish woman keen to hear how they reflect on their success. Native Belgian participants were also very eager to contribute—most had prior experience with research and found the subject (WFC) important and interesting.

In sum, although the sampling strategies resulted in a more homogenous group of respondents in a sense that they were all highly educated women with a Turkish migration background, they also seemed to show variability in terms of key attitudes, values and experiences related to my research questions.

3.3. Data Collection

Strauss and Corbin (1990) define data collection as a *cyclical process*, in which the collection and analysis of data occur simultaneously. Following their principle, I collected my data in different phases, which helped me to constantly re-analyse existing data, refine interview questions based on existing data and discover new themes to be further analysed with subsequent interviews.

The data collection process consisted in three phases. In each phase, I first conducted a wide search for general information followed by a more focused exploration of narrower topics. In the first phase of the project (October 2014 to August 2015), I interviewed 20 participants. In this intensive period of initial data collection, a broad range of topics was addressed, including family background information, educational and occupational experiences, social control, discrimination, ethnic community, traditional gender roles, the balance between family and professional lives, and partner choice. After the first few interviews, I revised my question set to hone in on the theme of WFC. At this point, I decided to add a comparative perspective to this particular theme and conducted ten interviews with highly educated native Flemish women in Ghent.

In period two (April 2016 to June 2016), I collected additional data through interviews with ten participants, focusing on partner choices along with other general themes such as educational and occupational experiences, social pressure, and ethnic community networks. The third period of data collection (April 2017 to November 2017) was dedicated to parental expectations and intergenerational value transmission. I interviewed 20 new participants and included seven more participants from period 1 and 2. As a characteristic of GT, the cyclical process of data collection and analysis helped me to develop categories (themes). I changed the focus of interviews with each new category to elaborate and refine the master set of categories.

Table 5: Periods of Data Collection

Period	Focus	Number of Participants
1) Oct 2014-August 2015	General-WFC	30
2) April-June 2016	Partner Choice	10
3) April-Nov 2017	Intergenerational Transmission	20 (+7 from Period 1 and 2)

3.3.1. In-depth Interviews

I used *in-depth qualitative interviews* as the main source of data for this research. The aim of in-depth interviews is to collect very rich, person-centred information (Silverman, 2000). Such interviews are one of the most appropriate ways to gain insight into people's feelings, perceptions and concerns about specific topics. As my general research questions deal with personal stories and experiences of participants, in-depth interviews provided rich and elaborate information about my participants' individual experiences and helped me to describe variations within this group.

In the course of conducting interviews, I used both *semi-structured* interview questions (a combination of closed and open-ended questions) and *unstructured* ones (not following a formal order of questions). Interviews were mostly person-centred, going back and forth within participants' life stories, allowing me to prompt to learn more about their experiences in different life domains over time and the meaning attached to these experiences.

Before conducting interviews, I created an outline which helped me to decide the range of issues I wanted to cover during each interview. However, I did not always stick to the questions; they functioned instead as mnemonic devices for important points I wanted to raise and as to steer the conversation. Furthermore, having a set of statements set out in advance allows the researcher to minimise gathering "inconsistent or non-comparable data across participants" (Weller, 1998, p. 366). The sequence of questions was not logical but more flexible. However, in general, I followed a gradual life story approach, starting with themes related to education, occupation, partner choice and having children. Later interviews contained questions that had been refined from statements of participants in the initial

interviews. Therefore, the data was not only collected but also produced through a collaboration between interviewer and participants.

As indicated, the questionnaire changed to some extent over the course of the interviews. The procedures of theoretical sampling make room for such refinement in research instruments (Coyne, 1997). According to Glaser (1978, p. 39): "The researcher continually asks questions as to fit, relevance and workability about the emerging categories and relationships between them". Thus, "some questions or foci with which you entered the interview or observational site will quickly get dropped, or seem less salient, or at least get supplemented" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 183). Based on these procedures, I would return to touch on initial topics in each interview, with some issues covered in depth and others discussed in passing. In addition, new topics were added to existing ones. For example, in the first round of data collection, I focused on WFC (among other things). Therefore, I asked detailed questions about work and family experiences. After concluding that I had collected sufficient data to answer my sub-research questions, I decreased the number of questions about WFC in the second round and went deeper on partner choice. As mentioned, in the last phase of data collection, I included more questions about parental expectations and intergenerational value transmission (see Appendix 2 for themes in the questionnaire).

At the beginning of each interview, I explained my research in detail and gave information about the interview process and confidentiality (see *Ethical Considerations* section for more details). Four types of questions, in general, guided my interviews; *introductory questions*, *transition questions*, *key questions* and *closing questions* (Creswell, 2007; Krueger & Casey, 2009; Merriam, 2009). I always started with easy descriptive questions. For example, I asked participants about their age, family situation, which schools they had attended and where they grew up. The aim of these general questions is to give participants space to talk about themselves and to elicit their demographic information. Some of them introduced themselves only very briefly—I then prompted with further questions to know them better—while some others took their time to talk about different aspects of their lives. I followed Minichiello, Aroni and Hays's (2008) *funnelling strategy* and began with broad questions and then narrowed the topics with further questions. More specifically, using transition questions, I steered the discussion from one topic to another to progress the interview towards the key research questions. For example, I asked participants to answer questions about their job experiences, work schedules, family situation, and responsibilities at home. Then I continued

with a series of key questions to learn more about their WFC experiences. I also used probing to ask more detailed questions to ensure I had fully understood a given issue and to explore the reasons and consequences of some actions (Levy & Hollan, 1998). To conclude the interview, I asked the participants if they wanted to add anything.

3.3.2. Interview Context

Once a prospective participant had agreed to participate, I contacted them to arrange a face-to-face interview. I let participants choose (to the extent possible) the time and place of the interview. Since most interviews happened during the day, the majority of the interviews were conducted at participants' workplaces; others were held in cafes or other public meeting places near to the workplace. I visited eight participants in their houses, and I conducted seven Skype interviews.

Table 6: Interview Location

	Informant's home	Informant's workplace	Public place	Online
Turkish Belgian women	7	21	15	7
Native Belgian women	1	3	6	
Total	8	24	21	7

The most productive interviews were those that took place at the workplace because there was ample private space and participants were less likely to be distracted. However, I had limited time for some interviews, which created a pressure for me to cover everything in a specified time.

Conducting interviews in participants' homes was very helpful in terms of building trust and having more time; on the other hand, in most home interviews children were present, which disturbed the course of the interview from time to time. Contrary to some studies which argue that interviewing at home can be dangerous, especially for female researchers (Gailey & Prohaska, 2011; Lee, 1997; Sharp & Kremer, 2006), I felt extremely welcomed, comfortable and safe, probably due to similarities in gender.

Interviewing through Skype had both advantages and limitations. Skype certainly widened the range of my sampling by allowing me to reach participants with no time for a face-to-face interview. This method gives more flexibility in terms of location and time for the interview (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014; Rowley, 2012). However, the challenging issue was building rapport over Skype (Cater, 2011; Rowley 2012) because having an unstructured conversation in front of a computer screen is difficult. Some of these interviews turned out to be more structured since participants expected me to ask questions one by one. However, repeated contacts via messages and e-mails before Skype helped me to build rapport (Seitz, 2015) and on reflection, it was clear that being able to Skype in a private space helped some (particularly shy) participants to disclose easily over Skype (Hanna, 2012).

During the course of interviews, I adopted a non-hierarchical approach by giving participants the flexibility to skip some issues that they were not comfortable to answer, to take breaks when needed, and to ask me questions. I followed the advice of several studies (Lee 1997; Mann & Murphy, 1975; Oakley, 1981), which contend that self-disclosure—sharing one's own experiences—facilitates empathy and helps participants to be more expressive. Participants did ask me questions about my experiences and my opinion about certain issues we discussed, which I answered to the best of my ability.

Some turned my questions back to myself, to learn more about my own experience. For example, after several questions about WFC, one participant asked me how I balance my own work and family life and how my partner and I share home responsibilities. I said that we still organise our lives not as a 'family' per se but as a newly married couple without children. She then reflected on when she was married before having children and how work–family balance was not an important issue at that time.

In addition, some native Belgian participants asked me questions about the WFC experiences of my Turkish Belgian participants after the end of the interview. I replied to their questions by summarising the general outcomes of my interviews with Turkish Belgian women. In general, they asked me questions after they had discussed an issue based on my questions. Therefore, I did not see any clear influence from my self-disclosures on their responses. Instead, my self-disclosures were *facilitative*—helping participants reflect and then elaborate on their views about particular issues to explain why they had a different/similar experience. I preferred to come back to some questions in detail after the interview. These self-

disclosures also helped me to identify more as a person in the interaction, rather than a pure data-gatherer.

Overall, participants were eager to talk about their lives and challenges. Some were very open about private issues (e.g., relationship with partners, family problems), while others preferred to answer certain questions about family problems in a superficial way. Out of 60 interviews, only one participant did not allow me to record the interview but allowed to take notes. Another one was uneasy about the recording at the beginning, but after my explanations about confidentiality, she eventually allowed me to record the interview.

Table 7: Interview Durations

	<30min	30min-1hour	1hour-1h30min	1h30min-2hours	>2hours
Turkish Belgian women	1	13	24	10	2
Native Belgian women		5	4	1	

Conducting semi-structured and unstructured interviews requires interpersonal skills. An ideal interviewer should be talkative, motivate participants to talk, ask the right questions at the right moments, have listening skills and be alerted to improvise and change the topic when required. Therefore, after each interview, I tried to reflect on the interview process and evaluate my approach, the quality of the information gathered, and how my background informed the process (see *Self-reflexivity* section for details). I asked myself if I had dominated the discussion, whether the broad opening questions were suitable openers, and if the probing questions were effective in ascertaining further subject detail. I also noted any revisions needed for the following interviews (see Appendix 3 for an example).

3.4. Data Analysis

3.4.1. Transcription

Ochs (1979) argued that transcription is an inherently theoretical exercise. In other words, rather than a mere technical procedure, transcription forms a central part of the analysis. In a similar vein, Silverman (2000, p. 131) defines transcriptions as "a theoretically saturated activity".

I transcribed all the audio records myself. Although this was certainly not practical in terms of time efficiency, it did give me the advantage of being more involved in the interpretation of the content (Wellard & McKenna, 2001). While transcribing, in addition to textual information, I also preserved any non-verbal components—gestures, pauses, tones, sounds (crying, laughing)—that might bear meaningfully on the analysis (Poland & Pederson, 1998; West, 1996). I developed and applied a transcription guideline which can be found in Appendix 10.

3.4.2. Coding Procedures

Qualitative research has three main components (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The first is collection of data, which in my research was drawn from interviews. The second concerns the procedures for analysing and interpreting the data, while the third relates to output—namely, a written or verbal report of the findings. Here, I focus on interpretive procedures, which include the techniques for analysing and conceptualising data. As mentioned, throughout my research I adopted a GT approach, which implies a continual back-and-forth between data, analysis and theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Coding is the main interpretative-analytical procedure, with the writing of memos and diagramming of conceptual relationships also crucial to the analytic process (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Coding is when the researcher breaks the data down, conceptualises it and puts it back together in new ways. As mentioned, I adopted coding procedures throughout drawing on the principles of GT. More specifically, I analysed my data through open, axial and selective coding. Open coding is the first, basic analytical step where "the data are broken down into discrete parts, closely examined, compared for similarities and differences" (Strauss & Corbin,

1990, p. 62). Axial coding, on the other hand, is "a set of procedures whereby data are put back together in new ways […] by making connections between categories" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 96).

After completing a few initial interviews, I fully transcribed the related audio and started analysing them via open coding. I broke the text down and closely examined it phrase by phrase, applying labels based on the meaning of the text components (see an example in Appendix 6). At the end of this broad process of open coding, I created a list of initial conceptual labels. Then I categorised concepts that seem to belong to the same phenomena, which is defined according to GT as axial coding. Through axial coding, I developed a set of main categories and associated sub-categories by establishing clear connections between a category and its subordinate types. These categories helped me to draw initial provisional themes which were mostly in line with the topics I covered during interviews (e.g., Turkish community, partner choice, work–family conflict, family characteristics). This line-by-line analysis helped me to generate main categories in the initial phase of my research and to decide what to focus on in subsequent interviews.

From this point, I started using the software programme NVivo to aid the data coding. I created the initial codes based on the themes generated. I chose NVivo because it offers the possibility to store and organise data in one place. It also helped me to classify the data (see Appendix 7 for coding structure). NVivo can facilitate many aspects of the GT approach since it allows for the creation of memos, incorporation of relevant literature for theoretical sampling, managing data documents, creation of a node structure and development of concepts and theories (Bazeley, 2007; Hutchison et al., 2010).

Having these initial themes in my mind, I conducted additional interviews and continued analysing data. Data analysis was thus a *cyclical* process, in which periods of data collection were followed by data analysis, which in turn informed subsequent processes of data collection. As I read through the data sentence by sentence, I posed *constant comparative* questions to make sense of the underlying meaning. Then I either assigned them to already existing codes in NVivo or created new codes based on new themes and sub-themes if and when these emerged. Some of the codes were derived from concepts drawn from the literature, while others were based on the concepts that participants themselves mentioned. After examining initial interviews separately, I applied the *constant comparative approach* of GT to ascertain similarities and differences and I compared each additional interview in a wave with

the previous one (Creswell, 2002; Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Moreover, at all stages of data analysis, I used memos and diagrams (mostly tables) to deepen my analysis (see examples in Appendix 8).

After each interview, I refined the coding tree, reorganising codes and sub-codes. To enhance *theoretical sensitivity*, I used the technique of questioning to stimulate more specific questions (who, when, where, what, how, why?) and to further develop categories. For example, I grouped the characteristics of participants who had formed an inter-ethnic marriage by asking the question: who? I grouped all the ways (how?) ethnic networks influence educational and occupational mobility. I grouped all definitions (what?) of WFC and looked at their strategies (how?) to cope with it.

In the next step, following GT-based procedures of *selective coding*, I specified one main theme (*core category*) to be the centre of an empirical research chapter (e.g., work–family conflict; ethnic-specific networks; partner choice; intergenerational value transmission). While choosing a core category, I followed criteria developed by Strauss and Corbin (1998). That is, categories which are central: 1) appear frequently in the data; 2) have a logical and consistent relationship with other categories; 3) have an abstract name which can lead to theory development, and; 4) can explain variation. After defining core categories, I used *selective coding* by "systematically relating [the core category] to other categories, validating those relationships, and filling in categories that need further refinement and development" (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 116). I used the coding paradigm to make connections between categories by establishing the logical links between phenomenon, conditions, context, action/interactional strategies and consequences (Strauss & Corbin 1990, p. 96). In the case of partner choice (phenomenon), I looked at under which conditions participants choose their partners, how they respond to challenging situations related to their partner choices and the consequences of their choices. In the case of WFC, I explored what types of conflicts participants experience, how they cope with these conflicts and conditions affecting their experiences related to WFC (see an example in Appendix 9).

After making connections between categories, I wrote the first draft of my findings. At this stage, I went back to the existing literature to see the connections and identify potential gaps in my research. Then, I conducted further interviews to collect more data and validate the established links. Once I determined that my analysis had reached *theoretical saturation*, my statements were grounded in the data and I did not obtain new findings from additional

interviews, I finalised the data collection process and started working on coded texts to prepare them for specific empirical articles. All the memos, diagrams, and links established between categories and sub-categories were helpful analytical aids in the writing process. For each theme, I translated the results into an outline for the main analytic story.

3.4.3. Development of Research Focus

The initial focus of this research was to uncover the experiences of highly educated Turkish Belgian women on their way to upward social mobility and their family lives in this process. As discussed in detail above, the first core category I identified was WFC. When discussing their work and family lives, partner choice and its implications were always salient in the life stories of the participants. Therefore, in identifying subsequent research themes, I decided to focus on partner choice and the variability in the marriage behaviour of highly educated Turkish Belgian women and identifying and describing the social processes that inform these choices. Moreover, from the beginning of this PhD study, participants repeatedly referred to the positive and negative influences of their ethnic groups and strong families on their career perspectives. Therefore, as a third main theme, I focused on ethnic community networks and which resources and limitations for educational and occupational mobility are used by these women. In addition, throughout this research, participants frequently compared their own relationship and experiences with their parents and how these influence their own parenting practices. Therefore, at the last stage of my research, I specified intergenerational transmission as the main concept and collected more data to explore this issue in detail. Based on these themes that developed more inductively throughout the process of data collection and analysis, I came to see connections between these themes towards the end of this PhD research; connections that could be framed theoretically from a life-course perspective. As a result, and as mentioned earlier, the empirical chapters in this dissertation are presented in particular chronology that fits with a life-course perspective.

3.4.4. Validity

It is argued that the claims of qualitative research cannot be valid if only a few well-chosen examples are reported, the criteria for choosing specific instances are not provided, and if original materials are not available (Silverman, 2000, p. 188). In order to reach more valid

findings, Silverman (2000, p. 188) proposes five methods of critical analysis: applying the *refutability principle,* the *constant comparative method, comprehensive data treatment, deviant-case analysis*, and using *appropriate tabulations.*

I employed *the constant comparative method* by starting an analysis of a small part of my data (initial interviews). Having generated a provisional analytic scheme with an initial set of categories, I steadily expanded my data to test provisional hypotheses emerging from the initial cases after which I modified the scheme. This provisional scheme was sometimes confronted with opposite cases (*deviant cases*) until I constructed a set of rules that involved all the cases and explained almost all variation in the data. Repeated inspection and constant analysis of all parts of the data allowed a more *comprehensive data treatment* that helped me to derive an integrated model that comprehensively describes a particular phenomenon (ten Have 1998, cited in Silverman, 2000).

3.5. Self-Reflexivity

Researchers are implicitly assumed to be studying or analysing something 'outside' themselves. However, "all researchers are to some degree connected to, or part of, the object of their research" (Davies, 2008, p. 3). This raises the question about whether/to what extent the research process and the results are influenced by the presence of the researcher. Davies (2008, p. 112) argues that researchers have to consider how all of the shared and disparate 'statuses' might affect their interactions with research participants.

Analysing the characteristics of the researcher, Reinharz (2011) identifies multiple (personal, professional) identities or *selves*. Each will contribute to the experience of the researcher and the phenomenon under study. According to Reinharz' categorisation, *research selves* are concerned with doing the research, while *personal selves* are those brought to the research. I believe that there is no clear-cut distinction between research and personal selves, both of which are interrelated. In what follows, I discuss the influence of my personal selves—ethnicity, age, educational status, gender and marital status—and how I developed a research self.

3.5.1. Personal and Research Selves

As opposed to arguments about *epistemological privilege*—which assume that a particular aspect of researcher's identity creates an inherent benefit for the research (Padfield & Procter, 1996; Styles, 1979)—I was aware that every aspect of my identity created *both* advantages and limitations. A researcher can manage this by engaging what Giovanni (1986) defines as *impression management*. Here, she highlights those aspects of her identity that are close to those of participants and avoids attracting attention to other aspects which might be problematic. Throughout the interviews, I paid attention to stress commonalities such as my age, gender, educational level, family background and shared hobbies.

Several authors have argued that there should be a balance between the professional responsibilities of the researcher and her interpersonal ones (Moser & Kalton, 2017; Selltiz et al., 1959). I did not make an extra effort to establish this balance. Being inspired by feminist research methodology, I followed a non-hierarchical interview approach which helped me to maintain this balance. According to feminist research methodology, the researcher-participant relationship is already very susceptible to hierarchy, since the researcher prepares the questions and organises the interview (Finch, 1993; Oakley, 1981; Stanley & Wise, 1993). Therefore, some feminist researchers suggest adopting a *non-hierarchical research* approach which places both interviewer and interviewee on equal footing. This approach, furthermore, helped me to minimise the power imbalance and social distances between me and my participants and gave participants the power to make decisions about the process and the content of the interview. Moreover, frequent self-disclosures helped me to maintain this relatively intimate and non-hierarchical relationship (for self-disclosures see *Interview Context* section).

My efforts to establish a reciprocal relationship proved successful throughout the interviews. My participants' unprompted engagement with my research process is a case in point here. Most of them showed an interest in seeing the results of my study; others took the initiative to arrange other interviews on my behalf; one participant sent a follow-up email to add to her answers; some of them offered prospective issues that I might find worthwhile pursuing in my research. In addition, I continued the relationship with most participants after interviews. I established a close friendship with three of them, and I follow most on social media.

3.5.2. An Insider or an Outsider?

Research on qualitative methodology has devoted ample attention to the insider–outsider debate (see Beoku-Betts, 1994; De Andrade, 2000; DeVault, 1996; Merton, 1972). A common assumption is that being an insider provides the researcher with intimate knowledge of the community that could be difficult for an outsider to access (Labaree, 2002). However, treating the insider–outsider paradigm as a dichotomy in which both elements are mutually exclusive overlooks the fact that researchers are "multiple insiders and outsiders" (Deutsch, 1981, p. 174) who frequently position themselves around boundaries of 'insiderness' and 'outsiderness' (Griffith, 1998).

As a Turkish woman who was born and raised in Turkey, at the beginning I had some concerns about the potential impact of my ethnicity on my research since I was neither a complete insider nor a complete outsider. Although I am Turkish and my participants all have Turkish origins, I do not share their experiences as Turkish Belgian women who combine two different lifestyles and cultures. In addition, my previous experiences with Turkish Belgians made me think that both Turkish-born and European-born Turks have certain biases in relation to people from the other group. Some Turkish Belgians I know (mostly highly educated) were critical about the way how people live, study, work and eat in Turkey. At the same time, they expressed open admiration for my 'decent' and 'pure' Turkish accent.[2] Based on these experiences, I was afraid to make them uncomfortable with my identity as a 'pure' Turkish who was born and raised in Turkey. That is why I defined my position (to myself) as 'in-between' in terms of the insider–outsider dichotomy.

My initial concerns were proved unfounded when I started conducting interviews with women. However, their concerns about their Turkish accent were always an issue that some of them wanted to apologise due to their 'bad' Turkish accent. When they started talking about this, I always replied: "you learn more than one language here and you are luckier compared to the ones who were raised in Turkey because our education system is not good enough to teach foreign languages". The smile on their faces made me feel that my open statement made them happy and more self-confident during the interview.

[2] The majority of the research participants (Belgian born Turkish speakers) disclosed that they cannot speak 'pure' Turkish and an accent can be detected.

In addition, the fact that I am 'in-between' had some positive impacts as opposed to being negative. First, I was not so much familiar with their community. Although there is a sizeable Turkish community in Belgium, most highly educated women knew each other and some of them were from the same cities and neighbourhoods. Any Turkish Belgian researcher would have found building trust more of an issue since they would have concerns talking about their private issues concerning judgement and gossip. I was more like an insider when they talked about their experiences with native Belgians, especially when they talked about experiences about discrimination. I felt like an outsider when some women tended to defend their Turkish Belgian community and made an effort to give a good image of Turkish Belgians by talking about stereotypes. Related to this, Zinn (1979) argued that researchers from the same minority group might have a deeper understanding of certain aspects of racial/ethnic phenomena and this helps the insider researcher to break down *self-protective* behaviours. However, I experienced such self-protective behaviours even though I am an ethnic minority researcher. I felt guilty at these moments because I had the feeling that they were simply trying to correct my own unwitting biases. After such interviews, I tried to take a step back and think about my questions and my communication style to avoid any further misunderstanding. However, in general, these instances were rare.

In general, I felt acceptance and appreciation of my 'expertise' throughout the research. For example, one of my participants who was a psychologist asked me to help set up a focus group of young Turkish Belgian women to talk about my research results and motivate them with examples of successful women. I also shared all publications based on my interviews with my participants and asked for their comments on them.

With native Belgian women, I was an outsider as an ethnic Turkish, but these interviews were comparably shorter, and issues were relatively less sensitive since we only talked about their experiences of work–family balance. Most of them studied at Ghent University and were familiar with research and interviews. Therefore, my role as a researcher was easily accepted and welcomed by them.

3.5.3. A Young, Married, Highly Educated, Woman Researcher

Being a female researcher facilitated gaining access, building trust and maintaining it. Coming from a Turkish Muslim background, I was aware of the gender norms institutionalised by

religion and/or culture in the Turkish community. I always felt the relief of being a female when I approached women who defined themselves either as religious or secular. Being invited to their private spaces without hesitation and, being trusted to talk about their private life stories, my opinion was often proved valid for both Turkish Belgian and native Belgian participants.

I was in the same age category as most of my participants, which facilitated gaining access. In Turkish culture, supporting a young motivated woman who has left her country and parental family for education is relatively important. I was always appreciated and praised due to my 'courage', 'ambition' and 'motivation'.

My marital status also played a role in my communication with participants. The majority of them were married or had a partner at the time of the interview, and I was seen mature and experienced enough to understand their experiences with marriage. I was proven right about my assumption when I realised that some women with children offered answers that underscored my lack of experience in raising children. Some of them would explain to me: "you will understand this when you have children". However, I do not think that this affected my research results since they did not consider parental expectations to be an issue as private as, say, marriage.

My higher education status always created a positive impact on my participants, because we were sharing the same status. Conducting research in a well-known university in Belgium made my research more trustworthy and serious because they were sure that the results would only be used for research purposes and it would be under the name of a university.

3.5.4. Researcher Appearance and Dress Code in the Research Encounter

Research suggests that the researcher's appearance in research field matters (Carling, Erdal & Ezzati, 2014; Goffman 1989). Although the impact of researcher's dress on the research process is "elusive, difficult to capture, perhaps even impossible to prove" (Lisiak, 2015, p. 2), it is an important dynamic to be considered. Several authors suggest women researchers interviewing men to dress in a professional and conservative way (Gailey & Prohaska, 2011; Green et al., 1993; Gurney, 1985), while some other authors suggest moderate dress choices in general (Gray et al., 2014).

I was wearing hijab when I started my research. I did not think about the potential influence of my appearance on my research at the beginning, because hijab was part of my identity. Some of my participants were also wearing hijab and I thought my dress had a positive impact on building trust. With some others, I did not feel that they were uncomfortable but when they criticised some religious norms and limitations, they tended to finish it by saying "but we respect our religion (in our heart)", "I am not wearing hijab but I am fasting during Ramadan", "our religion is, in fact, good, but it is misinterpreted". However, the same women were quite willing to open up about very private experiences that they know to be contrary to their own religion's tenets.

After the third year of my research, I decided to stop wearing hijab due to completely personal reasons. I did the last round of interviews with Turkish Belgian women with my new outlook. In general, I did not observe a big difference, and I did not also hear such sentences as mentioned above. In addition, two of my participants criticised their mothers' decision to wear hijab. They expressed the view that hijab is not 'modern' enough. I thought that they would avoid such open statements if I had been wearing hijab at the time of the interview. Apart from these instances, I found it challenging to evaluate the impact of hijab on my interviews.

I conducted all interviews with native Belgian participants when I was wearing hijab, therefore I did not have a chance to make a comparison. However, I did not feel that they were unwilling or shy to answer my questions due to this. Since the issues that we discussed were more about family systems and work–family conflict—rather than religious socialisation or practices—I conclude that my hijab had no meaningful influence on the interview process with native Belgian women.

3.6. Ethical Considerations

Increasing reflexivity in research raises questions about ethics in the conduct of research (Davies, 2008). Although ethical considerations were traditionally formulated for quantitative biomedical research, qualitative social research started exploring ethical issues in the 1960s (Bulmer, 1982; Homan, 1991; Kimmel 1988; Robley, 1995).

3.6.1. Key Procedural Ethics

The American Sociological Association stipulates a set of principles and ethical standards to be used as guidelines by sociologists in their professional work (2018). These ethical standards call on "researchers to articulate the purpose and significance of their project, the ways they will minimise harm to their participants, and their data management practices" (Baker et al., 2016, p. 607). *Informed consent* is a central tenet here, and a way of showing respect for the *autonomy*, *dignity* and *privacy* of research participants (Davies, 2008; Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). Informed consent consists in two main elements: 1) providing participants with clear information about the nature of the research and the potential consequences of participation, and; 2) obtaining permission only after participants have indicated complete understanding of the information so provided (Homan, 1991).

I began to practise *informed consent* in the early stages of my research—namely, as I invited Turkish Belgian women to participate in the research. I explained the nature of my research in a way that is understandable and meaningful to participants. Although I adopted a strategy of being persistent in gaining access to research participants, I was careful not to be irritating and I did not seek to persuade unwilling women to participate (Feldman et al., 2003). A few women wanted to see the questions before the interview. In such cases, I shared the main themes that would be discussed during the interview and informed the participants about the semi-structured nature of the questions. At the beginning of each interview, I allocated some time to explain the research in general, the process of interviewing and where the information would be used. I also asked their permission to record the interview.

I followed relevant procedures to ensure the privacy of research participants. First of all, I gave them the freedom to choose the place of the interview. However, I also encouraged them to choose a venue where they would feel most comfortable. When meeting at a workplace,

interviews were mostly conducted in separate rooms with a high degree of privacy. Thus, participants could reflect and ponder questions and answers with minimal disturbance. For those interviews conducted in participants' homes, small children were typically in the house but were usually busy playing. Some participants I interviewed in public meeting places (e.g., coffee shops) asked me to choose the venue. I evaluated different options to arrange interview venues where participants would feel comfortable.

Based on the *right to privacy*, all participants were assigned unique pseudonyms and personal information that might reveal their identity was removed from the presentation of the data analyses. As mentioned above, the Turkish community in Belgium is relatively closed and highly educated female are small in number within the community and are thus likely to be well known. Therefore, pseudonyms were not enough to ensure full confidentiality for these women. I also avoided extensive direct quotes that might make participants recognisable to others who know them well.

Assuring *confidentiality* is another key principle in procedural ethics. Generally speaking, confidentiality is about the correct treatment of personal information gained about participants in the course of the research (Davies, 2008). Following this, I informed all participants about the storage and the usage of the information they provided. I made sure that only I (or potentially my supervisor) would hear the recordings and that the information would only be used for this PhD project. All the recordings and transcripts were password-protected in a cloud system (Dropbox) and the university digital storage system.

Apart from these general procedural ethics, I also considered *ethical questions about disengagement* and researchers' responsibilities to their participants after data collection is completed (Zinn, 1979). To this purpose, I stayed in touch with all participants who expressed such a wish. Some ethnographers make careful calculations about whom they are going to share the final results of the research with, often to avoid conflict (Bogdan & Taylor, 1984). This is particularly so for 'insider' researchers because they generally remain within the community after the research and may face possible repercussions from participants (Labaree, 2002). Instead, I shared the publications from the research results with all participants and asked for their comments and feedback. Despite these potential challenges of doing so, I preferred to be entirely open with my research results and shared all the outcomes with those who had participated in their development.

Another ethical issue is to distinguish probing from *exploitation* through overly *intrusive interviews* which might harm participants (Kidd & Finleyson, 2006; Richards & Schwartz, 2002). This draws attention to the researcher's *duty of care* which extends to both research participants and the researcher herself (Dickson-Swift et al., 2008). Respecting the boundaries and experiences of research participants is one of the most important aspects of the duty of care (Bastida et al. 2010). In addition, several authors mention the significance of physical and emotional self-care for researchers due to potential psychological influences of discussing sensitive issues (Booth & Booth, 1994; Dickson-Swift et al., 2007). The latter was not generally a big issue since my research subject and field are not deemed risky. However, I had difficulties in deciding how much to probe when some participants talked about difficult life experiences. For example, one of the participants started crying when recounting her mother's lack of affection and love towards her. Rather than prompt her further, I let her settle her tears in her own time and decide if she wished to continue. Once she had done so, she picked up her story and continued. I had a similar challenge when another participant was talking about how her parents had disowned her because of her partner choice. Although I had many questions in my mind, I carefully considered their impact before posing them and made sure she felt comfortable to continue.

3.6.2. Situational Ethics

Apart from procedural ethics, a researcher might face "the difficult, often subtle, and usually unpredictable situations that arise in the practice of doing research" (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004, p. 262). Although rare, I felt this challenge a few times during my research.

In the second year of my research, I was interviewed by one of Belgian's well-known newspapers. They were interested in my research in general but they mostly asked about how the experiences of Turkish Belgian and native Belgian women compared. The interview was published on the front page and my sentences were interpreted by the journalists in a manner inconsistent with my intention (see the interview in Appendix 4). They published the interview with the title "Vlaamse moeders willen keuken niet uit, Turkse kunnen niet [Flemish mothers do not want to leave the kitchen, Turkish cannot]". This title implied that although Turkish Belgian women are highly educated, they still cannot leave the kitchen because their partners do not share responsibilities.

Two of my Turkish Belgian participants harshly criticised my interview and one of them published a response article about it. On the other hand, I got a supportive call from another participant who advised me to write a response paper explaining the misunderstanding and to request that the newspaper publish it (see the response article in Appendix 5). I did what she suggested, and I contacted the other two participants who were very critical of me as a researcher coming from Turkey and making (false and biased) interpretations about Turkish Belgian women. That was one of the rare moments I felt that the trust that we built for two years had collapsed and it would be impossible to find willing participants anymore. But in the end, my sincere and honest explanations and apologies changed their reactions and this event did not detrimentally affect the process of my research. After that experience, I realised (once again) the degree of sensitivity of these issues to those concerned. In addition, this experience was a confirmation of the necessity to see research participants as people who take ownership of their lives and stories rather than being the object of research.

"Once you are an immigrant,
you never forget that you are one".

(Jorge Ramos)

4. THE INFLUENCE OF ETHNIC-SPECIFIC NETWORKS ON TURKISH BELGIAN WOMEN'S EDUCATIONAL AND OCCUPATIONAL MOBILITY

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how different forms of ethnic-specific networks and ties influence realised educational mobility—and subsequently occupational mobility—among a group of highly educated Turkish Belgian women. Analysis of interview data with 30 highly educated Turkish Belgian women focuses on their experiences of how various forms of ethnic-specific networks developed opportunities and/or barriers for educational and occupational success and the importance of structural features in which these networks are embedded. The findings suggest that the importance and influence of co-ethnic networks and ties can change over time and in relation to different (interrelated) forms of social mobility.

4.1. Introduction

Numerous studies have drawn attention to the low educational attainment and limited labour market entrance of second-generation Turkish in Europe (see Heath et al., 2008). Nevertheless, a limited but not inconsequential number of children of Turkish migrants have realised steep intergenerational social mobility through socioeconomic and socio-cultural emancipation. Classical approaches to the integration of ethnic minorities might explain this mobility through socioeconomic and cultural assimilation to the dominant society (Alba & Nee, 1997). However, research has found that ethnicity can also act as a resource and affect social mobility outcomes of minorities in a variety of ways (Modood, 2004; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Zhou, 2005).

There is considerable discussion on how the concept of social capital relates to ethnic-specific networks and dense co-ethnic ties. However, findings from research analysing ethnicity as capital show a lack of theoretical clarity about which forms of ethnic resources are important in which context, in relation to what type of population and form of social mobility. For example, Portes and Rumbaut (2001) suggest that dense co-ethnic networks protect youth from downward mobility, while Shah et al. (2010) state that these networks may not always lead to positive educational outcomes and can even block children's upward mobility if the ethnic group consists of poorly educated working-class families who use each other as a source of information. Related to this, research in this field often fails to explore how the role of co-ethnic ties and networks are durable/temporal and transferable to following mobility stages. In her qualitative study on first-generation Polish migrants in London, Ryan (2011) suggests that networks immigrants encounter on arrival are likely to change especially with social and geographical mobility. A similar study about the impact of co-ethnic networks during transition from educational to occupational mobility for second-generation immigrants is lacking. Existing research on the importance of ethnic resources in realising social mobility is limited in showing this transferability since they focus either on education (Crozier & Davies, 2006; Modood, 2004; Shah et al., 2010; Zhou, 2005), or employment (Crul et al., 2017; Keskiner & Crul, 2017; Konyali, 2017; Rezai, 2017; Vermeulen & Keskiner, 2017).

In addition, research highlights that the influence of co-ethnic ties and networks can vary depending on structural conditions including time, group and place. Access to and activation of these co-ethnic networks as resources are embedded in structural factors such as school system, neighbourhood, (lack of) labour market representation and discrimination (Konyali, 2017; Rezai, 2017; Vermeulen & Keskiner, 2017). Therefore, this embeddedness is likely to have an important role in shaping mobility processes.

This study uses qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with 30 highly educated Turkish Belgian women to inductively explore the influence ethnic-specific networks and ties have had on the realised educational and occupational mobility of these women. As a result, the research sheds new light on several important issues: 1) how durable co-ethnic networks are over time and transferable from one domain of mobility to the other; 2) how accessibility and activation of co-ethnic networks as resources are embedded in structural features and how this embeddedness functions in shaping mobility processes.

4.2. The Influences of Ethnic-Specific Networks on Mobility Pathways

Dense ethnic-specific ties and resources bond co-ethnics, which create a safe place for people with similar cultural backgrounds. There has been a particular focus on the role of ethnic bonding ties and networks in facilitating educational and occupational mobility of descendants of immigrants. US sociological studies depart from Coleman's findings, which suggest that networks foster educational success among Asian Americans (Zhou, 2005). These studies, according to Modood (2004), collapse the Bourdieusian distinction between cultural and social capital and mark out a broad role for ethnicity. He finds this approach useful for the purpose of his study, which seeks to ascertain the 'motor' driving success in British Pakistanis. In addition, Zhou (2005) argues that community-based civic and religious organisations help minority youth in Chinatown to map the contours of complex educational systems and thus become more aware of their options and possibilities. Examining the case of Turks in Germany, Pott (2001) argues that mobilising ethnicity through organisational membership assists educational mobility. Moreover, co-ethnic ties are utilised by the second-generation Turks and Moroccans in the Netherlands to give informational support to younger generations (Rezai et al., 2015). On the other hand, a small number of other studies mention the negative influences of ethnic ties and networks in particular populations. Crul and Vermeulen (2003), for example, have argued that tight ethnic networks in Turkish communities in Europe mean traditional gender roles tend to be reproduced, negatively affecting girls' social mobility.

Studies have also emphasised the advantages of tightly-knit ethnic networks for successful entrepreneurship and self-employment (Zhou, 2005; Volery, 2007). Due to immigrants' disadvantaged positions and lack of resources, research has highlighted the critical importance of ethnic-specific networks in preserving the resources for in-group members (Sanders, 2002). On the other hand, it has been argued that ethnic-specific networks may be inadequate or even constraining after high school and that they fall short in providing resources for occupational mobility (Zhou, 2005; Zhou & Kim, 2006). Similarly, Phalet and Heath (2011) investigate socioeconomic attainment among second-generation Turkish in Belgium, finding that co-ethnic ties have limited influence if they are not connected to forms of social and cultural capital that are valued by dominant groups and institutions in the host country. This finding is supported by several subsequent studies that conclude that out-group networks are more effective than co-ethnic networks in labour market success (Rezai, 2017; Vermeulen & Keskiner, 2017).

Among studies on the influence of ethnic-specific networks on occupational success, Vermeulen and Keskiner (2017) examine the role of professional network organisations on improving labour market prospects of second-generation Turks in the Netherlands and France. Their findings show that the support provided by these professional networks is more intangible and interpersonal; they operate as 'bonding ties' with like-minded co-ethnics, rather than providing concrete assistance in advancing professional careers. Konyali (2017), on the other hand, indicates ethnic niches as an alternative path in the field of professional business, wherein some Turkish migrants prefer to work with their co-ethnics in Europe and Turkey to overcome institutional obstacles. Particularly in professional contexts where it is easy to reach co-ethnic clients, ethnic background can be used as a resource (Konyali, 2014). Likewise, Keskiner and Crul (2017) observe the advantages of co-ethnic networks in law sector among descendants of Turkish migrants in France. In short, these co-ethnic ties might boost a professional career in some fields of work but may also impede social mobility due to the extent they deter efforts to join broader (i.e., out-group) social networks.

Hence, we can conclude that dense, ethnic-specific networks might influence educational and occupational mobility in a variety of ways. While these networks sometimes operate as resources they can, at other times, be constraining. Therefore, existing research on the role of ethnic-specific networks for descendants of immigrants supports Ryan's (2011) idea of evaluating social networks as transient and dynamic in terms of usefulness and accessibility. However, existing literature lacks studies addressing both educational and occupational mobility of a particular ethnic minority group to analyse the temporality of ethnic-specific networks in different mobility steps as well as their transferability.

4.3. Structural Conditions

To establish a solid grasp on the influences of ethnic-specific networks on educational and occupational mobility, it is important to consider the structural circumstances in which they are activated (and deactivated). In the introduction of their special issue in the journal *ELITES: Pathways to Success* among children of immigrants, Crul et al. (2017) tie ethnic-specific resources to the idea of analysing institutional barriers and opportunities both in education and the labour market. We support their approach and argue that accessibility and usefulness of ethnic-specific networks are embedded in structural factors and this embeddedness has influence in shaping mobility processes.

Research highlights discrimination and the institutional arrangements of education as the relevant structural factors affecting educational mobility (Crul & Vermeulen, 2003; Fleischmann et al., 2012). School tracking systems have been criticised for creating unequal opportunities for second-generation students to achieve academically. A previous study, though not focused on ethnic segregation, concludes that the educational tracking system in the Flemish region of Belgium produces inequality of opportunity and social segregation for children from lower economic classes (Hindriks et al., 2010). Studying descendants of immigrants from Turkey in various European countries, Crul et al., (2012) conclude that Turkish minority youth are mostly streamed into vocational tracks rather than academic tracks. Moreover, another study shows that early tracking demonstrates that descendants of immigrants are less likely to have access to academic tracks. This is because they are not mature and experienced enough to be informed about their potential choices and lack of parental knowledge about the school system is not likely to be compensated at this stage (Crul & Vermeulen, 2003).

In addition, neighbourhoods in which families reside can contribute or hinder social mobility of children. A recent study reveals that co-ethnic concentration in stable neighbourhoods is positively related to school completion and decreases penalties for Turks and Moroccans in Belgium (Fleischmann et al., 2012). However, if valuable resources such as neighbours as role models and positive common norms are lacking among co-ethnics, this might lead to lower attainment levels of minorities, as seen in Turks in Belgium (Fleishmann et al., 2013). Hence, the context in which children of immigrants grow up might potentially slow down or facilitate their educational achievement. Furthermore, Rezai (2017) suggests that

the ethnic composition of neighbourhoods and schools can influence both academic and professional pathways of descendants of migrants from Turkey in some European cities. She observes that the ones who lived and attended schools in 'disadvantaged' neighbourhoods are less likely to adjust to the working culture, which they did not see modelled by their families. According to Waldring et al. (2014), boundaries between majority and minority groups are brighter in the labour market. Various studies have shown that children of migrants from Turkey have to deal with persistent barriers, including subtle or explicit discrimination and underrepresentation in high-status jobs (see Behtoui, 2015; Kalter & Granato, 2007). In addition, a recent study in Belgium shows that Turks have less access to family social capital in terms of the labour market and job information and this capital might turn out to (re)produce inequalities in labour market (Verhaeghe et al., 2012). In this case, some people develop broader social networks outside of their community (Keskiner & Crul, 2017; Rezai, 2017), while others pursue a double strategy, maintaining their close relations with their community and 'assimilating' to their professional environment to avoid exclusion and discrimination (Schneider & Lang, 2014).

These structural barriers can limit people's mobility. Nevertheless, individuals may find alternative pathways to bypass structural constraints. Studies show that some ethnic minorities reject dominant-group standards, while others depend on ethnic networks to overcome disadvantages (Zhou, 2005). For example, people compensate a lack of parental knowledge and a background of disadvantage by drawing on extended family members, peers and older siblings as resources to help achieve educational success (Crozier & Davies, 2006; Crul, 2000; Schnell et al., 2013). In addition, another recent study shows that when national conditions decrease the likelihood of their success, highly educated descendants of Turkish immigrants incline to 'alternative career paths' by building an international career path, carving out a professional niche or becoming independent (Konyali, 2017).

In sum, ethnic-specific networks show variability in terms of their positive or negative influences and their effects are not usually durable. Moreover, the influence of these networks is embedded in structural conditions which also tend to show variability in educational and occupational mobility processes. Based on this literature, this study seeks to analyse the influence of ethnic-specific networks and ties on the educational and occupational mobility of 30 socially mobile Turkish Belgian women. Considering the social context and the experiences and actions of individual actors, this study examines:

1) how durable/temporal co-ethnic networks are over time and transferable from one domain of mobility to the other;
2) how accessibility and activation of co-ethnic networks in different mobility steps are embedded in structural features and how this embeddedness functions in shaping mobility processes.

4.4. Methods

The study uses data from semi-structured interviews with 30 second-generation Turkish Belgian women to understand the influence of ethnic networks, family, and social norms on their experiences of educational and occupational aspirations, this group allows us to investigate how ethnic-specific networks influence realised social mobility. All participants were either born in Belgium or had moved there before the age of six. The respondents were between the ages of 27 and 55 (see Table 8). The sample is theoretically interesting because it contains women who are both educationally and occupationally successful, despite coming from a working-class background with limited human capital. Since the respondents in our sample have experienced both forms of social mobility, they constitute a theoretically relevant group to investigate the impact of various forms of ethnic-specific networks. Moreover, instead of focusing solely on aspirations, this group allows us to investigate how ethnic-specific networks influence realised social mobility.

The study was limited to highly educated Turkish women with at least a tertiary education who currently have professional occupations. We adopted a qualitative methodology because the aim of the research is to develop an in-depth understanding of participants' personal experiences, perceptions and strategies in relation to social mobility. Furthermore, because the study focuses on potentially sensitive topics, qualitative research is appropriate since it allows the researcher to build a relationship of trust and rapport with participants.

Participants were sampled in the Flemish region of Belgium and Brussels through a variety of techniques, including email and telephone contact, and outreach through women's organisations. The main researcher also used the *snowball technique* to reach additional participants (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). Researchers provided all participants with detailed information about the process and obtained each individual's informed consent. All participants were assigned unique pseudonyms and personal information that might reveal their

identity was removed from the presentation of the data analyses. All respondents provided information on their family background, experiences at school, entrance to the labour market, social control mechanisms, and strategies in dealing with contradictory sources of influence.

Table 8: Participant Information

Interviewee	Age	Edu.[3]	Occupation	Mother's edu.	Father's edu.	School population	Neighbourhood population [4]
Hülya	42	5	Lawyer	0	1	(mostly) Belgian	(mostly) Turkish
Canan	45	5	Politician	0	2	Belgian	Turkish
Sevim	37	4	Teacher	1	4	Belgian	Turkish
Zehra	35	5	Psychologist	3	3	Turkish+Belgian	Turkish
Öznur	35	5	Lawyer	1	1	Belgian	Turkish
Deniz	34	6	Psychologist	1	2	Belgian	Turkish
Arzu	55	4	Policy adviser	0	1	Turkish	Turkish
Leyla	30	5	Politician	2	2	Belgian	Turkish
Melek	41	4	Counsellor	1	1	Belgian	Turkish
Ipek	42	5	Lawyer	0	3	Belgian	Turkish
Ceyda	30	4	Engineer	0	4	Belgian	Turkish
Ebru	31	5	Architect	1	1	Belgian	Turkish
Lale	27	4	Banker	0	1	Turkish	Turkish
Meral	31	5	Lawyer	1	0	Belgian	Migrant
Hatice	32	5	Economist	2	2	Belgian	Turkish
Aylin	35	5	Policy adviser	0	2	Migrant	Turkish
Sibel	39	5	Researcher	0	1	Belgian	Turkish
Ceren	28	6	Psychologist	0	2	Migrant	Migrant
Oya	30	5	Policy adviser	3	3	Turkish+Belgian	Turkish
Selma	37	5	Lawyer	0	1	Turkish	Migrant
Esra	44	6	Doctor	0	2	Belgian	Turkish
Melisa	30	5	Psychologist	1	1	Belgian	Mixed
Songül	32	5	Researcher	1	2	Belgian	Turkish
Mine	42	5	Lawyer	0	1	Belgian	Turkish
Nehir	32	6	Psychiatrist	1	0	Belgian	Turkish

[3] Educational levels have been classified based on the International Standard Classification of Education. 0: Pre-primary education; 1:Primary education; 2:Lower secondary education; 3:Upper secondary education; 4: Post-secondary non-tertiary education; 5:Tertiary education; 6: Upper tertiary education.

[4] Neighbourhood respondents were grown up.

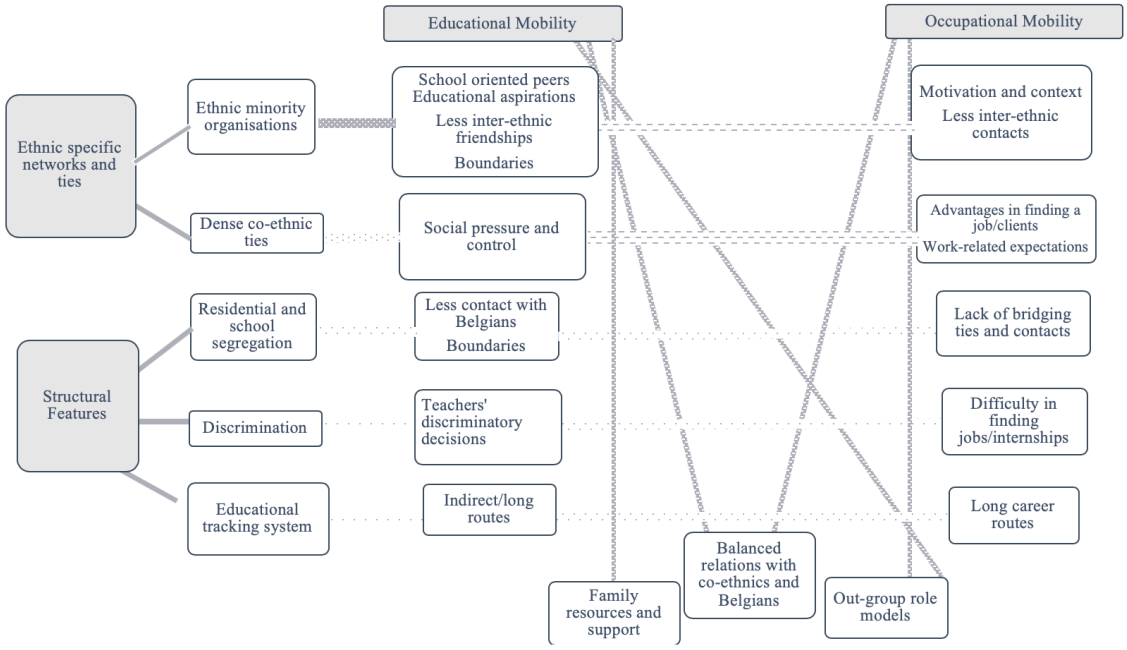
Yasemin	41	5	Educator	0	1	Belgian	Turkish
Belgin	40	6	Psychologist	0	1	Belgian	Turkish
Demet	39	4	Civil servant	0	1	Belgian	Turkish
Gamze	34	5	Lawyer	1	3	Belgian	Mixed
Hilal	30	5	Researcher	0	3	Belgian	Turkish

A Grounded Theory (GT) approach –which aims to develop an explanatory framework inductively through a constant comparative analysis of the qualitative data (Corbin & Strauss, 1990)– was adopted to analyse the data. Data analysis began with a full review of the entire corpus of interviews, using NVivo software to attach a first series of codes. We initially identified recurring themes based on related concepts referred to in other studies and participants' own statements. In the following stage, we further analysed these codes inductively and divided them into categories or sub-categories by comparing and contrasting the codes to find the relations between categories. A second researcher double-coded the data to examine the intercoder reliability score.

4.5. Explaining the Influence of Ethnic-Specific Networks on Social Mobility Opportunities

This section first describes various influences of ethnic minority organisations and dense community ties to which we commonly refer in our data. It specifically focuses on how temporal/durable these networks and ties are in women's mobility pathways. Second, it sheds light on the influences of structural conditions women encountered in education and employment. The schematic overview in Figure 1 maps out the forms of ethnic-specific networks and structural features that seem to have influenced the educational and occupational mobility of our respondents, either positively and/or negatively. It also shows the mechanisms that connect ethnic-specific networks to mobility and those that connect educational mobility to occupational one.

Figure 1: Explaining the Influences of Ethnic-Specific Networks and Structural Features on Social Mobility Opportunities



Source: Compiled by the authors.

4.5.1. Ethnic Minority Organisations

Ethnic-specific organisations were mentioned as a common advantage of ethnic solidarity and closed networks. As Vermeulen and Keskiner (2017) mentioned in their article, Turkish migrant organisations in Belgium—similar to other Western European countries—have been divided along 'political and ideological lines'. Respondents mentioned religio-political organisations (for example, the Milli Görüş), ethnoreligious organisations, ethnic student associations (for example, the Turkish Student Association Leuven, Flux Gent, la Turquoise) and youth branches of Turkish political parties as important in their early educational career. Some women explained their motivation to go to university through the ethnoreligious organisations with which they are associated. As a member of youth branches, Ceren reports being motivated to become an educated Muslim in an ethnic minority organisation where most of her friends are also educated. She went to a school populated mostly by fellow co-ethnics, but she was not very close to them. She preferred to spend her time with other co-ethnics in their religiopolitical organisation because they were 'more education-oriented'. Likewise, Hilal was happy to make a circle of educated Turkish friends through several associations which "were raising awareness in families about the importance of higher education." In general, their

engagement with such associations seems to be helpful in holding like-minded Turkish youth together, raising educational awareness among them, creating educational aspirations, and organising social activities for them. Coming mostly from families who lack the tools to help their children to achieve educational aims, these social networks appear to play a vital role in compensating low parental capital.

Although only mentioned by a few women, the positive influence of ethnic minority organisation engagement during their educational careers appears to be transferable to their future occupational careers. As a lawyer, Öznur has been engaged in co-ethnic associations since her years as a university student. Before, she did not have Turkish friends due to her Belgian populated schools and neighbourhood. She expanded her co-ethnic network with like-minded people from similar fields and found a 'role model' through these associations:

> I was engaged with a human rights association since the age of 18. Then we established new associations. I could only have relations with the Turkish community through these associations. I broadened my network and met a Turkish lawyer who became my role model (Lawyer).

Her case supports Rezai's (2017) analysis of the long-term importance of 'significant others' with whom one becomes acquainted in one's early educational career. However, in general, ethnic minority associations do not seem to have a strong effect on labour market outcomes.

Based on in-depth conversations with respondents, these organisational attachments are more likely to be considered as 'resources' in early mobility stages. They bring together 'school-oriented peers' (Rezai, 2017). However, some women expressed 'indirect negative influences' of engaging mostly with co-ethnics to aspire for higher education. Considering the political and ideological nature of these associations, 'nationalist feelings' appear to increase and thicken the boundaries between the co-ethnic community and the majority. Moreover, these engagements seem to decrease the probability of making Belgian friends, which seems to have long-term negative influences. Hence, our schematic Figure 1 and data suggest that ethnic-specific associations work as recourses mostly in educational mobility, while they appear to become constraints for some over the long run. Although limited, their positive influences seem to be transferred to occupational mobility depending on the field and finding the 'right' associations. While these organisations do not seem to have a direct effect on

employment, the context they provide, which motivates individuals to become successful, appear to have favourable consequences in later stages.

4.5.2. Dense Ethnic Community Ties

Apart from structured organisational networks explained in the previous section, respondents pointed out both positive and negative aspects of dense ethnic community ties and networks on their mobility processes. In general, being together with co-ethnics is perceived to form solidarity in dealing with the difficulties pertaining to a minority group. However, unlike ethnic minority organisations, which are thought to be more helpful in early educational career, general ethnic community ties do not seem act as resource for educational mobility. On the contrary, social control for women is regarded as the price of ethnic solidarity and dense ties within an ethnic community (Crul & Vermeulen, 2003). Even though families support their daughters' education, it seems that they are under the influence of external co-ethnics. Being highly educated is seen as unnecessary and even dangerous by some members of the Turkish community in Belgium. Canan stated, "The community had the idea that 'if she goes to higher school, what will happen? She is of no help to you [her parents], she is going to marry and go" (Politician).

This community notion implies that higher education is 'useless' because women will marry and will not contribute financially to their parents:

> I was working for the university exam at home. Some of my relatives came to ask my family to give me for marriage. I had heard my relatives tell my father not to send me to school by saying 'how come you let her go to school, you should marry her off at the age of 18', but my father supported me that day (Esra, Doctor).

Our data also shows that some families really want their daughters to continue higher education, but if there is a geographical distance between school and home, the community can exert significant pressure on the family to discourage this. Moreover, compulsory education is often regarded as sufficient; higher education is unnecessary for some members of the community. Reasoned from this perspective, only educational tracks that directly and easily lead to practical jobs that readily produce a stable salary are deemed appropriate for Turkish

Belgian girls. Some women in our sample expressed difficulties in convincing family and community that taking extra training to specialise in a field is worth doing.

Our research also suggests that relations with Belgian peers is very limited during school years. Most women explained that families fear judgement from the Turkish community. Deniz, for example, was harshly criticised when she was seen entering the home of a Belgian friend. Songül, on the other hand, had close relations with Belgian friends and, therefore, she said that she was seen as 'abnormal' and 'breaking convention'. She was encouraged to have Turkish friends, go to Turkish weddings and visit family members to break her connections with Belgians. Some respondents put forward the negative long-term influences of these boundaries in their educational and professional careers. Moreover, respondents mentioned the influences of social control and community pressure during their professional careers in a very limited way. This suggests that the power position of women changes when they move from the educational ladder to the occupational one. In relation to that, family and community pressures seem to fade in importance in later stages. Moreover, it might also be suggested that pressures from family and ethnic community are experienced less when women realise their ambitions.

Although strong co-ethnic ties are likely to be less effective for the labour market dominated by the majority, they appear to work in particular fields. For example, the lawyers, architects and psychologists mentioned that ethnic minority language fluency and networks mean ready access to Turkish clients, a key professional advantage. Ebru stated, "I have never had difficulty in finding a job. As a Turkish Belgian, I have access to various projects from both sides" (Architect). Moreover, Zehra said:

> Speaking Turkish worked out for the first time. I did my first internship at a hospital where Turkish patients come out in large numbers. Then I applied for a job there and they accepted me just because I am speaking Turkish (Psychologist).

Similarly, Selma moved to a Turkish populated city in Flanders to open her own law office since there were only a few Turkish lawyers there. Aside from that, our results show that the Turkish community places work-related expectations on educated women. Most women in our sample complained about how these demands can put them in difficult positions. Depending on the profession, some mentioned that co-ethnics ask for favouritism, extra attention and illegal demands such as forging documents:

> My Turkish clients have more expectations from me compared to a Belgian psychologist. I always encounter questions like 'Can you arrange an urgent appointment'? or 'Can you write a report for me'? They can ask for documents diagnosing long-term disease to claim insurance benefits (Ceren, Psychologist).

Additionally, of the sample as a whole, lawyers, doctors, and psychologists were more likely to complain about porous boundaries between private and professional life:

> Everyone in my large family comes to me thinking that I can deal with all of their legal issues as a lawyer. You can do that to a certain extent, but it is too much. I cannot make friends with Turkish people (Hülya, lawyer).

Many reported that people's problems and questions are brought up at family gatherings, wedding ceremonies or social outings. Moreover, some stated that they had to deal with extra workload due to the paperwork demands of their extended family.

In sum, dense co-ethnic ties are not regarded as a resource for women in their educational career due to the great social pressure they entail. However, control mechanisms are less likely to be effective in occupational mobility with respondents who hold stronger positions of power. In occupational mobility, community ties pave the way for finding a job for respondents from particular professional fields, while they are not likely to be effective for other fields. These ties appear to help some women to start their professional lives easier but growing up within dense ethnic networks puts added pressure on women who are successful in their occupations (through the community's work-related expectations).

4.5.3. Structural Conditions

According to our analysis, the transition from educational to occupational mobility does not seem to be straightforward for our respondents. Ethnic-specific networks and ties appear to have changing influences and they are also closely related to structural conditions. When discussing their mobility paths, respondents generally mentioned the influences of segregated school and neighbourhood, the school tracking system and discrimination. Most women in our sample grew up in either Turkish or mixed-migrant neighbourhoods. Residential and school segregation are closely related because families prefer to send their children to local schools. Ceren, for example, was brought up in a Turkish populated neighbourhood and was segregated

from non-(Turkish) Muslims until she went to university. As explained in the previous section, her involvement with ethnic-specific organisations kept her close to education-oriented Turkish friends. She emphasised the benefits of 'segregation' and being close to her culture by 'avoiding assimilation'. However, she accepts that it has been a disadvantage in the long run due to lack of social and professional connections with Belgians.

Zehra remarked that living in a neighbourhood populated with only immigrants negatively influenced her education. She lost her self-confidence when she changed to a school populated with Belgians. She was also afraid of going to university, and instead preferred technical tracks at first. Only later did she decide to go to university. Hence, structural conditions characteristic of Zehra's life appears to make her occupational mobility harder, since she could not take a 'direct route' to higher education. Although she felt that her co-ethnics in her neighbourhood complicated her educational career, her ethnic-specific connections seemed to ease her occupational life as a psychologist. For Arzu, finding contacts to get access to the labour market and adaptation to a working culture was difficult, as she also took the indirect and long route to start her career:

> I was raised in a Turkish populated ghetto neighbourhood. My school was also a ghetto school. I lived there until my marriage. We were together with Turkish people both in the neighbourhood and at school. We did not have any contact with Belgians. That affected my future working life negatively, because professional life was totally Belgian, and you do not know them (Policy adviser).

Similarly, Hülya said that living in a concentrated neighbourhood hindered her language proficiency. She said that her Dutch was still 'unsatisfactory' for her. Moreover, some of the participants emphasised the lack of role models in their Turkish populated social surrounding. As an example, Hatice stated, "When no one around you goes on to higher education, you feel like it must be too difficult for someone like you to do. This means you choose something you know others in your group have found easier".

Our data shows that some women had no Turkish peers at school, while others experienced a concentrated school environment within a given period of school life. Most participants went to Catholic schools and considered this a positive influence on future success. Some respondents mentioned experiencing smoother mobility with the help of a balance

between co-ethnic connections and relationship with Belgians. Ebru, for example, grew up in a Turkish populated neighbourhood but she did not seem to experience any negative outcomes:

> It was not something negative for our family, but if family is not careful enough, it might be negative for children. Education was very important for my parents. I was together with my Turkish friends in the neighbourhood, but I had more Belgian friends at school. It was very normal for Flemish friends to go to university, and I started to think like them. It became something normal for me as well (Architect).

Therefore, living in Turkish populated neighbourhoods, but at the same time going to Belgian populated schools saw some choose out-group role models and develop aspirations for higher education.

A limited number of families made school choices consciously, but others chose schools that were geographically close—regardless of their quality or reputation. Gamze's father, for instance, preferred to move to a Belgian populated neighbourhood so that his children could go 'better' schools. She had language problems in her primary school where she was interacting almost exclusively with other Turkish youth. After she moved to a Catholic school, she adapted easily. She appreciates these changes and emphasises them as the 'motor' of her success.

On the other hand, some respondents mentioned the school tracking system as a structural obstacle for their mobility. According to some women, tracking was done in reference to teachers' feedback. Demet and Selma mentioned enforced class streaming in Belgium and stated, "The 'A' stream is predominantly for Belgians and the 'B' stream for immigrant students. I was registered for A stream only by luck".

Ceyda's teacher advised her to go into the 'A' stream and her educational career changed dramatically because she did not have educational aspirations before. Some other women expressed how they were discouraged by their teachers to pursue the academic (high-status) track. However, some women stated that discrimination made them stronger and more determined to be successful at school. Hülya said: "being a foreigner motivated me", she explained that she chose to be a lawyer in order to fight discrimination.

Moreover, most women talked about direct/ indirect discrimination in their working lives as a result of their migration background and their belonging to a poorly educated ethnic

group. As a woman with a headscarf, Ceren stated to have difficulties both at school and in finding a job. Both discrimination and limited out-group connections decreased her chances:

> My qualifications mean I should have easily found a place in a Belgian practice. But I was denied this opportunity had to open my own practice instead. Now all my patients are Turkish but this is more a result of circumstances than my own choice.

Ceren's story supports the idea of 'alternative career paths' explained in Konyali's (2017) study examining the career paths of descendants of labour migrants from Turkey. Likewise, Lale talked about how, during job applications, she would be told that it would be impossible for her to land a job wearing a headscarf. Several women said that they have had to prove themselves and work harder than their Belgian colleagues on account of their migration background. Some other women had to choose jobs inappropriate to their qualifications before having the chance to build their own professional career. As a lawyer, Hülya had difficulty in finding an internship position which was required for her studies. She related that to discrimination, "I would walk into their business life as a lawyer with Turkish origin. I would strip them of their jobs in a way".

Besides, Hülya complained about lack of connections when moving from education to employment. She did not have experienced contacts that could guide her to start her career with an internship. As Rezai (2017) mentions in her study, when people lack significant others in labour market entrance, it seems more difficult for them to find internships.

Figure 1 and these findings suggest that residential and school segregation seem to influence educational mobility negatively, while no one mentioned direct positive and negative influences of the neighbourhood during working life. Hence, it might be argued that neighbourhood characteristics affect mobility outcomes more during childhood and adolescence when people are more vulnerable to external effects. However, women who rarely interacted with Belgians in their neighbourhood or school were more likely to experience challenges in future mobility due to lack of bridging ties and contacts with Belgians. When families invest in education, support their children and make conscious school choices, women's mobility pathways seem to be smoother, even though discrimination at school either through the tracking system or teachers' (discriminating) decisions might have an impact. On the other hand, discrimination seems to have a more long-term negative influence on employment since some women have difficulties finding internships and work after school.

Women in particular occupations cope with discrimination by giving services to Turkish clients; nevertheless they still need out-group networks to find internships and start their professional career.

4.6. Conclusion

There is a rich body of research that focuses on the positive influences of ethnic-specific networks and structural conditions that might affect the functioning of these networks on education or employment in different populations. However, little attention has been given to the dynamic and temporal nature of different dimensions of ethnic-specific networks and their influences on both educational and occupational mobility within a particular population. Therefore, based on analysis of qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews with a group of highly educated Turkish Belgian women, this study explores the temporal nature of the relationship between ethnic-specific networks and mobility along with structural conditions in which they are embedded.

Ethnic-specific networks seem to act both as resources and constraints in different mobility steps. Engagements with ethnic minority organisations appear to motivate women to continue higher education by bringing together like-minded people, raising awareness, creating educational aspirations and compensating low parental capital. Moreover, engagement with these organisations is likely to have indirect consequences in motivating women to pursue high positions as Turkish/Muslims in occupational life. However, the often political and nationalistic nature of these organisations seem to maintain boundaries between their ethnic community and Belgians, and this is perceived to drive them apart from Belgians over the long run.

Dense ethnic community ties seem to provide solidarity to cope with negative influences of being a minority. However, this ethnic solidarity also appears to provoke community pressure, which might discourage higher education and intergroup relations in educational attainment. When women realise occupational success, they feel less community pressure due to changing power positions and being decision-makers of their own choices. In addition, these dense networks in which they grew up seem to cause both additional work-related expectations from the ethnic community, but also facilitate finding clients in particular jobs.

It is undeniable that these ethnic-specific networks have had both positive and negative effects for these women, though the extent of their importance varies. Considering that these women have become successful against the odds, it seems that there are other factors that help them to be successful. Growing up in Turkish or mixed-migrant neighbourhoods, some have managed to make friends with like-minded people at schools where they could develop intergroup relations. When they lack professional contacts, their limited access to job information and low parental capital come together with discrimination, and some women have gone towards alternative career paths by opening their offices in Turkish populated neighbourhoods and serving mostly Turkish clients. In general, our analysis suggests that when solidarity with co-ethnics in neighbourhood or associations is combined with connections with Belgians at school and social life, women are likely to experience a smoother mobility path. Although discrimination in school was mentioned regularly, most of the respondents did not experience direct discrimination personally. Working life, on the other hand, involved discrimination, especially for women with headscarves, and was mentioned to be a determining factor affecting their mobility.

Inspired by literature on ethnic-specific networks and given what we have found in our study, it seems that—at least for this population—co-ethnic networks and ties have no clear direction when studied contextually and over time. It is not only that these networks can work differently in education and employment, but also the way they operate in educational processes, which influences what happens in terms of co-ethnic networks in employment. Examining the success stories of a group of women against the odds, our analysis hints at the possibility that problems might be solved much more readily when occupational social mobility is realised. However, discrimination and underrepresentation in the labour market must remain an important focus for policymakers. In addition, the aim of this research is not to reproduce clichés about Muslim minorities and give a deficit perspective about the minority culture. On the contrary, it shows the difficulties of a transition period for the first-generation parents and ethnic community and their daughters who are now highly educated.

This study adds to existing research by emphasising the temporality and transferability of the influences of ethnic-specific networks. It also highlights a relational approach to ethnic-specific networks and structural conditions. More generally, it shows that the influence of these networks and ties on social mobility is highly context- and time-dependent. Future quantitative research can build on our findings by testing changing (positive or negative) influences of

dense co-ethnic ties and networks for educational and occupational mobility for different groups. In this sense, small-n, qualitative studies such as ours can stimulate broader, large-n research focused on the same research questions and populations. They can compare different ethnic minority populations with Turkish minority women, compare Turkish minority men with women, or focus on ethnic minority groups who were educationally, but not occupationally, mobile.

"The truth is, I felt sorry for my parents. They were such fish out of water, not only dealing with the struggles of raising a teenager (which every parent finds difficult), but with understanding this culture. How could I subject them to underage drinking, how could I fly my drug use in their face, how could I embarrass them by getting caught at a rowdy party? I was in it for myself, certainly — I wanted to have a good time, just as much as the girl I was watching wants to have a good time. But I also felt a strong sense of loyalty to my family — my floundering, on-the-edge family — that I don't think this kid has. I felt like I was on the same team as them, like it was us against the world, and we could only win if I did my best to stay on the path of righteousness".

(Jaya Bedi)

5. WORK–FAMILY CONFLICT: COMPARING THE EXPERIENCES OF TURKISH AND NATIVE BELGIAN WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

While research has focused on a number of dimensions of work–family conflict (WFC), hardly any literature exists that analyses how differences in family systems might help to explain variations in WFC experiences. By employing Reher's typology of strong and weak family ties to integrate existing research and identify unaddressed features, this study finds that researchers have generally understudied the role of structural family ties on WFC. Qualitative data gathered from interviews with highly educated native Belgian and Turkish immigrant women living in Belgium are used to analyse variation in the WFC experiences and coping strategies of these two groups. The results suggest that a number of interconnected factors related to family systems –including internalisation of gender roles, division of family-related responsibilities, support mechanisms and external pressures from family and society, and socialisation processes of minority women in both family structures– are highly significant in explaining variations in women's WFC experiences.

5.1. Introduction

Work–family conflict (WFC) is defined in the research literature as a particular form of modern role interference; that is, as a situation in which "pressures arising in one role are incompatible with pressures arising in another role" (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985, p. 77). With the increasing participation of women in the labour market, women and men undertake new roles in addition to role interchanges; the former take on more work outside the home, while the latter assume additional duties at home (Annor, 2016; Sümer, Smithson, das Dores Guerreiro & Granlund,

2008; Wattis, Standing & Yerkes, 2013). There is limited WFC research on non-Western communities and especially diaspora groups (some exceptions for non-Western contexts are: Lu et al., 2010; Mortazavi, Pedhiwala, Shafiro & Hammer, 2009; Yang, 2005; for diaspora communities: DelCampo, Rogers & Hinrichs 2011; Grzywacz et al., 2007; Roehling, Hermandez Jarvis & Swope, 2005; Rout, Lewis & Kagan, 1999). Existing research focuses mostly on macro-level cultural factors, such as differences between individualism/collectivism and values of gender egalitarianism. However, neither the above-mentioned studies nor research based on the Western experience pay sufficient attention to the role of structural family ties on the experiences of and WFCs and how individuals cope with them.

Existing research has highlighted a range of factors that influence WFC experiences and coping strategies (Allen & Finkelstein, 2014; Rathi & Barath, 2013; Yang, Chen, Choi & Zou, 2000). However, no attempt has yet been made to integrate these into a coherent theoretical model. Building on the body of research on WFC, this study suggests the usefulness of employing Reher's (1998) binary typology of strong and weak family ties in studying women's WFC experiences for several reasons. First, this classification is based on certain structural and cultural differences between types of family systems. More specifically, weakly tied families are characterised by looser intergenerational kin-relations and more individualistic and egalitarian values in terms of gender role divisions, while those with strong family ties motivate women to internalise gender roles that reflect more close-knit intergenerational kin-relations and related expectations (Alesina & Giuliano, 2010). Family systems and characteristics in Reher's model intersect with commonly mentioned factors that affect the level of WFC one can experience. On this basis, we suggest that it is well suited to classify the multitude of factors related to WFC. Second, this typology is also useful for identifying additional features of WFC, which are understudied but emerged as important in our data. Therefore, it helps us to move beyond commonly mentioned features of WFC and extend the scope of research in this particular area. Third, it enables a comparative study of WFC experiences in two different family systems and gives us an opportunity to understand to what extent Reher's model is relevant in contemporary societies.

However, this typology has been criticised for being relatively broad and for overlooking micro-level regional variations (Mönkediek & Bras, 2014). Moreover, its scope may not be broad enough to incorporate all factors affecting WFC. Despite these drawbacks,

Reher's typology remains useful for our purposes as the objective of this research is to use this typology as a framework for describing main factors, which can lead to the modification of Reher's typology to incorporate additional, theoretically important factors related to WFC. Hence, this study critically reviews and integrates existing research on WFC through Reher's typology and identifies a particular set of additional features that appear theoretically important in explaining WFC.

Through qualitative interviews, this study explores the importance of structural family characteristics on women's WFCs by comparing the experience of Turkish immigrant and native Belgian women. The focus on Turkish immigrant women in Belgium, whose experience of integration into Belgian society has often left them at a disadvantage compared to their native Belgian peers, sheds light on a small, upwardly mobile group in a large diaspora community that is yet to be studied in relationship to WFC. Comparing both groups is theoretically relevant for three reasons. First, the characteristic family types differ across these two communities: Turkish Belgian women are typically socialised in families with stronger ties, and native Belgians are in families where ties are weaker (Alesina & Giuliano, 2010). Second, native Belgian women form part of the dominant social system and this comparison allows us to examine the role of family systems on WFCs by using Reher's family ties model as a starting point. Additionally, this comparative perspective enables a wider understanding of the differences between a diaspora group and a native one in terms of WFC experiences. A comparative analysis of a diaspora group and a native one in relation to WFC has not been carried out yet. Therefore, this study fills the gap in this area. In addition to all these, this comparative perspective allows us to test (and expand on) the theoretical relevance of Reher's binary model.

5.2. Theoretical Discussion

Reher's (1998) stimulating study on family ties in Western Europe has provided the framework for many comparative studies (Dykstra & Fokkema, 2011). Recent work on family solidarity patterns (Daatland & Herlofson, 2003; Kalmijn & Saraceno, 2008), economic behaviour (Alesina & Giuliano, 2010), perceptions of family structures in the context of broader social networks (Mönkediek & Bras, 2014), and the impact of different family models on quality of life and the protective function of family (Szołtysek, 2012) have all drawn on Reher's model.

However, there has as yet been no attempt to examine the connection between WFC and family ties, even though the characteristics of the latter allow for a more theoretically grounded classification of determinants influencing WFC experiences.

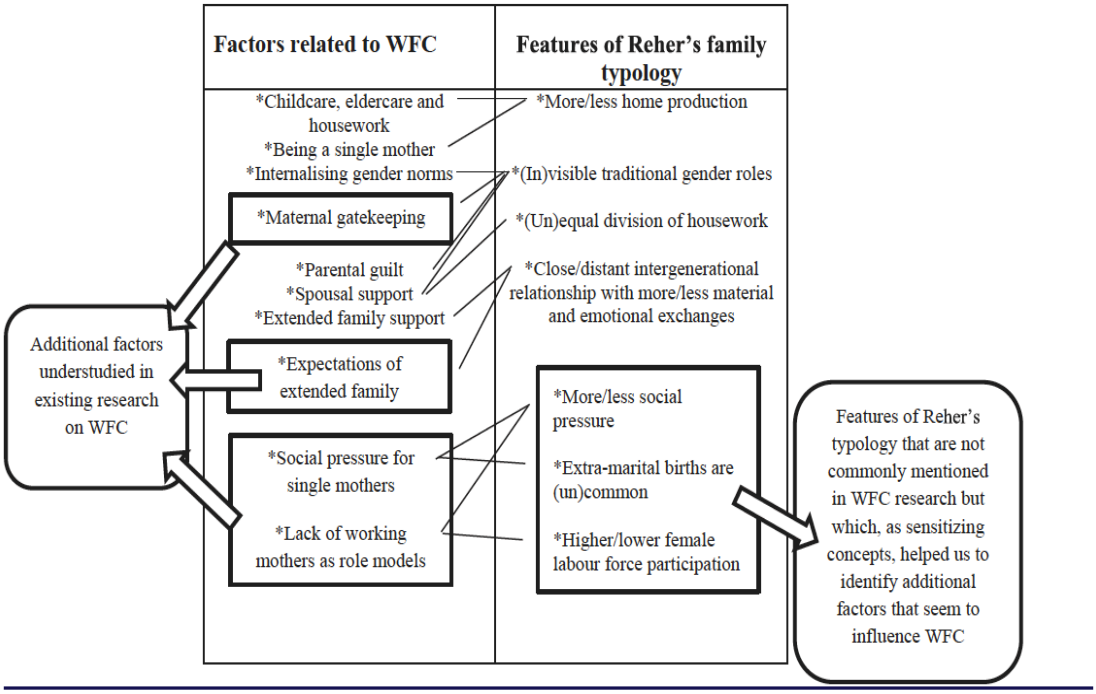
Reher (1998) divides family type in Western Europe into 'strong' and 'weak' based on the nature of family ties. Families in Central and Northern European countries are said to have relatively weak ties, while those in the Mediterranean region are said to be relatively strong. In families with strong ties, the family takes centre stage in the socialisation of the young and sustaining close intergenerational relationships is considered to be a 'social obligation'. In contrast, in families with weaker ties, individualism is more predominant (Reher, 1998). Both material and emotional exchanges between parents and children are commonplace in families with strong ties, but comparatively less material exchange occurs in the weak-tie families. In addition, strongly tied families exercise more social control over family members and sharply emphasise kin commitments, especially in marriage.

As a result, extramarital births and non-marital cohabitations are lower in strongly tied families (Reher, 1998). In weakly tied families, however, social control is less effective and extramarital births, and cohabitations are therefore more common. Furthermore, compared to weakly tied families, home production in the form of childcare, home cooking, caring for the elderly, and house cleaning is higher in strongly tied families. They are also generally larger, and exhibit lower female labour force participation, and less geographical mobility. In such a family type, women tend to assume more traditional roles, needing to spend more time at home to meet family demands. This results in an unequal division of labour compared to the relatively egalitarian role division seen in weakly tied families (Alesina & Giuliano, 2010). Finally, people in strongly tied families stay close to their parents for both emotional and instrumental support, while there is generally less instrumental support from parents in weakly tied families (Alesina & Giuliano, 2010).

5.3. Work–Family Conflict and the Family Ties Typology

Some of the characteristics of weakly vs. strongly tied families are discussed in the WFC literature as both structure and culture, but there are others that have not been studied or have been referenced less. Our visual summary in Figure 2 shows the interconnections between various dimensions of Reher's model and factors that influence WFC. It also displays the interactions between factors. As seen from the table, not all dimensions of Reher's typology are directly connected to factors mentioned in existing research on WFC. Some dimensions in Reher's typology are too broad to address every single factor related to WFC. Therefore, we expand the model by connecting various factors to these broad dimensions to describe main features of WFC. These dimensions, on the other hand, provide a useful starting point to identify additional factors that are understudied in existing literature.

Figure 2: Interconnections between Features of Reher's Model and Factors Related to Work–Family Conflict



Source: Compiled by the authors.

5.3.1. The Characteristics of Family Ties that are Linked to Work–Family Conflict Experiences and Coping Strategies

5.3.1.1. Home Production

Research on WFCs shows that features associated with the type of home/outside production in weakly and strongly tied families is related to women's experiences of WFCs. More specifically, the particular responsibility of women for home-based tasks—such as taking care of children, caring for elderly people, and doing household work—are often related to experiences of WFC (e.g., Eby, Casper, Lockwood, Bordeaux & Brinley, 2005; Grzywacz & Marks, 2000; Jeffrey Hill et al., 2008), given such tasks must be combined with long working hours, work-related travel, and inflexible working schedules outside the home (Allen & Finkelstein, 2014; Parasuraman & Simmers, 2001; Yang et al., 2000). Hence, research suggests that women will experience more WFC when they try to meet the expectations of both strong and weak family systems regarding the key area of production.

5.3.1.2. The Internalisation of Gender Roles

Research shows that women experience more WFC when they internalise conflicting gender role expectations typical for either strong (family comes first) or weak family (the individual career comes first) types (Aycan, 2008; Fahlén, 2014; Korabik, Lero & Ayman, 2003; Spector et al., 2007). Using this dimension in Reher's typology, we assert that additional factors, such as maternal gatekeeping and parental guilt, can affect women's WFCs. More specifically, women tend to develop more work and/or parental guilt in such a context (Aycan & Eskin, 2005) as well as a propensity to maternal gatekeeping.

Maternal gatekeeping is "a collection of beliefs and behaviours that ultimately inhibit a collaborative effort between men and women in family work by limiting men's opportunities for learning and growing through caring for home and children" (Allen & Hawkins, 1999, p. 200). While the home/outside production dimension focuses more on conflicting tasks, the internalisation of gender roles focuses more on internalised expectations that women have about their own roles. Hence, research suggests that WFCs will be strong when women simultaneously internalise strong gender role expectations typical for both types of families.

5.3.1.3. (Un)equal Division of Family Work

Studies show that women experience less WFC when they can rely on spousal support in carrying out tasks related to the family (Beutell & Greenhaus, 1982). While in the strong family type, spouses are less expected to make such commitments, offering such support is considered more normal in the weak family type due to the more egalitarian gender roles. An additional factor is the diminished career ambitions of women in strongly tied families where they may need to reduce their busy schedule to balance work and family life. Becker and Moen (1999) refer to this as "scaling back", whereby women eschew heavy work demands and typically opt for basic (often part-time) work rather than a demanding career after having children. Hence, WFCs are hypothesised to be higher for women who do not feel that they have access to such support (typical for a strong family structure) as opposed to the situation where women can get considerable support (typical for a weak family structure).

5.3.1.4. Instrumental Support From/for Extended Family

Research shows that support from extended family impacts experiences of WFCs in complex ways. On the one hand, families' obligation to help with family-related tasks (like childcare and preparing food) can help to decrease WFCs (Di Leonardo, 1992; Dressel & Clark, 1990; Spector et al., 2007). However, even though understudied in WFC literature, family members' expectations for attention, care, and assistance require considerable investment from the other family members (Milkie & Peltola, 1999; Reher, 1998). Hence, in strongly tied families, both family support and care are expected to be higher, while the opposite applies to weaker-tied families. Therefore, it can be hypothesised that both types of family have a variable effect on WFCs through support from or for the extended family.

5.3.2. The Characteristics of Family Ties that are not Linked to Work–Family Conflict Experiences

5.3.2.1. Lower Labour Force Participation of Women

Research demonstrates that labour force participation of women is lower in strongly tied families compared to weakly tied families (Alesina & Giuliano, 2010). Although not related to WFC, we can use this dimension to show the importance of contextual factors (e.g., being a diaspora community) and suggest that women who were socialised in family systems where labour force participation is very low are likely to experience significant conflict, since they lack prominent role models as working mothers in their societies. Hence, research hypothesises that the limited number of women role models in the labour market makes balancing work and family life harder in strongly tied families since they find themselves in a position of having to prove themselves in both fields.

5.3.2.2. Social Control

Studies suggest that social control is an operative trait in strongly tied families, but less so in weakly tied families (Reher, 1998). Social control is a system regulating people and giving the society an ideal through social pressure or law (Vincent, 1896). Social control is particularly relevant when we consider that single mothers in strongly tied families may experience significant normative pressure—even censure—in raising children alone, compounding WFC. Therefore, it is hypothesised that in addition to difficulties balancing work and family life as single mothers, women in strongly tied families might experience additional pressure within social contexts in which single motherhood is considered problematic or objectionable.

The literature review suggests that Reher's family ties typology can be helpful for categorising existing research and expanding this model by identifying additional factors influencing WFCs. This study builds on this field of research and addresses the following research questions:

1) How do native Belgian and Turkish minority women experience WFC and develop coping strategies?

2) How can variability between experiences be explained by structural family characteristics and the social structure women are socialised within?

5.4. Methods

This study analyses how 23 highly educated professional working women living in two different family types experience WFC. We chose to focus on women who are in professional careers because these roles typically demand a considerable amount of time and energy, thus impinging on family time. We chose to conduct the research in Ghent, a Flemish city in Belgium, because the city is home to a significant Turkish population, allowing the comparison of the two groups characterised by distinct family types but subject to identical labour market conditions and regulations.

All participants were born in Belgium or migrated before they were 7 years old. They were all aged between 25 and 45 years. Of the 23 respondents in total, 10 were native Belgian and 13 were immigrant Turks, and all had at least one child. Each had completed at least a bachelor's degree in a variety of fields and the sample included variation in employment sector (private vs. public) and profession. Participants were reached in the Flemish-speaking region of Belgium through a variety of techniques, including email and telephone contact, outreach through women's organisations, and newsletter advertising. The researcher also drew on the snowball technique—after each interview, participants were asked to refer other women who could meet the research criteria.

The data were collected between October 2014 and August 2015. Depending on participants' preferences, the interviews took place in at the workplace, at home, in cafes, or on the university campus. All participants discussed their childhood and family background, education, labour market experience, and partner choices. They also gave insights about work and family life, including work routines, the division of household and childcare duties between partners, asking for help from parents, social life, and the adjustment to having children. Interviews ran for between 55 minutes and 2 hours and were recorded. The data were fully transcribed by the researcher. All participants were informed about the research and their consent was sought to record the discussion. Due to ethical sensitivities, each respondent was given a pseudonym and all details that could potentially reveal their identities were removed

from the sample. They were given the opportunity to choose a location for interview where they could express themselves freely.

A qualitative approach in data collection and analysis was adopted for several reasons. First, the aim of the research was to uncover the connections between reported family characteristics and the respondents' experiences in their work and their family life. Qualitative methods are particularly suitable for this purpose, as they facilitate data collection that integrates respondents' personal experiences and the meanings that they attach to them. Second, it is also the best way to explore sensitive issues –in our case intimate family matters and very personal information about family life. In addition, qualitative semi-structured interviews allow the researcher more time to build trust and rapport with participants, which can, in turn, improve the reliability of the data. Furthermore, it encourages participants to expand on their responses and help the researcher to uncover new topic areas such as the role social control and being a diaspora in our case. Third, a qualitative approach allows the researcher to inductively identify, within a rich stream of data, a very broad range of potentially theoretically relevant factors impacting the experience of respondents.

During the data analysis, a Grounded Theory (GT) approach was adopted. GT is an ideal framework for uncovering the conditions in which observed phenomenon emerge and how people under research respond to these conditions, as well as how they relate the consequences of their actions (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Data collection and analysis were interrelated processes. The first set of data, which included a broad range of topics, were analysed and used to narrow down the research focus for subsequent interviews. Some additional questions were added in later interviews to gain a deeper understanding of emerging themes. As Corbin and Strauss (1990) argue, theories do not come out of raw data. Concepts are required for building theories. Initial findings about women's WFC experiences and coping strategies emerged from the analysis by using open coding. Afterwards, these concepts were compared with the features of Reher's family ties typology and intersections between findings and characteristics of the typology were identified. As Figure 2 shows, this typology helped us to develop a basic coding tree to which additional features that emerged from the data analysis were added. Related concepts were grouped to form categories. These categories were deepened with a comparison between Turkish and Belgian women's experiences and further comparative analysis of weak and strong family characteristics in Reher's model. From the beginning of the data analysis to the end, the process of writing analytical memos was used to

keep track of every detail. Analysis continued till reaching theoretical saturation. NVivo software was used to analyse the data.

5.5. Results and Analysis

This section describes Turkish and Belgian women's WFC experiences and the coping strategies they adopted. The differences between these groups are explained by the above-mentioned dimensions of the family ties typology.

5.5.1. Work–Family Conflict Experiences

5.5.1.1. Home Production

Our data showed that childcare and housework affect the WFC experiences of all women. The results indicated that having more than one dependent child is particularly demanding since young children need considerable care and attention. Women reported combining this with a full-time job as very difficult. As one Turkish woman (Sevim) noted:

> The second child was more difficult than the first one. One child was nothing actually when you compared with two. The third one is difficult anyway. I could make time for myself when I had one child, but it is almost impossible with three children now.

Her statement highlights the considerable changes experienced after each additional child. Other respondents whose children are old enough to take care of themselves talked about how it was tough to strike a balance when they were younger. For instance, Vera (Belgian) said:

> The balancing problem was mostly about scheduling. When I had to make appointments with a lot of people, I still needed to be free by 5.30 to collect the children from school. That was sometimes a problem because I did not like it. When they were little, there were hard times.

Similarly, Ceyda (Turkish) stated:

> There are times when I can't keep up. I experienced that frequently when the children were younger. I felt sorry when I was hard up. I thought: 'I wish I did not work and I could take care of my children better'. But now they are older and everything is easier.

In addition, our data indicated that in both groups household duties fall mostly on women. While some Belgian women share responsibilities, many resort to maternal gatekeeping in particular duties. For most Turkish women, sharing housework in a systematic way is not an issue. However, almost all the participants reflected on the fact that they are ultimately responsible for the overall organisation of the household. Christiane (Belgian), for example told the researcher that:

> We have dinner and then we clean up the kitchen, maybe do some stuff around the house. In theory, this should be it, but small things can crop up that take so much time to solve. I always have to organise things at home.

Hatice (Turkish), on the other hand, said, "Even though my husband helps a lot and we have a cleaning lady, the work is not finished there. You have a lot of responsibility". These findings show that childcare and household responsibilities are similar for both groups. No major difference between Belgian (weakly tied) and Turkish (strongly tied) families is found. Moreover, these results support the hypothesis that women experience much WFC when they try to simultaneously cover the expectations of both strong and weak family systems.

5.5.1.2. Being a Single Mother

Seven respondents in the sample were single mothers. Having to take care of everything on their own, some of them reduced WFC to the very fact of parenting alone. For example, Fien (Belgian) cannot get any kind of help from her ex-partner and being a single mother is a big conflict for her:

> I have a feeling that if there were two, if I had a partner, I could do my job with less stress. Now I have to organise so many things and it all rests on me. If I do not do the organising, it will not work. It is not an easy job to do.

However, if the ex-partner never helped in any case before the divorce, they argued their responsibilities were no different and being alone actually provided relief to some extent. As an example of this, Karen (Belgian) said:

> It was sometimes more difficult to work with my partner and the children. When you have a partner and you are doing everything in the household as if you are not working, it is even more difficult than without a partner.

Similarly, Leyla (Turkish) reflected:

> I was doing everything myself when my husband and I were together. I was doing all the household stuff and the man's work myself. I took out the trash, put the car in for service. I had to because he did not help. So divorce did not make any difference for me.

Our data demonstrated that having a partner who is not instrumentally helpful can offend women psychologically since there is a sense of unfairness when they do everything alone despite being in a family unit. When they become a single mother, however, it is clear that they alone are responsible and this makes the situation more tolerable.

Apart from the additional responsibilities single mothers have to deal with, Turkish women also face the pressures of social control. As single mothers in a strong patriarchal family system, they often confront disapproval from the wider community. Leyla, for example, said that she experienced social pressure as a single mother not from her own family but from Turkish society more generally. Ipek similarly mentioned that she preferred to move near to her parents' place since Turkish society might not approve of a single mother living alone. Belgian women did not mention that they experienced such social pressure from external sources. As the family ties typology suggests, social control is higher in strongly tied families and life as a single mother can be more difficult for women who were socialised in this context. Hence, the results show that compared to Belgian single mothers, Turkish single mothers in our sample need to cope with social control in addition to balancing work and family life.

5.5.1.3. Maternal Gatekeeping and Parental Guilt

Our data showed that maternal gatekeeping is a source of WFC for some women. Many respondents monopolise certain tasks for themselves as women and actively practice maternal

gatekeeping. The finding that women internalise gender roles is not unique to the Turkish women in strong family systems. Indeed, more Belgian women reported practising maternal gatekeeping. Carmen, for example, acknowledged feeling appreciative that her husband shares the burden but also admitted guilt because of her traditional mindset that a mother should be able to run the household alone. "I see that he does not make it a problem but I feel guilty about it because of the expectation about motherhood in my head. I want to do everything myself" (Carmen, Belgian). Susan (Belgian), in addition, stated:

> I do not want my partner to enter into the kitchen to do something. There are things that I just want to do myself. On the one hand, I think that if I take care of it, I know it will be done properly –I am a better cook (laughing). And I want to make sure my children eat certain kinds of vegetables or whatever. On the other hand, taking it all on myself is very tiring. You need to search for a balance.

For her part, Vera (Belgian) does not want her partner to do laundry, she stated, "The laundry is something he could do but I do not want him to. I see it as my job. He has a lot of stuff to do; I do not want him to do this too".

The results suggest that maternal gatekeeping is more of an issue for Belgian women whose partners are actually helping. Maternal gatekeeping is not possible where the partner does not offer to help to begin with. Far more than Turkish women, Belgian women have the option to choose what parts of the household tasks to keep for themselves and which responsibilities they are prepared to let go of.

In addition to maternal gatekeeping, Turkish women frequently referred to parental guilt or work-related guilt, a concept introduced by Aycan and Eskin (2005). Some Belgian women also mentioned parental guilt, but very infrequently. Turkish women observed that working life was impinging on their family lives. Having to leave their babies in childcare early in the morning, for example, was one source of guilt from time to time. Leaving sick children to go to work was another. Hatice, a mother of two small children, recounted:

> Unfortunately, life does not stop just because a child is sick. Small children develop fever all the time—you still have to go to work. We do not have the luxury to stay at home. I feel the conflict very much in that situation.

In line with Hatice's statement, Sevim implied that she felt insensitive leaving her sick child to her mother to go to work. But as she noted, while some mothers skip work in such a situation thinking that their children were more important, she had the option of her mother and so had to take it.

Collectivism in strong family systems might account for this overemphasised parental guilt. According to Staines' (1980) fixed-sum-of-scarce-resources theory, when women start working, they might feel guilty thinking that they cannot fulfil their roles as mothers. In his model, Reher states that in strongly tied families, traditional gender roles are more visible compared to weakly tied families and therefore women in strong families internalise gender roles more. However, this sample suggests that both Belgian and Turkish women internalise gender roles and feel guilty about not being proper mothers; the former practice maternal gatekeeping, while the latter feel overemphasised parental guilt. Regardless of their family systems, both Belgian and Turkish women experience much WFC when they have strongly internalised gender norms about their roles.

5.5.1.4. Expectations of Extended Family

High expectations of extended family were mentioned as one of the most challenging cultural demands by Turkish respondents. In collectivist cultures, society demands perfection in multiple roles such as "mother/father, daughter/son, daughter-in-law/son-in-law, neighbour, hostess in social events, wife/husband" (Aycan, 2008, p. 10). For example, Songül said, "Turkish parents rely on their children but Flemish parents rely on the system in the country, not their children". Also, when families expect to be visited frequently, it aggravates the situation for working women who have busy schedules. If both their parents and their in-laws live in Belgium, Turkish women feel a double responsibility towards family. For example, Ceyda (Turkish) expressed how her mother-in-law created a tension in her life:

> My mother-in-law is a very traditional Turkish woman. She expects me to help her and it becomes a constant struggle for me. I work during the day, and in the past, I would go over there every day after work for a family dinner. Then I'd help wash up and my husband and I would head home. After three years, I dropped that routine and they got used to it.

The results showed that extended family sometimes could interfere with decisions within the nuclear family. For instance, although Sevim (Turkish) and her husband do not plan on having another child, her mother-in-law wants them to have one more and she puts pressure on her indirectly. Ceyda (Turkish) reported that her mother- and sister-in-law do not favour her working—they feel a mother should stay at home and take care of children rather than working outside. Selma (Turkish), as another example, mentioned how she tries to convince her extended family that she can be a good mother and working woman at the same time, "My sister-in-law is not working, because they believe mothers should stay at home. But I realise that my children are better off than hers—they are not ill so often. Also, my house is cleaner than hers". It is clear that Turkish women lack role models of working mothers in their extended family since labour market participation among Turkish women in Belgium is very low. For this reason, some of them find themselves in the position of needing to assure their family that they can strike the balance between work and family, or otherwise consider scaling back their career ambitions.

For Belgian respondents, no such pressures were mentioned during the interviews. Most of them also acknowledged emotional responsibilities toward their families and the need to visit them periodically. However, this expectation is not seen as a burden. Those Turkish women who have no extended family burdens, in contrast, reported that this is only because either their in-laws are not in Belgium or their families do not talk to them because of their partner choices. Hence, as hypothesised, expectations of extended family for care/attention and intrusions from them increase WFC for Turkish women in strongly tied families rather than Belgian women in weakly tied families.

5.5.2. Coping Strategies for Work–Family Conflict

Women adopt a number of coping strategies to deal with WFC. Some choose particular professions that make work–family balance easier. Some reorganise their work schedule to accommodate family demands. A few even decide to move close to work in order to save time. Most of them tend to share family-related responsibilities with their partners and ask for help from their extended families. In addition, some choose to moderate their career ambitions, electing not to focus on promotion or career either temporarily or more long-term.

5.5.2.1. Division of Home Production Between Partners

The findings showed that sharing responsibilities with the partner was found to be one of the common strategies to decrease family demands. Most women share responsibilities with their partners but there are differences in the organisation of the household. The partners were reported to be less instrumentally helpful for Turkish women. As a result, these women have more strongly internalised norms in their position and they have to moderate their career objectives.

Some of the respondents stated that they share all responsibilities, others share only childcare responsibilities, and a limited number of women told the researcher that they are do not share any responsibilities with their partners. It seemed that the difference was due to the partners' origin and educational level. Most Turkish women who share all the responsibilities are married to Belgian or Turkish Belgian partners who are highly educated. Songül (Turkish), for one, who is married to a Belgian said:

> We generally share the work. I know that my husband is doing much compared to me. But we have to do that. I am very lucky in this respect. I think there must be Turkish men who approach this the way my husband does, but there are none in my social networks. My Turkish friends have a lot of difficulty even though they have parental help.

Along these lines, Selma (Turkish) who is married to a highly educated Turkish Belgian mentioned how she was content with her sharing pattern:

> He takes the children to the school, which is very important for me. If I do the cooking, he washes the dishes. He does the laundry. If I have to work in the evening, he puts the children to bed.

However, Selma and Songül's partners are in the minority. Most Turkish partners prefer to share only childcare responsibilities. For example, Hatice (Turkish) talked about how her husband does not help with housework, "He mostly helps taking care of the child. He is not a typical man who takes the garbage out and repairs things at home. If I insist, he helps but normally he does not care about such things".

On the other hand, most Belgian women stated that they share responsibilities with their partners. Susan said, "My husband is at home a lot so he helps a lot; during the evening he mostly plays with the children so I can cook. I prefer to cook myself. For other things we always share and switch duties". Jenny, similarly, pointed out that she can share all the responsibilities with her partner. Many Turkish and Belgian women reflected that they divide responsibilities along traditional gender lines –women's vs. the men's tasks. Some others who get no help from their partners express that if their partners did only the men's tasks, it would be more than enough. Hence, our data indicated that perceptions about traditional gender roles are effective in dividing the tasks at home; women who share responsibilities according to traditional gender roles either monopolise some behaviours for themselves unconsciously or their partners were raised in a gendered family where the mother is at home doing everything and father does only the man's tasks. For example, Ceyda (Turkish) pointed out:

> He takes care of the children; it is a relief for me. But he does not help with other things. I cannot persuade him. He does not cook, he does not like cleaning. It is also because of his parents. My mother-in-law always says: 'my son is educated; his hands can only do typing, not other things at home'.

Vera (Belgian) also talked about how the division of work evolved, "It is like traditional gender roles. I am the one who washes the clothes. Mostly I cook. I do the hobbies, driving around etc. he is the one who does finances, little things in the house, fixing". These results suggest that there is still a visible gendered separation in housework; it is women who perform 'women's work' (Cinamon & Rich, 2002). In short, findings indicate that compared to Belgian women's partners, most Turkish women's partners are less instrumentally helpful in household and childcare. The data, therefore, support the hypothesis that women experience higher WFC

when they cannot access spousal support (typical for strong family systems) compared to more egalitarian housework division (typical for weak family systems). However, women's maternal gatekeeping tendencies and traditional division of housework affect the WFC experiences of all.

5.5.2.2. Support from Extended Family

Almost all Turkish women reported having family support for childcare. Some of them mentioned permanent family support as a coping strategy, while others told that they ask for help sporadically. These statements make us think of Aycan's (2008) idea of "lifelong care of children" in collectivistic societies. To exemplify this point, Leyla (Turkish) expressed how she takes permanent support from her family, "My daughter is going to daycare for two days [a week]. My mother takes care of her the other days. I also have evening and weekend work, so my parents look after them all the time". Similarly, Sevim (Turkish) said:

> My first kid did not go to day care before school, because my mother looked after her for 2.5 years. When she started school, my second kid was born and my mother looked after her for one year. Now she was looking after my third kid two days a week.

Reflecting the rationality of parental help, Zehra (Turkish) said, "Everyone has a role in society; my parents also have roles as grandparents. I want them to do their roles, because it is a pleasure for them to look after their grandchildren". In addition to this, some Turkish respondents stated a lack of or limited family support as a significant source of conflict in their lives. Hülya (Turkish) expressed that she always expected help from her family but she found no support, "We have a saying 'you snooze; you lose'. I was the last one to be married and have children so I could not get the same level of attention my older sisters did. I was unlucky". On the other hand, Ipek (Turkish) frequently mentioned how it was difficult for her to be a successful lawyer without family help, "If you want to do such a job as mine, family support is a must especially when you have children. It was a big drawback in my life".

Our data showed that Turkish women also have expectations of their families in terms of childcare. Although expectations of extended family can be a burden for some, they also demand from their own parents. However, in individualistic cultures, this involvement might be considered an unreasonable imposition (Ho & Chiu, 1994). Belgian women also seek help

from family members as a coping strategy, but do so rather sporadically and on a negotiated, ad hoc basis. Fien (Belgian) who is a single mother told that she asked her brother to come and look after her son in the evening once a week:

> That my brother comes every week on Wednesday makes a huge difference for me. Because I know there is somebody my son knows and he trusts so I have a good feeling when I leave him with my brother. It is just one day I can work without worrying 'Oh god, what if I don't find a babysitter'?

Rilke (Belgian) whose husband works in the evening stated that she asks her parents to take children from school and stay with them at home once a fortnight when she has an evening meeting. Karen (Belgian), on the other hand, mentioned that sometimes she goes to her parents' place with her children and takes some time for herself with some friends. We see that seeking help from family members is a relief strategy for most women but its absence seems to generate little conflict for Belgian women, who made no mention of it during interviews. It would appear to be an ad hoc coping strategy for Belgian respondents, reserved for urgent or pre-planned activities.

In sum, it can be deduced from the data that Turkish women in strongly tied families have certain obligations to their families since intergenerational bonds are more intense. In addition, they draw a considerable amount of instrumental help from their families. On the other hand, Belgian women in weakly tied families find much less extended family interference, but they receive comparably less support from their families. These findings are in line with the hypothesis that relations with extended family can have a variable impact on WFC, reducing it because support and assistance are more readily available but increasing it through family expectations.

5.6. Conclusion

Drawing on in-depth qualitative interviews, this comparative study has explored the variations in WFC experiences and coping strategies among highly educated Turkish Belgian and native Belgian women. This chapter builds on a rich body of research on WFC by focusing on the role that structural family characteristics play in explaining this variability among women socialised in different family systems.

The results suggest the usefulness of Reher's (1998) family ties typology, which makes a distinction between strong and weak in terms of family ties. This study demonstrates that women's WFC experiences and coping strategies vary according to structural family characteristics and that interconnectedness between these factors is important in explaining the variation. We conclude that women's WFC experiences are affected by: 1) the amount of home/outside production; 2) being a single mother; 3) internalisation of gender roles; 4) sharing patterns between partners, and; 5) expectations of—and support from—extended family. Moreover, our analysis shows the importance of additional factors—such as maternal gatekeeping, parental guilt, and interference from extended family—in explaining WFC experiences.

In addition, it seems that there are also intra- and intergroup variations in women's WFC experiences. The findings indicate that women's partner choices, geographical proximity to and relations with extended family, and other personal circumstances affect their access to support mechanisms, which directly shapes the degree of WFC they experience. Additionally, the study suggests that contextual factors (i.e., relative position of minority women in social and working life and external pressures from their own community) inform the differences between groups.

The theoretical implications of this study are twofold. First, our data suggest that some determinants of WFC, such as family demands, traditional gender roles, and expectations of extended family, can be linked to Reher's (1998) family ties typology. Moreover, some mechanisms for coping with WFC, such as division of family work between partners and instrumental support from extended family, can also be linked to these family systems. This typology, therefore, helps to integrate existing research on WFC. Second, our findings show that some characteristics of these family types such as high expectations of, and interference from, extended family, social control, and the impact of lower labour force participation of

women have not been sufficiently studied in relation to WFC. In sum, Reher's typology provides a basis to identify other potential factors that might influence experiences of WFC but have not been mentioned sufficiently in existing research.

This research uncovers some differences between Turkish and Belgian women that can be connected to family systems. However, the differences are not particularly clear cut, given that regardless of the family system, all women must confront WFC in some form or another. Reher's model is helpful to integrate factors related to WFC, but the clear-cut division between two different family systems is not observed in the findings of this study. One reason for this might be the dilemma women face when between being a good mother and a successful working woman. It is clear that traditional gender role conceptions are still prevalent in shaping behaviour in both strong and weak family systems, and consequently, women internalise these roles either consciously or unconsciously. Another reason we see common patterns of WFC in both groups might be a reflection of the degree of socialisation of Turkish women within the Belgian social system.

The contributions of this study to the field are its focus on an under-researched ethnic minority group as a unit of analysis and its integrative approach, drawing on the family ties typology. The research may be limited by the narrow scope of the sample –only highly educated Turkish women were interviewed. Their educational and occupational mobility may impact coping strategies in ways we may not observe among less educated cohorts, for example. For this reason, it may be problematic to generalise the conclusions to the entire population of Turkish women in Belgium. Future research should, therefore, focus on larger and more demographically diverse samples to confirm the generalisability of the results found in this study.

"I've seen what happens when immigrant kids start acting too much of their own accord, and start ignoring their parents' rules. It's heartbreaking. Immigrant parents don't know what to do in these kinds of situations; they lack the cultural fluency to understand that teenage rebellion is a normal, American pastime. They're just so hurt that their child would do this to them. They either become draconian in their disciplining efforts, or they lose control over their child completely, abandoning them to a culture they don't understand".

(Jaya Bedi)

6. THE PARADOX OF CHOICE: PARTNER CHOICES AMONG HIGHLY EDUCATED TURKISH BELGIAN WOMEN

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ABSTRACT

Although research suggests that higher education leads to higher levels of ethnic inter-marriage, there is little research that describes and explains the variability of partner choice options for highly educated ethnic minority women. Using data from semi-structured interviews with 30 highly educated second-generation Turkish Belgian women, this study explores inductively the kinds of partner choice options experienced by these women and the conditions and social processes that stimulate them to (not) choose particular options. The results suggest that the relationship between education, inter-marriage and fuller integration is tenuous and needs further analysis.

6.1. Introduction

The offspring of the first-generation Turkish migrants constitute a growing percentage of the young population in Europe. Their structural and social integration have been studied from different angles, including marriage patterns. Their family formation choices have received considerable attention from researchers due to their growing numerical presence and their role on the demographic future of European societies (Lucassen & Laarman, 2009).

The classical marriage pattern of Turkish migrants in Europe has been characterised by low ages at marriage (Lodewijckx, 1994), and high rates of intra-ethnic marriages with a partner from the country of origin (Lievens, 1999). Existing studies observe a divergence from this classical marriage pattern in second-generation Turkish Belgians with a decline in transnational marriages (Van Kerckem, Van der Bracht, Stevens & Van de Putte, 2013), an increasing age at marriage and comparatively high levels of inter-ethnic marriages (Dupont,

Van Pottelberge, Van de Putte, Lievens & Caestecker, 2017). In addition, girls of Turkish origin seem to outperform boys at school and high education rates appear to result in more individualised decision-making processes about life-course events (Timmerman, 2006). Related to this, the role of parental involvement seems to weaken (De Valk, 2006).

In addition, quantitative studies on partner choices of Turkish immigrants associate higher education with a higher likelihood of having an inter-ethnic union compared to lower educated immigrants (Huschek, De Valk & Liefbroer, 2012; Hartung, Vandezande, Phalet & Swyngedouw, 2011; González-Ferrer, 2006). These studies, at the same time, highlight that even though there is a positive correlation between educational level and the likelihood of inter-ethnic marriage, high education is very often not followed by inter-ethnic marriage.

The literature suggests that second-generation Turkish women—especially higher educated ones—experience a transition and a cultural shift regarding their marriage patterns (De Valk, 2006). These women are assumed to develop more inter-ethnic contacts through their high level of education and this might reinforce inter-ethnic marriages (González-Ferrer, 2006). However, this transition is not always straightforward. We argue that a processual approach of this transition, in which 'modern' and traditional cultural and structural forces might interact in shaping marriage behaviour for these women, may better explain the situation of highly educated Turkish Belgian women.

Hence, we suggest that the link between education and inter-ethnic marriage is not linear, at least not for Turkish Belgian women. Moreover, there is a tenuous relationship between inter-ethnic marriage and 'better' integration into society. Although existing research suggests that partner choices for second-generation Turkish women are complex, very few studies have inductively explored the difficulties that these more highly educated women experience in finding a suitable partner, and the strategies they consider and employ in choosing a partner. In addition, little is known about how variability in these women's partner choices can be explained by the social context in which they are embedded.

For these reasons, through a qualitative study involving 30 highly educated Turkish Belgian women, we explore this population's range of choices, which is more complex than what is usually argued and focus on the individual/family processes and conditions that make them opt for a particular one.

6.2. Demographic Transition in Marriage Behaviour

Marriage patterns have changed dramatically across Europe since the late 1960s. This change has been mainly characterised by a fall in marriage and remarriage rates, high rates of divorce and separation, increasing age at marriage, postponement of childbearing, and increase in cohabitations (see Kuijsten, 1996: Lesthaeghe & Moors, 2002: Prioux, 2006). Lesthaeghe and Van de Kaa jointly formulated the concept of the 'second demographic transition'' in 1986 to refer to these interrelated changes in family arrangements. This idea of transition has been closely linked to various structural (e.g., modernisation and expansion of higher education), cultural (e.g., secularisation and individualisation), and technological changes (e.g., modern contraception techniques) (Van de Kaa, 1994).

The applicability of the components of this transition to non-European populations and migrants in Europe has become a question of debate among researchers. Research shows a significant change between first- and second-generation Turkish migrant women in Europe (De Valk, 2006; González-Ferrer, 2006). Increasing levels of education and female employment might be explained with the structural changes specified in the second demographic transition. Moreover, De Valk (2006) observed an increase in individualisation among migrant groups. Related to female emancipation through education and employment, unbalanced gender role divisions seem to be challenged (Koelet, Hermans, Torfs, Vanvoorden & Timmerman, 2009). All these indications are assumed to result in more 'modern' attitudes towards marriage behaviour with a high rate of inter-ethnic marriage and less parental involvement and social control. However, research suggests that cultural approval of new and more individualised behaviours do not come automatically (Lesthaeghe & Vanderhoeft, 2001). Hence, women who are likely to be potential trendsetters of demographic changes in their ethnic community may not experience these changes as straightforward.

Research also suggests that second-generation women seem to redefine components of Western modernisation and keep different and contrasting value systems together. For example, they express a strong adherence to both individualism and family values (Pels, 2006). In addition, more and more highly educated Muslim women experience female emancipation together with a strong religious commitment (Vanderwaeren, 2005) and they develop strategies to deal with social control and prioritise their personal choices (van Kerckem, 2014). Based on existing research, we suggest that this demographic transition might create challenges and

tensions for educated second-generation Turkish women as a result of contrasting value and structural systems.

6.3. Determinants of Partner Choices

Partner choices of people with a migration background are generally categorised as either inter- or intra-ethnic marriages. These subdivide further into: 1) a second-generation, co-ethnic partner; 2) a native partner from the host country; 3) a first-generation partner from the country of origin, and; (4) a second-generation partner from another migrant group (González-Ferrer, 2006; Hartung et al., 2011; Huschek et al., 2012).

Previous research has highlighted structural features, opportunities, third parties, individual preferences, and human capital as main factors affecting marriage behaviour (Kalmijn, 1998; Rother, 2008). The following sections critically discuss literature on different factors that affect partner choice and how these factors can influence marriage behaviour of Turkish Belgian women.

6.3.1. Structural Conditions

Blau (1977) suggests two main structural features –group size and heterogeneity– that either inhibit or create opportunities for intergroup contact. According to this theory, if the size of an ethnic group is small, the opportunities to meet with outsiders are higher and if the group is heterogeneous in terms of ethnicity, religion, gender, and socioeconomic status, it presents greater opportunities for intergroup relations. However, according to structuralist theory, even when the group size is balanced, it can still be difficult to find a partner if the number of potential partners with similar characteristics is small (Lewis & Oppenheimer, 2000).

Related to this, a perceived shortage of appropriate partners, due to low educational attainment among Turkish Belgian men in the local marriage market, seems to discourage Turkish Belgian women to opt for second-generation co-ethnic partners (Neels, 1999; Wets, 2006). Moreover, these women consider the local Turkish men as traditional and irresponsible (Timmerman, 2006; Van Kerckem et al., 2013). This suggests that some women have concerns

about gender equality and their individuality, and as a result, they appear to avoid second-generation co-ethnic partners.

Although comparatively less popular, the rate of transnational marriage is still very high among second-generation Turkish Belgian women. Recent research displays an increasing awareness about the risks of transnational marriages, including: 1) exploitation of women by partners who see marriage as an opportunity for migration (Charsley, 2005); 2) dependence on the wife due to the lack of knowledge of the local language (Dutch or French) and problems to find employment, which leads to changes in traditional gender role patterns (Gallo, 2006), and; 3) a lack of time to know one another due to fast marriages that occur during summer holidays (Van Kerckem et al., 2013). Related to these factors is the high rate of divorce risk in transnational marriages for Turkish Belgians shown in the research (Eeckhaut, Lievens, Van de Putte & Lusyne, 2011). As a result, we can expect Turkish Belgian women to strongly reconsider in-group partners from both Belgium and Turkey due to a perceived shortage of appropriate partners within the Turkish community in Belgium and a realisation of the risks related to transnational marriage.

In addition, research suggests that some better-educated immigrants might have less positive attitudes towards the native population due to perceived (Turkish minority) group discrimination (ten Teije, Coenders & Verkuyten, 2013). According to the study conducted by ten Teije et al. (2013) in the Netherlands, discrimination and experiences of social exclusion of higher educated immigrants despite their successful integration and efforts may draw them away from the majority population.

Moreover, studies show that highly educated members of the majority groups tend to have fewer contacts with immigrants (Martinovic, Van Tubergen & Maas, 2009). Some immigrants may be more sensitive towards discrimination to their own ethnic group and be aware of the more vulnerable position of their ethnic group (Taylor, Wright & Porter, 1994). These findings suggest that inter-ethnic marriage is not a one-sided story, involving only interactions between minority members. The experiences of discrimination by the majority population may also influence these women's choices.

6.3.2. Third Parties

Marriage is not merely about the decisions of two partners, it is also influenced by outsiders (Kalmijn & Van Tubergen, 2006). The family system, religion, traditions, and norms are presented as components of third parties (Kalmijn, 1998; Çelikaksoy, 2006). According to a study conducted by Lucassen and Laarman (2009) in Western Europe, if the religious faith of a migrant group is not common in the country of destination, the rate of out-marriage is fairly low.

The effect of parental involvement in children's marriage decisions is lower compared to the first generation, but it is still a significant factor in terms of shaping marital behaviour (De Valk & Liefbroer, 2007; Milewski & Hamel, 2010). Studies that investigate parental expectations regarding partner choices of Turkish immigrants in Europe suggest that parents either discourage particular union formations or encourage other partners. For example, the Integration of the European Second Generation (TIES) survey results regarding France indicate that half of the young adults experience family pressure in the sense of encouragement and discouragement (Milewski & Hamel, 2010). It is presumed that parents adopt different strategies to direct their children to Turkish partners they favour, rather than imposing one. Research also shows gender differences in parental involvement, as women experience much more social pressure, since they are seen as the transmitters of culture and religion in patriarchal family systems (Kalmijn & Van Tubergen, 2006; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001).

6.3.3. The Role of Education in Partner Choice

The relationship between educational attainment and intra-ethnic marriages (or the lack thereof) has been studied, albeit to a much more limited extent, to understand marriage behaviour of ethnic minority groups (Lucassen & Laarman, 2009; Chiswick & Houseworth, 2011; Furtado, 2012; Furtado & Theodoropoulos, 2011; Lewis & Oppenheimer, 2000). It has been suggested that education decreases intra-ethnic marriages in low education ethnic groups, while it is the opposite in high education ethnic groups (Furtado, 2012). However, education might not lead to inter-ethnic group marriage even in poorly educated ethnic groups when the above-mentioned individual/family processes and conditions are very effective in shaping marriage behaviour. Lucassen and Laarman (2009) explain this with contact and barrier theory.

People from different groups meet at places such as schools, neighbourhoods, work environments, and social gatherings, and this affects their chances to intermarry. However, these chances also reflect the fact that religious authorities might put up barriers to discourage marriage across religious and national lines. These religious and cultural values are not homogenous and static, but their (in)direct influence cannot be underestimated (Grillo, 2008).

This linkage between education and more modern attitudes towards marriage behaviour has also been fed by the relationship between education and agency development –especially for women. Some researchers question the idea that the modern education system empowers women and helps them resist cultural, religious and familial 'limitations' (Burke, 2012; Korteweg, 2008; Mahmood, 2001). They object to associating agency only with free will and resistance. Ahearn (2001), for example, argues that conceptualisation of agency may differ from society to society and may be shaped by socio-cultural conditions. Moreover, Meyers (2000) emphasises the importance of one's process of deciding rather than the outcome and the action decided upon.

It raises the question of whether educated women whose decisions might be influenced by above-mentioned third parties lack power to exercise agency in choosing their partners. Sahu et al. (2016) examine this link and suggest that it is much more complex than a straightforward relationship. Their study follows Ahearn (2001) and argues that there might be different forms of agencies between victimisation and resistance.

Hence, indications in research suggest that there is a tenuous link between education, agency and inter-ethnic marriages. Rather than being victims of cultural and religious expectations or destroying family relations with radical changes, there might be possibilities for women to steer their way around these expectations to find 'in-between' decisions. The literature, on the other hand, shows that educated people are forerunners who will discontinue the practice of transnational or intra-ethnic marriage and be more open to other groups. However, we have doubts about the applicability of this theory to Turkish Belgian women because we suggest that a processual approach, in which modern and traditional cultural and structural forces might interact in shaping marriage behaviour for these women may better explain the situation of highly educated Turkish Belgian women. Therefore, we argue that qualitative data is needed for a deeper understanding of the complexity of highly educated Turkish Belgian women's partner choices.

Based on previous discussions, the research questions to be examined through a qualitative analysis are:

1) What are the partnership options for educated Turkish Belgian women?
2) What are the factors that inform or limit partner choices of these women?

6.4. Methods

The study uses data from semi-structured interviews with 30 second-generation Turkish Belgian women in Flanders to understand their marriage behaviour. The study was limited to highly educated Turkish women with at least a tertiary education to investigate the determinants of partner choice among highly educated Turkish Belgian women. The case of Turkish women in Belgium is theoretically interesting for other national contexts because they do not seem to follow the predicted pattern in terms of partner choice, which begs the question: what choices do they have and what informs their partner choices? A qualitative research approach was adopted because of our focus on understanding participants' personal experiences, perceptions and choices. Furthermore, a qualitative approach allows the researcher to build rapport with the respondent and develop a deeper understanding of the phenomena step-by-step, which is arguably appropriate in discussing a sensitive topic like partner choice.

All participants belong to the second-generation, either because they were born in Belgium to at least one Turkish parent or because they had moved to Belgium before the age of six. The interview sample shows variability in terms of age, educational level, occupation, marital status and marriage type (Table 9). The sample did not intend to imply only men as partners, but we did not reach same-sex partners, possibly because of cultural and religious rules and limitations in this community although this would need to be further investigated. The respondents were between 27 and 55 years old at the time of the interview. The study consisted of semi-structured, digitally recorded interviews which lasted from 41 to 180 minutes and were conducted between 2014 and 2016 by the main researcher. Participants were reached in the Flemish region of Belgium through a variety of techniques, including email, telephone, and social media contacts. The principal researcher contacted some migrant women organisations that focus on activities related to women with migration background to reach

educated Turkish Belgian women through their newsletter advertising. Sampling was also done with the help of the 'snowball' technique (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981).

Table 9: Participant Information

Interviewee	Age	Education level	Marital status	Marriage age	Marriage type	Partner's education level
Hülya	42	5	Married	30	Transnational	4
Canan	45	5	Married	29	Transnational	4
Sevim	37	4	Married	25	Transnational	4
	35	5	Married	23	Transnational	5
Öznur	35	5	Married	24	Transnational	3
Deniz	34	6	Married	25	Transnational	3
Arzu	55	4	Divorced	19	Transnational	2
Leyla	30	5	Divorced	26	Transnational	0
Melek	41	4	Remarried	18-31	Transnational 2nd generation co-ethnic	3
İpek	42	5	Divorced	30	2nd generation co-ethnic	5
Ceyda	30	4	Married	23	2nd generation co-ethnic	6
Ebru	31	5	Divorced	25	2nd generation co-ethnic	5
Lale	27	4	Married	26	2nd generation co-ethnic	3
Meral	31	5	Married	26	2nd generation co-ethnic	5
Hatice	32	5	Married	26	2nd generation inter-ethnic	5
Aylin	35	5	Married	32	2nd generation inter-ethnic	5
Sibel	39	5	Married	28	2nd generation inter-ethnic	5
Ceren	28	6	Married	22	'In-between' co-ethnic	5
Oya	30	5	Married	27	'In-between' co-ethnic	4
Selma	37	5	Married	29	'In-between' co-ethnic	5
Esra	44	6	Married	27	'In-between' co-ethnic	4
Melisa	30	5	Married	28	'In-between' co-ethnic	4
Songül	32	5	Married	27	Native	6
Mine	42	5	Divorced	30	Native	5
Nehir	32	6	Single			
Yasemin	41	5	Single			
Belgin	40	6	Single			
Demet	39	4	Single			
Gamze	34	5	Single			
Hilal	30	5	Single			

We obtained informed consent, which ensures the participant is voluntarily involved in the research and has accurate information about the research process (Lewis, 2003). We used pseudonyms and removed personal information that might expose their identity. During the semi-structured interviews, key topics which were discussed included their family background, criteria for potential partners, the profile of partners, social control mechanisms, difficulties they experience about partner choice, and strategies in dealing with contradictory sources of influence.

The data was analysed by adopting a Grounded Theory (GT) approach, which aims to develop a theory inductively through a constant comparative approach (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Data analysis started with reading over the entire interviews after which an initial series of codes were attached through NVivo software. We initially identified recurring themes based on related concepts referred to in other studies and participants' own statements. We coded criteria for partner choice, the choices women make, and impacts of family and society as preliminary codes that could guide the analysis. In the following stage, we further analysed these codes inductively and divided them into categories or sub-categories by comparing and contrasting the codes to find the relations between categories. We identified partnership options whenever they referred the choices they made or would like to make and driving factors where they talked about structural or familial constraints as well as limited social networking opportunities.

6.5. Understanding Partner Choices of Highly Educated Turkish Belgian Women

6.5.1. Women's Marriage Model

Considering the criteria for partner choice, our findings show that most women conceive socioeconomic status as a key factor for selecting a partner. We found that most of them would like to choose highly educated partners with prestigious jobs. Both highly educated women and their families prioritise socioeconomic status since they experienced various challenges in the course of upward social mobility. Therefore, they appear to think that they deserve partners from similar socioeconomic situations. A similar level of education is perceived to enable a common worldview which is likely to be helpful in finding compromises about important life-

course decisions. Furthermore, if the potential partner has a higher socioeconomic status, his adaptation problems due to lack of proficiency in the local language and knowledge about Belgian culture seem to be less important for some women. However, being educated is not the only criterion for many women in our sample. Other criteria might come into play. For example, Ceyda would prefer a Turkish Belgian man educated to high school level with a good job to a highly educated partner from Turkey. Moreover, similarities in family structure, as well as ideological and cultural similarities, were also regarded as important.

With regard to the formation of criteria, a crucial observation is that some informants seem to state their individual preferences about partner choices, while others talk about criteria influenced by family expectations. Possible partnership options mentioned by informants include a second-generation co-ethnic partner, a first-generation partner from Turkey, and a second-generation (Muslim) partner from another ethnic minority group. Although limited, a Muslim Belgian, Italian, African, or Moroccan seem to be other options with some negotiation to convince families. Only a few women expressed the possibility of non-Turkish and non-Muslim partners for themselves. In addition to these theoretically mentioned partnership options, some women mentioned that they chose in-between co-ethnics and differentiated them from transnational Turkish partners, while some others favoured Turkish expats as dream partner options.

Gender equality seems to be a common concern for many informants when choosing a marriage partner. Growing up in families where most of them expressed to see traditional gender role divisions appears to make them be more ‘careful’ about their choices. Being respectful towards women, their career, and freedom were mentioned among some of the criteria that informants look for in potential partners.

6.5.2. Factors Influencing Women’s Marriage Decisions

Based on the qualitative interviews and existing literature, we discern some factors informing or limiting educated Turkish women’s partner choices. These factors include individual processes, structural conditions, opportunities in the marriage market, family barriers, societal pressure, and experiences of extended family members and friends.

6.5.2.1. Individual Processes and Structural Conditions

Firstly, being a highly educated woman with a professional career seems to influence the marriage decisions of our informants. Most of them look for partners who will respect their freedom in personal life (e.g., clothes, lifestyle, friends) and professional life (e.g., working hours, travels, relations with colleagues). The role of religion on their socialisation as children appears to inform their criteria and actual choices. Women raised in families where religious values and practices were deemed important mentioned that they try to live according to religious limitations. Therefore, they stated that a non-Muslim partner is not an option not because of family restrictions, but because they believe in it themselves.

Moreover, two informants mentioned the possibility of discrimination in case of having a Belgian partner. For instance, Belgin said, "I have to think about the possibility of being discriminated by a Belgian partner or his family. This can be the case". Apart from these two women, no one directly referred to a potential Belgian partner's discrimination towards them during the interview. However, most of them stated that "it is always good to be together with your own people in any case. You can feel safe and secure". This supports the argument of ten Teije et al. (2013) who state that some better-educated immigrants prefer to have less contact with majority population due to perceived group discrimination.

Furthermore, some women mentioned the meagre parental human capital as a 'barrier' limiting their opportunities to meet like-minded people. It appears that their family social networks do not provide suitable partners for these women. Almost all informants grew up in Turkish populated neighbourhoods where they were among a limited number of educated people. Nevertheless, our findings show that these women spend most of their time with Belgians both at schools and working places in the later years. However, most of them do not seem to consider Belgians as marriage partners due to their individual preferences or lack of social support from their families. Informants did not mention social media or online dating sites as tools to look for partnership opportunities. A few of them stated that they met their Turkish Belgian partners through social networks in the university and ethnic student associations.

Others mentioned that their school was mostly Belgian populated and that they barely encountered Turkish men within their Belgian working environment:

> I am more aware of it now. Sometimes I do not see any Turks in a day. The working environment is entirely Belgian. School was already like that. I ask myself where I am going to find a Turkish man because he must be Turkish in my case (Ebru).

This example shows that close inter-ethnic relationships do not always form positive partnership outcomes for highly educated Turkish Belgian women if they are not interested in an inter-ethnic marriage.

6.5.2.2. Opportunities in the Marriage Market

Our findings show that the most commonly mentioned barrier is the shortage of appropriate partners in the local marriage market. The women we interviewed gave two reasons for this shortage: 1) low levels of education of Turkish Belgian men, and; 2) the perception that Turkish Belgian men are 'narrow-minded' and 'too traditional'.

Many women in our sample mentioned that an educated second-generation co-ethnic partner would be an 'easy' and 'practical' option in terms of the marriage process, having similar experiences, language, and working opportunities. General expectations from second-generation co-ethnic partners are that they are respectful to their wives, have a sense of responsibility towards family life, be educated, and have modern attitudes. However, most women think that the number of highly educated Turkish Belgian men is very low, and this assumption makes it difficult for these women to find like-minded partners among them. Like most women in our sample, Arzu said, "Educated options are very limited here. You want him to be educated, Turkish, and to know the culture of Belgium. But finding this is very difficult". Some others think that even being educated is not enough since they see Turkish Belgian men as 'old fashioned'.

These constraints in the local marriage market encourage a transnational marriage for some women, but another difficulty arises since they are increasingly aware of the risks of transnational marriages. One of the risks mentioned by women is men's integration problems due to the lack of language proficiency and inability to find a proper long-term job. This makes men dependent on women and creates a double burden for these women who have to fulfil the responsibilities of both partners in the family. In relation to these, it was reported that traditional gender role patterns are disrupted within these families. Supporting this, Demet said, "For me

there is a difference between women's and men's coming here through marriage. A woman can stay at home and give birth to children, but the man has to work". This passage exemplifies a situation in which many transnationally married women have found themselves. Also, some of them told the interviewer that they see transnationally married people as "bad examples" since most of them experience big problems. Ceyda, for example, shared her reasoning of not choosing a transnational partner, "My older siblings were all married with partners from Turkey and they all had problems. Maybe that is the reason why I made a choice from here". In general, there is a negative image of transnational marriages among highly educated women. Öznur and Yasemin said, "Either lower educated people or old maids bring their partners from Turkey".

Contrary to these negative statements, a few women mentioned transnational marriage as the second-best option, since they could not find a suitable partner in the local marriage market. For example, Hülya has a partner from Turkey even though she was against transnational marriage before. However, she mentioned that she could only find a 'like-minded' partner from Turkey even though she experienced difficulties due to her husband's 'adaptation problems'. Another observation is that some single informants seem to idealise men in Turkey and see them as 'more educated and responsible' compared to Turkish Belgian men. Informants who have close relations with Turkey through friends, family, and holiday visits are more likely to think about a transnational partner as a second choice.

6.5.2.3. Third Parties

We distinguished two main factors that exemplify how third parties are salient in informing or limiting partner choices: 1) parental interference, and; 2) societal pressure. Our data suggested that some families impose religious, cultural, and social norms directly or indirectly. Women reported two situations in which their parents seem to interfere: 1) close intergroup contacts, and; 2) 'marrying down' in terms of socioeconomic status. In the first case, close contacts with other ethnic communities in schools and work environment seem to make some families more anxious in case of an inter-ethnic marriage possibility. Meral said:

> There was an extra social pressure since we were going to school. When I registered for the university, people said 'she will have her nose in the air and will not like us anymore. She will not marry after all. If she does, she will not choose a Turkish man'.

Although many women argue that the limit should be being a Muslim, they mentioned that most families object to a marriage outside the ethnic group and insist on Turkish grooms. Hatice, who is married to a second-generation Moroccan, told the interviewer:

> I explained it to my mother, they underestimated it at first [...] after two years we went through big family crisis. They did not accept it on any account [...]. I experienced limitations I had never had before. My father said 'they are all thieves and polygamists, you will see in a few years' […]. I could not convince them […] so I left home without their consent.

Hatice did not see her family for two years. They still think that it would be better if she was married to a Turkish man because such a crisis would have been avoided. Songül's family, on the other hand, still does not talk to her because of her non-Muslim Belgian partner. Contrary to this, Mine's parents accepted her Belgian partner more easily since they are not a religious family. Of course, these women should not be considered as the victims of families and social norms. Our analysis suggests that women respond to family interests differently. For example, negotiation processes through the mediators in the family were reported to be a common strategy to convince families for inter-ethnic marriages. It seems that these negotiations did not work in Hatice's and Songül's case and they preferred to insist on their decisions and married their non-Turkish partners. However, Yasemin and Belgin, who reported that they had marriage proposals from Belgian men, could not persuade their parents and did prefer not to marry, since they did not want to risk losing family social support. These observed differences show that constraints do not necessarily determine women's choices. This also suggests the existence of different types of agencies women exercise in important life decisions. Some women choose to insist on their decisions despite unfavourable consequences, while some others choose to give up their preferences for the sake of family expectations.

Regarding the second case, some women reported that their families do not want them to marry poorly educated men due to status differences. A few women, on the other hand, mentioned that their parents did not prefer transnational marriage since "their older children who had transnational partners experienced some problems".

Aside from parental interference, societal pressure becomes effective through social and religious norms in different ways. When a woman does not marry someone who is on equal footing in terms of educational and socioeconomic life, societal pressure about the supposed

mismatch seems to be reflected in gossip. Leyla married a poorly educated man and she said that her choice was criticised by people around her. When she realised that she was unhappy with that man, she did not divorce immediately because she thought that she would 'prove them right'. Öznur, on the other hand, had so much difficulty to gain social approval for her lowly educated husband from her extended family. Secondly, this pressure can aggravate pre-marital relationships for women. For example, Mine reported having to marry her boyfriend sooner than she had wished, because people in her neighbourhood created pressure on her since they saw her boyfriend came to her place.

These mechanisms also affect the way in which women develop relations with men. Depending on the job, developing a relationship with men can be a problem for Turkish women. For example, Belgin told the interviewer that she can easily develop a relationship with women, but there is always a distance with men. Lastly, we inferred from the findings that social norms about traditional gender roles seem to make some educated women 'unfavourable' as marriage candidates because of their roles in society. Thus, we consider name this particular female 'visibility' as an obstacle to marriage for these women.

6.5.3. Women's Partner Choices

Findings show that some women's partner choices are in line with their expectations, while the gap between real partner choice and expectation seems to be bigger for some others. Results show that there are nine transnationally married women in our sample. We found that explaining their transnational marriages is more complex. Some reported that they initially decided to move to Turkey to live with their husbands, but they could not execute their plans and continued living in Belgium. On the other hand, Canan's narrative about her marriage suggests that her transnational marriage was a 'by-product' of the 'limited opportunities' in Belgium.

In addition, six women have second-generation co-ethnic partners. Meral did not want to marry a Turkish Belgian man, thinking that they are too traditional, but when she met her future husband, she thought that he was different from other Turkish Belgians. However, we found that marriage with a native Belgian partner was the least frequent marriage type compared to marriage with someone from another migration background. There were only two women who chose native Belgians as partners and one of them was divorced. There are three

women who are married to second-generation partners from another ethnic minority group and they all reported experiencing difficulties. Lastly, six women reported being single at the time of the interview. They appear to have difficulties in finding suitable partners in the local marriage market. Some changed their criteria and decided to be more flexible thinking that marrying would be more difficult at a later age.

Hence, we observe more complexity in their choices with our sample of highly educated women who live in a poorly educated ethnic group characterised by strong social pressure. The findings demonstrate that their choices do not always reflect their preferred options and the choices that are cited in the literature as the most likely are not favoured by these women. More specifically, our findings show three additional theoretical partner choice options for Turkish Belgian women: 1) 'in-between' co-ethnics; 2) Turkish expats, and; 3) reverse transnational marriage.

6.5.3.1. 'In-between' Co-ethnics

The definition of 'in-between' co-ethnics in our sample is related to the so-called '1.5 generation' but we focus more on the concept of 'in-betweenness' rather than demographic criteria. Consequently, the 'in-between' generation can be defined as those: 1) born in Turkey and migrated after the age of 6 (Worbs, 2003); 2) who know the local language and have received a considerable amount of education in Belgium, and; 3) from, in some cases, the second generation who have moved between home and host country due to parents' returning plans (for the Netherlands, see Crul & Doomernik, 2003; for Belgium, see Timmerman, Vanderwaeren & Crul, 2003).

'In-between' co-ethnics are likely to be seen as an alternative to transnational partners since parents cannot take a very active role in the organisation of the marriage and women can be more independent with a longer pre-marital relationship. All women who are married to 'in-between' co-ethnics made clear distinctions with transnational marriages. Despite her negative opinions about transnational marriages, Oya chose a partner who grew up in Turkey but moved to Belgium for university education:

> He knows perfect Dutch and has a good job. Generally, I have been opposed to marrying someone from Turkey but since he is compatible with me in terms of status, education

and language he is a good match. If he had been from here, I do not think that I would have been as free as I am now. He has a broad vision.

Our data imply that it is important for marriage-pattern research to differentiate between the second and the 'in-between' generation and analyse to what extent the latter might be a new opportunity for the former.

6.5.3.2. Expats

Our findings show that Turkish expats are also quite appealing, given their high educational qualifications and prestigious international jobs. Expat is the label assigned to highly skilled temporary migrants. They are to be a 'distinctive group' (Van Bochove & Engbersen, 2015) and their movement is differentiated from classical (permanent) migration (Favell, 2008). Our results show that educated Turkish Belgian women differentiate expats from first-generation migrants and these Turkish expats in Belgium seem to be the new desirable partner choice for them.

Despite the popularity of potential expat partners among some women interviewed, no woman in our sample is married to an expat. They expressed that they do not have any connection with these men since they work in the local environment, not in an international one like expats. This suggests that some women idealise Turkish expats in their imagination. This might raise the question of dreams that are (re)shaped through a variety of factors in the migration context (Chamberlain & Leydesdorff, 2004). Structural conditions, limitations, and horizons of educated Turkish women appear to be important parts of their imaginaries and dreams. In this case, previous examples of transnational marriages for residence in Europe, limited opportunities in local marriage market, and low popularity of inter-ethnic marriages seem to direct educated Turkish women to dream about expats as the most ideal option. For example, Oya who is married to an 'in-between' co-ethnic partner explained that she would prefer a partner from Turkey on the condition that he would have a high social status like expats. Our results show that women do not prefer men coming from Turkey for marriage. Therefore, marriage opportunities with an 'in-between' co-ethnic or expat who already live in Belgium seem to ease their decisions.

6.5.3.3. Reverse Transnational Marriage

We found that some married women thought about moving to Turkey with a marriage partner before. Some transnationally married women told the interviewer that they planned to move to Turkey with their husbands but they had adaptation problems. On the other hand, Lale who is married to a second-generation Turkish man said that if her husband was from Turkey and had a good job there, she would move to Turkey with him.

Aside from these examples, we observed that some single women also prefer reverse transnational marriage and anticipate a movement to Turkey if they find a suitable partner there. Some believe that it will be easier for them to adapt to Turkey rather than their partner's adaptation to Belgium and they can avoid the complexity between men's and women's roles in the family. It seems that moving to Turkey for marriage is not a popular first choice, yet higher age and constraints in the local marriage market seem to stimulate these women to see reverse migration as a second (best) option. These results show that the qualifications educated women have also make them more independent and, therefore, they can think about moving to Turkey with their (future) partners. In our study, we refer to this kind of marriage as reverse transnational marriage and our data show that it can be seen as an alternative to transnational marriage.

6.6. Conclusion

Using data collected through semi-structured interviews with educated Turkish Belgian women, our study examines the variability in these women's marriage behaviour and identifies and describes the social processes that inform these choices. While previous research suggests that higher educated women are more likely to change their marriage behaviour and be more open to inter-ethnic marriage, our discussion illustrates that higher education does not always lead to inter-ethnic marriage. Furthermore, this chapter adds to the literature by examining the complexity of partner choice for these educated women. In addition, the suggestion that inter-marriage leads to fuller integration has not been supported in this research, because the relationship between these two is tenuous and needs further analysis. This chapter also suggests that inter-marriage is not a standard integration or assimilation path for some immigrant groups in Europe.

The findings demonstrate that transnational marriage is still the most common trend for women while choosing for second-generation co-ethnic partners is not a popular option for educated women. Furthermore, our analysis shows that the least chosen option is an inter-ethnic partnership with natives or someone from the second generation of another migrant group. The data imply that, for highly educated Turkish Belgian women, educated, 'in-between' co-ethnics and expats are becoming more attractive as 'dream partners' because of their accumulated knowledge about the language and the system of the host country.

This research presents a range of interacting factors influencing the marriage behaviour of these women and the feasibility of mentioned options. Structural barriers, such as a limited pool of partners with similar educational and socioeconomic status within the ethnic community, explain why second-generation co-ethnics are not seen as a reasonable choice. Negative examples and potential conflicts related to transnational marriage make some women eliminate the once-popular choice—first-generation, co-ethnic partners. However, some others emphasise the positive aspects of transnational marriages in finding like-minded partners. Although limited, perceived group discrimination also discourages inter-ethnic marriage for some women. Religion, parental involvement and social norms are still highly pertinent for educated Turkish women whose close contacts with natives and other groups can be seen as a threat by families. Hence, these constraints discourage women to consider a marriage with someone from another ethnic group. In addition, our study suggests that all these factors put women who cannot find a 'right' partner in a difficult position because marriage or having a partner seems to be the preferred option for most women in our sample. This may be shaped by societal norms about marriage and family life.

Our results also suggest that the choices women make (or would like to make) are not only rational but also seem to be geared towards avoiding potential conflicts to maintain cohesion and stability. It can be deduced that they have a long-term view of marriage. To avoid conflicts, they want to marry someone who has similar values, the necessary work and language qualifications, a similar socioeconomic status, and someone whom their family will approve of. It shows that they really think about the risk factors and look around for examples before choosing a partner. A crucial observation is that some women do not prefer having non-Turkish partners independent from family expectations and limitations. This calls for thinking about the relationship between education and inter-ethnic partnership in much more complex ways, because the suggested relationship may undermine individual preferences. On the other hand,

our study suggests that upward social mobility can make partner choice harder for some other women since families are not open to choices that are out of box. As trendsetters in their society, these educated Turkish Belgian women will probably have more difficulties to balance their own preferences and familial expectations that limit their social networks.

The theoretical implications of this study are twofold. First, our findings show that higher education may not lead to inter-ethnic marriages and can make partner choice more complex and even restrict options in some ethnic groups. Two, we discern new partnership options such as in-between co-ethnics, expats and reverse transnational marriages along with the existing theoretically mentioned options. Potential limitations of this study are the small sample size, the retrospective rationalisation of choices, and the absence of other voices such as partners, parents, or low socioeconomic status women in the analysis. Due to the small sample size, the aim of this study is not to make generalisations about the community, but to draw attention to potential challenges educated women in low education ethnic groups might experience. Future qualitative studies can analyse theoretically interesting new research questions by applying these results to different contexts among different ethnic groups or with different comparison groups. Furthermore, future quantitative research can provide us with deeper insights by differentiating for different realised and preferred choices with larger samples.

"So, here you are
too foreign for home
too foreign for here.
never enough for both".
(Ijeoma Umebinyuo—Diaspora blues)

7. CHOOSING A PARTNER FOR THE THIRD GENERATION: PARENTAL EXPECTATIONS AND STRATEGIES OF HIGHLY EDUCATED TURKISH BELGIAN MOTHERS

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this qualitative study is to examine the kinds of values a group of higher educated Turkish Belgian women are connected to and the way how they transfer these values to influence partner choices of their children. More specifically, it describes and develops explanations for the observed variability in the kinds of expectations these mothers have with regard to the partner choice of their children and the strategies that these women use to realise these expectations. Theory suggests that intergenerational traditional value maintenance and generational conflicts diminish as parents' education levels rise. Yet empirical evidence in support of this hypothesis remains limited. The study finds that the relationship between higher education and intergenerational value transmission is not straightforward. Although they seem to conform to new (more individualistic) norms that prioritise personal happiness and autonomy of their children, some collectivistic traditional values are still important for most mothers.

7.1. Introduction

Recent studies have examined socioeconomic outcomes of successful second-generation Turks (Crul, 2013; Crul, Schneider and Lelie, 2013; Keskiner, 2013; Keskiner, 2015; Konyalı, 2014; Rezai et al., 2015). However, we have minimal knowledge about the relationship between higher education and intergenerational transmission of values and family practices. It is, therefore, crucial to open new lines of empirical research into current patterns of demographic and generational change among highly educated, second-generation migrants in Europe.

Research mainly focuses either on transmission of specific values such as gender role values (Idema & Phalet, 2007; Talbani & Hasanali, 2000), family values and solidarity (Inman et al., 2007; Schoelmerich, Leyendecker & Citlak, 2006), achievement values (Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001), religious values (Maliepaard, Lubbers & Gijsberts, 2009), or on more general value domains such as group-oriented collectivistic and traditional values (Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001; Schönpflug, 2001) and conservatism values (Knafo & Schwartz, 2001). Although a few studies refer to value domains related to marriage behaviour (see Inman et al., 2007), values in relation to partner choice have not been examined systematically in intergenerational transmission research. However, partner choice can be an important area of research since it reflects the interactions between dominant value domains (e.g gender role values, religious/cultural values, traditional family values) mentioned in previous literature (De Valk & Liefbroer, 2007; Lesthaeghe, 2000; Todd, 1985). In addition, partner choice is sometimes considered as an indicator of "successful integration" (Dupont et al, 2017).

Studies show higher rates of traditional value transmission between Turkish parents and children after migration than might be expected given that the second generation is exposed to conflicting sets of values in the host society (Leyendecker, Citlak & Harwood, 2002; Nauck, 1997; Nijsten, Oosterwegel & Vollebergh, 2006; Schoelmerich, Leyendecker & Citlak, 2006). Moreover, research also shows that first-generation Turkish parents—consciously or unconsciously—are more likely to use strategies to impose intra-ethnic and intra-religious marriages for their children (Lievens, 1999; Timmerman, 2006).

The findings presented above tend to reinforce the general assumption that Turkish immigrants retain traditional parenting values. However, a limited number of studies add another layer to this theory—namely, that the children of first-generation Turkish immigrants have grown up during a period in which Western Europe has experienced a second demographic transition—a significant demographic and far-reaching cultural change—which might also influence the lives of children of immigrants (Van de Kaa, 1994). For example, research suggests that Turkish immigrant parents are less likely to hold on to and transfer traditional collectivistic values and instead emphasise more individualistic values when they are more educated, less religious and belong to a younger generation (De Valk & Liefbroer, 2007; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001). Moreover, more highly educated second-generation parents are merely expected to be less immersed in their children's partner choices and more "open" to different partnership options (De Valk & Liefbroer, 2007; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001).

However, research also suggests that cultural approval of new and more individualised behaviours does not come automatically (Lesthaeghe & Vanderhoeft, 2001). Although these studies suggest intergenerational transition in terms of values and parental strategies, little is known about whether these values are applied to partner choice, the way in which these values are more or less individualistic for highly educated second-generation mothers and how we can explain variability within this group in terms of the expectations they have for their children. Moreover, we also lack sufficient insight into the kinds of strategies that this group uses to influence their children's partner choices and how we can explain the variability within this group in terms of their strategies.

Building on research on intergenerational value transmission, this chapter offers an in-depth analysis of the kinds of parental expectations and strategies that highly educated Turkish Belgian mothers have about their children's partner choices, and how the variability in their expectations and strategies can be explained. Focusing on this group and this specific topic enables exploring an understudied topic, namely, the transmission of values related to partner choice. This highly educated group also helps us analyse the complex relationship between higher education and intergenerational transmission of values and practices in strong family systems. Although homogeneous in terms of gender and educational level, this group allows for an analysis of intra-group differences, thus opening up the variety of parental strategies that highly educated women employ.

7.2. Partner Choice and Interrelated Value Domains

Previous research shows that first-generation immigrant families often endorse values related to the family system, religion, traditions and norms, ethnic group and identity to socialise their children (Çelikaksoy, 2006; Inman et al., 2007; Kalmijn, 1998; Talbani & Hasanali, 2000). These value domains are significant in shaping values and norms related to marriage behaviour. For example, research shows that second-generation Turkish migrants are more likely to be expected to marry Turkish Muslims (Lievens, 1999; Lucassen & Laarman, 2009). Moreover, transmission and endorsement of values related to gender roles are also closely linked to values in relationship to partner choices. For example, research shows that women are expected to marry partners whose socioeconomic status is equal or higher to their own status (Yilmaz, Van de Putte & Stevens, 2019). In addition, women in strong family systems are seen as transmitters

of cultural and religious values, therefore, experience more group pressure with regards to partner choice (Kalmijn & Van Tubergen, 2006; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001). In addition to these particular value domains, group-oriented, collectivistic value systems expect children to carefully consider and respect parental expectations about marriage decisions (Xie & Combs, 1996). In such value systems, there is a strong normative preference for staunch parental influence, especially on life-course decisions (Buunk et al., 2010).

Certainly, intergenerational dynamics among migrant communities are producing societal changes that pressure traditional values (Phalet & Güngör, 2009). Nevertheless, studies on cultural transmission that examine the socialisation of values in migrant families show more intense traditional cultural/religious value transmission between parents and children within a majority of less educated and more religious Turkish families in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany (Güngör, 2008; Knafo & Schwartz, 2001; Nauck, 1989; Phalet & Güngör, 2009; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001a; Schönpflug, 2001). This might be the influence of strong group orientation and a strong family system, which is still salient within the Turkish second generation (De Valk, 2006; Kağitçibaşi, 2017; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001b). However, little is known about the kinds of values that highly educated, second-generation women prioritise for their children. Therefore, building on existing research, this chapter examines the kinds of values a group of highly educated Turkish Belgian women would like to transfer to (consciously or unconsciously) influence the prospective partner choices of their children.

7.3. Parental Involvement and Strategies in Value Transmission

Recent studies have shown that directly arranged marriages are no longer a predominant strategy among Turkish immigrant parents (Milewski & Hamel, 2010; Van Kerckem et al., 2013). However, this shift does not imply that migrant parents no longer attempt to influence union formation decisions among their children (Hooghiemstra, 2003; Van Pottelberge & Lievens, 2018). For example, the Integration of the European Second Generation (TIES) survey results in France indicate that half of the young migrant (second- and third-generation) adults are subject to direct pressure from parents strongly encouraging or dissuading them from a particular partner (Milewski & Hamel, 2010). Similarly, Topgül (2016) finds overt guidance and pressure to be strong elements of family influence on marriage decisions of second-generation Turkish youth in Switzerland.

Furthermore, research shows that parental involvement differs significantly depending on the gender of the child—women experience much more social pressure since they are seen as the transmitters of culture and religion (and family status) in strong family systems (Kalmijn & Van Tubergen, 2006; Kulzycki & Lobo 2002; Lucassen & Laarman 2009; Phalet & Schönpflug 2001a). Pre-marital relationships have generally been frowned upon and pre-marital virginity has been considered very important in Turkish migrant communities (Van Kerckem, 2014). In addition, a recent study suggests that—contrary to theoretical expectations—more highly educated migrant women can be even more inclined to pressure since in such households children are on average more likely to consider a native partner (Yilmaz, Van de Putte & Stevens, 2019).

Apart from direct strategies related to partner choice, existing research suggests that families develop other strategies which might help their children to internalise expected marriage behaviour norms. For instance, first-generation Asian–Indian mothers were reported to follow strategies such as modelling and reading religious stories to continue their core cultural practices which might influence their partner choice (Inman et al., 2007). Moreover, a study shows that South Asian immigrant parents in Canada encourage their children to mingle with their religio-cultural group and to watch Indian and Pakistani movies and shows to inculcate traditional South Asian gender values (Talbani & Hasanali, 2000). As mentioned above, these studies also show that some immigrant parents develop indirect strategies to transmit values related to different issues, in order to influence and shape their children's decisions about sensitive issues including partner choice.

Finally, a recent quantitative study finds that Turkish Belgian parents with a higher level of education are more likely to be open to inter-ethnic partnership and to have no distinct preference concerning the ethnicity of the future marriage partner of their daughters (Van Pottelberge & Lievens, 2018). However, limited empirical research presents more complex results. For example, Schönpflug (2001) finds that higher educated Turkish immigrant fathers in Germany transmit more group-oriented collectivistic values to their German Turkish children, compared to lower educated Turkish immigrant parents. This finding implies that highly educated parents might use 'modern' ways (through education) to transmit more collectivistic values.

To summarise, existing research suggests that families are likely to transmit—consciously or unconsciously—different kinds of interrelated values (such as traditions,

cultural or religious values, family values, gender values) to influence important life-course decisions (such as partner choice) of their children. However, direct parental involvement and strategies seem to give way to indirect ones. Therefore, in line with second demographic transition, research hints cultural changes in family practices and parental expectations. Nevertheless, the complexity behind this cultural change does not seem to be sufficiently explored. This study, therefore, aims to give more insights into the variability in the kinds of values this group is attached to and how they apply these values in their parental practices. In doing so, it examines intergenerational transitions and how this group positions themselves towards their parents.

With the foregoing in mind, the present study details the following research questions, which will be assessed through a qualitative research methodology:

1) How do the expectations of highly educated, second-generation Turkish Belgian women toward their children's (prospective) partner choices differ from the expectations their (first-generation) parents had of them?
2) What strategies do they pursue to realise their expectations for their children?
3) What explains variability in the parental expectations and strategies of these women?

7.4. Methods

The study uses data from semi-structured interviews with 27 second-generation Turkish Belgian women residing in Flanders and Brussels to explore their parental expectations and related strategies regarding their children's (prospective) partner choices. Since the study focuses on the experiences and outcomes of highly educated Turkish Belgian women, the sample was restricted to women with bachelor's degree qualifications (or higher).

All participants belong to the second generation, having either been born in Belgium to at least one Turkish parent or having moved to Belgium before the age of six. The interview sample shows variability in terms of age, educational level and the number of children (Table 10).

Table 10: Participant Information

Interviewee	Age	Educational level	Marriage type	Number of children	Parental expectations-preferences
Zehra	35	5	Transnational	1 son 1 daughter	No criterion–Turkish preferred
Meryem	30	5	2nd generation co-ethnic	2 sons	Muslim preferred–non-Turkish preferred
Sevim	37	4	Transnational	3 daughters	Muslim
Nur	31	4	Inter-ethnic (Muslim)	2 daughters	Muslim
Sena	36	4	2nd generation co-ethnic	3 children	No criterion
Gül	38	5	Transnational	1 son 1 daughter	No criterion -Turkish preferred
Asu	31	4	Expat-Transnational	1 son 1 daughter	Muslim
Leyla	30	5	Transnational	1 son 1 daughter	Flexible–Turkish preferred
Aslı	28	5	'In-between' co-ethnic	1 daughter	Muslim Turkish
Ipek	42	5	2nd generation co-ethnic	1 daughter	No criterion
Ceyda	30	4	2nd generation co-ethnic	2 daughters 1 son	Muslim
Sevgi	28	4	2nd generation co-ethnic	1 daughter	Muslim Turkish
Feride	30	4	Transnational	1 daughter	Muslim Turkish
Saliha	26	4	2nd generation co-ethnic	1 daughter	Muslim Turkish
Asya	47	6	2nd generation co-ethnic	1 son 1 daughter	Flexible–Turkish preferred
Basak	29	4	Expat-Transnational	1 son	Muslim
Belma	26	4	Transnational	1 son	Muslim Turkish
Ceren	28	5	'In-between' co-ethnic	1 daughter 1 son	Muslim

Cansu	37	4	2nd generation co-ethnic	1 daughter	Muslim
Didem	41	4	'In-between' co-ethnic	1 daughter 1 son	Flexible–Turkish preferred
Esra	44	5	'In-between' co-ethnic	1 son	No criterion
Esen	34	5	Belgian	1 daughter 1 son	No criterion
Gaye	29	5	Transnational	1 daughter	Muslim
Ayla	31	5	2nd generation co-ethnic	1 daughter	Muslim
Pinar	42	6	2nd generation co-ethnic	1 daughter	No criterion
Meltem	35	4	2nd generation co-ethnic	2 sons	Flexible
Sedef	28	4	Transnational	1 daughter	Muslim

The respondents were between 26 and 47 years old at the time of interview. All had at least one child. The oldest child is 21 years old and the youngest is 6 months, with the average age being 5.5 years. The study consisted of semi-structured, digitally recorded interviews conducted between 2014 and 2017 that lasted between 23 to 113 minutes. Participants were reached in the Flemish region of Belgium and Brussels through a variety of sampling techniques, including email and telephone contact, social media, and outreach through migrant women organisations. The *snowball technique* (Bierbacki & Waldorf, 1981) was also used, which means that additional women were identified and contacted with the help of existing respondents in the sample.

The principal researcher obtained informed consent from respondents, who agreed to participate in the research in light of full and complete information about the research process (Lewis, 2003). Pseudonyms have been used and personal information that might expose identities has been removed in presenting the data. In an initial phase, a few interviews were conducted as pilot interviews to further refine the focus of the research and research instruments (semi-structured interview questionnaire).

The principle researcher relied on Grounded Theory (GT) to analyse the data, moving from descriptive analysis of women's parental expectations to develop a comprehensive theory more inductively through a constant comparative approach (Corbin & Strauss, 1990). Data analysis started with a comprehensive review of all interview transcripts followed by an initial set of codes developed using NVivo software. In each interview, the narratives of parental expectations from the women's own upbringing were compared with their expectations regarding their own children's partner choices, family involvement and religious and cultural practices. Initially, recurring themes were identified based on related concepts drawn from other studies and participants' own statements. In subsequent stages, these codes were further analysed inductively and divided into categories or sub-categories by comparing and contrasting different codes in order to find relations between categories. In the last stage, variability in parental expectations, strategies and factors influencing both and were listed.

7.5. Main Findings

This section is organised as follows. First, it describes how highly educated Turkish Belgian women perceive their parent's attitudes in terms of parental expectations and compare it with their own parental expectations. This comparison helps us understand intergenerational changes in the kinds of values parents (would like to) transmit. Second, it gives an overview of the variability among respondents in terms of parental expectations and strategies. Finally, it explains the factors influencing respondents' expectations and strategies.

7.5.1. Intergenerational Differences in Parental Expectations

The majority of interviewees mentioned that they had very clear parental expectations in their partner choices and had faced a great deal of pressure from family members to comply with these expectations, albeit to varying degrees.[5] The most pronounced expectation of their parents was that they should marry a Turkish partner of the opposite sex. Although many women argued that the limit should be 'being a Muslim', they noted that most parents expected them to marry within their own ethnic group. Ethnic affiliation appeared to take precedence

[5] Differences between the interviewee's parents (i.e. between the mother and father) in terms of expectations never emerged as a significant issue and is therefore not taken up in the analysis.

over religion in respect of partner choice. Zehra, for example, recalls, “If I had married a Belgian, my father would have definitely disinherited me. If I had married a Moroccan, he might have accepted, but after a long period quarrelling about it”.

The findings also show that the women’s parents had the strong expectation that they would not have boyfriends before marriage. A few families seemed to be aware that their daughters had boyfriends or cohabited with their boyfriends, but women mentioned that they did not talk about it openly due to the ‘fear of social pressure’ from what they described as a ‘closed community’.

That the partner would have a similar social and economic status was identified as another key expectation of these women’s parents. Some women reported that their families did not want them to marry poorly educated men due to status differences. Leyla, who is married to a lowly educated man, mentioned that she experienced challenges in the process of marriage since she could not realise her parents’ expectations. Some other women addressed the importance of ‘reputation’ for their parents. Asya and Feride are married to Turkish Belgian men from Emirdag (a Turkish village from which a large number of families immigrated to Belgium, particularly to Ghent). Their families reacted to their decision because “people from Emirdag have a negative reputation in Belgium. They are not seen as committed to one marriage for life and seen as unwilling to look after their families”.

Hence, most women referred to a set of ‘strong criteria’ when talking about their parents’ expectations. In sharp contrast to these ‘strong’ expectations of their parents, highly educated Turkish Belgian women today seem to have softer ‘preferences’ for their children. In addition, contrary to previous research (Yilmaz, Van de Putte & Stevens, 2019), most mothers did not stress the ‘importance’ of having a ‘highly educated partner’, which seems to have been a crucial (imposed or endorsed) criteria for their own partner choices. Universal values and being a good human being were prioritised instead. In general, most mothers mentioned that their children’s upbringing and life experience would likely differ from their own and that they would therefore likely have a different outlook: “Restrictions will (therefore) not be the same for (my) children”. Furthermore, most recognised that there are fewer societal pressures on them compared to their parents to ‘impose’ a ‘strong’ set of expectations on their children. As the research suggests (De Valk & Liefbroer, 2007; Huschek et al., 2010), highly educated mothers are more likely to prioritise a democratic parenting style with values related to children’s autonomy and individualism.

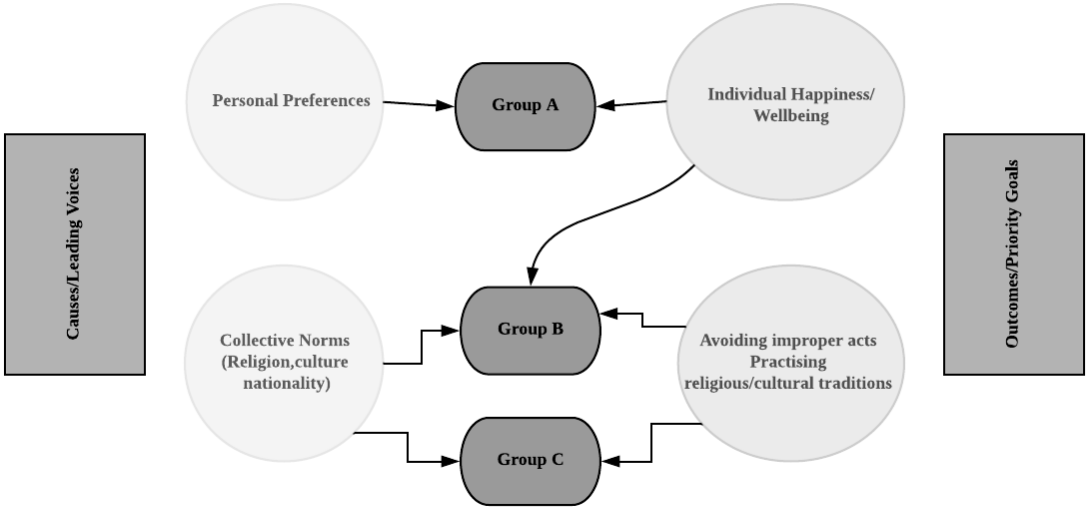
Moreover, all the mothers emphasised that the principles would not differ by the gender of their children—the boys and girls in their family would be subject to the same expectations equally. This points to a potential fundamental intergenerational shift emerging. Many of the women mentioned that their parents had assumed very different attitudes towards boys and girls when they were growing up, a narrative that is consistent with findings in the research (Kalmijn & Van Tubergen, 2006; Lucassen & Laarman, 2010). Contrary to existing research (Talbani & Hasanali, 2000), this finding also suggests that highly educated mothers do not prioritise transmitting traditional gender role values.

We deduced from our analysis that the highly educated Turkish women interviewed used different criteria (and emphasised different expectations) regarding partner choice when discussing their own choices and those they would like their children to make. Statements of respondents implied that having a Turkish or Muslim partner was an 'obligation' for most mothers in their generation, while it was a softer 'preference' for them in relation to their children's partner choices. This suggests a significant intergenerational transformation in highly educated immigrant populations in terms of value and norm endorsement.

7.5.2. Variability in Parental Expectations Among Highly Educated Turkish Belgian Women

Although most mothers appeared to accept the individual choices of their children and the existence of different options for them, most of them still seemed to have clear preferences about their children's partner choices. For some mothers, these preferences were paramount, while others seemed more flexible. In our analysis, marriage decisions seem to be informed primarily by the priorities mothers give to certain actors' expectations and the most important outcomes of these choices. Therefore, based on their visions and strategies, we have built a set of ideal-type categories around two criteria (causes and outcomes), which result in three group-types (see Figure 3). Our analysis showed that respondents were likely to base their parental preferences either on individual preferences or collective values, as the 'leading voices' that informed their decision. In addition, some of them prioritised only personal happiness, while others emphasised avoiding 'improper' acts and/or practising religious/cultural values as key outcomes of these decisions. Others still, in turn, were more 'in-between' their leading voices and priority goals. Although these positions are less clear cut and more flexible and fluid, they still help us understand within-group differences in terms of parental expectations.

Figure 3: Different Positions of Women



Source: Compiled by the authors.

According to this classification, *changers* (Group A) were more likely to prioritise the individual preferences of their children over those of the group of which they were part. If their children could 'get on well' and 'be happy' with their partners, they argued that this would be enough for them. For example, Didem, who is the mother of a daughter and a son and stated:

> I am very open. They can marry a non-Turkish [person] if they like, since that's what I did. Being Muslim is not a criterion for me, because they will make their own choices. I want both of them to be happy.

Similarly, Esen emphasised the importance of leaving children free to make their own choices. Therefore, she mentioned that she does not have any criteria and limitations in terms of partner choice. In line with other statements in this group, Meltem specified that ethnicity and religion are not relevant criteria for her. She also stated, "They can even be homosexual, even though I would not rejoice at that. [But] it is their choice". Some women mentioned that their criteria have changed over time. Pinar, for instance, said that she changed her mind about her parental expectations. Being a Muslim was an indispensable criterion for her in the past because at one time 'conforming to community values' was a crucial value but now 'getting along well with your partner' seems more important for her. Hence, over time, Pinar appears to have prioritised the individual desires of her children over the religious values endorsed by her community. This suggests that some actors can shift between types over time.

Moreover, these women seemed to think that pre-marital relationships are "what is considered normal nowadays". For instance, some women said, "I am aware that our children might have boy/girlfriends before marriage". Cohabitation before marriage also seemed normal and some women even argued it is 'healthier' for a marriage in the long run. This finding suggests that some collective values are changing, and actors appear to be adapting their priority criteria accordingly. It also supports previous research (De Valk & Liefbroer, 2007; Hartung et al., 2011) suggesting that less religious and higher educated parents are more likely to be open to unmarried cohabitations.

Women who are *balancers* (Group B) were more likely to prioritise collective values (especially religion). The findings indicate that these women strongly prefer Muslim partners for their children. And it appears that being Muslim is necessary but not sufficient—they wish the partner to be a 'practising' Muslim who is a 'good human being' along with other criteria including educational attainment and personal characteristics. Some of them used the words 'test' and 'challenge' when talking about the possibility of having a non-Muslim partner for their children. However, all of them emphasised, "It is their life and if they prefer, they can choose another direction in their lives". Ayla, for example, stated that "were she to choose such a path, that would be very difficult for us, but I would never abandon her or break off relations".

Women in this group seemed to find pre-marital relationships inappropriate, given their religion. Although they did not appear to support such relationships actively, they expressed that they want to be in communication with their children and give them advice about relationships in order to protect them from 'improper' relationships. These findings suggest that even though these women seem to base their expectations on collective (religious) values, they are more 'in-between' prioritising children's happiness and assuring that they are avoiding 'improper' behaviour according to their religion and culture. According to these mothers' priorities, the first best option for their children is to notice collective values and practise religious and/or cultural traditions. This option, they assume, will also bring personal happiness. However, if their children would not weigh in with their parents, the second option is to emphasise their happiness and not to lose them.

Finally, a limited number of women, defined as *keepers* (Group C) seemed to prioritise collective values. They, like the *balancers,* also consider avoiding 'improper' conduct to be more important than individual happiness as a goal. For these women, a non-Turkish and/or a non-Muslim partner appeared 'out of the question'. They argued that they felt they *should* be

'more open-minded' but 'confessed' that they are not. These women, on the other hand, seemed 'stricter' about pre-marital relationships and cohabitation without marriage.

In sum, the findings show that almost all mothers interviewed have *preferences* about their children's partner choices. However, they seemed to hold different *positions*. For *changers*, values related to individualism trump those of the collectivism and they are more 'open' to different partnership options for their children. *Balancers* strongly emphasise religious and collective values and avoiding 'improper' conduct but also appear to respect the right of their children to adopt personal preferences and make decisions for themselves. Beyond these two major groups, a few *keepers* adopted the posture of first-generation parents commonly cited in the literature (Güngör, 2008; Schönpflug, 2001), by strongly emphasising adherence to cultural and religious values over the personal choices and happiness of their children.

7.5.3. The Strategies Deployed to Realise Expectations

Among highly educated Turkish Belgian women, we observed clear variations in strategies vis-à-vis the priorities identified in the previous section. Thus, *changers* were less likely to develop (or plan to develop) strategies to preserve the Turkish identity of their children. Only a few women in this group stated that their children "should not forget that they are Turkish". Almost all *changer* mothers did express a preference that their children acquire a general knowledge of Turkish language and culture. But only a few mentioned that they take specific actions (e.g., sending their children to Turkish folklore courses, reading Turkish books, making their children watch Turkish TV channels, visiting Turkey) to 'preserve Turkishness'. Contrary to previous findings about first-generation immigrant parents (Talbani & Hasanali, 2000), these findings suggest that the majority of respondents do not develop active strategies to transmit ethnic and nationalistic values.

Balancers cited several strategies they do (or would) follow to familiarise their children with Muslim partners. A prominent strategy mentioned is to give them a 'proper religious education; from childhood onwards so that they learn right and wrong according to their religion. In so doing, the aspiration is that their children *convince themselves* of the importance of choosing a Muslim partner. Ayla, for instance, said, "If we make sure they have a proper education, they will return to their nature and will not insist on having a non-Muslim partner".

For Nur, “Human beings can always make mistakes. It is important to have elders around because elders remind you of values, because [otherwise] we might forget values in the flow of life”. These comments indicate that these mothers see refuting or resisting parental expectations concerning partner choice as less of a moral transgression for this generation compared to their parents. Moreover, these mothers appear to see their role as *advising and guiding* the next generation rather than *pressuring or compelling* children to act in a certain way.

Significantly, these mothers did not seem to have any active strategies for realising their expectations. For instance, although they referred to the importance of (religious) education during the interviews, they nevertheless asserted a clear lack of trust in Quranic schools and an intention to take ownership of how religious education is imparted to their children. However, they also mentioned that they lack the time to supervise and direct a ‘proper religious education’ for their children or the relevant knowledge or resources to do so. Asya, for example, noted that she directs her children to YouTube to learn about reading the Quran and daily prayer. This finding is theoretically interesting since it suggests an ‘inversion’ in parents’ educational competences across generations. In other words, whereas the parents of these second-generation mothers lacked the resources to help them become more ‘modern’ (e.g., knowledge about school selection processes, helping with homework, finding relevant contacts), these highly educated women seem to lack the resources to help their children retain the ‘traditional’ culture. This inversion, then, is another potential variation on the ‘paradox of transmission’ referred to in the literature (Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001). In addition, as mentioned in previous research (Schönpflug, 2001) this finding suggests that highly educated mothers intend to use ‘modern’ tools (e.g., YouTube) to realise more traditional expectations (e.g., teaching religious practices). However, findings also show that having strategies do not always translate into transmission of these values.

Apart from religious education, in line with previous research (Inman et al., 2007), some mothers seem to see direct ‘modelling’ of traditional or desired behaviour as one effective strategy. Some mentioned that they pray in front of their children and read the Quran when children are around. They specified that they do these things not for the sake of keeping up with certain traditions but in order to raise ‘consciously practising Muslims’. In so doing, they seemed to accord significance to themselves as everyday ‘role models’ for their children. Here, the assumption appears to be that by merely setting an example of living as a good Muslim,

children will develop a 'natural' preference for a Muslim partner. For example, when talking about her daughter's partner choice, Belma said that she and her husband plan to actively model these practices to "make sure that religious values are so embedded in her subconscious, that she will not look to a non-Muslim as a potential partner".

Our analysis suggests that *keepers* are likely to adopt similar strategies as *balancers*. Only one mother mentioned that she wants her children to have more Turkish friends and only a few Belgian friends since she has concerns about their 'moral education' through peer relationships. This preference seems to work as a strategy to direct children to Turkish Muslim partners. Apart from this, these women who take different positions in terms of expectations appeared to come together concerning the strategies they used (or intended to use) to realise their expectations. They seemed to believe that it is their parental responsibility to teach their children what is 'right' and 'wrong', but also mentioned that they are aware that there are limits to their influence. This also suggests that although these women emphasise collective values in their expectations, they believe it is an individual parental responsibility (rather than a collective family-community one) to transmit these collective values.

In sum, highly educated Turkish Belgian mothers' strategies are likely to be less normative than the strategies employed by their own parents who were more likely to apply family pressure to strongly discourage or encourage specific choices (Milewski & Hamel, 2010). They seem to have/accept less control over the life choices of their children, while their parents seemed to be more in control. Differences between the positions appear more fluid when they talked about their strategies. Overall, the rather flimsy frame of strategies offered by these women suggests that keeping the connection between three generations might be time-consuming and difficult for professional women. Thus, their articulation of a balance between individual preferences and collectivistic values was expressed more as an aspiration than a strong desire. Overall, these findings suggest that the tensions and conflicts observed between the first- and second-generations (Nauck, 2001; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001) are less likely to be observed in subsequent generations.

7.5.4. Factors Influencing Parental Expectations and Strategies

7.5.4.1. Personal Struggles and Experiences

What, then, is driving these apparent shifts in attitudes and strategies in parental behaviours? The findings suggest that women's personal struggles are central. Most of the highly educated Turkish Belgian women interviewed mentioned the difficulties *they experienced* with parental interference when choosing their own partners. *Changers* cited the negative consequences (to them) of the strong family system and explained why they do not want to transmit these 'traditional values' to their children. Didem, for instance, said that she had been always in love with Belgians, but she limited herself because of her family expectations. When she had to develop expectations for her own children, she affirms, "I will not put any limitation [on them], because I lived it [intense pressure] myself and I know how it affects your choices". This suggests that this group does not want their children to go through the same difficulties in navigating parental and social pressure in their partner choices. Concerning that, these mothers appear to disregard most of the collective values and prioritise values related to personal preferences, which are assumed to lead to individual happiness and wellbeing.

On the other hand, Nur's personal struggles with her family's reaction to her non-Turkish partner, seem to influence her planned future strategy, "If they want to marry non-Muslims, I will never do what my father did to me". For Nur (a *balancer*), having married a Muslim man remains something she values and appreciates, but she seems to balance her expectations based on community values and her children's personal preferences. This example suggests a strongly felt discrepancy among these women between *leading voices* (collective values) and *priority goals* (personal happiness) for their children. Although their expectations indicate a strong felt preference for collective/religious values, their 'weaker' strategies suggest that they, with varying degrees of grace, feel they have 'no other choice' than to let their children pursue their own vision of personal happiness.

In addition to struggles in the family, their personal relationship experiences inform their wider preferences and strategies for their children. Aslı who is married to an ethnically Kurdish man referred to difficulties she experienced due to 'cultural differences'. Furthermore, she said, "I realised that having an (ethnically) Turkish partner is just easier". This example suggests a post-factum rationalisation among women who have determined that one partnership model is actually superior, even though they have not experienced both to compare.

In contrast to Aslı, Meryem—who divorced her husband, a Turkish man—says she now knows that Turkish partners are problematic. She will, therefore, dissuade her children from marrying Turks. This suggests another discrepancy, which is more related to a change in the perception of the respondent over time. This transformation seems to be explained by marriage decisions that afterwards contradicted previously held assumptions about leading voices and priority goals.

Lastly, examples in extended family and transformations in their social surrounding seem to influence mothers' preferences and strategies. The findings show that having inter-ethnic marriages in the family increases the 'normality' of such marriages leading mothers to be more open to them. On the other hand, our respondents stated that they have 'like-minded' and 'educated' people in their social surroundings. This is likely to further decrease the possibility of social pressure in case of inter-ethnic marriage. This suggests that structural changes in the family and community can lead to cultural changes in terms of what is expected. Previous research has mentioned the likelihood of inter-ethnic marriage among highly educated migrants (Hartung et al., 2011; Huschek et al., 2010), but this finding stresses the salience of group educational attainment over individual educational outcomes.

7.5.4.2. Religious Socialisation

Our data also show that religion played a central role in the childhood socialisation of most respondents. Although almost all the mothers identified themselves as Muslim, we observed considerable variation in religious practice. *Changers* mentioned that they grew up in families where religion was always present but not practised sincerely. Except for a few respondents, all recalled some religious education in mosques or at school through Islam courses. Most of them criticised their families' 'unconscious' and 'mostly traditional' practices in the name of religion. For example, Gül said, "All these rules were based on culture, not religion. My mother wore mini-skirts and make-up when she lived in Turkey. When she moved to Belgium, she started to be religious due to the social pressure around her". Pinar also shared a similar story about her parents who "turned out to be religious because of social pressure". Based on their statements, these women were more likely to see religion or 'traditional practices in the name of religion' as 'restricting' their important life choices. This type of religious socialisation appears to have driven some of the women to prioritise 'universal values' above religious ones.

These women, therefore, stated that the religious affiliation of their children's prospective partners is not important for them. Moreover, they did not mention any strategy or plan to direct their children to Muslim partners in the future. This might explain why these mothers do not consider collective/religious forces as very influential in their life and hence are more likely to emphasise individual preferences.

Balancers and *keepers* were more often raised in families where religious values were practised actively and religion was considered very important. No one mentioned that these values were imposed on them by their families. It was instead described as a 'conscious learning process'. Most of them took religious courses either by going to mosques or by following Islam courses at school. In addition to this, they were also educated by their families at home. All of these women were wearing headscarves at the time of the interviews and almost all of them find religious education important for their children. There seems to be a consistency in their behaviour and expectations because they stated that they want their children to obtain a religious education and be practising Muslims like their parents. Hence, they appeared to find it 'very normal' to expect their children to marry Muslim partners. In line with previous research (Kelley & De Graaf, 1997), this suggests that religious upbringing in the family influences the level of religiosity in future generations. As a result, there seems to be a stronger focus on these collective expectations rather than individual ones among this group.

The influence of their religious socialisation, as distinct from *changers*, manifests itself in their strategies to familiarise their children with religious values. Most *balancers* are more likely to strive for a balance between the collective values they prioritise and the individual choices of their children, while the *keepers* are more likely to emphasise avoiding 'improper' conduct and practising religious/cultural traditions over personal happiness. This group's stronger adherence to collective values might be explained by their assumption that their children will be less happy if they do not follow the 'right' path through collective values. In addition, these findings support previous literature suggesting that religious women find various ways to combine religious and 'modern' values (Pels, 2006; Vanderwaeren, 2005).

7.5.4.3. Adherence to a Turkish National Identity

The findings also suggest that there is some perceived need to adhere to a Turkish national identity. There appears to be an assumption that their children will enjoy similar things their parents enjoy(ed) and will hold Turkish cultural values when they are grown up. Therefore, the majority of mothers, even the ones who seem to be open to every partner choice, prefer Turkish partners with the assumption that partners from different ethnic backgrounds might produce some clashes over cultural differences. These mothers also seem to be concerned that Turkish language and culture might be lost in case of an inter-ethnic marriage. This assumption also seems to drive concerns about child-rearing practices among some. It might be deduced from this finding that most mothers would like their children to identify with a Turkish national identity.

Interestingly, it seems even stronger for women who claim to be less religious and who seem to prioritise personal preferences over collective values. It seems that 'Turkishness' constitutes an alternative binding identity between the three generations. In line with previous research (Timmerman, 2006), it also seems that nationalism, as a collective force, binds more and less religiously minded Turks.

In sum, highly educated Turkish Belgian mothers' parental preferences and strategies appear to be shaped by: 1) their personal struggles with parental interference; 2) their own experiences about partner choice; 3) their experiences with religious socialisation in their family; 4) structural changes in the family and community, and; 5) the perceived need to adhere to a Turkish national identity. The variability in their positions suggests that these factors influence them differently. Therefore, we see a blurred picture of the processes of intergenerational change across the sample.

7.6. Conclusion

Based on qualitative data from 27 highly educated Turkish Belgian mothers, this chapter inductively analysed the kinds of parental expectations and strategies that this group introduced to influence their children's partner choices and how the variability within this group can be explained. In so doing, this study enabled us to explore the kinds of values highly educated mothers intend to transmit to their children.

The findings, first of all, demonstrate that strong 'criteria' and 'expectations' of first-generation parents turn into softer 'preferences' among highly educated, second-generation mothers who prioritise more individual choices of their children. Moreover, gender differences concerning partner choices seem to disappear within this group. Based on two important and contrasting criteria (collective values and individual preferences) which have been frequently mentioned by respondents, we identified three ideal-type categories (*keepers*, *changers* and *balancers*) through which we analysed the kinds of values they intend to transmit, parental expectations, strategies and factors influencing them. The findings suggest that collective values and priority goals are changing for most mothers. However, this change is more explicit for *changers* who are less likely to be religious and do not seem to have strong expectations regarding their children's partner choices. In addition, *balancers* want their children to avoid 'improper' behaviour in keeping with religious and cultural values, but they value the personal happiness of their children most of all. On the other hand, there are a few *keepers* in the sample, and they appear to have strict criteria for their children and are likely to oppose non-Muslim and/or non-Turkish partners. In addition, our analysis shows that some women appear to shift between types over time. Although some strategies were mentioned, this group do not appear to be consistently pursuing the kinds of normative strategies research has referred to (like overt guidance or pressure) (see Milewski & Hamel, 2010; Topgül, 2016). It appears that these women have great hopes for their children regarding the maintenance of national and/or religious values but do not have resources and time to help their children keep these values. Overall, it also appears that most of them are still connected to traditional and collectivistic values in some way but there is variability in the kinds of values they are attached to and the way how they apply these values. This highlights the complexity of the transition from collectivistic values to more individualistic ones in this group.

These women's own experiences and personal struggles, their religious socialisation, adherence to a Turkish national identity and structural changes in the family seem to affect the values they would like to transmit, their parental preferences and strategies differently. *Changers* do not seem to consider religious values as very influential in their lives, in part because their families are perceived not to hold on religious beliefs consistently. *Balancers* and *keepers* were generally raised in families where religious values are very important and were taught to believe in the importance of transmitting these values to the next generation. *Keepers*, in addition, seem to assume that following the right path and being happy is possible through prioritising collective values. Lastly, values related to Turkish national identity—both for

religious and secular women—seems to function as an alternative binding identity that can keep the three generations together.

Findings of this chapter are theoretically interesting for several reasons. First, it opens new lines of empirical research into current studies on intergenerational value transmission by showing how different value domains interact to (in)directly influence partner choices of children. Previous studies mentioned direct strategies used by first-generation parents to influence and shape marriage behaviour. However, respondents in this study appear to prioritise values related to autonomy and individualism and do not seem to be involved in shaping the personal choices of their children as their parents did. Instead, they appear to focus more on core values (not directly related to marriage behaviour) to socialise their children according to their expectations. Although these values seem to be transferred through more 'modern' channels compared to the lower educated first generation, the content of these values seems to be similar. Second, although the strong link with religious and traditional values seems to be fractured for some mothers, ethnic and nationalistic values still appear to be important for them. Therefore, it shows that research needs a deeper analysis when dividing groups based on individualistic and collectivistic values since the latter might be relatively fragmented for highly educated groups.

Hence, findings demonstrate a processual cultural change in the pattern of intergenerational relations and that the experiences of leading actors in intergenerational transmission have changed in important ways. Although this change does not mean a complete break with the values and norms of the previous generation, this study hypothesises that there will be less generational tension between highly educated second-generation migrants and their children. Moreover, the study expands our knowledge about how highly educated women combine and negotiate their traditional collectivistic values and individualistic values and ways of living in host societies. In so doing, the research reveals that the relationship between higher education and the pattern of intergenerational transmission is more fragmented and changeable than generally assumed in the literature.

The present study focuses on personal experiences of a group of higher educated Turkish Belgian women and how they position themselves towards their parents with regards to parental expectations. Therefore, this might result in making assumptions about first-generation parents based on perspectives of their daughters. Despite this methodological limitation, findings support existing literature about first-generation parents and show certain

cultural and demographic shifts (e.g., same-sex marriage, gender roles). The variability in findings also suggests that the method does not appear to impose one meaning. Moreover, this study examines parental expectations among a group whose children have not yet reached marriage age; therefore, their preferences might change when their children actually start to consider partners. However, given the experiences and personal struggles of mothers, the partner choices of their children are more likely to be on their agenda even at younger ages.

Moreover, observing variability in terms of expectations and strategies suggests that they already have clear views about partner choices. Future studies might build on the insights presented here by examining parental expectations when the third generation reaches marriage age and analyse parents' reactions to their partner choices. These studies could also cover both maternal and paternal perspectives and analyse differences in parental expectations and strategies by gender. Besides this, longitudinal studies might adopt a life-stage approach and examine the extent to which parents' views of their children's prospective and actual partner choices over time. Lastly, characteristics of the host society (e.g., discrimination, institutional arrangements, neighbourhood characteristics) did not emerge from data as key explanatory processes in shaping partner choice. This implies that collective values and norms are more likely to influence partner choice compared to host society context. This is an area that can be further explored in future studies.

"It's said that you can never go home again,
and it's true enough, of course.
But the opposite is also true.
You must go back, and you always go back,
and you can never stop going back,
no matter how hard you try".

(Gregory David Roberts—Shantaram)

8. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

8.1. Introduction

Since the 1960s, immigrant integration has been an increasingly important research topic in Western Europe. Over this period, our knowledge of the immigrant integration experience in various life domains—such as education, occupation, and family—has expanded significantly. Significant as this literature is, however, it has tended to analyse these in a highly segmented fashion (Arends-Tóth & Van de Vijver, 2003; Phalet, Van Lotringen & Entzinger, 2000), meaning the information we have about the experiences of children of immigrants over time is limited and our knowledge of how the determinants of integration might change across life domains circumscribed. This study has, therefore, sought to move away from the study of integration in phases and instead build an analytical framework that foregrounds integration as a multi-dimensional and dynamic process. Based on this understanding, the dissertation suggests that integration (of Turkish Belgian women) is an ongoing process that is influenced by two broad factors: the *characteristics of the ethnic community* (family system, norms, values, culture/religion, and the like) and *the host society context* (integration discourses, institutional arrangements, discrimination, and patterns of exclusion).

This study has focused on highly educated Turkish Belgian women's experiences in different but interrelated life domains. In so doing, it has analysed the relationship between higher education and integration processes by considering the influences of demographic and cultural transitions and broader structural conditions in the host society. Although sociological research has long assumed that higher education is more likely to translate into 'successful' integration (De Valk, 2006; González-Ferrer, 2006; Hartung et al., 2011; Huscheck, De Valk & Liefbroer, 2012), this study questions this assumption and shows that the relationship between the two is not straightforward, at least for the ethnic group under study.

The subjective dimensions of integration experiences—namely, individual agency—have not been reflected sufficiently in classical integration theory (Aparicio, 2007; Meurs, Pailhé & Simon, 2006; Portes & Hao, 2004; Simon, 2003). This study has thus sought to contribute to the field by focusing intensely on integration processes as experienced and negotiated at the individual level. Lastly, given the importance of the gendered aspects of

integration—which existing integration theories have often overlooked (Maas, 2013)—this research builds on and extends existing studies to analyse the influence of traditional gender role expectations on women's integration experiences.

The remainder of the chapter is structured as follows. I first present a synthesis of the main findings of the research. Second, I identify the theoretical implications of the study for the field. Third, I highlight the study's limitations and suggest some potential directions for future research. Finally, I present recommendations for practitioners based on the main research findings.

8.2. Main Findings

Here, I detail the core findings of the present study, as reflected in the answers to the research questions posed in the introduction. The section proceeds in two parts. First, I describe the determinants of integration that shape and influence integration processes across the various life stages. In so doing, I show how different life events interact across the various life domains during processes of intergenerational socioeconomic and socio-cultural incorporation. Second, I present the findings on respondents' strategies—namely, how they negotiate the influences of these determinants as they confront them in different life stages. This is undertaken as an analytical synthesis of the findings presented in Chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7 of the dissertation.

8.2.1. The Determinants of Integration Across Distinct but Interrelated Life Domains

The cohort of highly educated Turkish Belgian women seems to be theoretically at the forefront of change in the Turkish community in Belgium, where the level of education is relatively low and collectivistic values seem to be prioritised. The general expectation is that this group of women will more or less follow the same pattern of demographic transition seen in Western Europe since the 1960s—namely, pursuing and achieving a higher degree of individualisation and female emancipation. While this group certainly aspires to greater self-realisation and autonomy than previous generations, the findings of this dissertation show that this transition is not straightforward, and these women appear to experience various challenges in pursuing their life goals. The two core structural factors at play here are the *characteristics of the ethnic community*, such as a strong collectivistic family system, family socioeconomic background,

religious socialisation and the density of the co-ethnic community and the *host society context*, which includes institutional structures, patterns of exclusion and discrimination, neighbourhood effects and the characteristics of schools and other educational aspects. The core findings also indicate that the effects of these structural factors differ across the various life domains women function within, which are distinct but interrelated. In other words, a factor that might hinder in one life domain (such as career) could well provide opportunities in others (such as child-rearing). The women who participated in the study developed highly successful strategies to negotiate and/or overcome these barriers, which is discussed in the section *Agency*.

8.2.2. The Characteristics of the Ethnic Community

8.2.2.1. Strong Collectivistic Family System

Strongly tied families are defined as those in which intergenerational kin-relations are more close-knit (Alesina & Giuliano, 2010). In such family systems, a more binding set of expectations on members arises as the family takes centre stage in the socialisation of the young, traditional gender roles are more robustly reinforced, and greater social control over family members is exercised (Reher, 1998).

Overall, the empirical chapters of this dissertation show the distinct influences of a *strong family system* across the participants' various life stages. The findings presented in Chapter 4 indicate that some parents seek to control their female children's social relations (e.g., going out with friends, group activities) and out of school educational activities (e.g., school trips, studying at friends' houses). Families seem to be stricter about relations with the opposite sex and non-Turkish groups. This social pressure regarding inter-ethnic relations experienced in the educational domain seems to have had long-term occupational consequences for some women. For example, some women mentioned difficulties establishing relationships with Belgian co-workers, especially males. Some Turkish Belgian families also appear to limit the higher education aspirations of their girls due to traditional gender roles, which often place expectations on women to concentrate most on household and family responsibilities. It seems that these gendered role expectations have negative influences on some respondents' transition from education to occupation due to limited family support and a lack of role models. Some respondents mentioned that their parents deemed their aspirations to take extra courses or certificates that might be useful in the job market as 'unnecessary'.

Chapter 5 also presents findings on the impact of the strong family system on Turkish Belgian women. More specifically, the chapter shows how socialisation within this system can present challenges for women in balancing job and family responsibilities. For example, participants noted that household and childcare duties typically fall most heavily on women, which is experienced as challenging and often arduous when combined with a full-time job. Some women report moderating their career objectives in the face of partners who do not take up a significant share of the burden of home duties. Some women are more likely to internalise traditional gender roles due to expectations of mothers in a strong family system. *Maternal gatekeeping* (monopolising specific tasks for oneself as a woman) and *parental guilt* (the feeling that arises when mothers feel they cannot spend sufficient time with their children due to work-related responsibilities) exemplify the internalisation of motherhood roles (Aycan & Eskin, 2005; Staines, 1980). Moreover, findings suggest that single mothers in strong collectivistic families find more work-family conflict since they are more likely to face pressures of social control.

Chapter 5 also covers the impact of *elevated expectations of, and interference from, extended family*. These appear to be the source of the most challenging cultural demands participants face in balancing work and family responsibilities. In strong families, parents and in-laws are more likely to expect instrumental and emotional support from their children, which can significantly increase pressure in the daily lives of working women (Alesina & Giuliano, 2010). The study results show that these expectations and interfering behaviour are gendered since more pressure seems to be exercised in the lives of daughters-in-law. This is also shown to heighten tensions in the private and professional life domains.

The study's findings on the impact of strong family systems on the marriage behaviour of Turkish Belgian women are presented in Chapter 6. Existing research shows that children in collectivistic families are more likely to face pressure to prioritise and respect parental expectations concerning family formation decisions (Xie & Combs, 1996). It appears that family pressure and expectations are most potent when it comes to sensitive issues such as partner choice and dating (Kalmijn & Van Tubergen, 2006; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001). The findings in this chapter bring to light the importance of certain social and cultural norms in Turkish Belgian families and the direct and indirect ways parents often seek to impose them on children. Family interference appears to be more intense concerning *close intergroup contacts*, *inter-ethnic marriage*, *pre-marital relationships,* and marrying down in terms of

socioeconomic status. Social norms about pre-marital relationships and virginity also seem to affect how women approach developing relations with men.

Chapter 7 presents the findings on participants' expectations about their children's prospective partner choices. A core finding here is there is a diminution across generations concerning the degree of prescriptiveness of mothers in how they seek to shape and mould the prospective partner choice of children. For example, as it pertains to crucial life choices, today's highly educated Turkish Belgian mothers appear to have more fine-tuned preferences than their parents, who raised them with much stronger criteria. They seem to be less influenced by societal pressure and more likely to prioritise their children's autonomy, individualism and personal happiness. Although there is within-group variability, the majority of mothers appears to be more empathetic about pre-marital relationships of their children. However, some of these mothers seem to be expected, often implicitly, to bridge the first with the third generation, which also adds pressure to their lives. Therefore, it appears that some mothers would like to teach their children the values of their parents, even though it is time-consuming and difficult.

In sum, the strong family system bears significantly on all life events and domains studied in this dissertation, albeit in diverse ways. As existing research notes, gender roles and gendered expectations are a crucial characteristic of strongly tied families. The dissertation findings also show various impacts on different life domains. Although it seems that a strong family system has more influence on family life domains, findings here highlight that this influence might have direct and/or indirect consequences on educational and occupational domains. This shows interrelations between different domains. These findings are theoretically interesting since they build on the extant literature on collectivistic families (De Valk et al., 2004; Kağitçibaşi, 2005; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001; Schönpflug, 2001; Yaman et al., 2010) by showing how characteristics of strong families might influence integration processes and different domains of the life course. Moreover, the findings indicate a tenuous relationship between higher education and demographic and cultural transitions due to the presence of the strong family system.

8.2.2.2. Families' Socioeconomic Background

Research has found that family socioeconomic background is one of the most important determinants of educational achievement for children of immigrants (Schnell, Keskiner & Crul,

2013). Existing studies note that the children of first-generation Turkish immigrants in Europe have insufficient socioeconomic capital due to the weak social position of their parents (Timmerman, Vanderwaeren & Crul, 2003). In line with this, I discuss the influence of family background on the various life stages of highly educated Turkish Belgian women. The findings presented in Chapter 4 show that the majority of participants' parents had little formal education and worked in low-skilled jobs. *Low parental education* seems to have had considerable influence during the school years since children were not mature enough to make their own decisions. For some participants, this appears to have resulted in indirect and long routes to success in the occupational domain. For example, the majority of parents seem to have chosen schools unconsciously with little heed to quality. A *lack of role models* and *significant others* in the close and extended family also appears to have negative influences on Turkish Belgian girls' higher educational aspirations (Rezai, 2017). Some respondents mentioned that they had fewer role models in their family and ethnic community than their male siblings and were thus comparatively less motivated to choose academic tracks. This suggests that, for some families, access to parental support and resources is at least partly gendered.

Research shows that family endowments offer little purchase in explaining the ethnic gap in the transition from school to work (Baert & Cockx, 2013). However, the findings in Chapter 4 suggest that low parental capital might result in *low human capital* and *limited social networks*, which appear to create problems in getting access to the labour market, for example through referrals or job offers that are not advertised. Hence, it might be theoretically important to recognise the indirect impact of family background characteristics on the employment outcomes of children of immigrants.

In Chapter 5, the findings suggest that today's highly educated Turkish Belgian women have lacked *role models of working mothers* in their parents' generation, whose labour market participation was relatively low. This family characteristic appears as a stress in the work and family domains for some women—albeit indirectly—since they must often reassure extended family that they can balance work and family as working mothers. As another impact on the family domain, findings presented in Chapter 6 show that low parental human capital limits opportunities of meeting like-minded people as potential partners. Family social networks appear to remain limited in providing suitable partners for highly educated women. Lastly, family background and low parental capital appear to work as 'lessons learned' for Turkish

Belgian women who seem to compare their past experiences with their children's prospective experiences. In Chapter 7, various examples suggest that limited parental resources seem to motivate them to provide better opportunities to their children with the hope that they will have shorter and more direct routes to success.

Hence, a lack of parental resources has been the most referred explanation for educational underachievement and inequalities among ethnic minorities. However, the findings of this dissertation build on existing research by suggesting that family resources (or lack of thereof) might have long-term (in)direct influences on migrants' post-school life course.

8.2.2.3. Religious Socialisation

Religion has always been a primary concern of research on socio-cultural integration (De Valk et al., 2004; Diehl, Koenig & Ruckdeschel, 2009; Shain, 2000). In line with this, this dissertation finds that religion typically plays a vital role in participants' socialisation as children and adults. However, some families appear to impose traditional practices in the name of religion, especially during childhood. The influence of this family involvement seems to be more visible in the school years of participants, some of whom mentioned experiencing restrictions in their social lives with the opposite sex and non-Turkish peers. On the other hand, religious socialisation appears to help some girls to achieve at school and to be motivated to be successful Muslims. Related to this, Chapter 4 suggests that ethnoreligious organisations can bring like-minded co-ethnics together and motivate young Turkish Belgian women to pursue higher educational aspirations.

Moreover, religion seems to have a direct or indirect impact on employment experiences for some women who wear religious clothing. The findings in Chapter 4 suggest that religious clothing appears to make it difficult to find internship and job opportunities, which might result in long routes to career development. In addition to working life, religion seems to be an essential factor for many participants in the family domain such as marriage behaviour, child-rearing and parental expectations.

In line with the existing literature (Çelikaksoy, 2006; Kalmijn, 1998; Kalmijn & Van Tubergen, 2006), Chapter 6 demonstrates that most respondents appeared to experience restrictions concerning their partner choices. It seems that religious socialisation influences

their criteria and the choices they have made. Results suggest that some religious expectations seem to be gendered since many respondents mentioned that families appear to prioritise pre-marital virginity and intra-ethnic/religious marriages for girls in the name of religion. Some respondents also expressed how families have a different attitude towards girls and boys, with the latter appearing to have more freedom to have girlfriends and marry non-Muslim partners. However, results also show that religious socialisation does not always seem to be a restriction regarding marriage behaviour. Some respondents appear to live according to religious limitations and to not prefer inter-ethnic or non-Muslim partners and pre-marital relationships without parental interference.

In Chapter 7, I show that some parents base their expectations regarding the life choices of their children on *collective religious norms.* Although some appear to consider their parents as people who were more likely to associate religion with traditional and cultural norms, these educated women tend to be more conscious about religious requirements and would like to transfer these values to their children. Apart from these women, the influence of religion also seems apparent in the lives of women who have a more secular lifestyle in their personal lives. In Chapter 6, I mention how some women seem to feel restricted in terms of partner and other life choices due to family restrictions in the name of religion or *traditional practices in the name of religion*. In Chapter 7, I discuss how this type of religious socialisation appears to make these women prioritise universal values above religious values for their children.

In sum, these findings show that religion is highly salient across domains, but it can affect each domain and actor in different ways over time. It also seems that higher education does not always translate into greater secularisation, as might be expected from highly educated groups in demographic and cultural transition. The variability in respondents' opinions about religious values suggests that while some may see religion as a restriction, others are keen to apply it actively in different life domains.

8.2.2.4. Dense Co-ethnic Community

The research argues that *dense co-ethnic ties* can act as a form of capital and positively influence educational outcomes (Modood, 2004; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Zhou, 2005). In line with existing research, Chapter 4 suggests that ethnic-specific religious, cultural or national organisations can have a positive influence in the early educational career by compensating for

low parental education. These organisations, furthermore, seem to bring together like-minded co-ethnics, motivating them to strive for success at school. However, as discussed in the literature, dense ties are more likely to reproduce traditional gender roles and negatively affect girls' educational mobility (Crul & Vermeulen, 2003; Dale et al., 2002). Chapter 4 shows that some respondents appear to experience more social control than their male family members during the school years due to dense co-ethnic ties. However, what findings add to existing knowledge is that some families seem to support their daughters' higher education, but they are afraid of community pressure. Therefore, these families appear to try to find a balance between community expectations and their daughters' educational aspirations by considering the geographical distance between school and home and relationships with the opposite sex. Relations with Belgians seem to be more limited in the school years due to these control mechanisms, which might have long-term influences on educational and professional careers.

Although *ethnic minority networks* can be useful in some labour market fields (Volery, 2007; Zhou, 2005), the findings in this dissertation show that co-ethnic organisations and networks have no apparent direct influence on employment. However, consistent with the literature, strong co-ethnic ties appear to be of benefit for some professions—such as lawyers, architects and psychologists—where ethnic minority language fluency and networks give ready access to co-ethnic clients. These close networks, on the other hand, seem to create more *work-related expectations* (e.g., paperwork demands, asking for favouritism, illegal demands) on educated women. Besides, the findings in Chapter 4 suggest that women seem to experience less social control and community pressure during their professional careers. This implies that a woman's power position changes when she moves from the (higher) education domain to the occupational domain.

Nevertheless, the results presented in Chapter 6 imply that highly educated Turkish Belgian women appear to face more *ethnic group pressure* about their partner choices and pre-marital relationships. This suggests that social norms about traditional gender roles and family formations are being reinforced by the close co-ethnic group even when highly educated women become socially mobile adults. At the same time, as presented in Chapter 7, social pressures from the ethnic community do not seem to be an essential factor influencing the parental expectations and strategies of these women. The findings in the same chapter suggest that personal experiences and struggles regarding ethnic community pressure create more awareness among some respondents. Therefore, the majority of the respondents appear not to

count ethnic community expectations as determinative when it comes to their own children's important life decisions.

Given what has been found in this dissertation, it seems that—at least for this population—co-ethnic ties and networks have no clear direction when studied over time. To put it differently, these networks can work variously in the education, employment and family domains. Moreover, the way they operate in one domain might influence what happens in terms of co-ethnic networks in subsequent life stages. These findings also show the difficulties of a transition period for the (more collectivistic) first-generation parents and closed ethnic community and their daughters who are now highly educated.

8.2.3. Host Society Context

8.2.3.1. Institutional Arrangements and Discrimination

Research has devoted ample attention to the *institutional arrangements* of schooling and education as a salient structural factor influencing educational success (Crul & Vermeulen, 2003; Fleishmann et al., 2012). In line with existing research, Chapter 4 suggests that the *school tracking system* in Flanders appears to act as a structural obstacle to educational mobility for some women. The authority of teachers to determine the track a student will take seems to result for some in indirect and long routes to higher education. Moreover, teachers discouraging girls from pursuing academic tracks—which some respondents mentioned—could be considered a more indirect form of discrimination (see, also, Stevens, Vryonides & Dworkin, 2018). Chapter 4 also supports existing studies by showing that *discrimination* seems to have more long-term negative consequences in employment (Lessard-Phillips, Fibbi & Wanner, 2012; Müller & Gangl, 2003). As mentioned in the section *Religious Socialisation*, women with religious clothing were more likely to experience discrimination in working life. Some of them appear to experience *de-skilling* and need to take longer routes to their careers due to discrimination in the labour market. In other words, some respondents expressed being constrained to low-skill occupations at the beginning of their careers despite their high human capital.

Moreover, Chapter 5 suggests that contextual factors—namely, the *position of minority women* in social and working life—seems to influence their experiences at the intersection of

the work and family domains. The possibility of experiencing discrimination and exclusion in professional and social life as minority women seem to put more pressure on some respondents who work harder both at work and in the family to prove they are successful minority women. This finding might be theoretically interesting in suggesting different (mostly indirect) influences of discrimination on other life domains beyond the educational and occupational ones. Besides, in Chapter 6, *perceived group discrimination* emerges as a salient factor demotivating some women from considering Belgians as potential partners (Teije, Coenders & Verkuyten, 2013; Van Pottelberge & Lievens, 2018). This dissertation builds on existing research by highlighting the potential influence of perceived group discrimination on partner choices of a highly educated ethnic minority group. However, discrimination does not appear to be an essential factor when women talked about their parental expectations and strategies regarding their children's prospective partner choices.

8.2.3.2. Neighbourhood and School

The neighbourhood where children of immigrants grow up and schools in which they are educated can have positive and/or negative influences on mobility outcomes. Research shows that the role of the neighbourhood is mediated by the availability of *role models*, *resources* and *positive, common norms* in the neighbourhood (Fleishmann et al., 2012; 2013). In line with this, Chapter 4 suggests that neighbourhood characteristics bear consequentially on the educational domain. The findings imply that a *lack of role models* and *valuable school-related resources* in concentrated Turkish populated neighbourhoods can undermine educational aspirations. Moreover, *language development* during the school-aged years is more likely to be retarded in concentrated (minority) neighbourhoods, with the potential for attenuated long-term educational and occupational achievement for the children of immigrants living there. The (negative) influence of concentrated (minority) neighbourhoods seems to be more balanced when the school's catchment includes other immigrant and groups and not just co-ethnics.

The dissertation findings thus suggest that school characteristics and the educational track can influence what happens in employment—namely, the route to career development. Although respondents did not mention a direct influence of segregated neighbourhood on the occupational domain, analysis of data shows that concentrated (minority) neighbourhoods

seem to be a disadvantage in the long run due to lack of social and professional connections with Belgians. In other words, they seem to limit opportunities to develop *bridging ties* with the majority population, who make up the bulk of co-workers in most Belgian workplaces. Related to this, getting access to the labour market appears to be more challenging for some women. Hence, the findings support existing research which demonstrates that neighbourhood and school characteristics appear to have a more direct influence on educational life when children are more vulnerable to external effects (Fleishmann et al., 2012; 2013). In addition, the findings discussed above build on research by exemplifying the potential (indirect) impacts of neighbourhoods and schools on future career plans of children of immigrants.

The study also presents interesting findings about the influence of neighbourhood on the family domain. Chapter 6 shows that concentrated co-ethnic neighbourhoods can influence partner choice among highly educated Turkish Belgian women. Neighbourhoods form initial social networks. Therefore, the limited number of highly educated males in a neighbourhood appears to limit opportunities to meet prospective partners with similar experiences and aspirations. Moreover, as discussed in Chapter 5, neighbourhoods and geographical location seem to influence the way Turkish Belgian women organise their responsibilities in the work and family domains. The availability of co-ethnics in the neighbourhood and the distance with extended family members provide some insights about women's access to support mechanisms for childcare. It also appears that childhood experiences related to neighbourhood and school characteristics motivate some of today's Turkish Belgian mothers to consciously make the 'right' (i.e., educationally and professionally advantageous) choices for their children. In line with this, the results show that most mothers try to choose schools and neighbourhoods that they think will enable their children's school and professional achievements and support the development of advantageous social connections.

To sum up, the host society context and structural circumstances discussed above appear to be important in having a solid grasp on social mobility and demographic and cultural transitions highly educated Turkish Belgian women have experienced. The various factors appear to intersect at varying degrees and affect the life course differently at each stage. The women who participated in the study developed highly successful strategies to negotiate and/or overcome these barriers. The following section details these strategies and the way in which the participants have deployed them in various ways through the life course.

8.2.4. Agency

The best-known integration theories—namely, segmented assimilation theory, and new assimilation theory—have tended to prioritise the role of context, while paying limited attention to the role of agency. These theories thus remain limited in explaining the bounded choices of individuals who are influenced by multiple categories. Although socio-cultural conditions and social context condition people's actions and decisions to some extent, findings in the present dissertation portray women as *active agents,* who can make choices, negotiate challenges and find strategies that help them to realise their goals. However, the kind and degree of choice might vary according to the life-course stage.

Chapter 4 shows that choices and strategies are more likely to be random and limited in the educational domain, where the power position of respondents appear weaker at a younger age. In addition, choices at this stage appear mostly related to challenges emanating from the context, like neighbourhood and school characteristics. For example, some respondents mentioned that they compensated for the adverse effects of living in concentrated (minority) neighbourhoods by making friends with like-minded people (e.g., successful co-ethnics and other minority groups and Belgians) at schools beyond the neighbourhood where they could develop inter-ethnic relations. Although this strategy did not necessarily appear purposeful to participants at that time, respondents evaluated the choice in retrospect as a means to deal with the dearth of role models in concentrated (minority) neighbourhoods. Some of them appeared very aware that they had few prospects for easily shifting neighbourhood and thus chose out-group role models to help develop career aspirations for the future. What we observe then is the deployment of *balance* and *compensation* strategies during the school years. Moreover, while respondents appeared quite aware of the existing structural problems—such as discrimination at school, the school tracking system and teachers' attitudes—respondents reported no significant active *resistance* strategies to fight discrimination at school.

Turkish Belgian women seem to be more active in consciously negotiating structural challenges in the employment domain. Some chose particular professions (e.g., lawyer, politician) to fight discrimination against ethnic minorities. Others pursued *alternative career paths* because of discrimination and limited out-group connections in fields they might otherwise have chosen. For example, the findings show that some decide to open offices in Turkish populated neighbourhoods to serve mostly Turkish clients—even if broadening the client base might—all other things being equal—be more lucrative. Some respondents seem to

moderate career objectives to manage expectations from the strong family system (e.g., motherhood roles, traditional gender roles, unhelpful partners). Examples mentioned include limiting working hours and work-related travel at certain times. This reflects, then, a strategy of *compromise* to balance responsibilities in work and family domains.

On the other hand, Chapter 5 shows that some respondents appear to leverage the *strong family system* and *close intergenerational bonds* as a strategy to recruit additional support in dealing with conflicts between the work and family domains. This finding is theoretically interesting in showing the complex ways that strong family systems and dense co-ethnic ties influence women's lives. To put it differently, strong family systems and close ties seem to have contradictory effects in women's lives across the various domains (e.g., education, occupation, private life), while the solidarity aspect of the same system can provide instrumental support for women to build their professional careers.

Although family and social pressures are more likely to be greater concerning more sensitive life decisions such as marriage behaviour, Chapter 6 shows that women respond to family interests differently and they appear to be in a more advantageous power position in their early to mid-20s when partner choices are a key element of this stage of the life course. For instance, some of them engage a process of *negotiation* with the support of mediators to convince family members about their partner choices. The findings show this strategy is successful for some women, while it seems to fail for others. Other women, in contrast, appear to adopt a strategy of *persistence*, insisting on their decisions at the risk of losing parental support altogether. In general, it appears that the majority of respondents eschew cutting family relationships off and breaking entirely from their cultural traditions. Instead, they try to find a balance between their personal preferences and familial, kin, and community expectations. These findings suggest that constraints seldom *determine* women's choices and that, instead, women *exercise agency*, to varying extents, in navigating essential life decisions.

Lastly, in Chapter 7, the findings show that some women employ *modelling* and *indirect involvement* in their parental strategies to transmit and maintain some of their cultural/religious, nationalistic and traditional values to their children. For example, some mentioned that they plan to give their children a 'proper religious education' from early childhood so that they learn 'right' and 'wrong' according to their religion. Others report a sense that always modelling their values both in and outside the home will be an effective method to instil these values in their children. However, these strategies distinguish today's

Turkish Belgian women from their own parents, whose expectations of them were far less permissive and flexible. This suggests that, compared their own parents, they exercise less control over the life choices of their children. Here, it seems that respondents' power positions attenuate in the domain of parental expectations. Given their past experiences and personal struggles with their own parents, they seem to prefer a 'healthy' (i.e., less controlling, more flexible) relationship with their children. This finding suggests that the choices women make (or would like to make) for themselves, and their children are not only rational but also seem to be geared towards avoiding potential conflicts (e.g., with their parents and children).

To conclude, in revealing a complex interplay between externally oriented boundaries (host society context), internally oriented boundaries (ethnic group context and characteristics) and agency, the findings suggest the need for a broader focus on the multiple dimensions of individual agency. This is in line with existing studies arguing that the agency should not be associated with either free will or victimisation (Ahearn, 2001; Burke, 2012; Korteweg, 2008; Mahmood, 2001). This dissertation thus supports the hypothesis that agency can exist in various forms on a continuum between victimisation and resistance. More concretely, this is confirmed by the finding in the present study that indicates women's choices will tend to vary according to the degree of power they have at their disposal in different stages of the life course. Significantly, age does not appear to be an index of power, given some respondents report an acknowledgement that their control over the prospective choices of their children is limited.

8.3. Theoretical Implications

8.3.1. A Life-Course Perspective

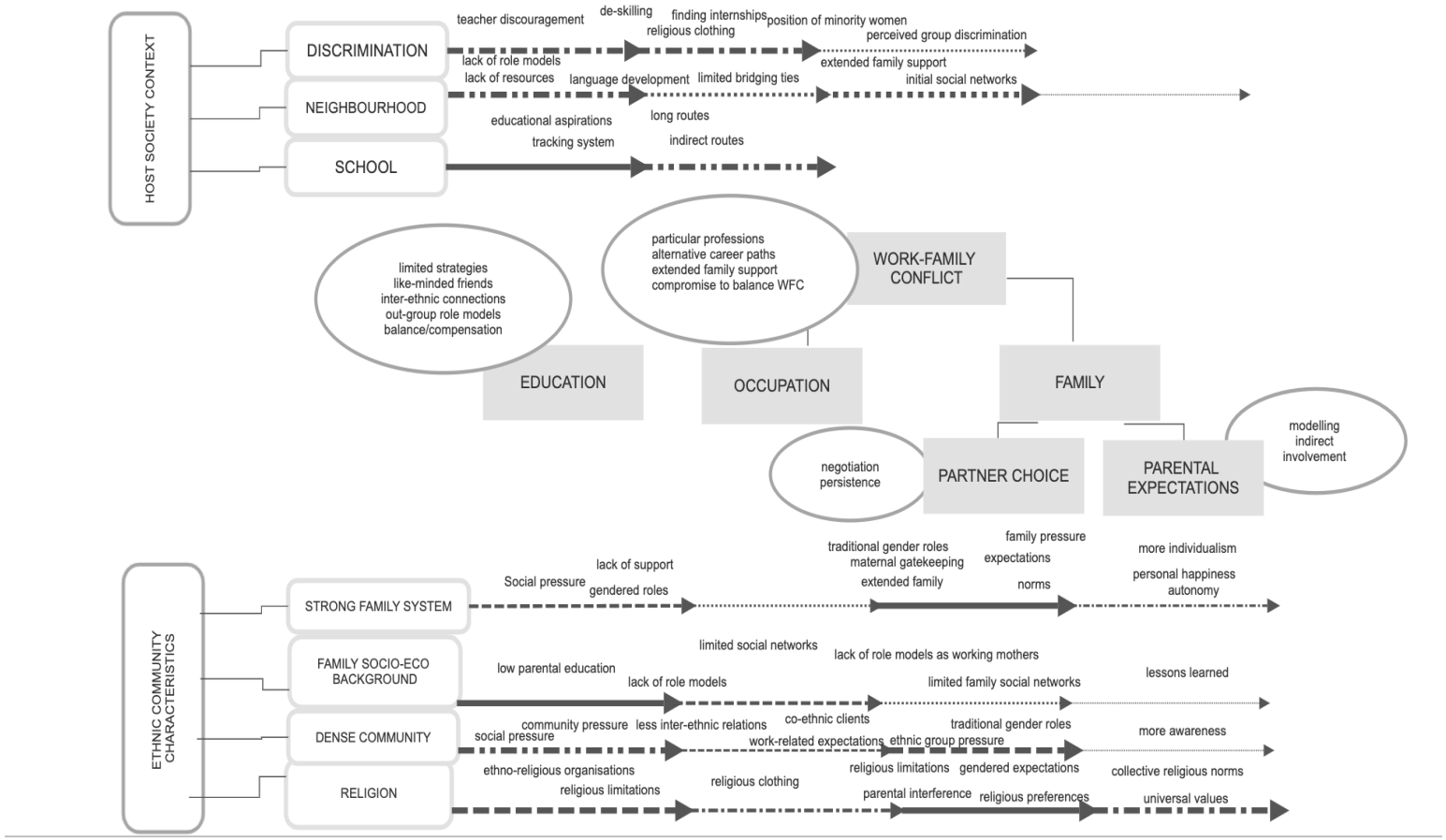
A sociological life-course approach "conceives of the life course in terms of sequences of age-related status configurations which refer to individuals' participation in societal fields like education, labour market and family" (Wingens et al., 2011, p. 4). Although the focus of this research was not primarily developed as a life-course perspective, towards the end of this PhD research, findings in empirical chapters helped developing an understanding in analysing and presenting different dimensions of integration from a life-course perspective.

Over the last four decades, the life-course perspective has been central in the social sciences. A wide range of sociological and demographic studies has applied the life-course perspective in empirical research (see Coltrane & Ishii-Kuntz, 1992; Hogan, 1985; O'Rand,

1996: Uhlenberg, 1996). Although the development of migration and integration research has coincided with the development of the life-course perspective, exchanges between these two have remained somewhat limited. The lack of dialogue and engagement between these literatures means they have mainly developed in cordial indifference to one another's findings. The vast majority of literature on migration and integration in Europe eschews the life-course approach, and the few studies that take it up, do so only partially (Wingens et al., 2011). One of the earliest examples combining migration research and the life-course approach was Thomas and Znaniecki's (1996) monograph, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*. Here, the authors applied a life-course approach to the study of Polish migrants in the United States. However, similar studies have not multiplied.

As yet, no unified sociological life-course theory has been developed, and thus there is significant room for theoretical development. The findings of this dissertation offer an initial analysis of this topic and suggest the theoretical benefits of such an analysis for future research. Namely, the findings offer an analytical framework that relates immigrant integration with the life-course approach. More concretely, the findings presented above suggest that different life stages are connected and that individual behaviour might be better understood as one step within an evolving history of behavioural decisions and choices (see Figure 4). Besides, changes across the life course strongly suggest graduated continuity rather than sudden shifts as in the so-called 'critical juncture' and 'punctuated equilibrium' approaches (Wingens et al., 2011). For example, experiences in the educational domain appear to influence the transition from schooling to work. These experiences seem to be shaped by both social structures (e.g., institutions, patterns of discrimination, and school and neighbourhood characteristics) and the ethnic community (e.g., strong family system, dense co-ethnic networks).

Figure 4: Experiences of Highly Educated Turkish Belgian Women from a Life-Course Perspective



Evidence of discrimination (direct and indirect) in the educational domain seems to influence the career decisions of some respondents once they start working. More concretely, the choice of particular professions (e.g., lawyer) seems to be a calculated one, driven by various motivations, including fighting discrimination or building an alternative (i.e., more secure or amenable) professional path (e.g., working with Turkish-speaking clients). Moreover, the presence (or absence) of educational resources appears to influence access to internships and job opportunities. The influences of these childhood and early adulthood experiences appear to extend into subsequent life stages as respondents start families and become parents (e.g., finding a like-minded partner, choosing a particular neighbourhood for the sake of the children's schooling).

In addition, some life events, such as partner choice, seem to have long-term influences on the life stages that follow. For example, women's partner choices are likely to affect the degree of balance they can strike between work and family responsibilities. A partner's perspective or attitude towards gender equality naturally influences the pattern of division of household and childcare responsibilities, thus influencing a women's ability to advance in her career in the occupational domain. The findings also show that a woman's own marriage experience shapes her approach to influencing the prospective partner choices of her children. Women who experienced parental interference and limitations appear more 'open-minded' about their own children's choices. Lastly, a life-course perspective also shows that the same factors can have a different (changing) influence over the life course. For example, the findings show that factors such as neighbourhood characteristics, strong family system, discrimination and ethnic networks have different influences in the educational, occupational and family domains.

To sum up, as presented in the *Main Findings* section, the findings suggest that similar events and characteristics experienced at different times appear to have varying consequences on people's lives. They also show that people actively make decisions about their objectives in the context of the opportunities and limitations presented by their history and social circumstances (see the section *Agency*) (Elder, Johnson & Crosnoe, 2004; Giele & Elder, 1998). Based on these results and the relationships between different life stages, a life-course perspective seems highly salient in studying interconnections between different domains and life events (e.g., education and occupation, occupation and family, partner choice and work,

partner choice and parental expectations). It also appears relevant to examining how these connections between life stages do not always seem to be consequential but as a spiral. The life-course perspective, furthermore, appears to help show the dynamic and temporal nature of life events.

8.3.2. Higher Education and Cultural Shifts

As mentioned, the best-known integration theories—namely, segmented assimilation theory, new assimilation theory and comparative integration context theory—have tended to highlight the impact of the structural aspects of incorporation (educational attainment and employment). The present study builds on and extends this work by explaining the impact of events in these domains in subsequent life stages. In doing so, the dissertation aims to develop an understanding of pathways and trajectories of upward mobility among highly educated Turkish Belgian women and how being highly educated affects their subsequent life stages. Coming from a poorly educated and closed ethnic group, the children of Turkish immigrants generally experience upward social mobility compared to their parents (Heath & McMahon, 1999; 2005; Platt, 2005; Thomson & Crul, 2007). However, in addition to this general progress, the Turkish Belgian women who participated in this research can be considered as *trendsetters* in their families and ethnic community. Limited research on the educated second-generation assumes that these forerunners are more likely to *discontinue or abandon* the traditional, cultural and religious practices that their parents prioritised, such as transnational marriages, intra-ethnic marriages, intergenerational transmission of traditional values, practising traditional gender roles (De Valk & Liefbroer, 2007; González-Ferrer, 2006; Phalet & Schönpflug, 2001). In addition, this group is expected to experience significant *cultural shifts* and follow the *demographic transitions* European countries have experienced since the late 1960s (De Valk, 2006).

However, the findings in this dissertation do not seem to support these assumptions. First, the research shows that the assumed link between higher education and inter-ethnic marriage is tenuous, at least among this group. Second, the findings demonstrate that 'modern' and traditional cultural and structural forces interact in shaping decisions, preferences and strategies about important life events. In addition, it seems that this highly educated group is going through a cultural shift compared to their parents. For example, they concern gender equality in their choices and expectations from their children. The majority prioritises

individualism and autonomy for their children. Therefore, they do not seem to develop normative parental strategies to influence their children's personal decisions. They do seem to engage in risk management and adopt negotiation strategies concerning their personal life choices (e.g.,, partner choice). However, these cultural shifts do not mean a complete disengagement from the values and practices of their first-generation parents. Instead, the cultural shifts this group has experienced are more *processual* and *negotiated* and consist in navigating contradictory value systems.

Given that research on the relationship between higher education and attitudes concerning different life events is quite limited, this dissertation suggests a new perspective on this link by providing relevant data about a higher educated group's attitudes in various life events.

8.3.3. Work–Family Conflict and Integration

Although research often focuses on the education, occupation and family domains separately, the present study has sought to analyse interrelations between the work and family domains. The balance (or lack thereof) between work and family life in immigrant families has been largely overlooked. Moreover, it has yet to be directly linked to immigrant integration. However, the small number of studies in the field that has addressed the issue suggest that work–life conflicts and the strategies of immigrant families in managing them do bear on immigrant incorporation more generally (Wall & José, 2004). It has been assumed that migration patterns, social integration in the receiving society and characteristics of the ethnic group might influence the relationship between work and family domains (Wall & José, 2004). For example, findings in this dissertation show that the strong family system, as a characteristic of the Turkish community in Belgium, seems to affect the balance between work and family domains. It appears that for many respondents the strong family system has both negative (e.g., traditional gender role expectations, motherhood roles, less instrumentally helpful partners, career objectives) and positive influences (e.g., family solidarity, support from extended family regarding childcare and household).

WFC might also be related to other widely studied domains of integration, including gender attitudes and intergenerational changes in value systems. For example, the findings presented above suggest that gender role expectations and internalisation of these roles (e.g.,

maternal gatekeeping, parental guilt) appear to influence the balance between work-related and family-related responsibilities. Moreover, some respondents seem to criticise their in-laws about not teaching their sons values related to gender equality. Therefore, most respondents appear not to transmit values related to traditional gender roles to their children. Moreover, they seem to give equal responsibilities to their sons and daughters at home. Their experiences with WFC seem to influence their parenting practices and strategies.

Examining the work and family experiences of women enables us to understand how family systems and gender have applied differently across several domains. Theoretically, this dissertation proposes that balancing the responsibilities in work and family domains can be related to integration research. In addition, it might demonstrate interrelations between different domains contrary to research that emphasises *domain specificity*.

8.4. Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

8.4.1. Narrow Scope of the Sample

Throughout this dissertation, I have focused on a relatively small sample of highly educated Turkish Belgian women, looking at their perceptions and experiences of their school, work and family lives. In so doing, I have had the opportunity to explore in-depth subjective experiences of a relatively understudied group. Focusing on this particular group has also enabled analysis of significant intra-group differences, thus opening up the variety of strategies and choices that highly educated women employ in navigating through life. In this way, this study has enabled a focus on the complexity of the behavioural patterns of a group of highly educated women. However, certain limitations emerge from the sample structure. The absence of a poorly educated sample as a comparison group limits the degree to which the study can enhance our understanding of the influence of higher education on socio-cultural incorporation processes generally. While limiting the sample to highly educated women helped me uncover how the influence of determinants of integration change in different life domains over time, by leaving less educated women out, I missed the opportunity to fully understand the extent to which these changes result from higher education. Moreover, although focusing on a women-only group allowed deep exploration of women's experiences, it also limited the analysis of gender-based differences.

Therefore, it would be valuable if future research would focus on both highly and less educated Turkish Belgian women and men to explore between-group differences concerning their incorporation experiences and whether and how determinants of integration are different in different life domains for both groups. Moreover, it would be interesting if future research could also add fathers' voices in the analysis of differences in parental expectations and strategies. Existing research argues that the characteristics of mothers are more likely to matter compared to fathers concerning integration outcomes of children (De Valk & Liefbroer, 2007; Huschek et al., 2012). Focusing on fathers could help to test this hypothesis and discern how mothers' and fathers' characteristics and previous experiences influence their parental expectations and strategies.

8.4.2. Intergenerational Aspect with One Voice

As previously discussed, one of the aims of this dissertation has been to explore the transformations and cultural shifts experienced by a group of highly educated women. To analyse these shifts, I focused on personal narratives about retrospective experiences with their parents, present experiences, and their children's future trajectories. Hence, these shifts are mainly studied from one perspective—namely, that of second-generation women. Their parents' perspectives are only considered through the accounts of their daughters (i.e., the respondents). For example, women mentioned their parents' criteria for partner choices in Chapter 8. This broad perspective allowed me to make some general inferences about intergenerational relationships and transformations over time. However, it would be interesting to include additional, theoretically important voices, such as grandmothers, grandfathers and (grand) children, as it seems likely that these voices would offer first-hand information about the views of the older and younger generation on issues such as traditional gender roles, religion, cultural values, partner choices and parental expectations. It would also be valuable for future research to address first-generation mothers' parental strategies and factors influencing these strategies, as this could help to shed more light on the relative importance of structural and cultural context for first-generation parents. Therefore, the research could follow the changes in the interplay of culture, structure and agency over time.

8.4.3. Hypotheses to be Tested

As a qualitative research project, the present study has analysed and interpreted data to generate specific hypotheses. Therefore, the conclusions I have made need to be tested quantitatively on large, ideally more representative samples of the population (or through qualitative research on a larger scale) to assess the robustness of my hypotheses. Future quantitative research can build on my findings by (for example) testing changing (positive or negative) influences of dense co-ethnic ties and networks for educational and occupational mobility for different groups. In this sense, this small-n qualitative study could stimulate broader, large-n research focused on the same research questions in empirical papers and populations. Moreover, it would be interesting if future research could focus on more demographically diverse samples to confirm the generalisability of the results found in this study. They could compare different ethnic minority populations with Turkish minority women, compare Turkish minority men with women, or focus on ethnic minority groups who have been educationally, but not occupationally, mobile. Furthermore, future quantitative research might offer deeper insights by differentiating for different realised and preferred partner choices with larger samples, as this could shed much more light on the significance of factors influencing women's partner choices.

8.4.4. Structural Aspects of Parental Expectations

One of the theoretical contributions of this dissertation is its focus on intergenerational value transmission between an understudied highly educated group and their children. Based on research participants' narratives, I analysed parental practices of highly educated Turkish Belgian women with a particular focus on partner choice and the prospective dating behaviour of their children, which are mainly mentioned in socio-cultural incorporation research. In making this choice, I left parental expectations and strategies about the structural aspects of incorporation, most specifically educational and occupational attainment unexplored. However, the data I collected raise some interesting questions that warrant further attention in future research.

First, based on the observation that many participants had school-age children, it seems valuable to explore what kind of resources these mothers can provide to their children in their educational attainment. Considering that many participants faced resource limitations in the

various steps they took to improve their socioeconomic and socio-cultural status, it would be interesting if future research could also explore the strategies today's parents adopt to facilitate the educational mobility of their children.

Second, given that the strategies that participants developed to influence their children's decisions and choices concerning their personal lives (e.g., partner choice) are not likely to be normative and strong, it seems valuable to examine if they have strong educational strategies to help their children to be successful at school. To do this, future qualitative and quantitative research could investigate various factors including the schools and neighbourhoods that educated mothers choose, and the availability of parental support for educational mobility. Lastly, it would also be interesting to learn what reactions and strategies mothers exhibit when their religious and cultural values contradict with value systems in schools and the society in which their children are socialised, presently or prospectively.

8.4.5. One Ethnic Group, One Context

Empirically, the findings of this dissertation give us information about one group in one national context—Turkish Belgian women in Belgium. Future research could involve other immigrant populations in other national contexts to broaden and strengthen the findings. Ethnic groups generally have at least some specific characteristics and a specific migration history, which might affect future integration experiences of their children in host countries. For example, in Belgium, most first-generation Turkish migrants had low socioeconomic positions. Therefore, my research did not include participants whose parents were coming from the diverse socio-cultural background. In that sense, it would be interesting if future research could test these findings with Moroccan Belgians, which is a larger population with a relatively diverse socioeconomic background.

As research suggests that different minority groups experience different levels of discrimination in Flanders (D'Hondt, 2015), it would be valuable to include groups with different ancestries (e.g., people with Italian, French, Belgian, Moroccan, or Turkish ancestry) to examine (positive and negative) influences of structural factors at different life stages for different groups in one national context. The research could also investigate highly educated populations from different national ancestries to explore what they think about inter-ethnic marriage and what kind of factors are salient in shaping their perspectives about inter-ethnic

partner choice. By doing this, future research could test the hypothesis about the relationship between higher education and inter-ethnic marriage in different populations. In addition, future research could make an intergenerational comparison with the second and third generation to analyse the generational aspect of the findings.

Given that the national context is one of the most important components of this study, it would be theoretically interesting if future studies designed cross-national research to examine the importance of structural factors related to the national context that were found important in this research.

8.4.6. The Salience of the Life-Course Perspective

The salience of the life-course perspective was only discovered in the final phase of this research. Therefore, theoretical development from such a perspective could not be maximised. Several suggestions for further research follow from this limitation. First, future qualitative studies would use event histories from retrospective and prospective data to study life-course perspective and integration with different ethnic groups in a more systematic way. Second, it would be interesting if future qualitative and quantitative studies would combine retrospective and prospective survey design. In this way, retrospective data would enable reflection of events, experiences and subjective meanings of these for individuals, while prospective data would help to gather concurrent data on persons to whom the individual is linked. Third, following Karweit and Kertzer (1998), a longitudinal design with large samples could be used with time-coded (e.g., year, age, duration of events and co-events) and domain-specific (e.g., education, work, family) data to handle varied-length event histories. This design would make it possible to follow the influence of earlier events and co-events on later integration outcomes both within the life of individuals and their family members who might also be part of the study. In addition, it would be interesting if future studies would add other life-course stages such as retirement, helping adult children and parents become grandparents. Studies could also focus on generational differences in life-course events. For example, they could examine how particular life events (e.g., earning a degree, getting married, having children) are experienced variously by first-, second- and third-generation women. Finally, a systematic life-course analysis would be helpful in analysing patterns between strategies employed across different life domains and the reasons behind the adoption of distinct patterns in different life events.

8.5. Recommendations for Practitioners

Rather than giving detailed recommendations, based on the findings of this dissertation, I would like to express some crucial principles that service providers and practitioners should consider when working with ethnic minority groups. In general, this study suggests that highly educated Turkish Belgian women actively employ strategies to overcome challenges arising from structural conditions in the host society and ethnic group. This suggests that their responses and choices are bounded by structural issues. Moreover, their empowerment seems related to complex power-related inequalities, characteristics of the community, and interaction with other individuals. Therefore, equality should be the guiding principle and concern of social work. Practitioners and social policymakers should initially work on the broader structural conditions (e.g., discrimination, institutional inequalities, neighbourhood and school segregation) to facilitate the upward social mobility of ethnic minorities.

Moreover, the findings highlight the difficulties in the transition period for first-generation parents and their daughters who are now highly educated. Starting from this point of view, rather than reproducing clichés about (Muslim) minorities and giving a deficit perspective about the minority culture, practitioners and social workers should be aware that this transition is far from straightforward and is quite nuanced from individual to individual. They should also be aware of ethnic factors and the lived experiences of ethnic minority groups. In line with this, practitioners could develop more targeted practices and services to avoid reproducing stereotypes about ethnic minorities.

The findings also show that age matters. For example, respondents are less likely to develop active strategies to overcome challenges due to institutional arrangements, discrimination and strong family ties when they are younger. Social services could, therefore, develop targeted services to young people to empower them when their power positions are less strong to respond to pressures and limitations. Given that the strong family system appears to influence all respondent life stages, social workers could develop intervention strategies to raise awareness among families with the purpose of minimising social pressures. In addition, there seems to be a within-group variability in terms of experiences and strategies related to strong family system. Results also imply that the majority of respondents do not seem to prefer breaking their family connections even though they mentioned various challenges caused by their family system. Therefore, practitioners might provide targeted individual support for

ethnic minority women with family problems. They might also help people in similar situations to find ways to negotiate and reconcile with families.

Given their experience successfully navigating such challenges, highly educated Turkish Belgian women might also act as effective role models for those who have similar challenges and who would like to be in the same position as the women in this dissertation. Their stories might empower other women who can draw on their experiences and strategies to successfully balance family and ethnic community expectations. For example, the experiences of respondents in this study might inspire others in so far as they make clear that there are many paths to integration. In other words, higher education offers a range of routes across different life stages and does not require or compel a more secular worldview, adoption of European values and inter-marriage. The insights in this research show that higher educated women can retain their traditional/religious values as they pursue their careers and family lives while embracing values related to the host society. In short, their stories might give other women more confidence to freely choose between different options. In addition to this, these women can play a role in lessening the social pressure in the co-ethnic community. They can engage in a dialogue with their community and influence more traditional families to look at things differently. In this way, some of the pressures that young generations experience could be moderated.

Given that Belgium—like many other European countries—is home to many generations of migrants and ethnic minorities, as well as newer refugees, these recommendations might also be useful for policies targeting long-term integration socio-cultural integration of newcomers. Lessons learned from immigrant groups who settled in Belgium 50 years ago can help to develop new understandings about complex issues related to more diverse communities.

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1: Turkish Belgian Sample

Interviewee	Age	Education level	Marital status	Job	Number of children
Hülya	42	5	Married	Lawyer	2
Canan	45	5	Married	Politician	2
Sevim	37	4	Married	Teacher	3
Öznur	35	5	Married	Lawyer	2
Deniz	34	6	Married	Psychologist	2
Arzu	55	4	Divorced	Policy adviser	1
Leyla	30	5	Divorced	Politician	2
Melek	41	4	Remarried	Counsellor	2
İpek	42	5	Divorced	Lawyer	1
Ceyda	30	4	Married	Engineer	2
Ebru	31	5	Divorced	Architect	
Lale	27	4	Married	Banker	
Meral	31	5	Married	Lawyer	
Hatice	32	5	Married	Economist	1
Aylin	35	5	Married	Policy adviser	
Sibel	39	5	Married	Researcher	2
Ceren	28	6	Married	Psychologist	1
Oya	30	5	Married	Policy adviser	
Selma	37	5	Married	Lawyer	2
Esra	44	6	Married	Doctor	1
Melisa	30	5	Married	Psychologist	
Songül	32	5	Married	Researcher	2
Mine	42	5	Divorced	Lawyer	2
Nehir	32	6	Single	Psychiatrist	
Yasemin	41	5	Single	Educator	
Belgin	40	6	Single	Psychologist	
Demet	39	4	Single	Civil servant	
Gamze	34	5	Single	Lawyer	
Hilal	30	5	Single	Researcher	
Zehra	35	5	Married	Psychologist	2

Meryem	30	5	Married	Project manager	2
Nur	31	4	Married	Teacher	2
Sena	36	4	Married	Teacher	2
Gül	38	5	Married	Office manager	2
Asu	31	4	Married	Educator	2
Asli	28	5	Married	Teacher	1
Sevgi	28	4	Married	Social worker	1
Feride	30	4	Married	Social adviser	1
Saliha	26	4	Married	Pedagogue	1
Asya	47	6	Married	Doctor	2
Basak	29	4	Married	Teacher	1
Belma	26	4	Married	Teacher	1
Cansu	37	4	Married	Teacher	2
Didem	41	4	Married	Social adviser	2
Esen	34	5	Married	Psychologist	2
Gaye	29	5	Married	Pharmacist	1
Ayla	31	5	Married	Teacher	1
Sedef	28	4	Married	Teacher	1
Meltem	35	4	Married	Project manager	2
Pinar	42	6	Cohabit	Doctor	1

Native Belgian Sample

Name	Age	Edu level	Marital status	Job	Number of children
Vera	42	5	Married	Manager	4
Sarah	35	5	Divorced	Civil servant	2
Christiane	40	5	Cohabit	Project Coordinator	3
Carmen	38	4	Married	Teacher	1
Fien	27	4	Single	Social worker	1
Susan	33	5	Cohabit	Manager	2

Rilke	37	5	Cohabit	Coordinator	2
Karen	44	6	Single	Architect	3
Jenny	56	5	Single	Director	1
Sara	43	5	Cohabit	Coordinator	1

Appendix 2: Main Themes in Interview Questionnaire

- **General Info**
  - Age
  - Marital status
  - Children
  - Job
  - Education
- **Family background**
  - Migration story of the family
  - Socio-economic conditions of the family
  - Number of siblings
  - Parental educational level
  - Neighbourhood
- **Education** (the process, schools they went, choices, family support, difficulties)
- **Working life** (transition from school to work, experiences)
- **Role models**
- **Social life** (friends, inter-ethnic relations)
- **Social control/pressure** (family, relatives, ethnic community)
- **Experiences of discrimination**/exclusion (school, work, social life)- strategies
- The role of **ethnic network/ties**; ethnic community (influence on education, work related expectations, control)
- **Traditional gender roles**
  - Responsibilities for (extended) family
  - Expectations from girls/women
  - Limitations
  - Strategies
- **Work-Family Conflict**
  - Balance of work and private life
  - Ask them to talk about their daily routine
  - Is it a conflict? Why?
  - Conflicts about the household
  - Communication with partner
  - Household sharing
  - Childcare sharing
  - Traditional division of labour
  - Perceptions in the society (ethnic community)
  - Maternal gatekeeping (why?)
  - Time for self-care
  - Sacrifices
  - Ideal woman/mother/partner?
  - Support from extended family
  - Challenges due to extended family
- **Partner Choice**
  - Criteria/preferences
  - Choices (partner' profile, educational level, background etc) why?
  - Age of marriage
  - Social pressure to marry? Or to marry with a particular partner?
  - Family involvement (expectations of family)
  - Relations with in-laws
  - Challenges
  - Regrets
  - Strategies
- **Religion** (the influence of religion, religious socialisation, religious education)
- **Parental expectations/ intergenerational transmission**
  - School choice (relations with teachers, family support, criteria)
  - Extra activities for children
  - Resources for children
  - Religious education
  - Relationship with opposite sex
  - Gender roles (different expectations from boy and girls?)
  - Future parental choices (their expectations from children)
  - Relations with Turkey (Turkish language, culture, visits)
  - Comparisons with their own parents?

Appendix 3: Example Reflection on Interview Process

20 May 2015

Interview with Hülya

Overall the interview went well. At the beginning she was not very comfortable. I made more explanations during the interview and she felt more comfortable. These explanations should be done at the beginning. I should be aware that participants are not used to be interviewed. I should allocate more time to talk about the process of interviewing.

I should organise the questions further. Every theme should go together with sub-themes and related questions. Otherwise I forget something and at the end I come back to it. It affects the flow of conversation.

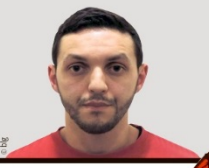
Appendix: 4: Interview with De Standaard

dS De Standaard

DONDERDAG 2 JUNI 2016
DAGBLAD / EDITIE **ANTWERPEN** 93STE JAARGANG, NR.128 WWW.STANDAARD.BE
BELGIE €1,70 NEDERLAND €2,70 LUXEMBURG €2,70

Politie volgde Abrini al vóór aanslagen Parijs

4



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België-Finland 1-1
Lukaku vermijdt pijnlijke nederlaag

34-35

HUISHOUDELIJKE TAKEN ONGELIJK VERDEELD

Vrouwen doen het zichzelf aan

Doordat ze een ideaalbeeld over moederschap nastreven, hebben hoogopgeleide vrouwen het lastig om huishoudelijke taken aan hun partner toe te vertrouwen. 'Zij beslissen wie wat doet. Zelfs als ze het zichzelf daardoor lastiger maken.'

VAN ONZE CORRESPONDENTEN M><V
NIKOLAS VANHECKE
MAXIE ECKERT

BRUSSEL | Het huishouden is vandaag nog altijd vooral de taak van vrouwen. En dat komt niet alleen doordat de man weigert de afwas te doen, te koken of het kind aan te kleden. Het zijn vaak vrouwen zélf die als een 'poortwachter' kiezen welke taken de man mag uitvoeren.

'Vlaamse vrouwen leggen zichzelf daardoor een grote druk op', zegt Simen Yilmaz, doctoraal onderzoekster aan de Universiteit Gent. Dat leidt ze af uit diepte-interviews die ze afnam bij moeders van Turkse en Vlaamse origine voor haar onderzoek naar sociale mobiliteit bij Turken. Vandaag licht ze aan de Universiteit Antwerpen haar eerste onderzoeksresultaten toe.

De geïnterviewde vrouwen, allemaal hoogopgeleid, blijken door de bank genomen veel stress te hebben door de combinatie van werk en gezin. De Turkse vrouwen zeggen veel druk uit hun omgeving te ervaren om aan een traditioneel rollenpatroon te voldoen. De vrouwen zonder migratieachtergrond voelen die externe druk niet, maar blijven zelf vasthangen aan oude patronen.

'Vlaamse vrouwen hanteren vrij strenge normen over moederschap', verklaart Yilmaz. 'Daardoor kunnen ze huishoudelijk werk moeilijk afstaan. Uiteindelijk komt het voor de Turkse en Vlaamse vrouwen wel op hetzelfde neer: de meeste taken zijn voor hen. Zij beslissen wie wat doet. Zelfs als ze het zichzelf daardoor lastiger maken.'

Het onderzoek van Yilmaz levert een nieuwe verklaring voor wat keer op keer uit onderzoeken naar tijdsbesteding naar voren komt. De VUB becijferde vorig jaar dat vrouwen gemiddeld 19u50 bezig zijn met het huishouden. Dat is zes uur per week meer dan mannen. Uit een recente bevraging van de Europese Commissie blijkt ook dat meer dan een derde van de Belgen (man ofvrouw) vindt dat mannen minder competent zijn voor huishoudelijke taken.

In Yilmaz' onderzoek verwoordt een moeder van twee kleuters het zo: 'Ik wil niet dat mijn partner in de keuken komt. Er zijn gewoon zaken die ik het liefst zelf doe. Ik ben een betere kok en ik wil dat de kinderen gezond eten. Het gevolg is wel dat het voor mij vermoeiender is. Ik moet naar een evenwicht zoeken.'

BLZ. 12-13 berichtgeving.

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'Ik wil niet dat mijn partner in de keuken komt. Ik ben een betere kok en wil dat de kinderen gezond eten'

Nieuwe cijfers kinderbijslag brengen Vlaamse regering in verlegenheid

BRUSSEL | De nieuwe kinderbijslag doet het risico op armoede in Vlaanderen niet dalen. Dat blijkt uit een tweede berekening van het Centrum voor Sociaal Beleid (UAntwerpen). Professor Bea Cantillon bracht de nieuwe cijfers gisteren naar buiten. Een eerdere analyse, waarmee de Vlaamse regering dit weekend zwaaide, was rooskleuriger, maar hield nog geen rekening met de tweede indexsprong. Cantillon was daar vrijdagavond, bij de opmaak van die eerste cijfers, immers niet van op de hoogte. Vlaams minister van Welzijn Jo Vandeurzen (CD&V) trekt de rekenkunde van Cantillon in twijfel en spreekt over 'een verkeerde voorstelling van zaken'. Hij belooft een armoedetoets uit te voeren. (evg)

BLZ. 2 commentaar.
BLZ. 9 berichtgeving.

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Appendix 5: Response article for De Standaard

DE STANDAARD
WOENSDAG 8 JUNI 2016

Druk raakt alle vrouwen

SINEM YILMAZ heeft heel wat kritiek gekregen na het artikel over haar onderzoek, en wil de puntjes op de i zetten. Vlaamse vrouwen bevinden zich in bijna dezelfde situatie als de Turkse vrouwen, maar sommige zaken verschillen in de praktijk

Het artikel over mijn onderzoek naar de ervaringen van Turks-Vlaamse en Vlaamse vrouwen heeft veel weerwerk gekregen. Onderzoek is nooit bedoeld om te veralgemenen en er zullen altijd variabelen en uitzonderingen bestaan. Het is moeilijk om de resultaten in een krantenstuk uiteen te zetten, want niet alle factoren kunnen aan bod komen. Mijn studie combineert de componenten van het conflict tussen werk en gezin die het vaakst werden vermeld. Ze heeft niet de ambitie welomschreven uitspraken te doen over elke Turkse of Vlaamse vrouw.

Een van de reacties impliceerde dat het onderzoek de indruk wekt dat groepsdruk alleen Turks-Belgische vrouwen treft of de enige bepalende factor van hun gedrag is *(DS 7 juni)*. Dat beweer ik niet. Mijn onderzoek geeft aan dat Turkse partners in de praktijk minder helpen in het huishouden en Turkse vrouwen dus meer tijd aan gezinstaken moeten besteden. Niet de groepsdruk op zich, maar die ongelijke taakverdeling is voor de meeste werkende vrouwen problematisch. Ik zeg evenmin dat alle Vlaamse vrouwen hun verantwoordelijkheden wel 'eerlijk' met hun partner kunnen delen en er bijgevolg zelf voor kiezen om meer huishoudelijk werk te doen. In werkelijkheid geldt het probleem voor beide groepen, maar zijn sommige Vlaamse vrouwen meer dan Turkse vrouwen geneigd om het zorgterrein voor zichzelf op te eisen. Dat kun je slechts doen als je een mate van hulp van je partner krijgt, en het onderzoek suggereert dat in de Vlaamse gezinnen het werk relatief veel wordt gedeeld. We kunnen niet zeggen dat het de enige bepalende factor voor hun gedrag is, misschien is het slechts een factor van vele.

Er was ook kritiek op het idee dat 'vrouwen het zichzelf aandoen'. Maar dat is niet de conclusie van mijn onderzoek. We kunnen de impact niet ontkennen van een maatschappij en een sociaal beleid die vrouwen in een moeilijke positie plaatsen en de bestaande traditionele genderrollen en beelden van de vrouw versterken. Maar de uitspraken van vrouwen tonen dat de neiging om het eigen territorium in het gezin te verdedigen een probleem is dat een discussie verdient, ook al heeft het weinig impact op het conflict tussen werk en gezin.

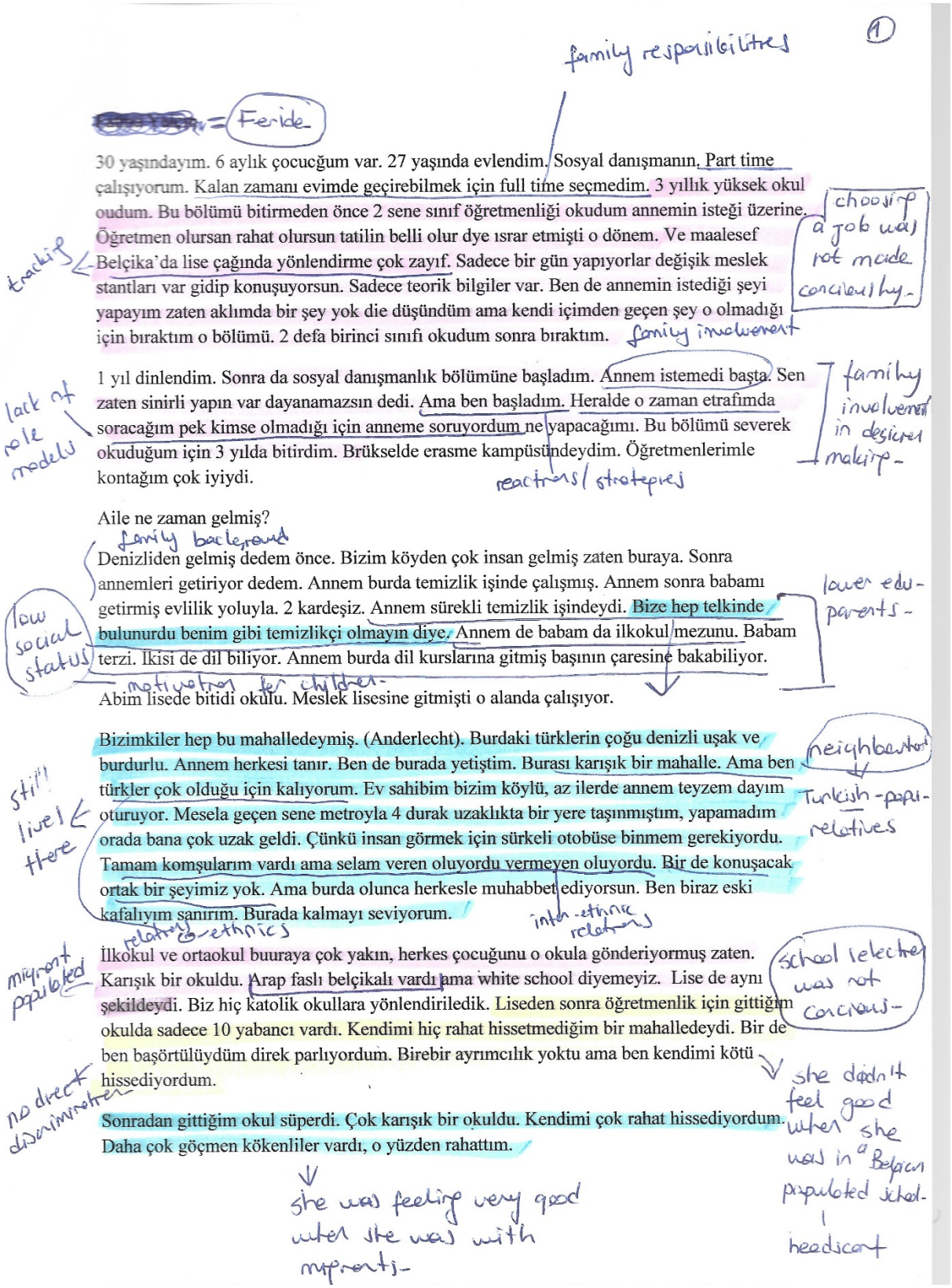
Weinig rolmodellen

Er werd ook gezegd dat je rekening moet houden met de kwetsbare positie van Turkse vrouwen. Mijn onderzoek wil de potentiële bijkomende uitdagingen aanstippen waarmee Turkse vrouwen te maken krijgen om werk en gezin met elkaar in evenwicht te brengen. Dat houdt verband met die kwetsbare positie, maar bekijkt ze op een andere manier. Het aantal Turks-Belgische vrouwen op de arbeidsmarkt is beperkt. Daardoor hebben hoogopgeleide Turkse vrouwen weinig rolmodellen van werkende moeders. Ze moeten zelf rolmodellen ontwikkelen, wat hen in staat zou kunnen stellen om aan zichzelf en de samenleving te bewijzen dat ze goed moederschap met een geslaagde loopbaan kunnen combineren. Ik heb het niet alleen over de oorzaken van de ondervertegenwoordiging van Turkse vrouwen op de arbeidsmarkt, maar probeer ook te begrijpen of die een weerslag heeft op het conflict tussen werk en gezin. Dat betekent niet dat Vlaamse vrouwen geen problemen hebben. Ze bevinden zich in bijna dezelfde situatie als de Turkse vrouwen, maar sommige zaken verschillen in de praktijk. Traditionele genderrollen zijn in beide groepen merkbaar. Sommige vrouwen zijn kwetsbaarder als gevolg van discriminatie op verschillende niveaus: etniciteit, klasse, leeftijd. Als zij zichzelf een bepaald gedrag opleggen, houdt dat ook verband met de impact van de traditionele genderrollen. Ik lees niemand de les, elke vrouw maakt keuzes. Maar het is wel een aspect dat sommige vrouwen zelf ter sprake brengen. Misschien is het niet eerlijk om te zeggen dat dit een eenzijdige studie is die vooral de moeilijke positie van de Turkse vrouwen in de verf zet. Ik besef dat de druk van de maatschappelijke verwachtingen en van een onbevredigend sociaal beleid voor alle vrouwen een uitdaging vormt. Maar het is bijna onmogelijk om in een beknopt artikel alle variaties van een onderzoek te belichten.

Ik lees niemand de les, elke vrouw maakt keuzes

Sinem Yilmaz
Doctoraal onderzoekster (UGent)

Appendix 6: Open coding example



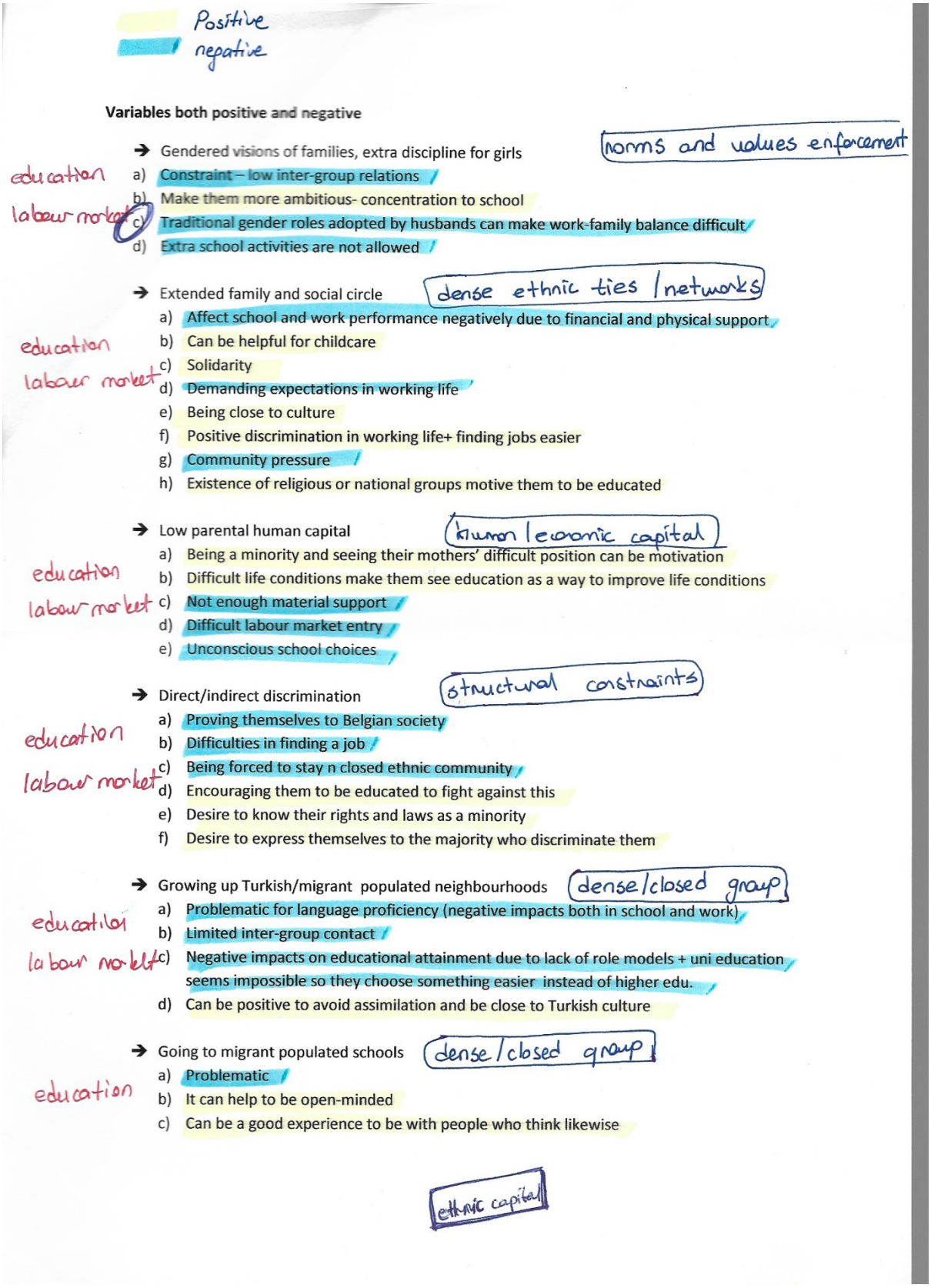
Appendix 7: Coding Structure

Theme: Ethnic-specific networks		
Name of the code/sub-code	Sources	References
Dense Ethnic Ties And Networks		
Extended family	24	48
Ethnic community	24	50
Social control	43	162
Inter-ethnic relationships	5	13
Work-related expectations	14	29
Civic religious organisations	11	16
Structural Constraints	18	42
(segregated) Neighbourhood	21	34
Lack of role models	17	17
School tracking system	19	34
Institutional barriers	17	43
Segregated school	25	41
discrimination	17	43
Resources	30	54
Human/economic capital	10	10
Labour market entry	11	11
Positive impacts	8	19
Ethnic social capital		
Norms and Values	5	5
Gendered visions	21	53
Mother influence	11	14
Traditional partners	5	5
Religion	8	15
Strategies		
Conformance	16	35
Differentiation	12	20
Alternative career paths	12	26
Integration to both cultures	21	27
Persuasion	12	17
Opposition	6	8
Theme: Work–Family Conflict		
The Conflict	28	158
Home production	26	37
Social pressures	43	162
Stress	8	26
Proving yourself	10	17
Responsibilities	15	49
Stereotypes about migrants	4	12
Family expectations	24	49
Work effect on family	25	58
Family effect on work	24	48
Family Characteristics	42	142
Limitations by family	6	17
Extended family	24	49
Expectations by family	10	14
Individualism/collectivism	10	17

Gender role divisions	37	159
Sacrifices	35	91
Changes in lifestyle	25	73
Social life	27	68
Self-defined roles	9	10
Maternal gatekeeping	18	33
Ideal career woman	29	29
Ideal mother	25	32
Coping Strategies		
Childcare sharing	7	8
Help-seeking from families	22	70
Household sharing	2	5
Quality time	8	9
Theme: Partner Choice		
Criteria for a potential partner	33	73
Status difference	14	21
Cultural differences	13	24
Profile of the partner	29	88
Disappointments	13	19
Marriage type	24	42
Meeting stage	22	36
Marriage stage	17	26
Structural Conditions		
Group size/characteristics	16	29
Limited social networks	10	14
Turkish populated schools	25	41
Turkish populated neighbourhoods	29	57
Discrimination/feeling of exclusion	3	8
Third Parties		
Family involvement	30	67
Societal involvement	20	28
Social pressure	43	162
Religion/culture	5	8
Nationalistic feelings	6	6
Gender roles/expectations	21	53
Inter-ethnic relations	16	29
The situation of unmarried women	7	23
Disappointments about women's education	4	5
Theme: Intergenerational Value Transmission		
Parental Expectations		
General criteria	22	30
Individual happiness/preferences	19	32
Collective norms	16	28
Never ever	2	2
Preferences	16	18
Pre-marriage relationships	19	39
Parental Resources		
Conscious school selection	26	65
Conscious neighbourhood selection	28	43
Family support at school	25	42
Extra-curricular activities	12	23

Quality time with children	11	28
Inter-ethnic friendships	22	34
Language learning	18	29
Conditions Influencing Parental Expectations		
Cultural continuity	8	16
Generational changes	3	3
Gender equality	28	39
Transformations in ethnic community	4	6
Changing Social networks	6	8
Religious socialisation	30	42
Tradition in the name of religion	11	27
Conscious religious socialisation	16	41
The influence of past experiences	7	7
Strong family system	9	15
Traditions	10	21
Limitations	18	31
Mothers' own partner choices	25	82
Parental Strategies		
Adherence to Turkish identity	18	28
Proper religious education	16	37
Being a role model	8	15
Less inter-ethnic relations	2	4

Appendix 8: Examples of Analysis



Positive
negative

Variables both positive and negative

norms and values enforcement

➔ Gendered visions of families, extra discipline for girls

education
a) Constraint – low inter-group relations
b) Make them more ambitious- concentration to school
labour market
c) Traditional gender roles adopted by husbands can make work-family balance difficult
d) Extra school activities are not allowed

dense ethnic ties / networks

➔ Extended family and social circle

a) Affect school and work performance negatively due to financial and physical support
education
b) Can be helpful for childcare
c) Solidarity
labour market
d) Demanding expectations in working life
e) Being close to culture
f) Positive discrimination in working life+ finding jobs easier
g) Community pressure
h) Existence of religious or national groups motive them to be educated

human / economic capital

➔ Low parental human capital

a) Being a minority and seeing their mothers' difficult position can be motivation
education
b) Difficult life conditions make them see education as a way to improve life conditions
labour market
c) Not enough material support
d) Difficult labour market entry
e) Unconscious school choices

structural constraints

➔ Direct/indirect discrimination

a) Proving themselves to Belgian society
education
b) Difficulties in finding a job
c) Being forced to stay n closed ethnic community
labour market
d) Encouraging them to be educated to fight against this
e) Desire to know their rights and laws as a minority
f) Desire to express themselves to the majority who discriminate them

dense/closed group

➔ Growing up Turkish/migrant populated neighbourhoods

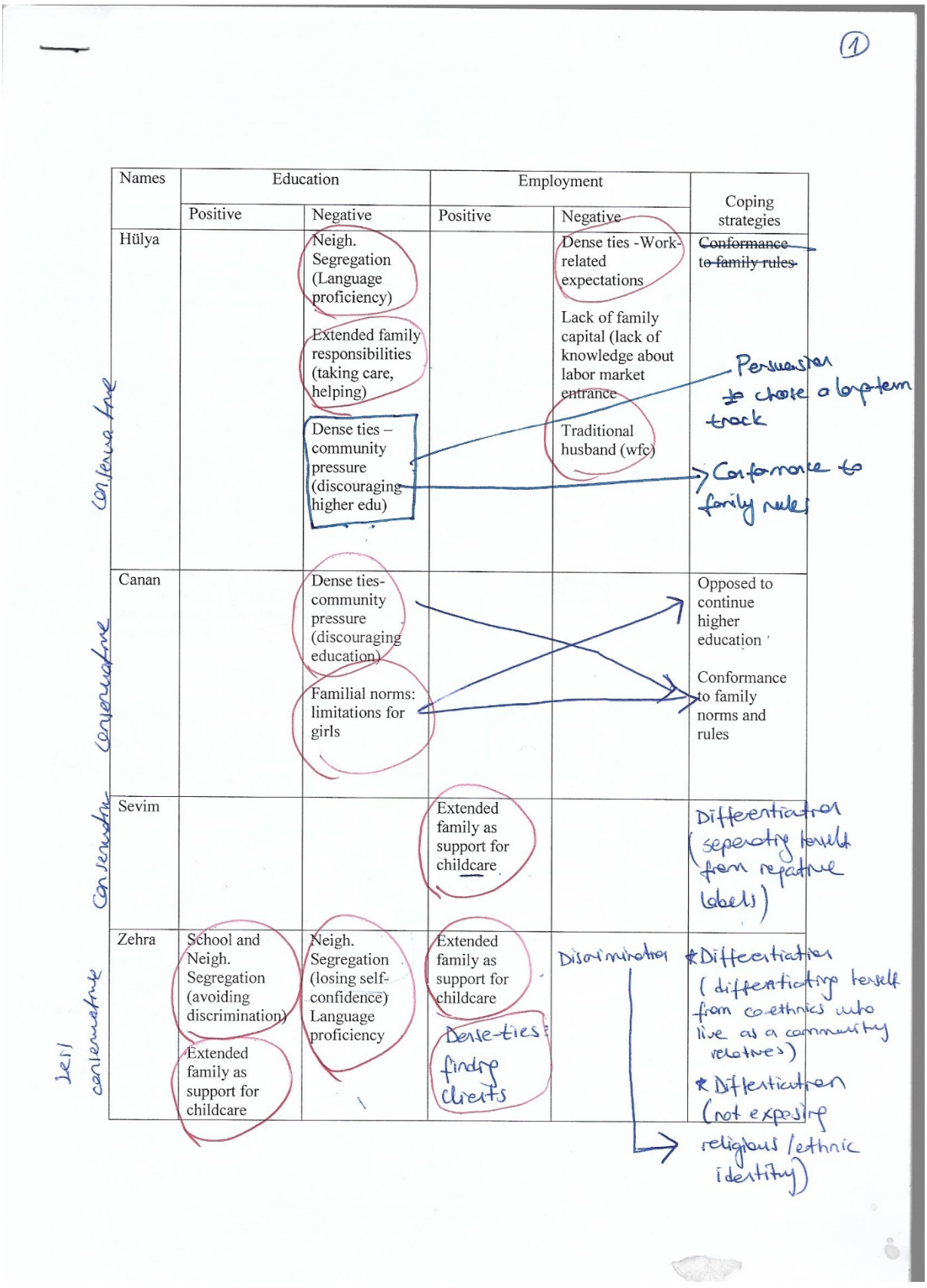
a) Problematic for language proficiency (negative impacts both in school and work)
education
b) Limited inter-group contact
labour market
c) Negative impacts on educational attainment due to lack of role models + uni education seems impossible so they choose something easier instead of higher edu.
d) Can be positive to avoid assimilation and be close to Turkish culture

dense / closed group

➔ Going to migrant populated schools

a) Problematic
education
b) It can help to be open-minded
c) Can be a good experience to be with people who think likewise

ethnic capital



Names	Education		Employment		Coping strategies
	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	
Hülya		Neigh. Segregation (Language proficiency) Extended family responsibilities (taking care, helping) Dense ties – community pressure (discouraging higher edu)		Dense ties -Work-related expectations Lack of family capital (lack of knowledge about labor market entrance Traditional husband (wfc)	~~Conformance to family rules~~
Canan		Dense ties-community pressure (discouraging education) Familial norms: limitations for girls			Opposed to continue higher education Conformance to family norms and rules
Sevim			Extended family as support for childcare		
Zehra	School and Neigh. Segregation (avoiding discrimination) Extended family as support for childcare	Neigh. Segregation (losing self-confidence) Language proficiency	Extended family as support for childcare Dense-ties: finding clients	Discrimination	*Differentiation (differentiating herself from co-ethnics who live as a community relatives) *Differentiation (not exposing religious/ethnic identity)

Persuasion to choose a long-term track

Conformance to family rules

Differentiation (seperating herself from negative labels)

Appendix 9: Example comparative analysis