

**THE ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION OR SOCIO-CULTURAL  
ADAPTATION OF BIETHNIC ADULTS AT THE WORKPLACE IN FINLAND.**

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by

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# THE ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION OR SOCIO-CULTURAL ADAPTATION OF BIETHNIC ADULTS AT THE WORKPLACE IN FINLAND.

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## Abstract

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This thesis studies the organisational socialization of a rapidly growing number of biethnic newcomers adjusting to the workplace in Finland, a country with a high proportion of monoethnic inhabitants. The argument developed here is that, in order to understand a biethnic adjustee's organisational socialisation, it is necessary to study the individual's identity formation; social and communication skills; adjustment motivation and proactivity; upbringing, biethnicity experience, and the organization's adjustment efforts affect adjustment. This study builds on earlier organisational socialization and identity formation studies to understand how biethnicity gives biethnics a multifarious perspective in organisational socialization.

Evidence was gained from 30 biethnic workplace newcomers in Finland through semi-structured interviews. A methodology based on inductive approach with a qualitative research design explored the participants' experiences, feelings, thoughts and opinions. Research data extracted from interview transcripts and field-notes were analysed thematically.

The original insights of this thesis contribute to organisational socialization and advance the knowledge of biethnic identity formation and management in identity studies. The findings rebut academic literature depictions of biethnic individuals not adjusting to working life and society in general as biethnic adults reported adjusting well to the workplace in Finland, mostly through their own proactivity and not due to the organisation's onboarding efforts, which they considered deficient. Upbringing is recognised as an important factor in the organisational socialization of biethnics; four biethnic identity types emerged, these are not stages as each type can occur at different life stages and no order of progression is implied. Findings indicate that non-Western (e.g., Indian, Japanese, Korean, etc.) personal identity concepts are often present, influencing identity management and socialization efforts of biethnic employees.

This thesis argues that the current theoretical understanding of organisational socialization should include upbringing, ethnicity, biethnicity, and non-Western identity concepts.

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

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|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Abstract.....</b>  | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>Acknowledgements.....</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>TABLE OF CONTENTS.....</b>   | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>1 INTRODUCTION.....</b>  | <b>10</b> |
| 1.1 Setting and scope of the thesis .....   | 10        |
| 1.2 Definition of core concepts and terminology .....                               | 12        |
| 1.3 Why study bi-ethnic individuals .....   | 14        |
| 1.4 Research context and location – why Finland .....                               | 16        |
| 1.5 The growing significance of organisational socialization.....                   | 18        |
| 1.6 The importance of identity formation for organisational socialization .....     | 20        |
| 1.7 Research aims, objectives and research questions .....                          | 22        |
| 1.8 Research design .....   | 24        |
| 1.9 Findings of this research.....  | 25        |
| 1.10 Contributions of this research .....   | 26        |
| 1.11 Thesis outline .....   | 27        |
| <b>2 LITERATURE REVIEW .....</b>  | <b>29</b> |
| 2.1 Introduction .....  | 29        |
| 2.2 What is organisational socialization and why is it important?.....              | 30        |
| 2.3 Roots of organisational socialization research .....                            | 32        |
| 2.4 Theories of organisational socialization .....                                  | 34        |
| 2.5 Overview of organisational socialisation research .....                         | 36        |
| 2.5.1 The stage-models of organisational socialisation .....                        | 37        |
| 2.5.2 Themes in organisational socialisation research .....                         | 39        |
| 2.5.3 Environment where organisational socialisation happens .....                  | 40        |
| 2.5.4 Newcomers adjust also to subcultures and microcultures in organisations... 41 |           |
| 2.5.5 Importance of adjustee proactivity in organisational socialisation .....      | 42        |
| 2.5.6 Methodological evolution in organisational socialization studies.....         | 44        |
| 2.6 Importance of workplace norms in organisational socialisation .....             | 45        |
| 2.7 Shortcomings of organisational socialization research .....                     | 46        |
| 2.8 Organisational socialization research in Finland.....                           | 47        |
| 2.9 How personal identity features in organisational socialisation research .....   | 48        |

|        |  |           |
|--------|--|-----------|
| 2.10   | Definition of personal and social identity in organisational context.....      | 49        |
| 2.11   | Theories of identity, ethnic identity and biethnic identity development.....   | 51        |
| 2.12   | Overview of identity studies in an organisational context .....                | 53        |
| 2.13   | Shortcomings of identity studies in organisational socialisation research .... | 57        |
| 2.14   | Why and how are individuals motivated to construct their identity? .....       | 58        |
| 2.15   | Difference between identity theory and social identity theory perspectives     | 59        |
| 2.16   | Does national culture influence identity formation? .....                      | 60        |
| 2.17   | Definitions of ethnic and biethnic identities .....                            | 62        |
| 2.18   | Ethnic identity models .....   | 64        |
| 2.18.1 | Critique of ethnic identity models .....                                       | 66        |
| 2.19   | Research of Ethnic identity at the workplace context.....                      | 67        |
| 2.20   | Biethnic identity formation models.....  | 68        |
| 2.21   | Difference between monoethnic and biethnic identity formation .....            | 70        |
| 2.22   | Power issues: Tension between biethnic identity and social validation.....     | 71        |
| 2.23   | What distinguishes the workplace adjustment of biethnic individuals? .....     | 73        |
| 2.24   | Summary of literature review .....   | 73        |
| 3      | <b>METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN .....</b>                                   | <b>75</b> |
| 3.1    | Introduction to methodology adopted .....                                      | 75        |
| 3.1.1  | Choosing from types of research purposes available from literature.....        | 75        |
| 3.2    | Research philosophy and overall design .....                                   | 76        |
| 3.2.1  | Approach to research 'logic' .....   | 78        |
| 3.3    | Methodological choice – Justification for qualitative research .....           | 79        |
| 3.3.1  | How this research addresses qualitative research shortcomings .....            | 79        |
| 3.4    | Research strategy choice .....   | 81        |
| 3.4.1  | Time horizon of the research – Cross-sectional research.....                   | 82        |
| 3.5    | Data collection technique – Semi-structured interview .....                    | 82        |
| 3.5.1  | Designing the semi-structured interviews.....                                  | 83        |
| 3.6    | Sampling – subject inclusion criteria and sample size.....                     | 85        |
| 3.6.1  | Sample size.....   | 87        |
| 3.7    | Socio-demographic profile of the biethnic respondents .....                    | 88        |
| 3.8    | Challenges of external identification of biethnics.....                        | 92        |
| 3.9    | Accessing the interviewees .....   | 93        |
| 3.10   | Conducting the interviews: interview venue, length and manner .....            | 94        |

|        |   |     |
|--------|---|-----|
| 3.11   | Elicitation techniques and probes to ensure 'rich data' .....                 | 95  |
| 3.12   | Pilot study.....  | 97  |
| 3.12.1 | Improvements to research methods and questions from pilot study.....          | 97  |
| 3.12.2 | Themes emerging from the pilot study .....                                    | 99  |
| 3.13   | Research limitations and delimitations.....                                   | 99  |
| 3.14   | Transcription of interview data.....  | 100 |
| 3.15   | Data Analysis .....   | 101 |
| 3.16   | A reflective account of the researcher's role, experience and impact .....    | 103 |
| 3.17   | External validity of results, confidentiality and data security .....         | 105 |
| 3.18   | Ethical considerations.....   | 106 |
| 3.19   | Conclusion.....   | 108 |
| 4      | FINDINGS.....   | 110 |
| 4.1    | Introduction .....  | 110 |
| 4.2    | Biethnic respondents' subjective evaluation of own OS in Finland .....        | 112 |
| 4.2.1  | The role of learning norms in the OS of biethnics.....                        | 113 |
| 4.2.2  | Adjustment tools their biethnicity produces for biethnic individuals .....    | 117 |
| 4.3    | OS differences among monoethnic and biethnic individuals.....                 | 121 |
| 4.3.1  | Factors affecting OS motivation of biethnic individuals.....                  | 124 |
| 4.3.2  | OS of biethnics with no visible phenotype differences from monoethnics...     | 127 |
| 4.4    | Effect of upbringing on OS of biethnics in Finland.....                       | 129 |
| 4.5    | Four types of biethnic identity among biethnic respondents in Finland....     | 138 |
| 4.5.1  | Power relations affecting the OS of biethnics in Finland .....                | 145 |
| 4.6    | The role of adjustee proactivity in the OS of biethnics in Finland.....       | 150 |
| 4.6.1  | Effect of organisation's adjustment efforts on OS of biethnics in Finland.... | 152 |
| 4.7    | How biethnic identity formation and OS are related .....                      | 160 |
| 4.8    | Presence of non-Western identity concepts among biethnics in Finland ....     | 164 |
| 5      | DISCUSSION .....  | 167 |
| 5.1    | Introduction .....  | 167 |
| 5.2    | Discussion of findings about biethnics' evaluation of their OS in Finland     | 168 |
| 5.2.1  | Theoretical implications of findings about biethnics adjusting well .....     | 170 |
| 5.2.2  | Practical implications of findings about biethnics adjusting well.....        | 170 |
| 5.3    | Discussion of findings about factors affecting the OS of biethnics .....      | 171 |

|       |   |            |
|-------|---|------------|
| 5.3.1 | Theoretical implications - findings about factors affecting biethnic OS.....        | 174        |
| 5.3.2 | Practical implications - findings of factors affecting the OS of biethnics .....    | 175        |
| 5.4   | <b>Discussion of findings of biethnicity's role in the OS of biethnics.....</b>     | <b>175</b> |
| 5.4.1 | Theoretical implications - biethnicity's role in OS of biethnics.....               | 179        |
| 5.4.2 | Practical implications - biethnicity's role in the OS of biethnics.....             | 180        |
| 5.5   | <b>Discussion - findings of adjustee proactivity in biethnic OS in Finland.....</b> | <b>180</b> |
| 5.5.1 | Theoretical implications - proactivity in OS of biethnics in Finland.....           | 182        |
| 5.5.2 | Practical implications - findings of adjustee proactivity in biethnic OS .....      | 183        |
| 5.6   | <b>Implications of this research .....</b>  | <b>183</b> |
| 6     | <b>CONCLUSION.....</b>  | <b>186</b> |
| 6.1   | Contributions of this research .....  | 186        |
| 6.2   | Recommendations for practice in the area of OS .....                                | 187        |
| 6.3   | Strengths and limitations of this research .....                                    | 187        |
| 6.4   | Future research avenues in biethnic identity formation/management .....             | 188        |
| 6.5   | Future research avenues in organisational socialisation .....                       | 189        |
| 6.6   | Concluding remarks.....   | 189        |
| 7     | <b>APPENDICES .....</b>   | <b>191</b> |
| 8     | <b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>   | <b>205</b> |

## List of figures

|  |    |
|--|----|
| FIGURE 1: RESEARCH PROCESS 'ONION' ..... | 77 |
|--|----|

## List of tables

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| TABLE 1 RESPONDENT DIVERSITY: PROFESSIONAL HIERARCHY, AGE AND GENDER .    | 89  |
| TABLE 2 DEMOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY AMONG RESPONDENTS .....                     | 92  |
| TABLE 3 METATHEMES AND THEMES ARISING FROM THE INTERVIEWS .....           | 112 |
| TABLE 4 BREAK-UP OF HOW BIETHNICS EVALUATED THEIR OWN OS .....            | 113 |
| TABLE 5 DO MONOETHNICS ADJUST BETTER TO THE WORKPLACE THAN BIETHNICS?     | 121 |
| TABLE 6 DO BIETHNICS ADJUST BETTER TO THE WORKPLACE THAN MONOETHNICS?     | 123 |
| TABLE 7 MOTIVATION FOR OS AMONG BIETHNICS IN FINLAND .....                | 125 |
| TABLE 8 DOMINANT CULTURE IN THE FAMILY: MOTHER'S OR FATHER'S .....        | 130 |
| TABLE 9 BIETHNIC IDENTITY TYPES REPORTED BY THE BIETHNIC RESPONDENTS .... | 139 |
| TABLE 10 TYPES OF BIETHNIC IDENTITY .....                                 | 145 |
| TABLE 11 EVALUATION OF ORGANISATION'S ROLE IN THE OS OF BIETHNICS .....   | 152 |
| TABLE 12 BIETHNIC-MONOETHNIC IDENTITY FORMATION DIFFERENCES .....         | 161 |
| TABLE 13 BIETHNIC AND MONOETHNIC IDENTITY FORMATION FACTORS .....         | 161 |



## **List of Abbreviations**

|     |  |
|-----|--|
| HR  | Human Resources                        |
| HRD | Human Resource Development             |
| HRM | Human Resource Management              |
| OS  | Organisational Socialization           |
| POS | Perceived Organizational Socialization |

# 1 INTRODUCTION

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## 1.1 *Setting and scope of the thesis*

Human resource practitioners and academics study how organisations achieve key organisational outcomes e.g., high performance, low turnover, improved employee well-being and commitment through more effective organisational socialization (OS) (Redman & Wilkinson, 2013, p. 137). Understanding the interrelationship between identity-formation and OS for one heterogeneous population, biethnic individuals, could illuminate OS interrelationships for others also. The number of biethnic employees are growing fast in many organisations but their identity formation and management, and their (OS) are unresearched (Soliz et al., 2017, p.267). Do biethnics adjust to the workplace well, contradicting earlier depictions (Gordon, 1964, Hauser, 1972; McRoy & Freeman, 1986; Park, 1928, 1931; Stonequist, 1937) of biethnics not adjusting to society and the workplace?

This study aims to advance the current understanding of *OS* and *identity management* of *biethnic* adults at the workplace through analysis of data acquired by a semi-structured qualitative study of biethnic adults in the workplace in Finland. This thesis builds upon the existing scholarship on these issues, where the sizeable research on *identity formation* (section 2.12) and *organisational socialization* (section 2.5) has neglected biethnics' experiences and failed to distinguish these from other ethnic minority experiences occurring in a majority monoethnic ambience (Albuja et al., 2018, p.133).

The research location is Finland, a Nordic welfare-state with a rapidly growing biethnic population living among a relatively high proportion (compared to many OECD countries e.g. Australia and Canada) of monoethnic inhabitants. The main research question "How do biethnic adults see themselves adapting socio-culturally to the workplace in Finland?" stems from the central topic of

this thesis, how biethnic adults adjust socio-culturally to the workplace in Finland. This study collects primary data and constructs its analysis in Finland, with no available Finnish data or research on biethnicity, biethnic identity formation and OS of biethnics that clearly distinguishes the biethnic identity formation and their OS experience from other ethnic minority experiences occurring in a majority monoethnic field. The explicit reasons for this data scarcity are explained in section 1.4.

It is argued in this thesis that biethnics adjust well to the workplace, not because of their organisation's adjustment-aiding efforts, but as their *proactivity* enables them to utilise the three possible competitive advantages biethnics have over monoethnics in their OS: enhanced social skills due to their biethnicity, advantageous adjustment skills through familiarity of processing internal and familial ethnic/cultural differences, and coping skills acquired through managing tensions between own identity and external ascriptions.

This study generated insights of how the adjustee's skills, motivation, upbringing and proactivity, their organization's adjusting efforts, four biethnic identity types, and different non-Western personal identity concepts (e.g., Indian, Japanese, Korean etc.), affect the identity formation and OS of biethnic adjustees. Knowledge gained from this study of the biethnics' identity formation, identity management and OS is valuable for employees, HR practitioners, academics and organisations also for understanding OS overall.

This study's two central themes: *identity management* and *organisational socialization*, the core concepts of OS, identity formation and management, biethnic identity and the growing need for understanding their inter-relationship are explained below. The next parts of this chapter explain the rationale for studying bi-ethnic adults and for choosing the research location of Finland at this time period along with a brief exposition of the growing importance of identity formation for OS. The final sections of this chapter explain the research aims, objectives and research questions, the research

design and the findings, contributions of this study and specifies to which fields they belong.

## 1.2 Definition of core concepts and terminology

*Biethnic* or bi-ethnic refers to an individual with 'parents of different ethnic backgrounds' compared to *monoethnic* with 'both parents of the same ethnic background' (Gonzales-Backen, 2013, p.93). Though the terms *biethnic* and *biracial* are sometimes used interchangeably (French et al. 2006, p.4) along with *bicultural*, they originate from different roots and have conceptual differences, which are often subtle. Common factors in the categorizations of these three terms are labelling (by self or by others) based on physical, linguistic or cultural criteria that indicate belonging or membership in, or identification with a group of people (Scherman, 2010, p. 128). *Biracial* originates in the term *racial*, originating from *race*, conceptualised as a 'social construct' usually based on physical features such as skin colour and how such visible phenotypic features play a role in the 'historical experiences of the people based of these superficial features' (Gonzales-Backen, 2013, p.93). *Biracial* "describes the person who is typically of mixed parentage, who simultaneously possesses the biological attributes of two different racial groups" (Herring, 1995; Kich, 1992; Scherman, 2010, p. 130). *Bicultural* originates from *culture*, understood as "the totality of learned, socially transmitted customs, knowledge, material objects, and behavior. It includes the ideas, values, and artifacts of groups of people" (Schaefer, 2013, P. 55).

*Ethnicity* or *ethnic identity* originates from a 'sense of peoplehood within a group, a culture, and a particular setting' as well as the actions and choices of the individual in shaping the experience (Phinney & Ong, 2007, p.271). *Ethnic identity* in this thesis is conceptualized as multidimensional (Phinney & Ong, 2007; Svensson et al., 2018) and refers to 'individual's subjective experience of belonging to an ethnic group' (Syed et al., 2013, p. 143) forming an identity through exploration and commitment. *Racial identity* refers to a "sense of group

or collective identity based on one's perception that he or she shares a common heritage with a particular racial group" (Helms, 1993, p. 3). The *bicultural identity* definition used in this thesis posits an interrelation between bilingualism and biculturalism and refers to how "bilingual individuals position themselves between two languages and two (or more) cultures, and how they incorporate these languages and cultures into their sense of who they are" (Kanno, 2003, p.3).

*Identity formation* as employed in this thesis uses three concepts: John Locke's (1694/1975) *personal identity* as a psychological continuity, founded on consciousness, especially memory, and not on the physical substance of the body or soul; the Foucauldian concept of a fluid, temporary and interaction-defined personal identity in place of a static and pre-defined monolithic identity construct (Foucault, 1998); and *social identity*, defined by Tajfel (1981, p.255) as "*that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from [his] knowledge of [his] membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership*". Erikson's (1950) stage model of *identity formation* through eight stages of psychosocial development, a crisis characterizing stages of Infancy, Early Childhood, Play Age, School Age, Adolescence, Young Adulthood, Adulthood, and Old Age, along with Tajfel & Turner's (1986) *social identity* underpins current concepts of biethnic identity, ethnic identity formation and ethnic identity models.

*Ethnic identity formation* refers to exploration of what ethnicity brings to the 'understanding of oneself' (Gonzales-Backen et al., 2016, p.790) and resolution through 'learning about the culture, history, and traditions of one's ethnic group by participating in cultural events and discussing these issues with others' (Svensson et al. 2018, p.187). *Biethnic identity formation* in this thesis refers to the ethnic identity formation among biethnic persons, and the conceptual framework includes multiple dimensions: general or social climate concerning ethnicity, community environment, child's development and direct predictors of Biethnic Identity (Gonzales-Backen 2013, p. 92-98).

Bauer et al.'s. (2011, p.51) widely-used definition, "Organizational socialization is a process through which new employees move from being organizational outsiders to becoming organizational insiders is used here. Onboarding refers to the process that helps new employees learn the knowledge, skills, and behaviors they need to succeed in their new organizations." highlights the status change accomplishment while Chao's (2012, p.579) definition of OS, "as a learning and adjustment process that enables an individual to assume an organizational role that fits both organizational and individual needs. It is a dynamic process that occurs when an individual assumes a new or changing role within an organization" illustrates the process and adjustee proactivity aspects as well as the needs of both the organization and the adjustee. *Newcomer* refers to 'new employees who are undergoing the socialization process' (Bauer, 2004, p. 743) in the workplace.

### **1.3 Why study bi-ethnic individuals**

Biethnics are an intriguing study subject for three main reasons: firstly, the significant demographic potential of biethnics, as their numbers are growing faster than majority monoethnics in many parts of the world. In USA, 15% of all marriages occur between people of different racial/ethnic backgrounds, directly resulting in a huge increase in the number of children born and raised in biethnic/biracial/households (Pew Research Center, 2014; Soliz et al., 2017, p.267; United States Census Bureau, 2010). In Finland, 100% of the growth in 2016 among a population of 5.54 million came from immigration by 'foreign-language speakers' (Ministry of the Interior, 2017). The figures for mixed-marriage's contribution to Finland's national population growth are available only from earlier years and the population growth figures originating from a combination of immigration of foreign-language speakers and mixed marriages are consistently high: 76% in 2014, 92% in 2013, 87% in 2012 (OSF, 2014; 2013; 2012). Finland does not collect ethnicity statistics, but in Finnish statistics, 'foreign-language speaker' is an indication of a person's ethnicity being different from

monoethnic majority Finns. The high immigration figure suggests large numbers of mixed marriages and parenting, resulting in corresponding high numbers of biethnic offspring with likely societal impact in Finland.

Secondly, research and statistics have neglected the evolving ethnic-racial-cultural-social relationship between biethnics and the monoethnic majority. This refers to how the kaleidoscopic variety of biethnic-biracial identity development forms and experiences relate to the 'changing landscape of ethnic-racial demographics' (Soliz et al., 2017, p.267) of USA and other parts of the world, including Finland, and how contemporary research neglects these experiences under the assumption that biethnic-biracial identity development forms and experiences are essentially similar to minority experiences faced by all newcomers/immigrants in a monoethnic majority society. In Finland, immigrants are less educated than natives while the situation is the opposite in many countries e.g., Italy, Portugal, Sweden and the UK (Dustmann et al., 2012, p. 152). Despite studies showing immigrant children and children of immigrants, classified as one group, achieving higher average school test scores and speaking more languages than natives in Finland (Dustmann et al., 2012, p. 158-159), there are no studies in Finland, except some bachelor-level studies (e.g., Ali & Lindroos, 2016) to understand how second or possibly third-generation immigrants and biethnics born in Finland might be perceived differently from new immigrants or minorities e.g., Finnish Kale, by the monoethnic majority in Finland or e.g., face less bullying, violence and exhibit less suicidal behaviours (Pottie et al., 2015) compared to first generation immigrants or monoethnic natives.

Thirdly, researchers' tendency to cluster biethnic-biracial identity formation and OS experiences of biethnics incorrectly into other ethnic-racial minority perspectives is reflected in an acute shortage of targeted research studying biethnic-multiethnic/biracial samples or differentiating between the experience of biethnic-biracial identity development and other ethnic-racial minority experiences (Soliz et al., 2017, p.268). Though immigration as a factor in OS has

been studied recently (Enoksen, 2016; Malik & Manroop, 2016), three recent extensive OS research reviews (Hughes et al., 2006; Nishanthi, 2017; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014) reveal how academic literature neglects the specialty of biethnic-biracial identity development and their OS. Therefore, studying the identity formation and OS of biethnics is of prime importance and high academic interest.

#### ***1.4 Research context and location – why Finland***

Finland, as a research location, is justified for three main reasons: Firstly, Finland is special from a labour market perspective as Finland's post WWII baby-boom generation is retiring en masse, making way for smaller age groups and causing deep structural changes in the labour market e.g., labour force participation rate has dropped from 72% in 1990 to 62% in 2017. (ILO, 2017; Lindström et al., 2011, p. 1027). Finland has also rapidly changed from a country of emigration to one of immigration (Korkiasaari et al. 2003, p. 2; Lasonen et al., 2013, p.9) after the 1980s with significant implications for population diversity, especially the rapid growth of immigrants and biethnic workplace newcomers.

Secondly, ethnicity related statistics is scarce in Finland. Due to stringent national anti-discriminatory legislation, reliable statistics about the current number of biethnics, especially in the workforce, are unavailable in Finland (OSF, 2013). The underrepresentation of immigrants in Finland's labour force is still striking among OECD countries, with immigrants representing a meagre 3.3% of the labour force of Finland, compared to 24% in Australia and Canada, Finland being the lowest among its Nordic neighbours, Sweden 14.9% and Norway 8.6% (Dustmann et al., 2012, p. 151). 29% of the current residents of Sweden had at least one parent born outside Sweden in 2016 (Statistics Sweden 2016) while in Finland, the share of people with foreign background in Finland has risen from 0.8 to 5.9% between 1990 and 2014 (Castaneda et al. 2014). However, in Finland, 100% of the population growth in 2016, among a population of 5.54 million, came from immigration by 'foreign-language speakers' (Ministry of the Interior, 2017).



76% in 2014, 92% of the growth in the national population in 2013 and 87% in 2012, came from foreign-language speakers (OSF, 2014; 2013; 2012). These astounding figures would indicate a dire need to track ethnicity related information in order to understand socio-ethnic dynamics, which have far-reaching consequences in shaping socio-political structures, interrelationships and societal harmony.

Thirdly, Finland's specialness is the paucity of ethnicity/biethnicity research. Since the Evaluation Panel of the Research Programme on Marginalisation, Inequality and Ethnic Relations in Finland in 2004 warned of a critical shortage of research about socio-cultural integration differences among different ethnic groups in Finland (Rantalaiho et al., 2004), the situation has not changed though trickles of research interest are surfacing. Anniste and Tammaru's (2014, p.392) study showing ethnic Estonians migrating to Finland being more likely than ethnic Russians migrating to Finland from Estonia to have ethnic Finns as conjugal partners, Varjonen et al.'s, (2013), study of ethnic identity construction of Russian migrants to Finland and Nie et al.'s (2018) study of Chinese immigrants' occupational well-being in Finland are examples of scant recent research. But research distinguishing the experience of biethnic-biracial identity development and OS from other ethnic-racial minority experiences is glaringly missing in Finland.

Finland's population register classifies immigrants on the basis of their self-reported mother-tongue, makes their ethnicity only language based (Anniste and Tammaru, 2014). Though exact numbers are missing, the rapid growth in the number of biethnic offspring in Finland can be detected from statistics which show that the number of children in Finland with at least one parent born abroad has doubled in the last ten years (OSF, 2016). So, it is no surprise that the labour market participation of immigrants and their offspring, of biethnic individuals and especially their OS are very important in Finland as some Finnish researchers (e.g., Heikkilä, 2012, p. 16) believe. With no previous research on biethnic identity formation and their OS in Finland, this is a valuable opportunity to explore

biethnic identity formation and management, and the OS of biethnics.

### ***1.5 The growing significance of organisational socialization***

Work plays a major role in the lives of most adults irrespective of attitudes to work (England & Whiteley, 1990; Morin, 2004); requiring most of their time and efforts, affecting; lifestyles, living conditions, health, worldviews, and identities (Casey, 1995, p.25; Giddens, 2009, p.921). With infinite variations, working people usually devote most waking hours to working or preparing therefor (England, 1986). Whether we view work as a source of satisfaction or as 'disutility', meaning unpleasant actions people would rather avoid (Fukuyama, 1995, p. 228), we cannot escape work centrality. Work is seen as shaping personal identity (Mannheim, 1975; Walsh & Gordon, 2008, p.58) and even as defining us more than our ancestors, religious affiliation, or educational attainment (Akabas, 1995; p.1780).

The labour turnover rate or the rate at which employees change jobs is high in many countries (Cooper-Thomas et al, 2012, p.41) - About one fourth of the total US workforce and corresponding numbers in many countries e.g. UK, Germany and Finland are in new jobs (Atkinson & Williams, 2003; Bellman et al., 2018; OSF, 2016; Petkova, 2018). One-third of all US employees change jobs within a single year, with people changing jobs on average 11.3 times by the age of 46 (BLS, 2012). As work is so central to human beings and as people change jobs often, it follows that how people adjust to the workplace, where work occurs, interests people, organisations and researchers. The voluminous research in OS literature overviews (Ashforth et al. 2007a, Bauer et al. 1998a, Nishanthi, 2017; Wanberg 2012) shows how OS has become a central HRM research area as well as a key issue for organizations and newcomers (Antonacopoulou & Güttel, 2010b; Tuttle, 2002). OS is growing fast, due to: increased mobility; immense challenges of maintaining and managing a suitable labour force; high demands on employee engagement, retention strategies and methods; all directly affecting vital talent management and

retention issues (Saks & Gruman, 2011).

Are there universally valid recipes guaranteeing workplace adjustment everywhere, always? Do new employees adjust successfully principally because of the organisation's efforts or due to their pro-activity? Is there a common understanding of OS transcending cultures and organisation types? Could we find common OS patterns in heterogeneous populations, so that OS pattern similarities could be utilised generally? These and other questions emerge as we study how a heterogeneous biethnic adult workplace newcomer population see their OS in Finland.

No readymade pill, swallowed, can make workplace newcomers instantly adjusted and no downloadable instructions, read a specified number of times, produces instantaneous OS in the desired manner and degree. Though academics and HR practitioners recognise OS's growing importance in a globalising world, and research has yielded much insight and data, our current knowledge of how components of the adjustment process (e.g., new employee proactivity) and mechanisms (e.g., organisation's OS tactics usage) interact and precisely affect employee adjustment and turnover in organisations is limited (Gupta et al., 2018b, p.61; Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003, p.791).

OS is valuable and desirable for individual employees and organisations for two main reasons (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2005: p. 493). Firstly, it helps people to: adapt new roles quickly (Bauer et al, 1998a, 2007); acquire required attitudes, knowledge and behaviours (Bauer et al., 1998a; Cable & Parsons, 2001); achieve task mastery (Morrison, 1993a, 1993b); get identity resolution help (Chao et al., 1994); achieve role clarity (Holder, 1996); notice positive changes in psychological contract expectations (Thomas & Anderson, 1998), and integrate better into the workplace (Morrison, 1993a, 1993b; Bauer et al., 1998b) by 'transforming the newcomer into a contributing member, thereby replenishing if not rejuvenating the organization as a system' (Ashforth et al., 2007a, p.2).

Secondly, OS is valuable because of a positive correlation between OS and some measurable factors affecting overall organisation performance. These factors are: greater job satisfaction, organizational commitment, person-organization-fit, reduced intention to quit (Cooper-Thomas & Anderson, 2002, 2005; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992) and lower rate of personnel turnover (Cohen and Veled-Hecht, 2010; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2012; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2005). Many studies positively linking achieved OS to psychological health and well-being (Grant and Sonnentag, 2010; Gruman & Saks, 2013, Sabharwal & Ruchi, 2015) affirm the growing significance of OS studies.

### ***1.6 The importance of identity formation for organisational socialization***

This thesis argues that identity formation, and biethnic identity formation and management, occurring both internally as well as through social interaction with others, strongly impact the OS of biethnics. Identity is a root construct in the social sciences informing individual and group behaviour, and identity formation is recognised as a vital aspect of individual development and psychological well-being (Erikson, 1959/1980; Rogers, 1961). In addition to a person's self, others are central in the formation, development and management of identity in contemporary identity development frameworks (Phinney, 1990; Svensson et. al., 2018, p.187). Increasing ethnic diversity in many countries (e.g., USA, UK, Singapore, Canada) has generated growing interest and awareness of ethnic issues grounded in theoretical understanding of *identity* as socially produced (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) though being subject to personal agency and contextual dependency through intricate and complex processes of defining, affirming and reaffirming boundaries, and transmitting 'societal norms of whom and what a person from a certain ethnic group can and should be' (Svensson et. al., 2018, p.187).

*Ethnic identity* formation has been studied exhaustively (Ong et al., 2006; Phinney, 1992a, b, 2000; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a, b; Umaña-Taylor et al. 2004,2014).

Research shows ethnic and racial identity to be intricately linked to academic, psychological and social adjustment (Phinney et al., 1997; Seaton et al., 2006; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2002; Yip et al., 2006). One kind of ethnic identity is biethnic/biracial/bicultural identity where the parents represent different ethnicities/races/cultures. Though the terms biethnic, biracial, bicultural should be used carefully due to their differences, they are often mixed in usage.

The social aspect in identity studies is important in the form of parental *upbringing*, which helps the person become aware of, learn values, reflect, form and negotiate ethnic/biethnic/biracial/bicultural identity by a continuous process of interaction and reflection with others' social ascription of his/her ethnic/biethnic/biracial/bicultural identity along with their own self-concept of identity. Parental upbringing is strongly related to ethnic identity formation (Mohanty et al. 2006, p.155; Noro, 2009, p.4; Tran & Lee 2010, p.169) and biethnic/biracial/bicultural identity formation (Coleman & Carter, 2007, p. 103; Crawford & Alaggia, 2008, p.82). The parents' upbringing role serves as a common underpinning to both identity formation and OS, as recognition of the parents' role and upbringing for OS is found in the concept of *anticipatory socialization* (Jablin, 2001, p.734), the process of learning about work and working life through parents at home before entering working life. Parents are also seen as one of the five major OS information sources for individuals: parents, educational institutions, part-time job experiences, friends, and the mass media (Feij, 1998; Jablin, 2001; Jablin & Krone, 1987; Levine and Hoffner, 2006).

Increasing diversity in the workplace has prompted research studying the role of ethnicity and ethnic identity in the workplace (Kenny & Briner, 2013, p. 725). However, most research considers ethnicity as demographic variables and neglects how ethnic identity and ethnic identity formation is experienced in a workplace context and what role they play in shaping OS. One significant dimension of identity and ethnic identity formation that has surfaced through research (Aryanti, 2015; Bachnik, 1992; Dissanayake, 1996; Kanno, 2003; Kondo, 1990; Lebra, 1976; Markus & Hamedani, 2007; Nandy, 1983; Smith, 1983) is what

I call non-Western personal identity concepts. Instead of '*binary categories with a primary focus on the individual*' as mostly internal processes (Korobov, 2015; Way & Rogers, 2015) with absolute identity descriptors, prevalent in the contemporary academic literature, mostly from the USA, fluid and contextual Chinese, Indian, Japanese and Korean identity concepts that 'give primacy to the context' (Misra & Kapur, 2014, p. 443; Pendse & Ojha, 2017, p.55) is noticed among people with non-Western backgrounds. The fast growing number of recent OS studies in non-Western societies, (Cable et al., in India, 2013; Cohen and Veled-Hect, 2010 in Israel; Chow, 2002 in five Asian societies; Kao & Chen in Taiwan, 2017; Korte et al., in Taiwan 2015; Kulkarni and Legnick-Hall in India, 2011; Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2009 in Japan) show how cultural norms and values greatly influence identity formation and OS, and this effect of identity formation on OS should not be neglected.

### ***1.7 Research aims, objectives and research questions***

Being the first study to investigate the OS of biethnics in Finland, this research aims to make an original contribution to existing OS knowledge as well as to identity management in ethnicity studies. Recognising the voluminous extant information on identity formation, ethnicity and OS, this thesis argues that the research aim of better understanding the biethnic identity formation and OS of biethnics newcomers in a Nordic welfare-state, Finland, is best achieved by a methodology employing qualitative interpretive semi-structured interviews of biethnic samples working and living in Finland.

Not only job-changers but also workforce entrants need OS. One main reason for high newcomer turnover is newcomers experiencing deficient OS (Black et al., 1989, p.512; Gupta et al., 2018b, p.61; Harrison et al., 1996, p.168). OS research has conceptualised different domains (e.g., training, understanding of one's job and organisation, co-worker support and future prospects in the employing organisation) interacting as 'continuous phenomena' (Taormina, 1997, p. 29). Strongly influenced by this 'continuous phenomena' approach, research has

failed to consider the diverse workplace adjustment of heterogeneous populations e.g., biethnic adults, who represent fast growing workforce additions (Humes et al., 2011; Spencer et al., 2000; OSF, 2012) and also failed to distinguish the experience of biethnic-biracial identity development and OS from other ethnic-racial minority experiences. Both from theoretical and management viewpoints, understanding well what the OS of biethnics, a growing segment of the labour force, really means for biethnic newcomers, their employers, and their colleagues, is vital.

Biethnics construct their identities differently from monoethnics, mainly because identity, of which ethnic identity is a part, is a complex multidimensional construct involving external ascription and self-categorising (McCubbin et al., 2013, p.2; Phinney and Ong, 2007, p. 272; Renn, 2000, p.402; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). Further, as earlier identity formation processes of biethnics e.g. parental upbringing, directly influence the new biethnic employee's identity and self-expression (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007, p.636; Poston, 1990, p.154; Soliz et al. 2017; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014), it follows that the OS of biethnic employees differs from that of monoethnic employees.

From both theoretical and management viewpoints, understanding what the OS process means for the biethnic newcomers, their employers, and colleagues, especially for a rapidly growing segment of the labour force, biethnic newcomers (Humes et al., 2011; Perez & Hirschman, 2009) is vital (Cooper-Thomas et al, 2005, p. 493). Ethnicity research studies ethnic or racial identity extensively (Gonzales-Backen, 2013) often without differentiating between biethnic/biracial identity development and other ethnic minority identity development (Soliz et al, 2017; p.268) and neglects biethnic identity formation and development and links between biethnic identity formation and OS of biethnics is unresearched. This leads to the main research question:

- How do biethnic adults see themselves adapting socio-culturally to the workplace in Finland?

Secondary questions were required to (a) identify the phenomena encapsulated in the core topics (OS and biethnic identity formation and management) and examine their nature, and (b) to bring to the awareness of the research subjects the nature of biethnic identity formation and OS, in order to help them access and analyse these phenomena through their own experiences. The secondary research questions follow naturally as we delve deeper into OS, biethnicity and the identity management efforts of biethnics, especially by reflecting their proactivity against their organisation's OS facilitating efforts.

The secondary research questions are:

- What factors do biethnic adults in Finland consider advantageous or disadvantageous in their OS?
- Do biethnic adults consider their biethnicity a detrimental factor or a factor contributing towards the success of their OS process in Finland?
- Do biethnic adults in Finland see their own proactivity as being more important than the role of the organisation facilitating the success of their OS as Ashford and Black (1992) have suggested?

## **1.8 Research design**

Being an exploratory research originating primary data, the overall strategy (research design) had to connect the research idea (to produce deeper understanding of the OS of biethnics in Finland) to the *empirical* results (deeper understanding of identity management and OS of the biethnics through exploration of the interviewees' experiences). The interpretivist research philosophy suited the research aim of understanding OS of biethnics in a Finnish workplace context. OS, though affected by interaction with other human beings and human institutions, is approached through their subjective sense-making of their OS by biethnics in a Finnish workplace. OS has been researched in Finland (e.g., Jokisaari & Vuori, 2018; Jokisaari, 2013), but this particular interrelationship of biethnicity, ethnic identity formation and OS, i.e., how biethnics manage their biethnic identities and achieve their OS in Finland is unresearched. Using face-



to-face qualitative in-depth semi-structured interviews illuminated the subjective sense-making of their identity formation and OS by biethnics so that individual experiences could be analysed to elicit findings.

The interviewee selection criteria (section 3.6) ensured adequate diversity and as biethnics, they were the best competent to analyse their biethnic identity formation, management and how it affected their OS. In Finland, colleagues, subordinates and supervisors may not be aware of a person's ethnicity/biethnicity due to collecting and keeping ethnicity related information being illegal, and also these others may not be sufficiently aware of the development and nature of a biethnic's OS unless they were in a designated role e.g., HR or a mentor, with access to such information.

The snowball sampling method for accessing interviewees (section 3.9) and for effectively carrying out the interviews required the researcher establishing a relationship with participants built on trust, openness, transparency, respect and reciprocity. It is argued that the benefits brought on by the researcher's own biethnicity and being a HRD professional contributed to the success of this research. Section 3.16 explains the challenges of this 'insider' status. The practical challenges of elicitation and prompting needed for producing rich description and detailed contextual information are explained in section 3.11.

## ***1.9 Findings of this research***

The research findings rebut earlier depictions in academic literature of biethnic individuals not adjusting to working life and society in general as biethnic adults reported adjusting well to the workplace in Finland (section 4.2), mostly through their own proactivity and not necessarily due to the organisation's onboarding efforts, which they considered deficient. Upbringing is recognised as an important factor both in the identity formation and management, and in the OS of biethnics in Finland (section 4.4). Four types of biethnic identity emerged, these are not stages as each type can occur at different life stages and no order of

progression is implied (section 4.5). Findings indicate that non-Western concepts of personal identity e.g. fluid and contextual Indian, Japanese and Korean identity concepts that stress the role of the context in identity formation are often present among biethnic adults (section 4.8).

### ***1.10 Contributions of this research***

The original insights of this thesis constitute four contributions to OS: the first adds to the understanding of *antecedents of adjustment* (Kammeyer-Mueller, 2003, p. 790), which a biethnic identity formation and management influences. As a biethnic has already gone through a complex process of identity formation involving cultural, ethnic and social differences in their own personal and familial background, therefore, their earlier experiences of adjusting to different cultural situations, concepts, values and norms implies that their OS would be different from that of monoethnic newcomers to the workplace.

The second contribution highlights the importance of *upbringing* or anticipatory socialisation, where a biethnic's gaining knowledge about working life and work from parents or relatives (Dailey, 2016, p.454; Scarduzio et al., 2018, p. 432), is an important OS success factor.

The third contribution to OS complements the understanding of *antecedents of adjustment* (Kammeyer-Mueller, 2003, p. 790), by revealing the presence of non-Western personal identity concepts (Kanno, 2003; p.4; Ohara, 2011, p. 254; Markus & Hamedani, 2007, p.3) impacting identity management, adjustment proactivity as well as the biethnic employees' OS. Four biethnic identity types emerged from the interviews (section 4.3). These are not stages, as each of these types can occur at different life stages and no order of progression is implied. As individuals might change from one biethnic identity type to another, no judgement can be made about which type is most desirable. Respondents reported these identity types, resulting from the biethnic's identity work, as durable and not static, but dynamic in the sense that it evolves in response to

both external and internal stimuli. These biethnic identity types influence how the biethnic individuals handle tensions between internal identity concept and external ascription, they play a role in power relations with others around them and therefore impact their OS.

The fourth contribution is to the proactivity in OS debate (Ashford and Black, 1992, 1996; Bauer & Green, 1998b; Black & Ashford, 1995; Ellis et al., 2017; Saks, 1995) by showing that biethnics in this research consider their proactivity as being more important for their own workplace adjustment than their organisation's onboarding efforts. The above insights contribute to ethnic identity formation in ethnicity studies and to OS studies.

### ***1.11 Thesis outline***

The literature review, presented in Chapter 2 explains the essential concepts of workplace, OS, personal identity, identity formation, ethnicity, ethnic identity, biethnicity, and biethnic identity development and how they are interrelated. It also identifies core debates and how they inform the research questions. This section also illuminates the theories forming the background of this research: Identity theory (Erikson, 1968), Personal Identity Theory (Locke, 1694), Foucault's concept of individual identity (1986, 1998), Uncertainty reduction theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1975), Social exchange theory (Homans, 1961), Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), Cooley's Looking-glass Self Theory (Cooley, 1902) and Organisational socialization theory (van Maanen & Schein, 1979). The chapter concludes with what is special about the OS of biethnics (section 2.23) and a summary of literature relevant to this thesis's topics.

Chapter 3 describes how a methodology suitable for the research problem and research questions was selected and utilised. Sampling, subject inclusion criteria, the special challenges of accessing biethnic interviewees, recording data and how lessons learnt from the pilot interviews were adopted are

explained then. Reflexivity and ethical issues involved are also discussed here (section 3.16). Chapter 4 presents the findings of this study. Chapter 5 presents the discussion of the research findings, analysis of the data collected and the findings. Chapter 6 presents the conclusions of this study and explains how this study will contribute to current knowledge. Research strengths and limitations are set out here (section 6.3). Recommendations for future research areas are delineated here (section 6.4 and 6.5). Relevant appendices and the bibliography are at the end of this thesis.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

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### 2.1 Introduction

The research question under investigation concerns the organisational socialization (OS) of bi-ethnic employees. This chapter sets out the theoretical background to the study and the current understanding of OS and biethnic identity formation. In particular, it focuses on four themes 1) what is organisational socialization (OS); (2) what is biethnic identity formation and management; (3) how does the process of biethnics forming and negotiating identities affect their OS; and (4) what is special about the OS of biethnics. These themes appear in recent reviews and meta-analyses of OS (section 2.5) and identity studies in organisational contexts (section 2.12).

OS is defined in section 2.2, followed by an overview of OS's roots and evolution, highlighting the research shift from stage-models through learning-oriented strategies (where the newcomer learns, seeks information or is engaged in changing her/himself) to more 'proactive and assertive strategies' e.g., 'monitoring and asking questions' and 'networking and job change negotiation' (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2012a), the role of trait curiosity in feedback seeking and relationship building (Harrison et al., 2011) and developmental feedback as positive framing behaviour related to performance outcomes (Li et al., 2011).

The concepts of personal identity, biethnic identity and identity formation are defined in section 2.10. Two personal identity concepts are employed here: John Locke's (1694/1975) consideration of *personal identity* as a psychological continuity, founded on consciousness, especially memory, and not on the physical substance of the body or soul; and the Foucauldian concept of a fluid, temporary and interaction-defined personal identity instead of a static and pre-defined monolithic identity construct (Foucault, 1998). Both concepts are utilized in understanding the identity formation and OS of biethnics in the cross

currents of enculturation to the organisation and individual self-expression. The significance of OS is explained in the next section.

## ***2.2 What is organisational socialization and why is it important?***

Simply put, OS is “the ‘learning’ of what it is to be an organisational insider” (Bauer, 2004, p.743). Two nuanced definitions reveal the evolution of OS over the decades. Louis’s (1980, pp. 229–230) definition of OS: “*is the process by which an individual comes to appreciate the values, abilities, expected behaviors, and social knowledge essential for assuming an organizational role and for participating as an organizational member*” condenses the OS phenomenon into an almost quantifiably mechanistic industrial process. Ellis et al.’s definition (2014): “*acquire the knowledge, skills, and functional understanding of their new jobs, make connections with others in the organization, and garner insight into the culture, processes, and people in their new organization.*”, is more contextual, considering ambient cultures and subcultures where OS happens. ‘People’ and ‘make connections’ in Ellis et al.’s definition requires knowing the actors and their interrelationships with the adjustee. In addition to the adjustee’s information-seeking, the adjustee’s attributional traits e.g. *skill for taking charge of own adjustment* and *curiosity* (Harrison et al., 2011; Thomas et al, 2010), and how supervisors and colleagues contribute to the adjustee’s OS (Oldham & Fried, 2016; Wang et al., 2017), is a growing OS research interest. Researchers use terms ranging from (LMX) *leader-member exchange* (Sluss & Thompson, 2012) to *newcomer-supervisor exchange* (Ou et al., 2018) for the adjustee-supervisor interaction.

Person-environment (PE) fit (Kristof, 1996) measuring individual-work environment compatibility; person-job (PJ) fit (Kristoff-Brown & Guay, 2011) studying a person’s and the job’s characteristics; and person-organisation (PO) fit evaluating the adjustee-organisation compatibility (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005); person-supervisor (PS) fit studying adjustee-supervisor compatibility (Turban and Dougherty, 1994) are concepts employed to study how helpful the newcomer-supervisor/environment relationship is for the newcomer’s OS.

Research of support from *people* involved in the adjustee's OS e.g., supervisors, has progressed along two separate streams Nifadkar et al., (2012, p.1146). The first stream (e.g., Ashforth et al., 2007a; Jokisaari & Vuori, 2018; Sluss & Thompson, 2012) stresses the supervisors' role in facilitating OS, divestiture socialisation (Montani et al., 2019), and enhancing the adjustee's performance. The second stream (Kammeyer-Mueller & Wanberg, 2003; Morrison, 1993a,b,c; Tremblay et al., 2017) claims that newcomer-supervisor exchange success for P-O fit and resulting higher OS success has incipient conditions e.g., co-worker support and customer recognition (Kao et al., 2014; Topa et al., 2016; Tremblay et al., 2017), and stresses the newcomer's proactivity in acquiring insights, information and skills that produce successful OS for them, sometimes despite non-supportive supervisor treatment (Nifadkar et al., 2016, 2012; Topa et al., 2016).

But, why is OS important? Firstly, OS has become a central research area in HRM (Antonacopoulou & Güttel, 2010b; Cable and Parsons, 2001), and a key issue for organizations and adjustees largely because of the changing nature of the field of work: increased mobility; immense challenges of maintaining and managing a suitable labour force; demands on employee engagement, retention strategies and methods, all affecting vital talent management and retention issues (Saks & Gruman, 2018, 2011). OS is equally influential for the adjustee, as *'work contexts are complex, dynamic, designed for multiple purposes, and for the newcomer, more or less novel, their meaning is inherently equivocal.'* (Ashforth et al., 2007a, p.1).

Secondly, research has validated successful OS utilization improving person-organization fit, job-satisfaction, role-innovation, organizational commitment levels and decreasing employee turnover, impacting both the adjustee and the organisation (Ashforth et al., 2007a, p. 2; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004; Kim, 2018). Diminished commitment, the adjustee not adjusting and increased employee turnover signifying unsuccessful OS, mean high cost for both the organisation and the employee (Bodoh, 2012). Therefore, adjustees and organisations seek

more effective OS, producing quicker role-learning, enhanced task mastery, and better social integration (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2012).

OS differs from *occupational socialization*, which encompasses '*learning the norms of one's profession*', e.g., nurse or army officer, to help them acquire professional status, solidarity and '*function as full members*' of that particular profession (Bauer and Erdogan, 2011, p.51). This distinction between a workplace and a profession is important because OS matured from studying individuals adjusting to a profession towards a focused 'interactionist process' study of how newcomers adjust to an organization, and how the insiders or 'entrenched employees' and the organisation react to this process and the newcomer (Bauer & Erdogan, 2012, p.51). Occupational socialization paves the way for OS as a person cannot be adjusted to the workplace without being adjusted to the profession. An IT programmer must adjust to working with computers and programming languages before adjusting to a workplace. The roots of OS research are investigated next.

### ***2.3 Roots of organisational socialization research***

Knowing the roots of OS research helps understand how OS nowadays spans diverse fields e.g., anthropology, psychology, and social psychology, with most research being fairly recent. Edward Ross (1896, p.518) first used the term to illustrate the concept of 'social control'. Child socialization or 'the moulding of the individual's feelings and desires to suit the needs of the group.' (Clausen, 1968, p.139), initiated the research focus, which graduated to role-learning at all ages, especially a person's organisational position only in the 1960s (Sewell, 1963). Following the first research article (Thomson, 1941), OS research grew in the mid-1960's towards the modern understanding (Ashford & Nurmohamed, 2012, p.9).

Life course socialization, occupational socialization, and socialization in total institutions are the three most important roots of OS research (Ashforth et al.,



2007a, p.3). Socialization happens at various life stages: childhood, kindergarten and nursery, school, youth organisations, part-time jobs, hobbies and extracurricular activities. The term 'anticipatory socialization', (Jablin, 2001, p.737) stresses the impact of these different socialization types on OS by showing e.g., how parents and families affect "*vocational choice, general attitudes to work, stereotypes of gender-appropriate work, and skills for role negotiation and information seeking*". Role acquisition involving insider interaction, learning, and coping that situates the adjustee into the work community is a central OS element.

Lutfeý et al, (2006, p.188) see occupational socialisation, with profuse ethnographic research (Carr et al. 2006; Lui et al., 2003; Scarduzio et al., 2018), studying "*what is needed in terms of skills, knowledge and behaviours-for-socializees to function as full and effective occupational incumbents*", and detect two influences of occupational socialization on OS: Firstly, individuals adjust to different subcultures instead of one monolithic organisational culture (section 2.4.4) and earlier adjustment affects the OS process (Ashforth et al., 2007a; Fisher & Wilmoth, 2018, p.82). Secondly, the effect of work experiences on everyday life through '*basic attitudes, values, and ways of conceiving the self*' affect OS (Lutfeý and Mortimer, 2006, p.188). Research following this second influence, examining e.g., what work features affect personal development (Kohn & Schooler, 1983) or whether job experience affects older workers more than younger workers (Lorence and Mortimer, 1985) have impacted OS.

The third main root of OS is socialization in 'total institution' (Ashforth et al., 2007a, p.3), e.g., prison. Qualitative total institution studies with very strong and clearly pre-defined professional roles, e.g., psychiatric hospitals (Goffman, 1961; Crawford et al., 2008), prisoner of war camps (Schein, 1961), prisons (Chong, 2013; Lawson et al., 1996); correctional institutions (Jiménez & Lorente, 2014; Wheeler, 1961), and military institutions (Bree et al., 2015; Dornbusch, 1955) reveal harsh and inflexible socialization processes functioning differently than in organizations as they often deconstruct and reconstruct the adjustee in their desired mould. When comparing practices and OS aspects in different kinds of

organisations e.g., total institutions, start-ups and multinational firms, their peculiarities may be more meaningful than assumed. Institutions (e.g., universities, armed forces) may resemble organisations, but the link between ‘institution’ and ‘socialization’ is more encompassing than the link between ‘organisation’ and ‘socialization’ and sweeping generalisations are better avoided (Antonacopoulou and Pesqueux, 2010a, p.23). Theories of OS relevant to the current study are presented next.

## ***2.4 Theories of organisational socialization***

An “umbrella” theory of organisational socialisation, accepted by researchers and practitioners, does not exist. OS studies utilise theories from different disciplines e.g., developmental psychology, social psychology and personality theories, depending upon the approach selected (Feij, 1998, p. 209). OS theories considering how social interaction affect identity development and OS are presented below.

*Uncertainty Reduction Theory* (Berger and Calabrese, 1975), centrally informs OS research (Cooper-Thomas, 2006, p. 498; Fetherston, 2017) as it suits all OS process stages, explains the motives and the behaviour employees adopt to learn and adjust to their new roles (Kramer, 2010, p.10) and its core assumption that rapid socialization radically reduces the adjustee’s anxiety caused by disharmonious situational identity in the workplace (Ashforth, 2001, p.100; Bauer et al., 2007) guides most OS approach aims of reducing adjustee anxiety.

*Social exchange theory* (Homans, 1961) suggests a theoretical framework of how newcomers evaluate the costs of their efforts needed to gather information through social interactions in making sense of their OS. Though criticized for overtly resembling the ‘rational pursuit of self-interest’ in economics (Cook, 2000, p.687), it is used by OS researchers to illuminate the learning aspects of the adjustment process (Korte, 2010; Kramer et al., 1995; Kramer, 2010, p.15) and reciprocity in manager-subordinate relationships (Erdogan & Enders, 2007; Ou

et al., 2018; Uhl-Bien & Maslyn 2003).

*Social learning theory*, (Bandura, 1977), shows how individuals observe and imitate behaviour in social contexts, how others influence their perceptions, and how they cognitively make sense of their workplace learning needs, a core socialisation task, making the theory useful for assimilation, adjustment and discrimination studies (Dixon, 2012; Hennekam & Syed, 2018; Miller & Jablin, 1991).

*Social information processing theory* (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978) claims that an employee's perception of organisational phenomena is strongly influenced by the opinions and information supplied by influential persons in the organisation. It is used in educational psychology for studying children's social adjustment (Cooke, 2017; Crick & Dodge, 1994), workplace ostracism (Hershcovis & Reich, 2013; Robinson et al., 2013), and OS studies (Yang et al., 2018).

*Belongingness theory*, (Baumeister and Leary, 1995), posits an innate human drive to establish strong interpersonal relationships and feel accepted, with research evidence from diverse cultures (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Ma et al., 2016; Rogers et al., 2017). Belongingness theory has been used by researchers (Bennett & Robinson, 2003; Baumeister et al., 1996; Williams, 2007) to study what happens when belongingness is thwarted and employees engage in behaviour contradicting organisational norms (e.g., absenteeism, taking unauthorised breaks, stealing) that negatively impact OS, and used in OS research studying organisational support (e.g., supportive relationships with colleagues and supervisors at work) and OS (Ferris et al., 2009; Nifadkar & Bauer, 2016; Thau et al., 2007).

*Social comparison theory* (Festinger, 1954) claims that individuals have innate drives to self-evaluate by comparing themselves with others and acquire perspective in order to reduce uncertainty in seeing themselves accurately as uncertainty reduction theory (Berger and Calabrese, 1975) has suggested

(Marsden & Friedkin, 1994, p.5). Researchers (e.g., Ge et al., 2015; Greenberg et al., 2007) have studied how people use social comparison in organisations to acquire more accurate perspective for improving self-evaluation impacting their adjustment. *Organisation support theory* (Eisenberger et al., 1986) suggests that POS (Perceived organisational support) improves commitment and performance via the norm of reciprocity.

*Social identity theory* (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), a core OS theory, suggests social identity being a person's self-concept arising from membership in a 'relevant social group' (Turner and Oakes, 1986) and that identity issues are central to sense making during OS. Social identity of individuals can be situational, and different cultural orientations may cause different social identity developments and manifestations, impacting OS significantly (Feitosa & Salazar, 2012; Gibson & Zellmer-Bruhn, 2001; Nguyen et al., 2014). This theory and *belongingness theory* both have outsider's perception influencing the person's identity, identification and involvement, affecting the internalization of shared norms and values, which impact their OS. After this presentation of OS-related theories, an overview of OS research relevant to this study follows.

## ***2.5 Overview of organisational socialisation research***

OS research investigations typically follow one of three approaches, *organisational*, *individualistic* and *international* for understanding how different factors impact OS (Fang et al. 2011, p. 128). *Organisational* approach studies methods and processes the organisation utilises for socialising newcomers e.g., OS tactics (Batistič, 2018; Saks & Gruman, 2011). This approach's significant contribution was Van Maanen and Schein's (1979) classification of six tactics organisations employ to socialise newcomers: (a) formally or informally, and (b) in groups undergoing common experiences or singly with individual attention, (c) with predefined phases of induction or a random approach, (d) fixed timetable or a variable approach, (e) mentoring like serial tactic where a newcomer is socialised by an insider or no role model utilised, (f) feedback is

utilised in the identity affirmation of the newcomer or no feedback is used. The *individualistic* approach studies newcomer attributes e.g., adjustee proactivity (Saks et al., 2011; Zhang et al., 2018) while *interaction* approach studies how the adjustee's proactivity interacts with the organisation's socializing efforts (Reichers, 1987; Zou et al., 2015). Underlying all approaches is 'an implicit mechanism: *social resources* (e.g., information) that newcomers obtain through interactions with organizational insiders.' (Fang et al., 2011, p.128).

Ashford & Nurmohamed's (2012, p.10) three 'waves' with focus on: the organisation and its actions as the first wave, the adjustee and proactivity as the second wave, and 'integrated' or interactionist perspective of the two earlier as the third wave is another overview approach. Inside the 'waves', the research focus varied from *process* dimensions generating OS stage-models (e.g., Feldman 1976; Louis, 1980; Van Maanen & Schein 1979) to *content* or what is learnt during socialization (Chao et al., 1994; Hart & Miller, 2005), and information seeking, networking, feedback-seeking, relationship building, supervisor-relationship building and job-change negotiations (Saks, Gruman & Cooper-Thomas, 2011, p.37). In this overview, to understand the evolution of OS studies, stage-models are presented next.

### **2.5.1 The stage-models of organisational socialisation**

Early OS focused on what the organisation did or should do to socialise newcomers and what outcomes organisations desired. OS content studies of learning content necessary for successful OS (Feldman, 1981; Louis, 1980) envisioned stages of a universal process all newcomers went through in their OS, generating the OS stage-models. The three 'stages' of (a) the *anticipatory socialisation* describing the newcomer's job expectations about the job and the organisation, (b) the accommodation stage involving learning, sense-making, and adjusting; (c) role management stage involves improving and fine-tuning are common to most stage models.

Van Maanen's (1975) influential model showed OS as a continuous change process beginning with *anticipatory socialization* with adjustees influenced by prior knowledge, social experience and the general direction the career had taken, acquired before the organisational entry. The 'encounter period' began with the newcomer formally being registered into the organisation, and the newcomer started to adapt by participating in the organisational events, performing the assigned tasks and communicating with peers and workplace supervisors. This learning to handle change state was termed 'metamorphosis'. Success of these stages meant the newcomer becoming organisation insiders, accepted by colleagues, whereas failure made them ill-adjusted, underperforming and often leaving (Van Maanen, 1975).

Feldman's (1976) model admitted that the newcomer's adjustment efforts might affect the organisation's socialising efforts. Both van Maanen and Feldman stressed that OS was not a quick-fix but a continuous change process. Emphasising the newcomer's cognitive experience of sense-making during OS, Louis (1980) introduced an unlearning aspect, suggesting that adjustment was not only about 'adding new roles to the portfolio of life roles', but also distancing oneself from earlier roles. Later stage-models functioned as 'specialized models' (Ashforth et al., 2007a, p.11) by highlighting specific themes e.g., communication (Jablin, 1987), considering mentors as socialization agents (Anderson & Thomas, 1996; Moreland & Levine, 2001), and probing the OS-stress relationship (Nelson, 1987). These specialized stage-models exposed how local and contextual elements as well as interpersonal transitions affect OS, and how adjustees adjusted to different subcultures (Ashforth et al., 2007a, p.12; Fisher et al., 2018). Non-conclusive empirical support guided research interest away from stage-models towards specific emerging perspectives e.g. proactivity, particular 'context of the organization, localized socialization, integrating individual differences in sense-making and the role of time' (Ashforth et al., 2007a, p.31). In this overview, we have seen OS stage-models. Central OS themes are presented next.

### 2.5.2 Themes in organisational socialisation research

OS reviews (Ashford & Nurmohamed, 2012; Batistič & Kaše, 2015; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2012b; Moyson et al., 2018; Nishanthi, 2017) reveal two central themes: first, the 'interactionist perspective' of the organisation's and the newcomer's effect on the adjustment process (Bauer et al., 2007, p.707). Studies of the manner and nature of adjustee proactivity shaping their OS processes (Bauer et al., 1998b; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992) revealed that the newcomer's actions and the organisation's initiatives cannot be studied or developed in isolation. This influenced later OS models (Bauer et al., 2007; Saks et al., 2007). Recognising OS as a 'psychological process' (Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2013, p. 2089) exposing individuals to different influences while experiencing role uncertainty due to changes in their environment and social status (Ashford & Black, 1996; Nicholson, 1984) illuminates the research interest in the relationships between the organisation's socialisation tactics and content, the employee's proactive input and behavioural outcomes (DeBode et al., 2017; Lam et al., 2009).

The second most important theme is the adjustment-learning link, guided by learning theories (social learning theory, Bandura, 1977; social information processing theory, Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978; social comparison theory, Festinger, 1954) that suggest individuals gather information, learn, and construct meaning socially by giving importance to the views and opinions of credible and significant persons and compare themselves with these others, organisational insiders, for OS. Using these learning perspectives, the early socialization literature (Feldman, 1976, 1981; Schein, 1968) progressed from stage-models into studying OS as a *learning process* (Ostroff and Kozlowski, 1992). Then *learning by doing* (Beyer and Hannah, 2002), illuminating the importance of the context for learning (Edwards *et al.*, 2009) and how OS *tactics* affect organizational commitment and learning processes (Benzinger, 2016; Filstad, 2011) emerged. Researchers attempted to conceptualise and theorize OS by examining what newcomers actually learn during adjustment (Ashforth et al., 2007; Case & Given, 2016; Spagnoli, 2017), how pre-socialisation and learning are interlinked

(Fetherston, 2017; Yanson & Johnson, 2016) and create typological frameworks. Earlier OS research (Feldman, 1976; Schein, 1968), standardizing the organisational context and the temporal situation, assumed stable nature of the individual's and the organisation's interaction, while later studies focusing on adjustee proactivity and the organisation's socialisation tactics (Ashforth et al., 2007; Wang et al., 2015) adopted a more holistic orientation (Toarniczky, 2011). In this overview, we have seen OS stage-models and central OS themes. OS environment studies are presented next.

### ***2.5.3 Environment where organisational socialisation happens***

There is debate about whether the environment where OS occurs is stable. OS model driven quantitative studies (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), highlighted the organisation's aim of controlling the OS process and maintaining the organisation's stability and productivity by assuming a stable organisational environment (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979, p.9) and seeing adjustees as 'passive, reactive agents' (Gruman et al., 2006, p.91). But later researchers studied or specific contexts e.g., workplace relationships conflicts (Chen et al., 2011; Fang et al., 2011; Nifadkar & Bauer, 2016) or individual adjustee aspects (e.g., proactive behaviour - Cooper-Thomas et al, 2012a; Ellis et al., 2017) but typically focus on quantitative individual behavioural aspects and attitudes without illuminating the individual's subjective experience of OS dynamics (Saks & Ashforth, 1997, p.270).

Both the organization and the individual actively attempt shaping the individual's workplace identity, and organizations utilize identity management processes to control employees (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002; Ashforth et al., 2016 a, b). The assumption of the 'passive, reactive agent' adjustee has been replaced by researchers (Ashford and Black 1996; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2011; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000) seeing adjustees as self-initiated and proactive. Researchers (Ashforth et al., 2007a; Bauer et al., 2007; Nifadkar et al., 2012, 2016) also challenge the assumption of the stable organisational context by



positing the organisational context as unstructured, with some supervisors even abusing individuals (Nifadkar et al., 2012). Further, the nature of HR systems (Batistič, 2018), customers (Kao et al., 2014; Tremblay et al., 2017), and social-relationship differences among state-owned and private organisations (Tan et al., 2016) or situational factors e.g., events occurring periodically in the workplace environment (Kramer, 2010) play critical roles affecting the environment beyond management's direct control. In this overview, we have seen OS stage-models, central OS themes, and OS environment studies. Newcomer adjustment to subcultures is presented next.

#### ***2.5.4 Newcomers adjust also to subcultures and microcultures in organisations***

Adjustees adjusting to a monolithic work culture (Schein & Van Maanen, 1977) is disputed by researchers (Ashforth et al., 2007a; Fisher & Wilmoth, 2018; Schein, 2017) claiming that newcomers negotiate and adjust to several sub-cultures and microcultures, coexisting and operational within a dominant overarching organisation-wide culture. Van Maanen and Barley (1985, p.38) defined subculture as a *"subset of an organization's members who interact regularly with one another, identify themselves as a distinct group within the organization, share a set of problems commonly defined to be the problems of all, and routinely take action on the basis of collective understandings unique to the group"*. Management style, shared values, function, discipline, work process, and relationships with other subcultures as well as the organisation's overarching culture (Goleman et al., 2002; Schein, 2017) affect subcultures. However, not all sub-groups are subcultures (Fisher & Wilmoth, 2018; Morgan & Ogbonna, 2008, p.48).

Martin and Siehl's (1983) influential typology for the degree of congruency between an organisation's overarching culture and subcultures shows three forms of interrelationships: 'enhancing' relationships (Boisnier, 2003, p.2; Egan, 2008, p.302), detracting from the overarching culture or 'countercultural' (Huang et. al., 2002, p.225), or 'orthogonal' or neutral not affecting the overarching

culture (Chatman & Spataro, 2002) and applicability to microcultures is unclear.

Microcultures, existing within subcultures, typically involving few individuals with their own values, beliefs and shared tasks with histories, may affect newcomer OS (Fisher & Wilmoth, 2018; Lin, Yu, & Yi, 2014; Schein 2017, p.3). Reflecting the possible impact of subcultures and microcultures on OS, Person-Environment Fit (P-E Fit), a multidimensional concept defined as *“the compatibility between an individual and a work environment that occurs when their characteristics are well-matched”* (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005) has generated much research (Cooper-Thomas et al., 2004; Hamstra et al., 2018; Özdemir et al., 2015) studying person-organisation bidirectional conducive relationships at the early entry stages ensuring higher P-E Fit and better OS.

Researchers (Moreland & Levine, 2001, p.87; Moreland et al., 2001b; Riketta & Van Dick, 2005) see OS happening mostly within work groups, possibly subgroups, even claiming workgroup socialisation being more important than OS as contradictory messages and value intimation from different subcultures (Ibarra, 1999; Beyer & Hannah, 2002; Bush et al., 2017) affect adjustees strongly. Fisher et al. (2018, p.83) suggest studying both the overarching organisational culture and subcultures where the newcomer is adjusting, as values held in subcultures affect the actions of adjustees and insiders, despite practical limitations of identifying informal subcultures or microcultures (Boisnier, 2003; Hofstede, 1998). We have seen newcomers adjusting to subcultures, and adjustee proactivity in OS is presented next.

### ***2.5.5 Importance of adjustee proactivity in organisational socialisation***

Louis (1980) introduced proactivity into OS studies and the interactionist perspective (Reichers, 1987) developed it with the core belief that OS can be understood only by studying how the interaction between the individual, the organisational factors and socialising tactics affect OS. The recognition that: adjustees can *‘observe others, ask direct questions, and/or experiment with test*

*behaviors to learn what is expected and what limits can be pushed'* (Ashford & Black, 1996); adjustee tactics can be 'covert (e.g., consult written manuals and handbooks for information) or highly interactive (e.g., social network building with key organizational members - Morrison, 1993a; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1992), characterised newcomer proactivity in OS studies from the 1990s onwards (Allen et al., 2017, p.327).

The organization's OS tactics impact newcomer proactivity differently (Griffin et al., 2000; Gruman & Saks, 2011). Proactive newcomer behaviour affects work outcomes involving role-clarity, task mastery, turnover intentions, overall social adjustment (Nifadkar et al., 2012; Wanberg & Kammeyer-Mueller, 2000), and also the organisation (Ashforth et al., 2008; Zou et al., 2015) via other socialization actors (e.g., workmates, subordinates, supervisors, or clients), social capital (Fang et al., 2011), and the supervisor helping socialisation (Anderson & Cooper-Thomas, 1996; Cooper-Thomas, Anderson, & Cash, 2012b). Cooper-Thomas and Burke (2012a) categorised three newcomer proactive behaviours: changing the role or environment (e.g., work procedures), self-change (e.g., feedback seeking), and mutual development (e.g., networking). Evaluating proactivity is challenging and one approach is, Perceived Organizational Support (POS), referring to employees' "beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being" (Eisenberger et al., 1986, p. 501). POS is driven by the organizational support theory, which claims that "*employees develop global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being*" (Eisenberger et al., 2011, 2001, p.42). POS reflects proactivity, and has generated influential OS research (Kurtessis et al., 2017; Perrot et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2017).

OS research has re-included the organisation's perspective by studying how supervisors perceive, evaluate and react to the newcomer's proactivity by providing support and information (Daft, 2015), by assigning and evaluating performance goals (Ashforth et al., 2007a), recognise employees' socioemotional needs (Armeli et al., 1998; Eisenberger et al., 1986; Simosi, 2012), especially at the

early OS phases (Ellis et al., 2017). Excepting some POS studies from diverse cultures, (Gyekye et al., 2009; Kawai & Strange, 2014; Wang et al., 2017), the effect of perceived cultural differences, racial and ethnic discrimination issues on OS is unresearched. The supervisor's role can potentially inform OS research and proactivity remains central to OS research. The last section in the overview of OS will next explore methodological evolution in OS.

### ***2.5.6 Methodological evolution in organisational socialization studies***

OS research has grown from the early stage model assumptions (Feldman, 1976; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979), necessary for conceptualising the socialisation process, into encompassing the adjustee's identity management efforts (Ibarra and Petriglieri, 2007; Kao et al., 2017), into considering how organisational characteristics e.g., values, concrete artefacts, and organisational practices e.g., onboarding, mentoring (Klein et al. 2015; Pratt et al., 2006) impact identity formation and management (Weick, 1995). Early ethnographic research on unusual occupations (Bourne, 1967 studying US soldiers in Vietnam; McCarl, 1976, 1980 US fire-fighters; Van Maanen, 1975 US policemen) captured the dynamics and diversity of individual adaptation and identity management experiences.

As proactivity engaged them more, researchers (e.g., Anderson-Gough, et al, 2005; Bourassa and Ashforth, 1998; Jackson & Morrisette, 2014), recognising the surprising contextual twists and turns, errors and missed opportunities, learning challenges and concomitant defence mechanisms, human relationships and identity management challenges, and ways to make sense of these, realised the limitations of earlier simplifying assumptions about the predictable and universal process nature of OS (Schein, 1968; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). The challenges of understanding better the adjustee's adjustment perception, it's significance to the adjustee and to the organisation, constraints and demands on other OS actors (e.g., workmates, subordinates, supervisors, or clients), and the unpredictability of outcomes required methodological improvements.

Quantitative data which can sketch the outline, identify patterns, detect causal relationships and measure their relative effects, required support from case-specific qualitative *thick description* method (Geertz, 1973).

OS methodologies need to capture distinctive individual OS experience and let adjustees voice their situational identity management challenges involving upbringing, ethnicity and biethnicity, and balancing their needs with their organisation's needs. After this brief overview of OS studies, the next section investigates norms in OS.

## ***2.6 Importance of workplace norms in organisational socialisation***

*Norms* play a central role in human social behaviour (Cialdini et al., 2006; Triandis, 1977). Seeing norms as representing informal shared rules guiding the behaviours of group members, and increasing the predictability of individual behaviour, writers (Benavides, 2015; Berkowitz, 2004) argue that norms impact individual behaviour more than biological, cultural, familial and religious influences.

To better understand the impact of norms on human social behavior, Cialdini et al. (1990, p.1015), proposed a two-fold meaning of norms: i) *descriptive norms* referring to '*what is commonly done*' and ii) *injunctive norms* meaning '*what is commonly approved*'. This understanding of *norms* is used in this research. Norms generate and maintain behaviour uniformity among group members, especially newcomers, even ensuring group functionality (Korte, 2009, p.300; Kruglanski et al., 2006, p.84). OS being the method of inculcating norms becoming internalized and ensuring behavioural uniformity (Bandura, 2001), the importance of norms for OS is crucial and research validated (Benavides, 2015; Keenan et al., 2015; Korte et al., 2015; Korte & Lin, 2013). After an overview of OS studies, relevant theories, norms in OS, a discussion of OS's shortcomings follows next.

## *2.7 Shortcomings of organisational socialization research*

OS literature reviews (Ashford & Nurmohamed, 2012; Batistič & Kaše, 2015; Moyson et al., 2018; Nishanthi, 2017) reveal OS's shortcomings. Firstly, most OS research concerns specific themes: e.g., Networking (Ashforth and Black, 1996; Fang et al., 2011); Information seeking (Ashforth and Black, 1996; Fetherston, 2017); Role Negotiation (Ashforth and Black, 1996; Scott & Myers, 2010), but ethnic identity as a theme is un-researched. Secondly, using college graduates as typical participants is questionable as they represent only a workforce minority (Bauer et al., 1998; Cooper-Thomas et al., 2012). Thirdly, ethnic identity studies in OS context (Brown, 2015, 2018; Knights & Clarke, 2017; Miscenko & Day, 2016) cannot differentiate between biethnic-biracial identity development experience and other ethnic-racial minority experiences (Soliz et al., 2017, p.268). Fourthly, though POS or perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1986), is a much-researched OS concept (Eisenberger & Stinglhamber, 2011; Kawai & Strange, 2014; Wang et al., 2017), it is under-utilized for exploring identity management and how culture, ethnicity or upbringing affect biethnic adjustees (Allen & Shanock, 2013; Perrot et al., 2014; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002, p.698). Upbringing in OS has generated only scant research (Dekas & Baker, 2014; Lupu et al., 2018; Trickett-Shockey et al., 2013).

Do theories and models, developed in USA or English-speaking Western countries, with mostly *emic* one-culture views, ignore incipient factors and risks of misinterpreting concepts and phenomena in other cultures (Bauer & Taylor, 2001, p.409; Bauer et al., 1998a, b, 2007; Earley & Mosakowski, 1996). Influential studies in non-Western cultures: (Cable et al., 2013 and Kulkarni and Legnick-Hall, 2011 in India; Cohen and Veled-Hect, 2010 in Israel; Chow, 2002 in five Asian societies; Kim et al., 2018 in Korea; Muthuveloo et al., 2017 in Malaysia; Laouami, 2018 in Morocco; Lin et al., 2016, in Taiwan; Showail et al., 2013 in Saudi Arabia; Takeuchi & Takeuchi, 2009 in Japan; Zhang et al., 2018 in China) show differences in how culture affects identity formation, and impacts adjustee OS.

Conflict and discriminatory power-relations between newcomers and workplace insiders, who even intentionally deny support, abuse or undermine work relationships, damaging or sabotaging newcomer OS (Jokisaari & Nurmi, 2009; Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2013; Nifadkar et al., 2012, 2016) is under-researched. Besides personality-based conflict (Jehn 1995, 1997), how racism along with social perceptions of an adjustee's biethnicity impact work-relationship dysfunctionality is under-researched. Finally, there is no OS research differentiating between the experience of biethnic-biracial identity development and other ethnic-racial minority experiences (Soliz et al., 2017, p.268), despite rapidly changing ethnicity demographics (e.g., in Finland, section 1.4). The next section presents OS studies in Finland.

## ***2.8 Organisational socialization research in Finland***

Though OS is fairly new in Finland, there is a growing body of research from Finland. Most earlier research (Kauppinen, 1994; Kovalainen, 1990; Suutari et al., 2002) was process-focused, typically studying Finnish expatriates abroad. The second research wave, post 2000, reflecting Finland's change from emigration to immigration influencing labour markets from the late 1990s, has produced nuanced OS studies, (Aaltonen & Turkulainen, 2018; Jokisaari and Nurmi, 2009; Jokisaari, 2013, Jokisaari & Vuori, 2018).

Finnish studies have explored how immigrants adjust after entering the job market or experience social inclusion (Busk et al., 2016; Koivuniemi, 2012; Pehkonen, 2006; Yijälä & Nyman, 2017) but generally these studies (except Yijälä & Nyman, 2017) treat all immigrants as a monolithic entity against a background of supposedly monoethnic Finns. Even recent research (Airila et al., 2013), studying Russian, Kurdish and Somali immigrants' adjustment to working life in Finland, despite the heading, mentions *immigrants* having different cultural backgrounds but all observations, measurements, reporting and analyses categorise the 610 research subjects as generic 'immigrant'

contrasted with a supposedly monolithic Finnish majority. The rare Finnish study considering ethnicity as an adjustment factor are: Anniste and Tammaru (2014) studying Estonians in Finland; Kivisto et al., 2015, 2013 studying Iraqi refugees' identity-work; Nie et al.'s (2018) study of Chinese immigrants' occupational-well-being in Finland and Varjonen et al.'s, (2013), study of ethnic-identity formation of Russian migrants in Finland.

Even the most recent Finnish OS studies (Aaltonen & Turkulainen, 2018; Jokisaari & Vuori, 2018) disregard cultural or ethnicity-related factors affecting OS. The polarised negative attitudes of Finland's mostly monoethnic population towards immigration, primarily asylum seekers, reflecting general trends in Europe, (PEW Research Centre 2016), is not considered impacting OS even though working life in contemporary Finland is characterised by visible and rapid demographic changes due to globalisation and recent large-scale immigration (Ministry of the Interior, 2017). The probable reason for the researchers' reluctance in engaging with ethnicity and culture as incipient OS factors are Finland's national legislation restricting ethnicity-related data collection and handling (Jasinskaya-Lahti, 2009). After an overview of OS studies and OS in Finland, a discussion of personal identity in OS follows next.

## ***2.9 How personal identity features in organisational socialisation research***

*Personal identity* and *social identity* (Tajfel, 1986) feature centrally in identity studies in organisational contexts. A bifurcation of interest is evident in OS *personal identity* literature: one stream (Allen et al., 2017; Klein et al., 2015; Saks & Gruman, 2012), investigating how personal identity aspects interact with organisational aspects, studies the identity regulating impacts of organisational practices e.g., onboarding, mentoring, training, and job promotion, on identity-work (defined in section 2.10) processes among employees. Researchers (Iwasaki et al., 2018; Koppman et al., 2016; Yan & Meinhof, 2018) show how specific contexts involving e.g., customers and other stakeholders (Ainsworth and



Hardy, 2009; Wasserman and Frenkel, 2011) and culture, affect identity formation. For example, Japanese employees, unlike American employees, adopt company identity in place of a professional identity (e.g., a welder) and may practice self-sacrifice to ensure company success (Ishikawa (1992, 2007).

The second stream, (Ibarra and Barbulescu, 2010; Pratt et al., 2006; Yan & Meinhof, 2018) focuses on the newcomers' *identity work* and their *proactivity*. Studies (Gendron et al., 2010; Pez  , 2013; Watson, 2008) show that identity regulation is seldom an autonomous process though it can be the goal of the organisation's identity regulation efforts, as proactive persons find ways of initiating changes benefitting their identity work even with significant situational constraints (Li et al., 2011; Parker et al., 2010; Seibert et al., 2001).

OS studies from both streams (Ashforth et al., 2008; Brown, 2019, 2015; Pratt et al., 2006) recognise the hybrid nature of identity work and its interaction with organisational practises impacting OS. Researchers (Das et al., 2008; J  rventie-Thesleff & Tienari, 2016; Koveshnikov et al., 2016, p.1356) agree that individuals in workplaces typically negotiate stereotypes associated with identity aspects (e.g., gender, race, ethnicity, language and nationality), which others use as primary means to categorise them across situations (Das et al., 2008; Moreland & Levine, 2001, 1989; Stangor et al., 1992). In conclusion, identity is very important in OS. Personal, organisational and social identity concepts used in this study are defined next.

## **2.10      *Definition of personal and social identity in organisational context***

*Personal Identity*, defined as an individual's self-definition of a person answering the question 'who am I?' (Ashforth and Schinoff, 2016a, p.113), reflects growing multi-disciplinary interest. Identity formation process or *identity work*, defined by Alvesson & Willmott (2002, p. 626) "*forming, repairing, maintaining, strengthening or revising the constructions that are productive of a precarious sense of coherence and*

*distinctiveness.*”, is used in this study.

Social identity, defined as “*that part of an individual’s self-concept which derives from [his] knowledge of [his] membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership*” (Tajfel, 1981, p255) relies on others’ ascription e.g., via group membership or recognition of group characteristics through stereotyping, and rather than being a fixed description depend on situational, social and cultural contexts (Feitosa & Salazar, 2012). Personal identity is the result of the person’s conscious recognition of a unique sense of being a person through this self-awareness and identity work. It may reflect others influencing the sense of who one is (Banaji & Prentice, 1994, p.325; Baumeister et al., 1995, p.508), and even include multiple social identities e.g., father, lawyer, environment-activist or even multiple identities in organisational contexts (e.g., team leader, technical expert, compliance officer, shop steward or change agent) reflecting changing organisational needs (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Kourti, 2016).

*Organisational identity* refers to “*features of an organisation that in the eyes of its members are central to the organisation’s character or ‘self-image’, makes the organisation distinctive from other similar organisations, and are viewed as having a continuity over time*” (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Gioia et al., 2013, p. 125). *Central, distinctive* and *continuity* function as cognitive and emotional tools that help an organisation’s employees define their organisational identity by answering the question “*How do I perceive myself in relation to the organisation?*” (Pratt, 1998, p. 178).

*Occupational identity* e.g., technician, nurse, engineer, usually derived from work experience occurring in specific occupations with its own culture where the work shapes the individual, is seen as one of an individual’s social identities (Bothma, 2015, p. 40) and is defined as “*the set of central, distinctive and enduring characteristics that typify the line of work*” (Ashforth & Kreiner (1999, p. 417). With definition clear, theories of identity, ethnic identity and biethnic identity

development, relevant to OS and used in this study, are presented next.

### **2.11      *Theories of identity, ethnic identity and biethnic identity development***

Identity themes in organisational studies are handled in “*many levels: organisational, professional, social and individual*” (Sveningsson & Alvesson, 2003, p. 1163) which identity formation and management often mix, e.g. organisational and social identities co-form the identity of an organisational newcomer (Ashforth & Mael, 1989, p.22; He & Balmer, 2007; p.771). Psychological OS theories (Feij, 1998, p. 209) about identity development of individuals e.g., Psychosocial Theory of Development (Erikson, 1968) and Looking-glass Self Theory (Cooley, 1902) along with ethnic and biethnic identity development models are explained below.

Erikson’s *Psychosocial Theory of Development* (1950, 1968, p.94), a core theory in personal identity formation, features centrally in organisational identity studies (Ashforth et al., 2016a; Brown, 2018, 2015; Nishanthi et al., 2017) and suggests individuals navigating a series of eight psychosocial challenges (Trust vs. Mistrust, Autonomy vs. Shame & Doubt, Initiative vs. Guilt, Industry vs. Inferiority, Identity vs. Role Confusion, Intimacy vs. Isolation, Generativity vs. Stagnation, Ego Integrity vs. Despair) during their lifespans.

*Looking-glass Self Theory* (Cooley, 1902), at the core of the idea of socially constructed identities, has influenced later theorists (e.g., Baumeister, 1998; Goffman, 1959; Stryker & Serpe, 1982), suggests people’s perceptions of themselves being conditioned by how others around them see them.

Jean Phinney’s (1990) *model of ethnic identity development*, a multidimensional model rooted in Erikson’s identity model (1968) claims that, like personal identity, an ethnic identity refers to a sense of self, but also shares a sense of identity meaningful to members of a particular ethnic group. Phinney (1990)

claims people having no choice in selecting an ethnic identity as it is ascribed and maintained by others' ascription on the basis of ethnic categories, e.g., phenotype, but people do have choices in their manner of dealing with such identity ascription (Phinney & Ong, 2007, p.275). Phinney's model still influences researchers globally (Iwamoto et al., 2013; Kou & Huang, 2015; Svensson et al., 2018; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014).

*Marginal Man Theory* (Park, 1928; Stonequist, 1937) suggested biracial persons attempting to belong to both racial groups in their background but being accepted by neither. Park's (1928) marginality concept was racial and cultural while Stonequist's (1937) marginality concept encompassed historic traditions, moral codes, political affiliations, religions and languages. Research support for this theory is meagre (Gibbs, 1987; Williams & Thornton, 1998) with substantial research refuting it (Gonzales-Backen, 2013; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014b, p. 52; Root, 1990, 1996, 1999; Shi & Sanchez, 2005; Soliz et al., 2017).

Poston's (1990) *Biracial identity development model*, suggests that individuals develop healthy and functional biracial and multiracial identities in five distinct stages of personal identity independent of any racial or ethnic group: choice of group characterisation from among one or both parents' heritage, enmeshment/denial involving shame, anger or guilt from not being able to identify with all aspects of their racial/ethnic heritage, appreciation signifying a broadening of the individual's multiethnic knowledge and membership in any ethnic/racial group, and integration of the ethnic/racial identities that make the individual unique. Root's (1990) model posits individuals adopting four manners of resolving biracial identity tensions: Acceptance of the identity society assigns, identification with both racial groups in their heritage depending on ambient support and their own skills, identification with one racial group where the individual chooses one racial group to identify with irrespective of ambient pressure, identification as a new racial group where the individual moves fluidly among racial groups but chooses identification with other biracials irrespective of their constituent racial backgrounds. Root's model (1990) considered personal

characteristics, e.g., extraversion (Hubbard & Utsey, 2015, p. 92), the impact of racism paving the way for later nonlinear identity development (Renn, 2008, p. 15). After this presentation of OS-related identity theories and biethnic identity development used in this study, an overview of identity studies in an organisational context follows.

## 2.12 *Overview of identity studies in an organisational context*

Creating the 'definitive' *identity* review by mapping the entire field of identity studies is an 'impossible task', so du Gay & Evans's (2000, p.2) strategy of tracking 'specific themes, debates and positions' is adopted here. As this thesis handles the OS of biethnic adjustees, an organisational lens for viewing identity is adopted. Identity in an organisational context is important for two reasons. Firstly, *identity* gives keys for understanding how individuals feel, hold and enact values, like to be seen, behave and aspire in social and organisational settings (Alvesson et al., 2008; Haslam et al., 2005). Secondly, understanding identity allows a conceptual linking between the micro and macro levels of organisational analysis as identity studies reveal what is happening in the micro level inside the individual, and studying how identity intermingles with the wider spheres of organisational activities (Karreman and Alvesson, 2001, p. 60) situates the individual interacting with others in the broader social and organisational context, producing a nuanced understanding of processes and organisational facets (Brown, 2018, p.1; Ramarajan, 2014).

Some OS identity researchers see *identity* as a recent concept (Brown et al., 2007, p.17; Miscenko & Day, 2016), while others (Brown, 2015, 2018, Knights & Clarke, 2017; Lemert, 2011, p.5) detect identity themes in 3000-year-old texts, which '*still have contemporary resonance*' (Brown, 2015, p. 22). *Identity*, conceptualised in a psychological sense, is much older than identity conceptualisation in an organisational setting and this psychological meaning has unavoidably seeped into the organisational concept (Van Tonder & Lessing, 2003, p.21) therefore awareness of the 'root' concept is essential. The term *identity* is derived from the

Latin word *idem* meaning “the same” (Abend, 1974, p.607) signifying “*the sameness of a person or thing at all times in all circumstances; the condition or fact that a person or thing is itself and not something else*” (Simpson & Weiner, 1989, p. 620). The first recorded use of *identity* in this meaning is from 1570 AD (Van Tonder, 1987; 2009, p. 1171).

*Identity* coalesces the paradox between similarity with oneself over time and difference from others (Brown, 2018, p. 3) and from what one is not, into an entity. *Identity* requires referencing ourselves with others and understanding that identities are also social constructs as ‘*they are formed in the continuing processes of interaction in social life*’ (Giddens, 2009, p.256). The concept of *self* or what one is and is not occupies the core of any investigation into *personal identity* and typically uses questions such as ‘Who am I?’ or ‘How should I relate to others?’ (Brown, 2018, p. 3). ‘*Self and identity are complementary terms with much in common*’ (Owens & Samblanet, 2006, p.226), and the *self* is “reflexive in that it can take itself as an object or name itself in particular ways in relation to other social categories or classifications.” (Stets and Burke, 2000, p.224).

The quest for understanding *personal identity* resonates in the earliest human records. The question, “*Who then am I?*” appears in the Aitareya Upanishad (1.3.11, Aurobindo, 2001), the oldest sections of the Rig Veda, ancient Indian millennia old scriptures. A complex ‘*multi-layered concept of personhood/identity*’ existed among the ancient Egyptians, along with sophisticated beliefs of post-mortem existence of personal identity and social memory of such an identity (Vischak, 2014, p. 209). Self-reflexivity, as evident in the maxim, γνῶθι σεαυτὸν or *Know thyself*, is at the core of Socratic philosophy in Plato’s writings (1925). Identity debates in Greek thought e.g., durability of identity over time, and stability versus fluidity of identity, exhibit similarities with ontological conceptualising of the self in later Western thought, in the writings of Søren Kierkegaard (1981, p. 18), Martin Heidegger (Aho, 2009, p.14), and Fyodor Dostoevsky (2007, Zhivolupova, 2012). Modern organisational identity scholars (Alvesson et al., 2008, p.5-6; Brown 2018) focus on three core themes resembling

ancient thinkers: distinctiveness or 'a first-person *me*' trying to express their ideas of self (Sorabji, 2006, p.5), a subjective "who am I?" understanding reflected and bounced back from other's perception of that individual, and durability of identity over time situated in a dynamic social world (Brown, 2019, 2018, 2006; Whetten, 2006).

Alvesson et al.'s question (2008, p. 6), "*Do we need to revisit such themes and tensions at this moment in organizational studies?*" and conclusion that "*the rising identity frame in organization studies is a useful trend through which we can explore, understand and possibly improve individual and organizational lives*" (p. 24) is substantiated by an explosive research interest in identity in organizational contexts. At the time of writing (October 2018), Google Scholar returns 4, 360 000 results for *identity*, compared to 42 800 for *organisational socialization*. Identity literature has experienced a 600% growth in the last 20 years (Brown 2018, p. 11; Miscenko & Day, 2016, p. 221), but produced minimal consensus among contemporary identity scholars about identity issues and sense-making (Brown, 2018; p. 2).

The first of Brown's (2018, p. 6) three key themes in organisational *identity* studies is that studying identity work is crucial to understanding organisational changes. A stream of research (Coupland & Brown, 2012; Lok, 2010; Wright et al., 2012) shows how 'identity prescriptions' are 'compelling' for individuals but cause tension generating (or reinforcing existing) new organisational forms (Brown, 2018, p. 6), how emergent identity work affects evolution of discourse, organisational and societal changes through contradictions of navigating climate change and micro-politics in organisational environments (Giorgi & Palmisano, 2017; Leung et al., 2014; Wright et al., 2012).

Brown's (2018, p. 6-7) second key theme is '*leadership, leading and leader-development programmes*' and how leaders navigate identity conflicts in the cross-pressures created by stringent leadership programmes, claiming-granting of leader-follower identities (DeRue & Ashford, 2010, p. 627), conscious and unconscious drives (Driver, 2013), and processes of attachment and detachment

(Croft et al., 2015; Petriglieri & Stein, 2012).

The third theme in Brown's overview (2018, p. 6) is how identities feature in conflicts and organisational power relations, interacting with '*political processes and power constellations*' (Koveshnikov et al., p.1354). Some researchers (Kamoche et al., 2014; Koveshnikov et al., 2016; Thomas & Davies, 2005) have studied the available agency of individuals in their identity-work often attempting to assert agency amidst the cross-pressures of the organisation's identity regulation efforts and their identity formation constraints. This theme has attracted the attention of researchers (Brown, 2018, p. 8) studying power relations in managerial identities; organizational actors attempting to '*define themselves through the knowledge they create*' (Kamoche et al., 2014, p. 1375); how identities reflect power relations of '*seducing, insisting, insinuating, restricting*' and even '*coercing identity options*' (Brocklehurst, 2001; Huber & Brown, 2017).

Following Ashforth & Mael's (1989) introduction of social identity theory (SIT) (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) into organisational studies, social identity approaches (Ashforth, 2016; Cascón-Pereira, & Hallier, 2012; Weick et al, 2005) stress the process nature of identity formation and maintenance achieved through a network of identifications distinguishing the distinctness of self from others. *Organisational identity* (Albert & Whetten, 1985) and *organisational identification* concepts signifying the 'extent to which employees define themselves in terms of their work organization' (Blader et al., 2018, p.20) have become influential in identity in organisational and management studies, focussing on how organisations shape an individual's identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989; Humphreys & Brown, 2002; Kunda, 1992) while pursuing the organisation's aim to achieve desired employee behaviours, attitudes and positive affiliations (Ashforth et al., 2008; Lee et al., 2015; Riketta, 2005).

Researchers have used belongingness theory (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) to explain how a drive for inclusion and belonging drives identity formation (Blader et al., 2017; Tyler & Blader, 2000, 2003). Social Identity Theory has been



influential in explaining how individuals' motives for affiliation by identifying with collectives and their norms affect their identities (Blader et al., 2017; Ellemers & Jetten, 2013; Van Veelen et al., 2015). Researchers claim that distinctiveness of personal identity resonates with a distinctiveness of organisational identity reflecting the organisation's uniqueness (Ashforth et al., 2011; Van Tonder, 2003, p. 23) and see the organisation's ability to achieve and maintain distinctiveness as a survival criterion (Abimbola, 2009; Van Tonder & Lessing, 2003, p. 23).

Enduring distinctiveness of core characteristics (Albert & Whetten, 1985; Dutton et al., 1994; Elsbach, 1999) and stability versus fluidity are central identity debates. Scholars (Corley et al., 2006; Kenny & DePaulo, 1993; Whetten, 2006) emphasise the stability of identity required for employees to function at the workplace, while others (Ashforth et al., 2016; Brown, 2015; Kourti, 2015) see identity as a context-related, malleable and evolving construct. Some writers (Dutton et al., 1994; Elsbach, 1999) assume fairly stable structures of both the individual self and the organisation and see social identity as a mixing of an individual's personal identity and a group's (where the individual belongs) or organisation's identity. Conversely, scholars (Alvesson et al., 2008; Ashforth et al., 2016; Brown, 2017, 2018), emphasizing the process nature of identity, see identity as a perpetual work-in-progress requiring constant 'work' in reacting to external circumstances and *identity* is never ready (Brown, 2018, p. 3). The overview of identity studies in an organisation context presented here is incomplete without a brief exposition of the shortcomings, which follows next.

### **2.13      *Shortcomings of identity studies in organisational socialisation research***

Three shortcomings in OS identity studies are evident: Firstly, most OS identity studies focus on single nation contexts (Das et al., 2008, p. 1500) and the complexity due to mixtures of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identities caused by globalization (Ailon-Sounday & Kunda, 2003; Das et al., 2008) is

neglected. Within nation cross-sub-culture, cross-ethnic-group, cross-linguistic-group or sub regional-culture identity are rare in identity studies (Schwartz et al., 2012 p. 9). Secondly, how recent immigrant newcomers (RINs) experience their immigration colouring their OS, barring some exceptions (Enoksen, 2016; Malik et al., 2017) is neglected. Thirdly, how ethnic/biethnic components of identity affect the OS is under-researched. After this short presentation of shortcomings of identity studies in OS, identity formation motivation is presented in the next section.

## **2.14      *Why and how are individuals motivated to construct their identity?***

Scholars investigating the ‘why’ of identity formation suggest many potential motives (Easterbrook & Vignoles, 2012, p. 1066), seen as instinctual needs e.g., need for belonging, need for identification and self-expression, compelling individuals to strive toward desired identity states (Vignoles et al., 2006, p. 309). Regarding the ‘how’, social interactions affecting identity formation processes features centrally in organisational identity study overviews (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016a; Fernandes-Jesus et al., 2018; Vignoles et al., 2007; 2011). Ashforth’s (2001, p. 55) influential model of psychological motives of identity, suggests six motives (self-knowledge, self-expression, self-coherence, self-continuity, self-distinctiveness and self-enhancement), which are ‘experienced simultaneously, not sequentially’, and sees identity motives as ‘*tendencies towards certain identity states which guide the process of identity construction*’ (Fernandes-Jesus et al., 2018, p. 1034).

Ashforth & Schinoff’s, (2016, p. 116) typology separates identity motives into two groups: central to identity-formation motives [e.g., *belonging*, a need to be connected to and accepted by others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Vignoles et al., 2006)]; and peripheral motives [e.g. *meaningfulness*, a need to find significance (Vignoles et al., 2006)]. Most motives (e.g., *belonging*) are ‘internally-focussed’. Motives with an external focus exist as identity formation never happens in

isolation from the social context (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016, p. 117) due to others' perceptions of the individual's identity formation being as important as the individual's own (Baumeister & Tice, 1986), especially in an organisation context with multiple interactions and social control through accountability and rewards etc. (Abrahamsson et al., 2011; Tsui & Ashford, 1994). Identity motives also function as 'feedback-loop' indicators (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016, p. 127) for individuals forming and maintaining their identity, through social validation and self-analysis or adaptive self-regulation (Tsui & Ashford, 1994). Individuals continuously assess if their emergent identities fulfil the salient identity motives and then to what degree and how (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016, p. 128; Brickson, 2013). We have now seen the *why* and *how* of identity formation, the next section concerns differences between identity and social identity theory perspectives.

### 2.15 *Difference between identity theory and social identity theory perspectives*

Researchers (Campo et al., 2018; Hogg et al., 1995) see boundaries between *personal identity* of identity theory and *social identity* of the social identity theory, while others (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016; Elsbach & Flynn, 2013; Ramarajan, 2014), emphasising the similarities and common ground, see both identities as possibly simultaneously salient. In both theories, the *self* is reflexive, able to consider itself as an object of study that can categorise, classify or attempt description through naming in relation to social classification (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 224). Identity theory calls this process *identification* (McCall & Simmons, 1978) and social identity theory *self-categorization* (Turner et al., 1987). In identity theory, a person's identity formation involves reflexive activity or self-categorization, especially in relation to workplace role occupancy (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 225) whereas in social identity theory, the self-classification basis is group membership or other's evaluations of the individual's identity aspects. Social validation involves others whose opinions are valued (McCall & Simmons, 1978; Swann et al., 2009) and this identity negotiation by reflection, adjusting e.g., through identity-conforming activities (DeRue & Ashford, 2010; Swann et al.,

2009) is an iterative process. In both theories, individuals forming their identities adjust identities through meanings generated in a structured ambient society (Hogg & Abrams, 1988; Stets & Burke, 2000).

Individuals can have multiple identities (Kang et al., 2015; Ramarajan, 2014), possibly with tensions between the personal and social identities (Brewer, 2012; Kourti, 2016; Ramarajan, 2014). Researchers (Hornsey, 2008; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Turner et al., 1987) claim improbable salience of personal and social identities, while others (Ashforth, 2001; Kourti, 2016; Gubler et al., 2014) claim that personal and social identities may transcend particular contexts and become salient in multiple contexts. Identity related feedback-seeking scholars (Annosi et al., 2017; Anseel et al., 2015; Smith et al., 2013) show the importance of social validation or how individuals are influenced by ‘explicit or implicit, intended or unintended, direct or indirect cues’ from others (Ashforth & Schinoff, 2016, p. 125) affecting their workplace identity formation.

After the differences between identity and social identity theory perspectives, the next section presents how national culture influences identity in an organisational context.

## **2.16      *Does national culture influence identity formation?***

Does national culture affect identity formation, and how? As organisations do not function independently of societal and national culture (Powell & Colyvas, 2008; Scott, 2010), as an organisation is a ‘social actor’ functioning as a ‘skilled cultural operative’ with enough discretion to adopt cultural elements advantageous to its aims and avoid detrimental ones (Glynn & Watkiss, 2012, p.65), and as individuals form identities functioning in and resonating with their immediate context, the organisational culture and ambient societal or national culture (Ashforth et al., 2016a; Lee et al., 2015; Molinsky, 2007), it follows that national and societal culture impacts identity formation (Becker et al., 2012; Brickson, 2015; Koveshnikov et al., 2016).

Most North American identity theories and models assume a default agency of an individual freely choosing commitments and influences shaping their identity formation. This assumption may not apply to cultural contexts outside ‘heavily individualistically oriented’ cultures like USA, Canada, UK etc. (Becker et al., 2012; Schwartz et al., 2012, p. 10) as shown by studies from many non-English-speaking European countries, (Goossens, 2001; Luyckx et al., 2006 in Belgium), (Klimstra et al., 2010; Meeus et al., 2010 in The Netherlands), (Crocetti et al., 2012, 2010; Sica et al., 2014 in Italy), (Beyers & Seiffge-Krenke, 2010; Haid et al., 2010; Seiffge-Krenke et al., 2012 in Germany), (Žukauskienė et al., 2017 in Lithuania) and (Topolewska-Siedzik, 2018, in Poland). Further, research comparing indices across various European countries (e.g. Crocetti et al., 2012; 2010) along with studies comparing European and US samples (Berzonsky et al., 2003; Eryigit & Kerpelman, 2011; Schwartz et al., 2006) show similarities in the *structure* of identity development across cultures but reveal culture-relative developmental contexts influencing *forms of exploration and commitment* across cultures (Schwartz, et al., 2012, p. 8).

Identity studies in non-Western cultures: (González et al., 2017, in Chile), (Yuan et al., 2016, in China), (Gupta et al., 2018a; Khamis et al., 2012; Koppman et al., 2016 in India), (Hatano et al., 2017, 2014; Yamaguchi et al., 1995, in Japan), (Atak et al., 2013; Morsünbül, 2014, in Turkey), and comparisons between multi-nation Western and non-Western samples (Becker et al., 2012; Côté et al., 2016; Ohnishi et al., 2001; Sugimura et al., 2018) reveal the *structure* of identity between Western and non-Western cultures being different. The representation of *self* in Western cultures as a self-contained agent of exploration and identity formation, in many non-Western cultures need to accommodate larger and more collective sense of *self* (Cross et al., 2001; Schwartz et al., 2012 p. 9) and consider how the ‘beliefs and values in an individual’s *context*’, rather than the ‘individual’s *own* beliefs and values’ affect identity formation (Becker et al., 2012, p. 834). Studies also show how “Westerners” use personal attributes e.g., diligent, to define their identities while “Easterners” rely on external attributions (Markus & Kitayama, 1991;

Oyserman et al., 2009; Saluja et al., 2017). Recent studies (González et al., 2017 comparing majority and minority identity development in Chile; Karhunen et al., 2017 identities of scientists in Finland and Russia; Kim et al., 2012 European and Asian Canadians in Canada; Huijnk et al., 2012 four immigrant groups in the Netherlands; Martiny et al., 2017 and Spiegler et al., 2018 Turkish-origin students in Germany) confirm the above findings. Studies of multiple ethnic or cultural identities, especially with immigration shaping identity (Fleischmann & Verkuyten, 2016; Matschke & Fehr, 2015; Nguyen & Benet-Martínez, 2013), use concepts of *national identity* meaning the identity based on the host society e.g., German, *ethnic identity* referring to the immigrant's country of origin e.g., Turkish, and *dual identity*, which refers to a hyphenated combination of both e.g., Turkish-German (Martiny et al., 2017, p.401). They also reveal how multidimensional identity combinations enable adjustment but also may produce stress while adjusting in ethnically diverse contexts.

Longitudinal studies of personal, social, ethnic, and national identity development (French et al., 2013; González et al., 2017; Huang et al., 2011) affirm the dynamic and complex salience of multidimensional identities and that ethnic identity does not develop in isolation from personal, social or national identities (Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014). They reveal how ethnicity and biethnicity affect identity formation multi-dimensionally influencing acculturation preferences and methods. We have seen above culture shaping identity formation. The next section definitions ethnic and biethnic identities used in this research.

## 2.17 *Definitions of ethnic and biethnic identities*

Continuing the definitions in section 1.2, *Ethnicity* and *race* are often intermixed, so differences need clarification. First used by Vacher de la Poughe in 1896 (Vacher, 1896), *Ethnicity* refers to 'cultural, psychological and social characteristics', while *race* refers to a set of physical characteristics. *Ethnicity* exhibits three characteristics: "(1) membership of a group, either from personal choice or as an external imposition, but which nonetheless implies the existence

of an 'us' and a 'them', and therefore the concept of 'other'; (2) the search for a common IDENTITY on the group members' part; and (3) the perception on the part of other groups of more or less coherent stereotypes ascribed to the ethnic group in question" Gindro, (2003, p. 94).

Eriksen (2010, p.5-6) gives three reasons why usage of *race*, though ubiquitous (Banks, 1996, p.54; Jenkins, 2008b, p. 23), is a disputed concept in the social sciences: firstly, fixed boundaries between 'races' are difficult to ascertain, resulting from migrations and interbreeding; secondly, within group genetic variations can be greater than systemic inter-group variations (Cavalli-Sforza et al., 1994; Ramachandran et al., 2010); thirdly, hereditary characteristics cannot explain cultural variations. Eriksen (2010, p.6) argues that as the term 'race' informs thought patterns, attitudes, behaviours and actions of people, it exists as a cultural construct for users irrespective of what scholars believe and theorise and thus '*race*' should be considered along with *ethnicity* in the social sciences. Authors (Carter & Fenton, 2010, p. 7; Fenton & Charsley, 2000; Jenkins, 2008b) have criticised the concept of *ethnicity* for: substituting 'culture' explanations as 'ethnicity' explanations, assuming that all ethnic-group members share the same attributes to the same degree in the same manner, and the assumption of 'group-ness'.

*Ethnic identity*, a 'primary identity' like humanness and gender (Jenkins, 2008b, p.48), is defined as '*..the degree to which individuals perceive themselves to be included and aligned with an ethnic group*' (Smith & Silva, 2011, p. 42). *Ethnic group* is, '*not a mere aggregate of people or a sector of a population, but a self-conscious collection of people united, or closely related, by shared experiences*' (Cashmore, 2003, p. 119). *Ethnic identity* does not require physical membership of an ethnic group but needs an individual's psychological connection with that group via the individual's thoughts, actions and behaviours. Psychological, and not physical location is the key determinant affecting how individuals perceive their ethnic origin and locate themselves psychologically in relation to surrounding social systems (Dickson and Timble, 2005; Lai, 2012; Phinney and Ong, 2007). *Ethnic*

*identity* suggests the sameness of a group of people living in the same historical time-frame and geographical location, sharing common customs, traditions, and perspectives of history, and is often context-related (Gonzales-Backen, 2013; Karssen et al., 2016; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2014).

*Biethnic* refers to an individual whose heritage includes two different socially designated ethnic groups (Deters, 1997; Phinney & Alipuria, 1990, 1996). *Biethnicity* refers to “recent ancestry from two different ethno racial groups; a word to describe the dual ethnic or racial nature of one’s heritage and/or identity; here synonymous with multiethnic/racial” (Wallace, 2001, p. xi). Researchers and common usage often intermix the terms *biethnic* or *bi-ethnic* with *biracial* or *bi-racial* (Aspinall & Song, 2013, p.2).

*Biracial* refers to a person ‘whose parents are of two different socially designated racial groups, for example, black mother, white father’ (Root, 1996, p. ix). The term *multiracial* is often used as a synonym for *biracial* or *biethnic*. *Mixed race* is a common term (Aspinall & Song, 2013, p.160) but it’s use is contested (Banton, 1999; BSA, 2005) by arguing that *mixed race* is a ‘misleading term’ implying the existence of ‘pure races’, which do not exist (Bliss, 2012, p. 80; Mukhopadhyay et al., 2014). The term *multiethnic* refers to a person who identifies with more than one ethnicity and who may not identify as *multiracial* (Samuels, 2014, p. 5). The term *monoethnic* refers to a person both whose parents belong to the same socially designated ethnic group. Reflecting the blurry boundaries between *race* and *ethnicity* (Aspinall & Song, 2013; Song, 2003), *biethnic* means both *biracial* and *biethnic* in this study. With clear definitions of ethnic and biethnic identities above, the next section presents ethnic identity models informing this study.

## **2.18      *Ethnic identity models***

21<sup>st</sup> century studies of ethnic/racial identity (ERI) have become ‘international and interdisciplinary’ whereas the majority of 20<sup>th</sup> century work handled national contexts (e.g., Black-White axis in USA) (Verkuyten, 2016, p. 1796). Two



theoretical frameworks have guided most of ethnic identity development: Erikson's identity development theory (1968) and social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1978) (both explained in section 2.11). Erikson's (1968) and Marcia's (1980) identity models both assume that identity development's primary focus is to achieve a stable, secure and grounded identity where issues of moral values and religion, functional personality, gender and sexual orientation, ethnic status and vocational position are all achieved by adolescence stage.

Cross's, (1971, 1978) influential five-stage Black identity development model, *Psychological Nigrescence*, has five stages: *pre-encounter*, signifying the individual's preference of White over Black culture, *encounter* where experiences like racism shocks the identity, *immersion-emersion* where emotions changed polarities generating positive feeling for Black and negative feeling for White culture, *internalization* stage where the individual comes to terms being Black, and *internalization-commitment* when individuals fully internalized their new identity and committed to social activism. Ruiz's (1990) five-stage model of Chicano/Latino ethnic identity required a 'crisis' and psychological distress similar to Cross's 'a shocking personal and social event' (Cross, 1978, p. 17) from marginality and denigration experiences, initial denial of one's 'true' identity and finally resolution through acceptance of the 'true' identity. Other ethnic/racial identity stage models (e.g., Atkinson et al., 1983; Cross & Fhagen-Smith, 2001; Helms, 1990, 1995) echoed identity changing over time but in stages.

Individuals in Phinney's (1989, 1990, 1991, 1996 p. 146) ethnic identity model examine and re-examine their identities all their lives, and qualitative meanings of particular ethnic/racial identities instead of linear stages feature centrally in the Sellers et al (1998a, b) multidimensional model of racial identity (p.21). Researchers (Kim, 1981; Tse, 1999) aiming to integrate the subjective and qualitative interpretation of Asian-background individuals in USA question the applicability of stage models to minorities or ethnic groups. Tse (1999) found many individuals feeling that they belonged to a hyphenated category of Asian-American rather than achieve 'belonging' to their Asian roots. Phinney (1996, p.

143) highlighted how “*increasing numbers of individuals from mixed ethnic backgrounds cannot be assigned to a single group and thus blur the boundaries of ethnic groups*” made describing ethnic groups ‘objectively’ difficult and generalizations less applicable to all existing and potential group members. Nadal’s (2004) Filipino-American identity development model and Atkinson et al.’s (1983) Minority identity development model are examples of models highlighting the disproportionately experienced power relations that minorities experience against majorities, and demand specific recognition of their unique combinations contra large generalisations (e.g., Filipino and not Asian-American) preferred by the ambient majority. It is unclear how common this experience is among ethnic groups and ethnicity combinations but may inform the identity development of biethnic individuals.

Models explaining individual’s cognitive and psychological sense-making of their multiple social identities (Amiot et al., 2007; Chen et al., 2008; Cheng & Lee, 2009) suggest different ways how biethnic individuals organise their social identities. In Roccas and Brewer’s (2002) model: two identities may be *intersected* or *hyphenated* creating a compound group (e.g., Asian-American gay), they may be *merged* (Asian-American and gay); one identity may *dominate* the other and manifest as the primary identity (e.g., gay); or the identities may be *compartmentalised*, where they both reside intact but activate depending on the social context (Settles & Buchanan, 2014, p. 172). Our knowledge of identity models informing this study is incomplete without critiques, presented in the next section.

### ***2.18.1 Critique of ethnic identity models***

Ethnic identity models have the following shortcomings. Firstly, authors (Spencer et al., 1990, p. 302; Bochove, van et. al., 2015, p. 653) reject the *assumption of homogeneity among ethnic group members*, as ethnic identity is multi-layered and context-dependent, as skin colour and socioeconomic status are societal ascriptions that ethnic identity models neglect. Secondly, attempts to *define ethnic*

*identity in a stable, trait-like fashion, without considering the context where the identity manifests* neglect social reality and differential identity forming processes due to differences in gender, skin tone, education, social class and how these different variable combinations generate different individual experiences (Celious & Oyserman, 2001, p. 150; Graham, 1999, p.5). Thirdly, *the models overlook variations of ethnic behaviour and identity in familial, peer, and environmental contexts* (Kiang & Fuligni, 2009; Rivas-Drake et al., 2014a, b; Yip & Fuligni, 2002). Fourthly, *hypothesized correlations between identity domains* (e.g., gender and ethnicity / race) might exhibit deviations as some people might feel that they are typical representatives of their gender but not their ethnic-racial group (DiDonato & Berenbaum, 2013; Wilson & Leaper, 2016, p. 1617). Finally, *failure to consider the effect of intergroup bias and in-group favouritism* (Tobin et al., 2010), within-group differences in attitudes about ethnicity and racism (Davis et., al., 2013), ideologies or social norms associated with particular ethnic-racial groups (Sellers et al., 1998 a, b).

Though early stage-models (Atkinson et al., 1983; Helms, 1990, 1995) attempted overarching universally valid ethnic identity theories, recent ethnic identity research overviews (Dunham et al., 2016; Gaither, 2018) reveal multidimensionality at the core of all major ethnic/racial identity models (e.g., Phinney, 1989; Phinney & Ong, 2007; Umaña-Taylor et al., 2004). There is no universally accepted ethnic identity model integrating all aspects and dimensions. The most recent identity research overviews (Dunham et al., 2016; Gaither, 2018; Kang et al., 2015) indicate the research direction towards multifaceted multiple identity mindsets of biethnic identity formation. As we have an overview of ethnic identity models, the next section presents how ethnic identity is studied at the workplace.

## **2.19      *Research of Ethnic identity at the workplace context***

Two research strands of organisational context ethnic identity (Kenny & Briner, 2013, p. 728) appear: ethnic/racial identity's impact on the individual's career

decision-making, e.g., self-efficacy (Jackson & Neville, 1998; Ng et al., 2005), career choices (Kirton, 2009; Ossenkop et al., 2015), choosing suitable organisation type (Kim & Gefland, 2003) and job attributes (Combs et al., 2012). The second strand concerns evaluation and management of discrimination and power-relations (Van der Raad, 2015; Van Laer et al., 2011).

As ethnic identity salience increases at work (Kenny & Briner, 2013), as individuals assign subjective meanings to workplace social ascriptions of their ethnic identity (Ely & Meyerson, 2010; Sellers et al. 1998b), as ethnic identity strongly impacts work identity (Miscenko & Day, 2016, p.233; Slay & Smith, 2011), and as gender-ethnic identity intersections affect ethnic identity formation (Essers & Benschop, 2009, 2007; Holvino, 2010; Srinivas, 2013), especially for biethnics and minority ethnic individuals (Atewologun et al., 2017, 2016), the ethnic identity-organisational environment link is strong. After this overview of workplace ethnic identity research, the next section presents an overview of biethnic identity formation.

## **2.20      *Biethnic identity formation models***

Biethnic identity formation is an emerging field. Researchers (Albuja et al., 2018; Herrmann et al., 2018; McCubbin et al., 2013; Poston, 1990) claim that monoethnic/monoracial identity formation and development models do not apply to biethnic individuals: firstly, they don't realise biethnic identity formation being more complex than monoethnic identity formation (Gonzales-Backen, 2013, p.93; Herring, 1995, p.31); secondly, they fail to describe how biethnics negotiate their identities by integrating more than one ethnicity into their identity, often by having to choose which ethnicity to express in a singular ethnic identity while facing societal cross-pressures to be accepted as biethnic individuals (Gonzales-Backen, 2013, p.93; Herring, 1995, p.31).

There are two strands in biethnic identity models' evolution: biethnic/biracial identity stage models of Poston (1990), Root (1990), Rockquemore (1998), Collins

(2000, Renn (2000) originate mostly in Black-White US contexts. The second strand of studies of biethnic/biracial identity involve combinations beyond Black/White, emerging globally, are recent (e.g., Allen et al., 2013b, studying Polynesian/White adults; Gambol, 2016, Filipino-Americans; Karssen et al., 2017, 2016 biethnic students in Holland; Kuramoto et al., 2017 and Yamamoto, 2012, in Japan).

Poston (1990) argued that racial/ethnic identity models, assuming social acceptance of a minority racial/ethnic group as indicator of a healthy racial/ethnic identity development, do not allow for integration of multiple ethnic identities, and biethnic individuals may not experience the centrality of group acceptance in a 'monoracially defined world' (p. 194) as pivotal in their identity formation. Poston's (1990) ground-breaking five-stage model of biracial identity development affected later models (Collins, 2000; Jacobs, 1992; Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Root, 1990). Poston's (1990) stages are: *personal identity* where children have their own identity irrespective of their ethnic heritage, *choice of group categorization*, when social pressures lead the individual to choose a group to identify with resulting in *enmeshment/denial* characterised by guilt about not accepting one parent's ethnic heritage or confusion due to non-acceptance by one or both ethnic groups, the fourth stage, *appreciation* is characterised by exploration of both ethnic groups leading to the final stage of *integration*, when a sense of wholeness is experienced.

Unlike Poston (1990) and Jacobs (1992), moving away from Black-White dichotomy in USA, Kich's (1992) model encompassed all multiethnic/multiracial individuals though he studied White and Japanese heritage subjects only. Collins' (2000) model's key contribution was non-linear identity development and flexible stages. Kerwin & Ponterotto's (1995) six-stage model of biracial identity development assumes only one positive identity being reached by adulthood and workplace entry and excludes dual heritage identity outcomes.

Root (1990) challenged the applicability of identity stage-models to biracial

individuals by claiming that biracial identity resolution, instead of linear stages, may occur cyclically and repetitively throughout their lives. Root (1990) theorised individuals compartmentalizing their ethnic heritage aspects in the beginning of their identity formation process and later utilising them for resolution. Root (1990) introduced multiple healthy psychological identity outcomes: *Acceptance of the identity Society assigns* either from oppressive forces or when the individuals feels a strong sense of belonging with the group they are assigned; *identification with both racial groups*, when the individual is rejected by neither group and their identity remains constant across the groups; *identification with a single racial group*, this differs from the first outcome as it is the result of an active and voluntary process of accepting one option through studied discrimination by the individual instead of passive acceptance and the other heritage may not be denied or wholly rejected; *identification as a New Racial Group* occurs when identity struggles involving marginalized status leads the individual to feel a sense of belonging with other biracial people though they need not reject their heritages. After this short overview of biethnic identity formation models, the next sections presents differences between biethnic and monoethnic identity formation.

## 2.21 *Difference between monoethnic and biethnic identity formation*

Researchers (Karssen et al., 2017; Nuru & Soliz, 2014; Panico & Nazroo, 2011) suggest three differences between biethnic and monoethnic identity formation: First, the biethnic's phenotypically ambiguous appearance possibly elicits differing social reactions affecting validation of the biethnic's identity and self-esteem (Allen et al., 2013; Gonzales-Backen, 2013).

Second, biethnic's familial socialisation differs from monoethnic's as predictors of biethnic identity e.g., phenotype appearance or parents' verbal and non-verbal messages about their racial/ethnic identity and expectations vary (Burke & Kao, 2013; Crawford & Alaggia, 2008; Gonzales-Backen, 2013). Contact Hypothesis

(Allport, 1954, p.261) suggested that increased social contact decreases prejudices (Davies et al., 2011; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006, 2010). For biethnics, this signified internally assimilating how differences in national and ethnic cultures (Felstead et al., 2009; Marquardt, et al., 2004) and organisational cultures (Jones, 1991; Trevino, 1986) significantly affect learning workplace norms, affecting OS. The distinctiveness of the biethnic's family background, religious, cultural, linguistic and social differences from monoethnics also affect how parents pressure them to choose a single ethnic label (Gonzales-Backen, 2013; Jackson et al., 2017, p. 19; McCubbin et al., 2013).

Third, distinctive but not necessarily negative identity formation experiences of biethnics compared to monoethnics due to the ambient society's monoethnic norms and prevalent historical disapproval of interethnic relationships (Khanna, 2008; Nuru & Soliz, 2014, p. 1; Shih & Sanchez, 2005). After this exposition of differences between biethnic and monoethnic identity formation, the next section presents power issues or tension between biethnic identity and social validation.

## **2.22      *Power issues: Tension between biethnic identity and social validation***

How biethnics, usually with either parent Caucasian American or African American, constructed an integrated biethnic identity was studied by early researchers (Kerwin & Ponterotto et al., 1993; Nishimura, 1995; Poston, 1990) but targeted discrimination studies were missing. Researchers globally (Oikawa & Yoshida, 2007; Perez & Hirschman, 2009; Golash-Boza, 2006) saw the *marginal man* stereotype persistently affecting why other biethnicity combinations were hardly researched. Concepts used in later ethnic identity studies are presented below.

*Minority socialisation* or 'preparation for bias' (Jackson et al., 2017, p.3) is a part of ethnic-racial socialisation where parents teach their children about racism and diversity (Jackson et al., 2017, p.2). Research suggests parental ethnic-racial

socialisation fostering resilience by mitigating and buffering racial discrimination's harmful effects (Brown & Tylka, 2011; Bynum et al., 2007; Neblett et al., 2008) but minority socialisation's impact on biethnic identity formation is un-researched. Parental ethnic-racial socialization overviews (Jackson et al., 2017; Priest et al., 2014) reveal biethnic subjects being underrepresented, suggesting a 'monocentric conceptualisation' bias assuming parents socialising biethnics into one ethnic group.

*Racial microaggressions* are "brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioural, or environmental indignities, intentional or unintentional, communicating hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults to the target person or group" (Sue, et al., 2007, p. 273). Biethnics, compared to monoethnics, are especially vulnerable to racial microaggression (Gardner et al., 2013; Hagerman, 2017; Priest et al., 2014).

Biethnics with higher identity validation report: higher 'self-concept clarity' (Lou et al., 2011), being more creative in tasks related to their multiple ethnicities, e.g., cuisine (Cheng et al., 2008) and also adjusting better to society (Miramontez et al., 2008; Sacharin et al., 2009). Biethnics experiencing lack of social validation through discrimination felt conflict among their ethnic identity components (Benet-Martínez et al., 2006; Jackson et al., 2012) and biethnics considering 'race' as a more meaningful behaviour determinant often feel challenged by needs for cultural frame-switching between their different ethnicities (Chao et al., 2007). Current organisational identities studies of power relations, discrimination, issues of structure and agency in identity formation (Boussebaa & Brown, 2017; Huber & Brown, 2017; Koveshnikov et al., 2016) appear fragmented, displaying 'lack of construct clarity' (Atewologun et al., 2017). Differences between monoethnic and biethnic identity formation and the power issues biethnics face in identity social validation, indicate distinctiveness of biethnic OS, presented next.



## 2.23 *What distinguishes the workplace adjustment of biethnic individuals?*

Biethnics differ from monoethnics in their OS in three ways: Firstly, biethnic identity formation involving intersections of self-esteem, psychological health, and well-being (Pedrotti et al., 2008; Sue & Sue, 2008), possibly handling discrimination in the social validation of their biethnicity, impact their biethnicity, even possibly conferring OS advantages e.g., more insightful communication skills (Berry et al., 2006; Nguyen & Martinez, 2013; Phinney et al., 2001).

Secondly, biethnics, used to handling cultural differences within their distinctive familial backgrounds and upbringing, were more likely to explore their ethnicity and identity (Rockquemore & Brunsma, 2008, 2002; Gonzales-Backen, 2013), perceiving their families as empowering agents (Joseph-Salisbury, 2018). They experienced their biethnicity giving them OS advantages compared to monoethnics (Allen et al., 2013b; Shih & Sanchez, 2005), as prior learning enabled biethnics to utilise links between learning and OS (Filstad, 2011; Spagnoli, 2017; Yanson & Johnson, 2016).

Thirdly, due to previous biethnic identity negotiation experience generating factors (assimilation, identity, self-esteem) contributing to psychological adjustment (Allen et al., 2013; Shih & Sanchez, 2005) biethnics report positive outcomes of disclosing biethnic identity at work e.g., feeling more connected and being socially accepted (Altman & Taylor, 1973), resulting stress-reduction (Pennebaker, 1997), and enhanced psychological well-being (Pantchenko et al., 2003). Seeing *race* as a social ascription, biethnics identify less than monoethnics with *race*, easily rejecting the biological basis of *race* and cope with racism (Shih et al., 2007, p. 126).

## 2.24 *Summary of literature review*

First, this chapter provided an overview of the vast OS domain and biethnic identity in organisation contexts, focussing on the research location, Finland. The aim was to consider broad themes in OS, and biethnic identity formation, viewed through an organisational lens. Starting from the roots of OS, presenting OS theories, revealing OS research shortcomings, an overview of OS research was supplemented with the characteristics of OS research in Finland with its shortcomings.

Thereafter, an overview of how personal identity features in OS research was presented along with relevant theories and critiques. Biethnic identity models, their shortcomings, identity formation differences between biethnics and monoethnics, experiences of discrimination and power-relations and how all these affect the OS of biethnics was provided. OS theoretical perspectives and biethnic identity formation were considered, highlighting broad themes: adjustee proactivity, OS of biethnics, biethnic identity formation, and varying personal identity concepts, which all form the basis of this research.

### 3 METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

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#### *3.1 Introduction to methodology adopted*

This chapter elucidates why particular methodological, approach, strategic and technique choices were made. The first part of this chapter explains the overall paradigm and approach, starting with a discussion of the ontological/philosophical issues underpinning the conceptualisation, design and conduct of this research. The rationale for using qualitative research and for choosing particular research methods, the semi-structured interviews, and data collection strategies are examined. Sampling, subject inclusion criteria, the special challenges of accessing biethnic interviewees, recording data and how lessons learnt from the pilot interviews were adopted are explained then. The transcription process and the thematic approach to analyse the data are explained. Section 3.16 focusses on what reflexivity (Etherington, 2004, p. 28; Alvesson et al., 2008, p. 480), meant for me with my 'insider' biethnic status in this research. Result validity, confidentiality and data security, along with steps taken to guarantee this research conforming to the proper standards are explained next followed by a discussion of relevant ethical issues.

The chosen methodology suits the main research aim: to better comprehend the OS of biethnic workplace newcomers in Finland. It is argued here that this aim can only be achieved by a qualitative interpretive approach exploring and understanding of how skills, motivation, upbringing and proactivity of biethnics working in Finland, their organization's adjusting efforts, as well as how the biethnics utilize their biethnicity in their OS. This argument is balanced by a discussion of the reasons why other approaches, strategies, techniques and methods were not utilised.

#### *3.1.1 Choosing from types of research purposes available from literature*

Of the four contemporary research types: exploratory, descriptive, explanatory (Neuman, 2014, p. 38) and evaluative (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 164), this research resembles the *exploratory* research type most as it originates primary data and aims to understand, for the first time, despite prior OS research in Finland (e.g., Jokisaari & Vuori, 2018; Jokisaari, 2013), identity formation perceptions and OS experiences of biethnics in Finland.

However, this research exhibits features of other research types. For a fairly-developed idea about some social phenomenon, descriptive research presents details and relationships for answering ‘why’, ‘how’ and ‘who’ causal questions (Neuman, 2014, p.40). This research’s variables: socio-cultural adaptation, workplace, biethnicity and Finland are fairly known topics, and the ‘how’ biethnic adults see themselves adapting socio-culturally to the workplace in Finland is a *descriptive* feature, which was served best by using semi-structured interviews allowing descriptions of behaviours and adjustment mechanisms from the adjustee’s perspective. Using an analytical approach to identify data themes and examine their relations to existing theory to elicit a theoretical contribution is an *explanatory* feature. The *evaluative* feature of this research has research subjects evaluating the ‘how well’ or ‘how effectively’ aspects of their proactivity and their organisation’s adjustment efforts. Though combining features of multiple types, using a single research type (exploratory), suits this research’s aims best (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 177).

### ***3.2 Research philosophy and overall design***

The Saunders et al. (2016, p.124) research ‘onion’, graphically situating different research decisions in layers, is used here as a perspective framework for situating philosophies, theory development approaches, methodological choices, strategies opted, time horizon, data collection and analysis techniques chosen.

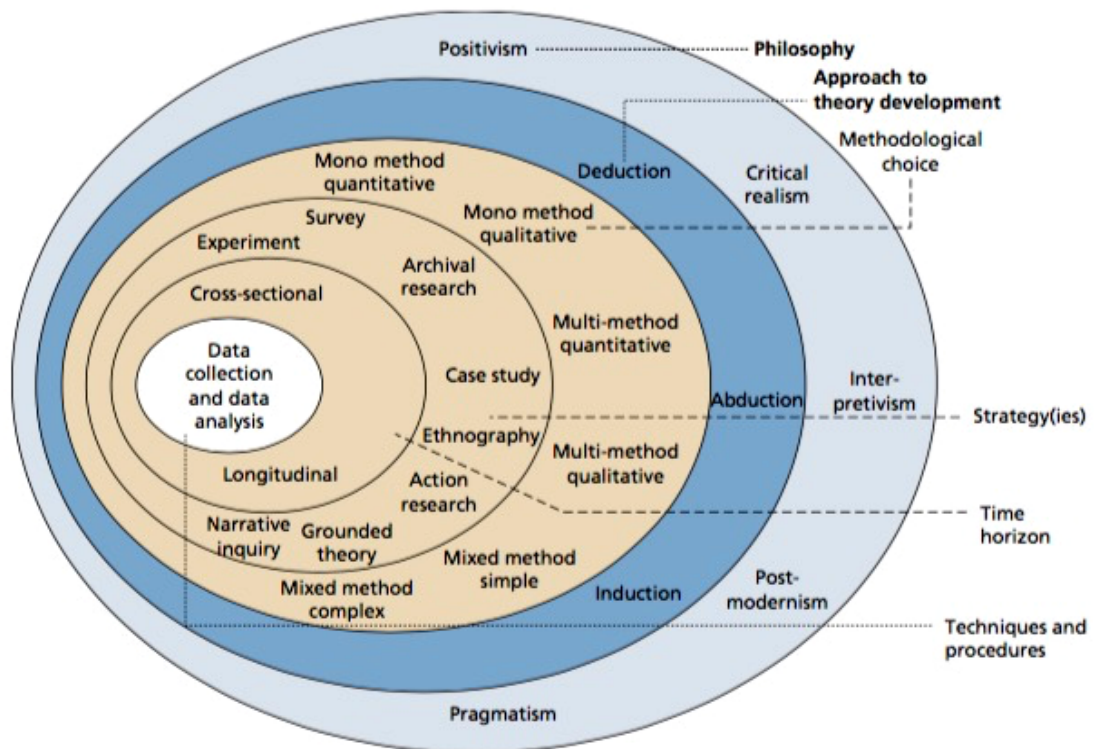


FIGURE 1: RESEARCH PROCESS 'ONION'

Of the five research philosophies in the Onion Model's outermost layer post-modernism, pragmatism, critical realism, positivism and interpretivism, *interpretivism* suited this research best (Saunders et al., 2016, p.136): This research aims to understand identity formation and OS of biethnics in Finland. The subjective sense-making of their identity formation and OS by biethnics, conditioned by others and institutions, is best illuminated by an interpretivist approach. The reasons for not choosing any of the other four approaches are: postmodernism was not adopted as language and power relations are central for postmodernism but do not illuminate this study's research phenomena (Saunders et al., 2016, p.141). Pragmatism attempts practical solutions for a problem, which was not the case of this research (Saunders et al., 2016, p.143). Critical realism attempts a 'historical analysis of social and organisational structures' over time and was not suitable here (Saunders et al., 2016, p.139-140). A positivist approach positing a true reality to be observed and measured by

an objective researcher at a distance was not suitable as this researcher studied the subjective experiences of the interviewee's identity formation and OS by personally interviewing respondents.

Though interpretivism is criticised for 'interpretations of interpretations', its ability to produce insights and comprehensive understanding illustrating the complexities of the issues and illuminating the background, development, current conditions and environmental interaction of the subjects of this study makes it the most suitable approach (Bryman, 2012, p.381). Lower generalizability of findings over large populations is a weakness of interpretivism, but generalizability to larger populations is not a research aim here. The interpretivist approach, is not value-free but rather value-laden, necessitating a conscious and effective reflexive orientation of the researcher to be trustworthy. The reflexivity section (3.16) handles this issue. Producing deeper understanding being the main aim of this research, the choice of an interpretivist approach is explicit.

### ***3.2.1 Approach to research 'logic'***

The Onion Model's second layer, the research's decision-making process 'logic', requires choosing among three approaches: deduction, induction and abduction (Saunders et al., 2016, p.145). The deductive approach, used mostly for theory testing, is not suitable with no existing theory of biethnic OS in Finland. The abductive approach using collected data to 'explore a phenomenon, identify themes and patterns and locate these in a conceptual framework' was not suitable for this study (Saunders et al., 2016, p.145). As the study of identity formation and OS of biethnics in this study, is mostly exploratory, an inductive data collection approach was employed here to collect data from interviewees, identify themes and patterns to create a deeper understanding of identity formation and OS of biethnics in Finland (Bernard & Ryan, 2010, p.266).

### ***3.3 Methodological choice – Justification for qualitative research***

The third layer, methodology choice, involves choosing between: quantitative, qualitative and a mixed-method research design (Saunders et al., 2016, p.164). Guided by the overall purpose of the study, the choice here is mono method qualitative. Two characteristics of qualitative research: “an unrivalled capacity to constitute compelling arguments about *how things work in particular contexts*.” and ability to produce ‘*cross-contextual* generalities’ justify choosing qualitative methods here (Mason, 2011, p.1 and p.175). The principal argument for using qualitative research here is that the main research aim requires an ‘emic’ perspective, i.e., the perspective of the persons being studied, by purposefully entering their frames of meaning over a ‘etic’ statistical perspective that easily produces quantifiable data. Understanding the participant’s sense-making of their own biethnic identity formation and OS against the backdrop of the organisation’s onboarding efforts requires grasping social relations seen as processes rather than in static terms and justifies choosing qualitative research. Yin’s (2003, p.9) suggestion that when (1) the research question begins with ‘how’; (2) ongoing events are being studied; and (3) we have little or no control over the events we are examining, methods such as exploratory case studies are useful, supports the methodology choice.

#### ***3.3.1 How this research addresses qualitative research shortcomings***

Quantitative researchers criticize qualitative research as being overtly dependant on the researcher’s subjective screening of significance of data obtained through close relationships with the studied persons (Bryman, 2012, p.405). I argue that elicitation of my interviewee’s sense-making of their subjective identity formation and OS experiences, reflecting their organisation’s onboarding efforts, could not occur effectively without my reassuring and ingenuous researcher-subject interaction, as the data to be elicited is subjective and contextual. A quantitative approach would be

unproductive here as contextual understanding would be deficient without the reassuring close involvement.

Quantitative researchers criticising qualitative research's replicability weakness (Bryman 2012, p. 405) should be seen against replication challenges in the social sciences (p. 177), as, despite my explicitly delineating the steps and procedures adopted in this research, some conditions of this original study would not remain constant for any future study due to ongoing societal changes (Bryman, 2012, p. 47). This study is the first of its kind, originating primary data, and could never be replicated as any restudy would not be performed on unexplored territory. Due to societal changes, the number of biethnics in Finland is growing fast. Increased visibility of ethnic phenotype differences generates an increased familiarity with biethnicity, surely impacting OS, attitudes and subjective sense-making, all affecting this study's replicability conditions. Though strict replicability is more valued in the quantitative tradition, replicability is not the only prerequisite for achieving reliability in the qualitative approach, where originality, which this research contributes, is valued (Bryman, 2012, p. 47).

Another 'weakness' criticism of qualitative methods is external validity, or the findings' generalisability (Bryman, 2012, p. 47), which tests the veracity of claims about what the research findings represent, making quantitative researchers require large representative samples (Saunders et. al., 2012, p. 202). This study's external validity would examine if the findings are restricted to the 30 interviewees or could say something about OS, especially in contemporary Finland. It is not claimed that this study's findings apply to every workplace in Finland or for OS outside Finland. Firstly, it is claimed that the findings can be generalized beyond the specific research context by ensuring that interviewee selection representativeness follows the natural diversity pattern of Finnish workplaces and society, as explained in the subject inclusion criteria section 3.6. Secondly, the logic by which each interview adds to the understanding of the research phenomenon requires an adequate number of perspectives as



subjective ‘sets of experiences’ of sense-making of their OS in Finland and 30 representative in-depth interviews ensures external validity (Mason et al, 2012, p.29).

### ***3.4 Research strategy choice***

The fourth layer or research data collection strategy is understood as a plan for answering the research questions with the most commonly used strategies in qualitative research: action research, case study research, ethnography, Grounded Theory and narrative research (Saunders et al., 2016, p.169). As none of the above strategies implicitly fitted this research’s aims, the strategy choice of semi-structured interviews contains elements of ethnography, case study and narrative research. Management researchers use action research to ‘promote organisational learning to produce practical outcomes’ and was not suitable here (Saunders et al., 2016, p.190). A ‘case study is an in-depth inquiry into a topic or phenomenon within its real-life setting’ (Saunders et al., 2016, p.184). The ‘case’ being studied in this research are not the interviewees’ lives or careers, but their identity formation and OS phenomena.

Ethnography studies the ‘culture or social world of a group’ with the researcher directly participating in the subjects’ lives (Saunders et al., 2016, p.187). Direct participation was unnecessary as these interviews were the only interactions between me and the interviewees. My being a biethnic working in Finland, like each interviewee, created some kindred feeling of ‘us’ biethnics living in a world of ‘them’ monoethnics. This made me resemble a participant observer to some interviewees though this was not the case. Researcher involvement and its implications are handled in the reflexivity section 3.16.

Grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) is often employed to inductively generate explanations and theory of social interactions and processes. Though the grounded theory approach is evident in the understanding of how social reality of OS is created through meanings social actors, here biethnic adjustees,

ascribe to their OS experiences, as theory building was not an aim of this research, Grounded theory was not employed as the research approach. The narrative research aspect was evidenced in how interviewees used 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973) narratives to recount aspects of their workplace adjustment by connecting events, and by integrating their analysis of meanings of the events and their ramifications into a 'meaningful whole' (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 198).

#### ***3.4.1 Time horizon of the research – Cross-sectional research***

The fifth layer, time horizon, stems from the research aims and purpose. As this exploratory research studies, for the first time in Finland, the interviewees' experiences of their identity formation and OS phenomenon and investigates how adjustee proactivity and the organisation's socializing efforts interact, rather than study the OS of the same interview subjects over longer periods of time, possibly even in different workplaces, it is a 'snapshot' or cross-sectional approach rather than a longitudinal approach (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 200).

#### ***3.5 Data collection technique – Semi-structured interview***

The sixth layer is data collection and analysis. In qualitative research, the most common data collecting methods are participant observation and semi-structured interviews. As knowledge in this research is situational, not easily divorced from the originating contexts, a semi-structured qualitative interview is justified for achieving the research goals of producing rich data and inherent contextual meaning of experiences. Typically, in semi-structured interviews, the researcher focusses on a list of themes and covers some key questions (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 391). The interviewees filled in the demographic information in the questionnaire (Appendix 1) and the entire interview was digitally recorded (Mason, 2011, p. 62).

A fairly tightly structured standardised set of open questions ensured uniformity in addressing the key themes to each interviewee and assure high research reliability. Compared to using a structured interview, with pre-coded answers, used to gather quantitative data, using this set of open questions and concurrently keeping the interview semi-structured required constant prompting to get the interviewees to express themselves more freely. The probing and elicitation techniques used are described in section 3.11.

### ***3.5.1 Designing the semi-structured interviews***

Creating a feeling of engaging the interviewee in a ‘conversation with a purpose’ (Burgess, 1984, p.102) required paying rigorous attention to balancing a natural discussion flow with a cogent structure. This ensured that all desired areas were covered sufficiently to elicit the desired amount and quality of data without compromising the ‘intellectual and social dynamics of the situation’ (Mason, 2011, p.67). The skilful framing and sequencing of questions, and the firm yet graciously accommodating interaction facilitation allowed participants to digress temporarily on tangents to portray the rich tapestry of lived experiences yet return purposefully to address the question themes. My two decades of coaching and training skills came in handy for politely yet firmly getting the interviewee back on track, after acknowledging that the recounted episode illuminated a particular issue, but the interview had to get back on track. I used phrases such as “*This anecdote illustrates your point about your organisation lacking meaningful onboarding for you, but let’s return to your organisation’s onboarding.*”

Four main themes: *OS*, *ethnicity*, *biethnic identity formation* and *Identity management*, and specific research questions (section 1.7) emerging from the literature review shaped the design of the semi-structured one-to-one interviews. *Ethnicity* and *biethnic identity formation* as themes, were merged with the *identity management* theme as they are subsumed within identity management, which affects OS. Further, delimiting *ethnicity* and *biethnic identity formation* as themes,

helped getting too deep into immigration, racism and power relations issues as they are not the main focus of this study. Having two main themes (*identity management* and *organisational socialization*) rather than three or four improved the focus, allowing deeper exploration of the interview themes.

Questions, reflecting themes to be addressed, were intuitively generated to address challenges emerging from workplace adjustment, ethnicity and identity management literature following Bryman's (2008, p. 446) guidelines and Mason's 7-step recommendation of first generating 'big research questions', then 'mini-research questions' followed by 'possible interview topics and questions all cross-referenced for coherence (2011, p. 72). These questions were collected in a semi-structured interview format to elicit the necessary data and give voice to the adjustees reflecting their biethnic identity management and OS.

An equal number of questions on each main theme ensured that both themes would be addressed equally. Questions 1-10 elicited demographic information. Some of the questions 11-25 are formatted as Likert-scale questions rather than as purely open-ended question. This made answering the questionnaire easy and not intimidating as the questionnaire seems to have a tightly structured format compared to a questionnaire with all open-ended questions that interviewees would have had to answer in details. The Likert-scale design facilitated quick initial responses, which interviewees had to qualify and explain in details via my promptings. Choosing this Likert-scale design and tightly-structured questionnaire approach is guided by my three decades long work experience in Finland and studies showing Finnish people valuing structure in the workplace as Finns experience stress in unstructured situations, which asking many open-ended questions requiring deep introspection might entail (Lämsä, 2010, p. 146; Mehta et al. 2003, p. 75).

OS, one of the two main themes, is introduced directly after the demographic questions, as question number 10. Question number 16, in the middle of the questionnaire, asks interviewees to step back from OS into their *upbringing* and

the identity management theme, and then again return to the OS theme. The *identity* theme is reintroduced in question numbers 20-23. The OS theme is reintroduced in the last two questions, 24 and 25. Having the interviewee going back and forth between the two themes gently reminded them how the two main themes are intertwined and influence each other. The total number of questions in the interviews are 25, not overtly long yet they elicit enough quality rich data to sufficiently illustrate the nuances of each case.

### ***3.6 Sampling – subject inclusion criteria and sample size***

Though qualitative samples are small for practical reasons (Mason, 2011, p.128), a meaningful and representative sample should generate information necessary for addressing research questions. The research objectives necessitated finding a representative sample suiting the profile and attributes required, both able and willing to discuss their ethnicity, identity formation and OS experiences. The reasons for choosing Finland as research location are explained in section 1.4.

The following subject inclusion criteria were applied:

- Self-identified biethnic background, with a clear perceived subjective difference in the parents' ethnicities, e.g., Finnish-Japanese or Indian-British.
- Minimum age 20 years. Considering different perceptions of 'adult' among cultures, the lower age-limit of 20 qualifies better the term 'adult'.
- Participants were currently employed and, to minimize memory contamination during the retrospective recall of adjustment experiences, preferably below 2 years at the same workplace. The rationale for this time-limit is that, though accessing and remembering the experience of adjustment would produce more detailed insights if it was relatively fresh in mind, only a few months of workplace

adjustment might not yet enable the participant to evaluate their ongoing adjustment process, and conversely interviewees might not correctly recall aspects of their adjustment process from many years ago.

- Works and resides in Finland.

Criteria to ensure that sample selection reflects overall diversity in Finnish society and working life, and to make the sample representative were met by including different:

- Age-groups: 20-30, 31-40, 41-50, 51-60 and 61-65
- Equal number of men and women.
- Minorities: persons with special needs, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender
- Professions and industries
- Ethnicities: some without and some with visible phenotype markers of ethnic differences from dominant Finnish ethnic phenotypes e.g., skin colour or facial features. This informs how visible phenotype difference from the dominant Finnish phenotype affects other's reactions to the interviewee's identity formation as Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) suggests, and might affect their OS also. The interviewees' understanding of the terms 'ethnic' and 'ethnicity' differ somewhat from social sciences usage. 'Jamaican' is a culture and not an ethnicity in the social sciences, where a Jamaican person's ethnicity would be Afro-Caribbean, Black-Caribbean or African-Caribbean (Radcliffe, 2004, p. 35) but here the interviewees' term usages are employed instead of proper sociological terms to maintain authenticity. Replacing interviewee's terms with social science terms would not add any value here. Including different Asian backgrounds, e.g., Indian, Japanese, Filipino, Thai etc., ensured representativeness among global populations.
- Languages: interviewees easily distinguished from majority monoethnic Finns by linguistic criteria e.g., level of Finnish skills, distinctly different accent.

- Job roles: operational, managerial and non-managerial

The aim was not to make comparisons among subjects within the criteria e.g., by studying if and how 20-30-year olds adjusted differently from 61-65-year olds, but to avoid having a limited viewpoint by selecting e.g., only 20-30-year olds or only men.

The term 'biethnic' was chosen over 'multiethnic', 'biracial' or 'bicultural' as the pilot interviews showed interviewees getting confused when asked to identify if they considered themselves 'multiethnic', 'biracial' or 'bicultural'. With different meanings, as explained in section 1.2., the terms created confusion. Interviewees started thinking of distant ancestors and could not decide if an ancestor from a different ethnicity, generations ago, would make the interviewee 'multiethnic', 'biracial' or 'bicultural'. The term 'biethnic' avoided such confusion as the prefix bi- was a clear reference to each of their parents, and thus 'biethnic' was chosen.

'Retrospective and self-reports of newcomers' socialization experiences' is claimed as a research weakness (Saks & Ashforth, 1997). Two possible remedies are: contrasting self-report with majority monoethnic colleagues evaluating the biethnic's OS, and supervisors rating newcomers nine months after joining work as Bauer and Green (1998b) did. Both are ruled out here, as monoethnic colleagues or supervisors may not know whether an employee is biethnic and their knowledge of the biethnic newcomer's OS may be insufficient or biased. Only two out of thirty interviewees reporting discussing their biethnicity at the workplace supports this choice.

### **3.6.1 Sample size**

Sample size is often a qualitative interview challenge due to the lack of universal adequate size criteria (Bryman, 2012, p. 425; Creswell, 2013). The research objectives of getting a representative sample, sufficiently broad in diversity and other selection criteria (Bryman, 2012, p. 425) guided the

researcher. The sample size comprised thirty biethnic adults, over the age of 20, living and working in Finland. All had been in their current jobs for less than two years. The size is above the ‘minimum non-probability sample size’ of 25 (Saunders et al., 2016, p. 297) and within the recommended range of 30-50 for social science qualitative studies (Baker & Edwards, 2012; Bryman, 2012, p. 425).

### ***3.7 Socio-demographic profile of the biethnic respondents***

Both gender distribution: 57% female and 43% male, and age diversity: 30% between 21-30 years of age, 37% between 31-40, 23% between 41-50, 7% between 51-60 and 3% over 61, conform to qualitative sampling practices (Mason, 2011, p.133).

The interviewee’s education and income level were not specifically asked for as it was assumed that interviewees from different organisational hierarchy levels and age groups would reflect educational and income level diversity. The interviewee’s profession, industry and their hierarchy level are not reported here due to ethical privacy concerns, so that interviewees are not identified easily, as some interviewees specifically requested not mentioning their field of work to preserve their anonymity. The diversity of professional hierarchy, age and gender is illustrated by Table 1 below, where numbers represent the number of respondents.

|                   |                     | Operational level | Middle-management level | Top management |           |
|-------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-----------|
| <b>Gender</b>     | <b>Male</b>         | 5                 | 6                       | 4              |           |
|                   | <b>Female</b>       | 5                 | 8                       | 2              |           |
|                   | <b>Total number</b> | <b>10</b>         | <b>14</b>               | <b>6</b>       | <b>30</b> |
| <b>Age groups</b> | <b>20-30</b>        | 4                 | 5                       |                |           |
|                   | <b>31-40</b>        | 3                 | 6                       |                |           |



|  |                                    |           |           |          |           |
|--|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
|  | <b>41-50</b>                       | 3         | 2         | 4        |           |
|  | <b>51-60</b>                       |           | 1         | 1        |           |
|  | <b>61-65</b>                       |           |           | 1        |           |
|  | <b>Total number of respondents</b> | <b>10</b> | <b>14</b> | <b>6</b> | <b>30</b> |

Table 1 Respondent diversity: Professional Hierarchy, Age and Gender

Two respondents voluntarily identified as lesbian and gay. This did not affect the findings but reflects existing social diversity. To the interviewer, approximately one third of the respondents displayed clearly visible phenotype markers, such as skin colour or facial features, and the rest displayed no clearly visible phenotype markers of ethnic difference from the dominant ethnic phenotypes in Finland. This reflects general ethnic diversity in Helsinki, Finland and conforms to the research's diversity aims.

The respondents' current employment duration varied from 2 months to 4 years, 83% being over 1 year. The total employment length varied from 2 months to 19 years, 76% being over 1 year with the same employer. Years lived in the same area varied between 'whole life', some over 40 years to 1 year, the average being 19.5 years. The implications are probed in section 4.2.

High ethnicity diversity from 5 continents: Asia, Europe, Africa, North and South America supports this research's diversity aims. Respondents felt that compared to 'objective' quantifications like age, gender, citizenship or job title, found in official documents, defining their ethnicity was challenging mainly because they sometimes disagreed with external ascription.

*"Your passport tells your nationality and age. Height and weight, you easily measure, but ethnicity is slippery. Others might see me very differently from how I see myself."* said Layla, a biethnic woman in her 40s, born and brought up in England.

Some respondents used the concept of *ethnicity* differently from social science scholars: e.g., Emma uses ‘Serbo-Croatian’, a language and not an ethnicity as her ethnicity; ‘British’ used by Amit is not an ethnicity alone when not used in tandem such as *Black-British* or *Asian British*; similarly, *Portuguese* is not an ethnicity but a language and a culture. The respondents’ usage remains unchanged in this research as it reflects their understanding, highlighting how *ethnicity* has no universal definition, but often political connotations. For quotes, fictitious proper names are used (explained in section 3:17). The demographic diversity of the respondents is presented in Table 2 below.

| Interviewee no. | Gender of Interviewee | Age<br>20-30 = a<br>31-40 = b<br>41-50 = c<br>51-60 = d<br>61-65 = e | Ethnicity combination of parents | Self-defined ethnicity of respondents            | Job role: Operational Level (O), Middle-management (MM) and Top management (TM) |
|-----------------|-----------------------|--|----------------------------------|--|---|
| 1               | F                     | b  | Finnish-Turkish                  | Finnish-Turkish                                  | MM  |
| 2               | M                     | e  | British-German                   | White-European                                   | O   |
| 3               | F                     | b  | Finnish-Japanese                 | Finnish or Finnish-Japanese depending on context | MM  |
| 4               | M                     | b  | Finnish-Tunisian                 | Finnish or Tunisian, depending on context        | TM  |
| 5               | F                     | b  | Thai-Finnish                     | Thai-Finnish                                     | MM  |
| 6               | F                     | b  | Finnish-English                  | Finnish-English                                  | TM  |
| 7               | F                     | d  | Italian-American                 | Italo-American                                   | O   |
| 8               | M                     | c  | Finnish-Japanese                 | Finnish or Finnish-Japanese depending on context | MM  |
| 9               | F                     | a  | Finnish-Philippines              | Finnish or Filipino depending on context         | O   |

|    |   |   |                                 |  |    |
|----|---|---|---------------------------------|--|----|
| 10 | M | c | German-Finnish                  | German-Finnish   | TM |
| 11 | M | b | Indian-British                  | British  | O  |
| 12 | M | b | Japanese-Finnish                | Japanese or Finnish-Japanese depending on context          | MM |
| 13 | F | c | Finnish-Japanese                | Finnish-Japanese or Japanese-Finnish, depending on context | MM |
| 14 | M | a | Finnish-Sierra Leone            | Finnish or Finnish-Sierra Leone depending on context       | O  |
| 15 | M | a | Turkish-Finnish                 | Turkish-Finnish  | MM |
| 16 | F | a | Finnish-Korean                  | Finnish or Finnish-Korean depending on context             | O  |
| 17 | F | a | Finnish-Swedish                 | Finnish-Swedish  | TM |
| 18 | F | c | English-African Indian (Kenyan) | English  | MM |
| 19 | F | b | Finnish-Kenyan                  | Finnish or Kenyan-Finnish depending on context             | MM |
| 20 | F | a | Finnish-English                 | Finnish  | MM |
| 21 | M | c | Finnish-German                  | White, Anglo-Saxon   | TM |
| 22 | F | b | Finnish-Portuguese              | European   | MM |
| 23 | F | d | Finnish-Tatar                   | Finnish  | O  |
| 24 | F | b | Finnish-Greek                   | Finnish or Greek depending on context                      | O  |
| 25 | F | a | Serbo-Croatian                  | Serbo-Croatian   | O  |
| 26 | F | b | Finnish-Iranian                 | Finnish-Iranian  | MM |

|    |   |   |                     |                 |    |
|----|---|---|---------------------|-----------------|----|
| 27 | M | c | Italian-Argentinian | Italo-Argentino | O  |
| 28 | F | a | Finnish-Turkmen     | Finnish-Turkmen | MM |
| 29 | M | b | Finnish-Jamaican    | Mixed           | MM |
| 30 | F | a | Finnish-Moroccan    | Finnish         | TM |

Table 2 Demographic diversity among respondents

### 3.8 *Challenges of external identification of biethnics*

Early researchers criticised neglect of ethnic identity and categorisation of mixed ethnic origin, but the situation is changing and, in some countries, e.g., UK, government surveys have increased awareness of mixed ethnic/racial origins (Phinney 1990, p. 499; Root 1996). The continuous usage of categories such as ‘Mixed/multiple ethnic groups’ subdivided into “White and Black Caribbean, White and Black African, White and Asian, any other Mixed/multiple ethnic background” in survey forms e.g., Overcrowding and Under-Occupation by Ethnic Group, 2011 or Household Survey by the Office for National Statistics (2011) in UK bring the concept of mixed ethnic identities to everyday knowledge. Finland does not use national census forms (OSF, 2013). An inhabitant’s ethnicity or racial background information is never asked or registered in any database, and demographic categorisation is based on inhabitant’s citizenship, country of birth and language the person informs as their mother tongue. Finland’s Population Information System (OSF, 2013) records the ‘name, mother tongue and religious denomination’ of children born to parents resident in Finland. Human resource or other organization databases in Finland, are specifically forbidden by Chapter 3, Section 11 of the Personal Data Act 22.4.1999/523 to collect, register or maintain any information ‘if they relate to or are intended to relate to race or ethnic origin’ of their staff, clients, customers or interest groups (PDA, 2013).

Though biethnics may not exhibit external phenotype characteristics instantly identifying them as ethnically different from the majority monoethnic Finns, being identified as 'different' from the monoethnic majority might influence others' perception of biethnics and affect recognition/rejection/ by ethnic groups, as well as affect their identity and relationships within family and beyond (Brittian et al., 2013, p.178-179; Wallace, 2001). The two central factors shaping a biethnic/biracial identity are *appearance* and *social environment* (Townsend et al., 2012, p.92). The 'omnipresence of phenotype' meaning 'skin colour, hair texture, eye shape, and facial structure' often dictate how others label biethnic persons, totally irrespective of their own internal ethnic identity designations (Talbot et al., 2008, p. 27).

In Finland, with ethnicity information missing from organisational databases, and only some voluntarily disclosing their biethnicity to others as often their biethnicity may not be obvious without perceptible phenotype markers, the only method of identifying biethnics is self-identification. A biethnic identifying with the majority monoethnic Finn's group, is sometimes labelled by the surrounding society as a mixed-ethnic background person or as belonging to the ethnic/ racial background of the parent phenotypically different from monoethnic Finns. This study did not aim to construct any objective criteria of biethnic classification but utilises subjective self-identification (Gullickson and Morning, 2011).

### ***3.9 Accessing the interviewees***

Considering the identification challenges explained above, the snowball sampling technique, used for accessing hard-to-reach populations in ethnographic research (Bryman, 2012, p. 424) was used to locate biethnic interviewees. Referrals from the pilot interviewees, who were workplace contacts, generated new interviewee contacts. Some interviewees utilised social networking websites e.g., Facebook and Linked-In and member-restricted e.g., Finnish-Japanese, discussion forums to locate biethnic persons willing to be interviewed and gave the researcher names and contact details of potential

interviewees. Interviewees were then contacted through email or by phone before face-to-face meetings. No gatekeeper was involved in accessing the interviewees. Interviewees did not get the list of questions before the interview.

### ***3.10 Conducting the interviews: interview venue, length and manner***

The interviews were conducted during 2015 over eight months. The interviewees chose interview time and a disruption-free quiet venue, either their office or a café, where the interviews could be digitally recorded (Bryman, 2012, p.13). They chose the interview language, mostly English with only two in Finnish. This not being a longitudinal study, participants were interviewed once as most biethnic identity studies (Herrmann et al., 2018; Karssen et al., 2017; Root, 1998) and some OS studies (Kammeyer-Mueller et al., 2011; Saks et al., 2011). The pilot study showed one interview yielding sufficient information to address the research questions.

The exploratory and descriptive interviews (Interview schedule – Appendix 5) lasted about one and a half hours and supplied rich information on biethnic identity management and OS, centring on the interviewee's life-world (Gubrium et al, 2012, p. 121). During the first interview phase, interviewees were informed (Appendix 2) about: research aims, background, manner of data usage and confidentiality. Then interviewees signed the informed interviewee consent (Appendix 3) form for interviewing and digital recording. Phase two gathered interviewee demographics information: age group, socio-economic background, current employment length and self-defined ethnicity. Phase three focussed on how upbringing affected their adjustment, possible OS differences between biethnics and their monoethnic colleagues, and their organisation's role in their OS. Phase four explored incipient biethnic identity construction factors and possible differences from monoethnic identity construction.

Finally, the interviewees were thanked and asked to comment, which they all did. No new data illuminating the concepts and information categories sought surfaced only during the last two interviews, signifying that theoretical saturation was reached. This justified thirty interviews (Bryman, 2008, p.416). No interviewee objected to recording conversations, possibly as a sign of trust towards me, my research methods, and my respecting their anonymity. Notes were meticulously maintained during interviews and were dated, timed and marked with the interviewee code for access during transcription and analysis (Bryman, 2008, p.442; Mason, 2011, p.75). Taking notes while conducting the interviews was challenging but my coaching, mentoring and performance review experience proved useful. The field notes reflected the points each interview needed to or wanted to elaborate, and the main points of what each interviewee said.

Having a printed copy of the list of standard interview questions in front of the interviewee and the interviewer (researcher) during the entire interview was useful. Firstly, it served as road-map of where we were in the interviews and secondly, the researcher visibly ticking off each answered question before progressing to the next question ensured a structure to the interview and helped get the conversation back on track after digressions. This also ensured that each interviewee was asked precisely the same questions throughout the interview. The different prompts used for different interviewees were just individualised means to get them to answer the same questions and did not change the questions they were answering.

### ***3.11 Elicitation techniques and probes to ensure 'rich data'***

My over two decades of HRD experience in teaching, coaching and interviewing proved useful in securing a 'person-centred-interview' (Levy and Hollan, 1998, p. 296). Different elicitation techniques were used: *Graphic elicitation* (Crilly et al. 2006, p. 341) was used e.g., at the beginning of the interviews. An A4 size paper showing only the figure 90% and the year 2012

signifying that in Finland 90% of the growth in a population of 5.54 million came from foreign-language speakers and mixed marriages (OSF, 2013), was placed on the table. Highlighted the impact of mixed marriages and biethnics on Finnish society and the importance of OS, this technique had interviewees repeatedly referring back to this paper on the table during the entire interview.

*Arrangement tasks – ordering* (Barton, 2015, p. 185), elicitation technique was used in the interview questions when the interviewees had to e.g., in question 14, arrange different alternatives in order of preference. This ordering task proved useful in making the interviewees ponder the issues being discussed, generating a lot of exclamations, opinions and pondering. The *projective device* elicitation technique (Bagnoli, 2009, p. 548; Barton, 2015, p. 189) was used for question 19 in the interview when I asked the interviewee to imagine them replying anonymously to an HR survey in their organisation about what they thought their organisation had done to help their OS. This proved an effective device as it quickly generated spontaneous answers, which every interviewee qualified in depth.

Another useful elicitation technique was the *object and walking probe* (De Leon and Cohen, 2005, p. 200-204). When the interview began, I placed two half-postcard size white paper slips with one main theme on each paper. These two cards with the themes: *Workplace Adjustment* and *Identity Management* stayed on the table throughout the interview. Whenever the interviewee digressed at length, I pointed at one of the cards and guided the discussion back to the theme gently by using phrases such as “we’re in the *Identity Management* theme now, could you please say something more about how this affected...” For some interviewees, the interview flow needed prodding with additional prompts such as ‘tell me more’, ‘can you describe that a bit more’, ‘could you give an example’, and ‘in what way your upbringing affected your adjustment’ etc., to make sure that there was a substantial immersion in the interviewee’s opinions, impressions, feelings and subjective world of sense-making.



### ***3.12 Pilot study***

To test the validity and reliability of the research methods and interview questions, a pilot study with semi-structured interviews of biethnic adults in Finland was conducted with two interview subjects located through workplace contacts. They fulfilled all selection criteria and were eager participants. The choice of subject access and research method, especially the semi-structured interview was useful and productive in both cases. Both interviewees were very forthcoming, requiring minimal interviewer prompting. The following section describes five shortcomings detected, and the improvements adopted to interview approach, questions and methodology.

#### ***3.12.1 Improvements to research methods and questions from pilot study***

The first improvement need noticed was the lack of explicit choices of defining own ethnicity on the question form. The form was duly amended by including a 7-point multiple choice question 'Do you define your ethnicity by' with choices being: ancestry, memory of origin, migration, culture, experience of racism, low socio-economic status or high social support. This methodology from Fenton & Charsley (2000) was adapted to include the 'memory of origin' criterion from (Kopnina, 2010, p.251). This inclusion helped interviewees focus their ethnicity definition.

The second improvement area was the observation that 'immigration' as an issue needs to be carefully demarcated out of this research. The word 'migration' in the identity definition question at the beginning of the interview refers to any historical migration by the subject's ancestors and not the interviewee's own possible immigration to Finland. This helped pinpoint focus on workplace adjustment by excluding immigration issues. Only a handful of the interviewees had immigrated to Finland, the rest born in Finland. A possible shortcoming of this exclusion of immigration might be a blindness to how the

experience of immigrating to Finland might have informed OS. Immigration is an extremely contentious topic, especially in Finland during the interviews. OS and identity formation and not the effect of immigration on adjustment is the focus here and asking interviewees to talk about their immigration experience would have side-tracked the interviews without contributing to the OS theme.

Though the word 'migration' is used in the interview questionnaire to clarify the interviewees' definitions of their ethnicity, workplace performance management, ethnic relations and evaluation of the organisation's human resource or management initiatives were excluded, to prevent any wrong conclusions, e.g., that biethnic adults make 'better' immigrants or more desirable employees or that organizations in a certain industry facilitate better OS etc., as examining such possible causal linkages was outside this research's scope.

The third improvement was the addition of 12 factors: religion, gender (sex), language, age group, ethnicity, social class/level/caste, upbringing, order of birth, nationality (passport), education/training, culture and something else, *what*, as examples of factors most affecting the interviewee's personal identity construction. This became a valuable addition helping interviewees reflect and formulate their answers.

The fourth improvement was adding the question: "Do you construct your personal identity differently from monoethnic persons you interact with regularly? In which areas do you notice major differences?" This addition helped interviewees ponder their personal identity construction through specific workplace situations. No interviewee questioned their competence in evaluating the personal identity construction of their monoethnic colleagues. Every interviewee assumed that monoethnic Finns would automatically have an intrinsic familiarity with Finnish culture and behaviour norms requirements

as a home-court advantage whereas immigrants and even biethnics born in Finland may negotiate identities.

The fifth improvement was adding the two questions “Due to their background, biethnic employees have an advantage over monoethnic employees and perform better than monoethnic employees in certain settings, e.g. multicultural workplace!” and “Do you have any experience of such settings where biethnic employees have an advantage over monoethnic employees and thus perform better?” These questions produced strong emotional reactions among interviewees and elicited much self-reflection with exclamations e.g., ‘*I have never thought of this before*’ or ‘*I was discussing this with my boyfriend the other day.*’ before the interviewees elaborated their opinions.

### ***3.12.2 Themes emerging from the pilot study***

As the OS motivation themes were not clearly identified at the pilot study stage, interesting and seemingly important features regarding OS motivation were identified from the pilot study, then collated into possible themes, which were then reviewed and refined to form key themes. For factors affecting OS motivation of biethnic individuals in Finland, the five themes that appeared numerically the most are: *Being popular and liked at the workplace*, *Getting more money and benefits*, *Having power and high status at the workplace*, *Being regarded as professional* and *Learning and developing professionally*.

### ***3.13 Research limitations and delimitations***

The research time horizon is not longitudinal but cross-sectional. This delimitation is due: firstly, to exploratory research aims; secondly, to the research being primary and not secondary data research on a previously unstudied topic. Another limitation concerns the research subject inclusion criteria regarding alternative forms of employment e.g., self-employed, private caregivers, temporary workers, illegal immigrants, which were not explored. It was assumed

that the organisation's OS efforts might be less common among alternative employment arrangements. As this research studies OS of people currently employed, unemployed persons or people between jobs were not interviewed.

Care was taken to have representative samples, as explained in section 3.6., and it is a strength of this study. All respondents had tertiary level education, but socio-economic status and academic level of the respondents were not considered. Future research should investigate possibly differing developmental processes or influences for respondents with different kinds of education and different socio-economic statuses. It is unknown if comparing persons without and with visible phenotype markers of ethnic differences from dominant Finnish ethnic phenotypes would yield differences in the prevalence of biethnic types, identity formation and OS experiences. Individuals with two minority ethnic group parents, with strong influence of immigration and refugee status and/or experience of discrimination might have different OS experiences compared to the respondents of this study. Further, this study focusing solely on Finland, results may not apply elsewhere.

The use of snowball sampling technique precluded the use of random sampling, which may be a potential limitation. All respondents volunteered for this study, signifying that they were self-reflective, interested in their heritage and background more than other biethnics reluctant to discuss their backgrounds. Not studying any possible differences between such uninterested biethnic adults and this study's respondents can be seen as a slight bias in this non-clinical sample, as findings may not represent all biethnic individuals. However, despite limitations, this first of its kind study revealed new insights and illuminated the identity formation processes and OS of biethnics.

### ***3.14 Transcription of interview data***

Most interviews were in English (transcript example extract – Appendix 4). The researcher translated the Finnish interviews to English and considered

carefully whether the researcher's translating created challenges and should translated parts be mentioned (Temple and Young, 2004, p.161). Being faithful to the original text and the readers did not create any conflict and translation is not mentioned. The researcher transcribed and analysed all the interview data without any software, though NVivo analysis software was available. The benefit of transcribing and analysing manually, an arduous and time-consuming task, brought the researcher closer to the data, familiarised the key themes and 'similarities and dissimilarities' between different interviewee accounts (Bryman, 2008, p.456). Instead of the 'naturalist' transcription approach recording 'stutters, pauses, nonverbal and involuntary vocalisations', a 'denaturalised' approach removing such (Oliver *et al.* 2005, pp.1273-1274) was adopted here as the focus was on the substance of the interviewer's speech capturing the meaning and perceptions generated. The manual transcription process took longer than six hours per recorded interview-hour (Bryman, 2012, p. 93).

### ***3.15 Data Analysis***

The analysis method framework approach to thematic analysis, a 'matrix based analytic method, common among qualitative researchers, was employed here to classify and categorise data into main themes, concepts and 'emergent categories'. Two steps were involved: (1) 'managing the data', and (2) 'making sense of the evidence through descriptive or explanatory accounts' (Bryman, 2008, p.555; Ritchie et al. 2003, p. 219). Ryan and Bernard's (2003, p 89-93) four-step method was employed for identifying and developing the themes from the interview-data: (1) identifying themes and subthemes, (2) narrowing down themes to manageable main themes, (3) creating theme hierarchies, and (4) linking themes to theoretical models.

Resembling *open coding* from Grounded Theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), comparing, examining, and categorising data, concepts (phenomena instances) are identified through reading transcripts. Important themes were registered as

they emerged from reading and re-reading. 23 themes were identified during the process of immersion in the collected data and reading the interview transcripts, pertinent field notes and journal insights by utilising '*repetitions, indigenous typologies, metaphors and analogies, transitions, similarities and differences, linguistic connectors, missing data and theory-related material*' as theme identification criteria (Ryan and Bernard, 2003, p.89-93).

After thorough familiarisation with the interview data and field notes, 'conceptual scaffolding' (Ritchie et al., 2003, p.213) or a platform of key concepts or terms was created to overview and make sense of the entire data. Schutz's (1973) typology was very useful at this analysis stage (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008, p. 301). Schutz proposed that 'first-order constructs' or interpretation by social actors using practical reasoning or '*typifications*' are supplemented, by 'second-order constructs', meta-analyses attempting extraction of tacit knowledge from social actors engaged in first-order constructs. Identifying the linkage between themes using colour-coded add-on-notes was the method used to correctly index or code the themes and label them to create the theme hierarchies as a thematic chart. Utilising Ryan and Bernard's (2003, p. 99) method of investigating the relationship among the 23 'a priori themes' to discover 'overarching metathemes', at higher levels of abstractions than the emergent themes two metathemes emerged: *Workplace adjustment* and *Identity management*. Table 1 in Section 4.2.2 shows metathemes and themes arising from the interviews (Onwuegbuzie, 2003, p. 398).

The fourth step involved reverting to the theories from the literature review and connecting the data-themes and super-ordinate metathemes to the relevant theories explaining how the interview data informs each aspect. These are discussed in the discussion section. While analysing the data and the themes, the researcher realised that some theoretical explanations were more adequate than others in explaining the biethnic identity formation concepts that interviewees were reporting and started investigating non-Western personal identity concepts (see section 2.16). Data analysis became an iterative process

where interviewees' comments were evaluated against existing theoretical explanations. This helped widen, enrich and refine the researcher's understanding of biethnic identity formation and the relation to OS.

### ***3.16 A reflective account of the researcher's role, experience and impact***

The decision to study the identity formation and OS of biethnics in Finland, against the backdrop of their organisation's onboarding efforts and whether biethnicity gives them a distinctive perspective, is rooted in the realisation of OS's importance to working life through the researcher's personal experience as a biethnic HRD professional in Finland with OS involvement for two decades, and in relating own OS to other's experiences and the academic literature. The research gaps in the field became apparent while seeking further knowledge after the Master's studies.

This research argues 'reflexively or multivocally' aiming to make readers 'aware of a meaningful range of perspectives, experiences and standpoints', including the researcher's (Mason, 2011, p. 177). Being a biethnic with a long HRD career exposed to OS issues, reflexivity for me studying other biethnics was important. Reflexivity necessitates researchers knowing how their understanding of the social world, decisions, values, biases, methods and 'mere presence' in the research situation affects the knowledge gathered, recognising that a story narrative is a 'construction in which the interviewer is involved' (Bryman, 2008, p. 441). Critically appraising my beliefs and assumptions (Bryman, 2008, p.683; Lynch, 2000, p.29) was important, not only when analysing data and results, but throughout the interaction with interviewees and especially when, as an interviewer, I was guiding the interviewee back to their experiences of observing, making sense and describing (Tsekeris, 2010, p.30). This research was a great opportunity to learn from and cultivate my beliefs from the respondent interactions, and consciously endeavour to be objective in the research data description and analysis without letting my beliefs distort data or meaning (Gewirtz & Cribb, 2006, p.142-148). All

interviewees, barring four work connections, were unknown to me, so I did not need to 'distance' myself from the interviewees.

A two-point reflexivity method was utilised: (i) keeping a reflexive journal (Bryman, 20008, p.417; Etherington, 2004, p.127); reflecting on the interview field notes during and after data collection, and trying to understand how the interviewer's own experiences relate to the interviewee's; what were the common points and divergent opinions: (ii) paying special attention during and after interviews, to one's promptings, questions and responses to check if they were suggestive or influencing interviewees. Field notes of possible tension between the various values 'embedded in the research' and those of the people being researched was also very useful (Gewirtz & Cribb, 2006, p.147). Some interviewees had never thought about some of the issues, and asked the interviewer 'what do you think about this?' Ritchie et al.'s (2003, p. 158-60) tips for refraining from finishing off an answer or summarising the interviewee's answer or commenting on them and finally never assuming but checking own comprehension by asking questions such as '*Can I just check that I have got this right?*' were practical and useful. Using prompts and wording them carefully to redirect back to the interviewees' words e.g., '*you mentioned that..*' or '*earlier you said that...*' and asking them to elaborate or illustrate some point, greatly ensured avoiding researcher's bias.

Practising a *bracketing interview* (Roulston, 2010, p. 128) with a colleague at the questionnaire design stage was valuable for reflexivity. In this exercise, the researcher became an interviewee and the colleague, asked six illuminating questions: '*Tell me about your research topic.*', '*Tell me about some of your experiences about the research topic.*', '*What have you learnt about the topic from your literature reading?*' '*What do you expect to find from your study?*' '*Why do you think your topic is important?*' and '*What audiences do you hope to inform with your research?*' (Roulston, 2010, p. 128). This *bracketing exercise* produced two outcomes: firstly, by having to narrate my whole work along with the underpinnings of understanding and beliefs and seeing how another researcher related



objectively, without engaging therapeutically or imposing any subjective meaning, generated a model for achieving the same when I became the interviewer again. Secondly, recognising how much wait-time was necessary to allow the interviewee to add something before being asked the next question proved useful (Roulston, 2010, p. 128). This was a valuable lesson for me being a fast-talker, and conversations in Finland being usually slow-paced, with distinct recognition of sentences having ended and a rather long 'wait-time' before the other person can talk back.

Bryman's (2008, p. 443) practical recommendation of consciously avoiding leading interviewees, and Ritchie et al.'s (2003, p.66) advice to strive for empathy without getting overinvolved, were useful. The researcher's being a biethnic like each interviewee allowed them to relate on a level that may not have been possible for a monoethnic. Some respondents, acknowledge this by assuming automatic understanding, used interviewer-addressing comments like "*You know what I mean, don't you?*" or "*I'm sure you have experienced this also.*" At the end of the interview sessions, every interviewee thanked the researcher for getting the opportunity to reflect so deeply on a core aspect of their lives and gave the researcher their business cards or contact information for any additional information. They requested the study results and asked to be invited to the post-convocation party. Such feedback affirms that they perceived the interviews as a beneficial two-way process (Bryman et al. 2011, p.134).

### ***3.17 External validity of results, confidentiality and data security***

For external validity, getting a representative interview data sample is significant. Accessing biethnic employees is very challenging (Section 3.8) but the snowball sampling method proved useful in accessing biethnic interviewees. The subject inclusion criteria (Section 3.6) show how subjects from different organisational settings were sought to avoid one organisation's settings dominating the study, and ensure necessary variance in organisational

cultures, team and personnel dynamics as well as reflect varying OS tactics (Ashforth et al. 1998; Wanous, 1992).

We proceeded to the interview stage only after each interviewee understood the nature, scope and significance of the study along with the methods utilised, signing the consent form to give a fully informed consent. To ensure external validity of the research findings regarding generalizing and linking the research findings to relevant domains, every interview was systematically documented and digitally recorded with the interviewees' informed consent.

Biethnics were interviewed to produce a *thick description* (Geertz, 1973) illustrating the complexities of the issues and illuminating the background, development, current conditions and environmental interaction of the subjects.

To maintain strict confidentiality, the interview recordings and filled-in questionnaires remain securely locked. The questionnaires or recordings do not have any names, age, gender, and occupation or organization tags to identify them. For subject identification purposes, a numerical code system was used. The key to the code is a password-protected document kept in a separate location, which only the researcher can access. All questionnaires and digital interview recordings will be destroyed six months after the current study has been approved. Respondents are referred to in the findings section by fictitious proper names. Each participant was assigned a fictitious forename carefully chosen to not resemble their real names, ethnicity combinations, and prevent them being identified.

### ***3.18 Ethical considerations***

Established ethical principles guiding this research cover four main areas: *harm to participants, lack of informed consent, invasion of privacy* and *whether deception is involved* (Bryman 2008, p.118; BSA, 2004; Diener and Crandell, 1978).

The extremely sensitive *harm-to-participants* issue was treated with utmost care, so that interview subjects cannot be identified at any stage, even by secondary data analysis. Finland's Personal Data Act (523/1999) classifies employee data, related to or intended to relate to "*race or ethnic origin*" as sensitive data subject to prohibition from processing. Identity records are kept confidential and demographic details, kept at a general level are obscured to prevent any subject identification from published results.

The *lack-of-informed-consent* issue forbids covert participant observation or contrived observation. Interviewees were interviewed using semi-structured interviews, common in social research (Bryman, 2008: p. 196). As generating trust is vital for the method's success, the researcher gave the subjects all the information they needed to make an informed decision to participate. This complies fully with BSA (2004) guidelines (Bryman, 2008: p.121).

The *invasion-of-privacy* issue was considered carefully. Interviewees were informed that agreeing to being interviewed does not surrender their privacy rights, and they may refuse to answer questions. As *privacy* is linked to anonymity and confidentiality in research, the researcher explained to interviewees the safeguards adopted (Section 3.16) to ensure strict anonymity at all stages, especially after the research becomes public. The *deception* issue is straightforward here without need for covert participant observation or contrived observation to delve deeper beyond the information the subjects provided. Gaining access to subjects was not a political process here as there was no *gatekeeper* involved (Bryman, 2008: p. 131).

Care was taken to not 'take sides' during interviews, especially with interviewees knowing that the interviewer is a biethnic like them (Bryman, 2008: p. 131). This can be sensitive as interviewees' biethnic identity formation processes may have strong feeling towards one of the ethnicities in the person's background. The researcher's coaching experience and the semi-structured interview technique helped in avoiding 'taking sides'. The *data fabrication* or

*misrepresentation* issue was handled strictly according to the RCUK guidelines (RCUK, 2009, p. 4-5) as well as the University of Leicester Research Ethics Guidance (2013) involving human participants.

To follow ethical considerations and make participation entirely voluntary, participants were given a clear research strategy and protocol, containing clear and specific information about: research aim and objectives, key participants and research subjects, time involved and level of commitment required of them; how their consent is obtained, and if they choose to any time, how withdrawal is handled; steps taken to identify potential risks to participants: how data is recorded, stored, analysed and used, also for secondary analysis; how privacy issues are handled; how research findings are used and disseminated to participants (Bryman, 2008: p.133).

### **3.19 Conclusion**

This chapter has described this research's design process. It has discussed the framework of methodological and conceptual complexity involved, the particular research design methods, data collection strategies, sampling, subject inclusion criteria, interviewee accessing methods, and data analysis generated findings illuminating the research questions and supporting the research aim of better comprehending the identity formation and OS of biethnic workplace newcomers in Finland.

Primary data was gathered using qualitative semi-structured in-depth interviewing method. At the data analysis stage, the data gathered from the participants was analysed manually within a developed theoretical framework to generate the findings. This chapter delineated limitations pertaining to the research design and process.

A key aspect of this study is my role as researcher combined with my being a biethnic and also an HRD practitioner. I have acknowledged this through

appropriate reflexivity. There was no harmful tension between my roles and I have utilised this seemingly insider status to acquire more meaningful data, insights and deeper analysis. This chapter also explained how ethical issues were handled in this research. The following chapter presents and analyses the findings.

## 4 FINDINGS

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### 4.1 *Introduction*

This chapter presents the findings of the qualitative study about OS of biethnics in Finland. First, biethnics in Finland evaluate their OS and the links between OS and learning. OS differences between biethnics and monoethnic Finns in Finland are then presented. Next, the OS motivators of biethnics, and upbringing's influence on OS are presented, followed by the four biethnic identity types that emerged from the respondents. Finally, findings about adjustee proactivity for OS of biethnics are presented along with concepts of non-Western personal identity among biethnics.

Key constructs are defined as they appear. Illustrative and representative respondent quotes highlight key points. A two-pronged agenda guides this section: Firstly, answers to the research questions are sought from the research data, their interpretation and analysis; secondly, research findings are situated against knowledge gained from literature review. OS, the adjustee's proactive role and the organisation's efforts facilitating OS, biethnic identity and identity management inform the research questions:

- How do biethnic adults see themselves adapting socio-culturally to the workplace in Finland?
- What factors do biethnic adults in Finland consider advantageous or disadvantageous in their OS?
- Do biethnic adults consider their biethnicity a detrimental factor or a factor contributing towards the success of their OS in Finland?
- Do biethnic adults in Finland see their own proactivity as being more important than the role of the organisation facilitating the success of their OS as Ashford and Black (1992) have suggested?

The first research question has biethnic respondents evaluating whether they adjusted well to their workplace, contrasting earlier depictions (section 2.11) of mal-adjusting biethnics. Findings of biethnics exploring their OS experiences, and discussing their biethnicity and identity management, their proactivity and their organisation's OS efforts, answered the secondary research questions.

The research findings emerged from the data analysis as explained in section 3.15. The conceptual linking and assembly by using the researcher's interpretation and methods described in section 3.15 generated meaningful themes and illustrated each theme to produce a more integral understanding of the research phenomena. Table 3 below shows metathemes (in bold) and themes arising from the interviews:

| <b>OS – Workplace adjustment</b>                         | <b>Identity management</b>   |
|--|--|
| Subjective evaluation of OS                              | Biethnic and monoethnic identity formation differences                       |
| Significance of adjusting to new workplace norms         | Effect of adjustment on biethnic identity                                    |
| Monoethnic and biethnic workplace adjustment differences | Can read situations and people better than monoethnics                       |
| Organisation culture / subculture impacts OS             | Awareness of the 'other' ethnicity in own background                         |
| Effect of national / social culture on OS                | Others' preconceptions affect their identity ascription of biethnic subjects |
| Effect of upbringing on OS                               | Familiar with both cultures in own background                                |
| Proactivity and organisation's OS role interrelationship | Own identity is hybrid but neither ethnicity dominant                        |
| Monoethnic people adjust to the workplace easier         | Biethnicity is clearly a boon  |
| Critical of dominant monoethnic culture                  | Would never trade biethnicity away   |
| Paucity of received OS help                              | Identity work is complex   |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| More qualitative OS needed             | Self-identity and social-identity discourse |
| Attracted to workplaces with diversity |   |

Table 3 Metathemes and themes arising from the interviews

## 4.2 Biethnic respondents' subjective evaluation of own OS in Finland

The respondents' evaluation of their OS in Finland is presented here. High interviewee participation eagerness (31 contacted, 30 participated) and long interview duration (average 1,5 hrs) signals importance of biethnic identity formation and OS for subjects. Evaluating how they had adapted to the norms and behavioural requirements of their current organisation prompted discussions of what norms meant to the respondents, and elicited examples. The respondents evaluated their OS on a five-point Likert-scale ranging from 'extremely well' to 'not at all'. Answering the main research question, (Table 4 below) all interviewees adjust well to the workplace and to society. No one reported OS failure. Only two persons labelled their adjustment 'could be better'.

Oliver, an English-German operational-level employee in his sixties, living forty years in Finland, identifying as a White-European, was asked why he thought his adjustment 'could be better'. Oliver explained: *"Of course I'm well adjusted, but I wouldn't be eccentric if I simply answered 'well' or 'extremely well'."* Mia, a Finnish-English respondent in her twenties, fluent in both languages, having worked in both her background cultures explained choosing the *could be better* option as she was very demanding, not agreeing with everything in the Finnish workplace though she has adjusted well.

|                       | Extremely well | Well | Satisfactorily | Could be better | Not at all |
|-----------------------|----------------|------|----------------|-----------------|------------|
| Number of respondents | 15             | 10   | 3              | 2               | 0          |



|                        |    |    |    |   |   |
|------------------------|----|----|----|---|---|
| % of total respondents | 50 | 33 | 10 | 7 | 0 |
|------------------------|----|----|----|---|---|

Table 4 Break-up of how biethnics evaluated their own OS

The ‘satisfactorily’ adjusting respondents were critical of only some aspects of their adjustment, diminishing their overall adjustment rating. Amit, a British-Indian operational-level employee in his 30s, working among monoethnic Finns in a one-on-one client service role was dissatisfied with his inability to speak fluent Finnish, but adjusted well overall. Haruto, a mid-level Finnish-Japanese in his 30s, speaking flawless Finnish and Japanese, and working mostly among monoethnic Finns, explained that unacquainted Finns nowadays replying in English to his fluent Finnish, lowered his overall adjustment rating. Minna, a middle-management Finnish-Kenyan in her 30s, working in a Finnish monoethnic-majority state-run organisation reduced her OS success rating due to the discrimination she encountered (section 4.5.1), but clarified that barring these instances she was well adjusted.

This study’s high OS success rate was supported by most respondents reporting having worked long with the same employer (76% over 1 year), and residing long (average 19.5 years) in the same area, indicating successful OS and social adjustment. In conclusion, all biethnic respondents reported successful OS. The next section presents the role of learning norms in biethnic OS.

#### ***4.2.1 The role of learning norms in the OS of biethnics***

Though a few respondents were born and brought up abroad and immigrated to Finland as adults, all interviewees reported learning workplace norms quickly. Learning workplace norms impacts OS significantly, as explained by Amit: “*How one relates to personal space and silence are two areas that were new and important for me. In Finland these are very different from other places.*” The lack of non-task-related

small-talk in Finland bothers Amit as small-talk as a prelude to knowing others and the feelings before addressing serious issues is the 'norm' behaviour in his UK upbringing. *"This small talk idea – just to say hello to people and greet them, it's so nice in the UK, but not common here. When they pass you by, they would just not acknowledge, look or nod as if you didn't exist."* Emilia, a Finnish-British respondent in her late 20s, working in top management, explains the challenges of learning norms different from the default Finnish organisational culture.

*"I work in a Swedish company in Finland. We all have to adapt to Swedish mentality more than a Finnish way of working. We have more public clapping, lifting people up for their work, culture cards, strong culture related things and we emphasize lots on being happy. There is more outward thinking and being social, which Finnish companies seldom are."*

For Emilia, in a 'traditional' monoethnic Finnish workplace, getting directly to business without small-talk is the 'norm' and non-essential talk a frivolity. The Swedish norm obliging everyone to voice their opinions at the discussion stage and showing emotions openly were challenges for her. Communication differences affecting norm-learning were revealed by Ciro, an Italo-Argentinian lawyer in his 40s, with both parents non-Finns, who immigrated to Finland from Argentina:

*"People talk much less here so there are many assumptions. Coming from a very different kind of culture, this requires some adjusting to, but I have learnt this rather quickly."*

Ciro, a gregarious person, needed to adapt his Latino communication style and behaviour to the Finnish less-expressive manner. He analysed his biethnic background for necessary skills and explains how he succeeded:

*"I am an Argentinian, diligent, while as an Italian I am lively, then again as I am partly an Arab I am very respectful. Now I'm respectfully quiet."*

Ciro metaphorically sees people as houses. A monoethnic person has windows all opening on one side of this 'house', whereas a biethnic 'house' has two sets of windows opening on different sides of the house. Some biethnics can keep all windows open simultaneously, whilst others may keep one set of windows shut at all times and even walled up. Some alternately open and shut different windows at different life stages affecting how new views, ideas, impressions and experiences appear. Ciro explains:

*"In my house all windows, the Italo-windows, the Arab-windows and the Argentinian-windows are all open at all times. Finns have only one set of windows and they are always kept shut. This morning I said to my Finnish neighbour "Good morning!" and as you can guess there was no reaction."*

Avoiding discussing non-work-related topics and especially feelings being the norm in Finland echoed in all the respondent's answers, even those born and brought up in Finland. Hans, a top management engineer in his 40s, born and brought up in Finland, with a Finnish father and German mother explains how workplace norms reveal cultural differences:

*"In Finland, there is always an immediate hurry in everything. It is as if people have a right to demand that everything should happen in a faster pace and it often feels that these demands are exorbitant."*

Hans claimed that this workplace norm entailed appearing busy, probably from a reticence about feelings and, also insecurity about keeping one's job in an insecure job-market in Finland. This impacts newcomer OS as learning norms in the new workplace primarily happens through interpersonal interactions via questions, answers and discussions.

Noah, in his late 30s, top management in a global corporation, born in Finland to Finnish-North African parents, emphasized how his demonstrating having

mastered workplace norms convinced his organisation that he could adjust to future challenges, impacting his career.

*“It’s actually the reason why they want you to be there still, that you can adapt well. They don’t judge you on your skin, your background, your ethnicity or whatever, the main thing is what are you capable of.”*

Asked how he knew if he had successfully demonstrated his understanding of the organisation’s viewpoint and norms, Noah clarified.

*“I can measure it from how they rely on me. I have the possibility to speak freely, and no matter who is the boss or the CEO, CFO or whatever. In Finland this trust and dependability is a good indication of successful adjustment as trust is very difficult to gain.”*

Noah’s views of gaining trust finds support in every respondents’ opinions. How relevant is norm learning when moving between sectors or from one industry to another? About a quarter of the respondents reported their new jobs requiring learning new behaviour norms, when moving to a different industry or from the private to the public sector or vice versa. Nina, a mid-level Finnish-Japanese public-sector manager in her 30s explains:

*“Being in the public sector, as a boss you need to be flavourless or greyish so you need to be very careful about how you behave even outside your work. That was a bit shocking to me as it means that you need to be a little bit on your toes all the time.”*

Nina becoming a supervisor, had to learn the new norm that she couldn’t behave in the traditional office Christmas party as freely as in the private sector. Jane, a Thai-Finnish middle manager in her 30s observes critically how workplace norms not being articulated made norm-learning difficult.

*“In Finnish workplaces people are very concerned about not offending anybody and I’m used to the system that if person X makes a mistake then you talk to person X only to adjust their behaviour, whereas in the Finnish workplace I find it really disturbing that there will be a general memo about what is acceptable behaviour and you know the subtext is that somebody has not been behaving accordingly, but the unacceptable behaviour and who did it hasn’t been pointed out.”*

Jane refers to a cultural norm in Finnish workplaces that personal confrontations are avoided and discussion about behavioural lapses or perception differences are handled systemically by first distancing issues from persons and masking who should have been confronted. Getting used to this avoidance of face-to-face confronting is challenging in Finnish workplaces as no one explained to Jane how this norm actually functions, but she understood this quickly due to her inbuilt etic-emic biethnic perspective.

The biethnic respondents, who were half-Finnish themselves saw Finns both objectively in an *etic* view as well as their inherent *emic* view, but when analysing the behaviour of Finns and Finnish culture used ‘they’ or ‘them’ for the Finns. This does not mean that half-Finnish biethnics in Finland did not identify as Finns as some did. Using the third person for monoethnic Finns was only a descriptive device helping the biethnic identity work.

We have now seen how norms affect OS, the next section presents the ‘tools’ biethnicity confers on biethnics.

#### ***4.2.2 Adjustment tools their biethnicity produces for biethnic individuals***

The first ‘tool’ fostered by biethnicity is enhanced social skills, as Omer, a Turkish-Finnish mid-level public-sector manager in his late 20s, born and brought up in Finland to a Finnish mother and a Turkish father explains: *“I have an inherent advantage in people management. As a biethnic, I have better social skills.”*

Asked whether these better skills come from his biethnicity and not from his personality, Omer replied *“Yes, I am absolutely certain as I have thought much about it and discussed the matter in and out of the workplace.”* William, a Finnish-Sierra Leone operational-level respondent in his 20s with work experience from both monocultural and multicultural workplaces concurs:

*“Biethnicity does give you more and especially if it is a multicultural workplace with people from different backgrounds. Relatability to different backgrounds gives an edge.”*

William uses *relatability* to show how personal exposure to diverse ethnic/cultural elements in own familial background can enable a biethnic to generate better social skills by relating to different values and cultural perspectives in others. The second ‘tool’ is communication skills. Awareness of different ethnic, cultural and linguistic components present or even nascent in their own backgrounds gives biethnics an ability for acquiring a deeper understanding of values and thought processes of different cultures. This often translates into insightful communication skills. Tina, a Finnish-Turkish mid-level small NGO manager in her 30s, clarifies this biethnicity insight boon:

*“Communicating with people from different backgrounds and ethnicities should be flexible and understanding. These are characteristics that have formed in me due to my bicultural background. I operate with a different skill set than the average Finnish monoethnic person.”*

Asked for an example, Tina clarifies: *“Communicating only by email is considered efficient among Finns, but not among others. In a multicultural organisation, using only Finnish habits to reach people is wrong. It doesn’t reach the client.”* Tina’s practical insights reflect comparative analysis of Finnish and other cultural behaviours, a trait every biethnic respondent shared.

The third 'tool' concerns coping skills, discerned in how biethnic individuals cope with possible discrimination, racism and power-relations in their biethnic identity work at different life phases. In norm-learning, the difference between the 'is' or descriptive and the 'ought' or injunctive meaning of social norms are important. Nina, a Finnish-Japanese respondent in her 30s, who grew up and has worked mostly in Finland, explains this difference through her work experience in a Japanese office where everyone saw her as a foreigner:

*"My boss summoned me to his room saying that your colleagues think that you are frustrated. I asked him 'why do you think so'. 'From your body-language'- he said. They sit the whole day with an erect posture, they don't slump or slouch as I probably did sometimes like I do here in Finland. They really took me apart and told me that by slouching I am signalling to everyone that I am frustrated."*

Nina was required to demonstrate through her posture her internalization of how she *ought* to behave and Nina had failed to notice how her posture did not convey the appropriate signals. This difference between the *ought* and *is*, interpreted through body-language in Japan, confused Nina as this interpretation was absent in Finnish workplaces.

*Proactivity* in handling discrimination is another area revealing OS differences among biethnics and monoethnics. Respondents emphasised how balancing tensions between own identity and how others saw and treated them, conditioned by the prevalent racial/ethnic/cultural stereotypes, affected their identity as Social identity theory and Cooley's Looking-glass Self Theory suggested. However, the distinctive exposure to linguistic, cultural and ethnic influences in one's background generates characteristic adjustment skills only if the biethnic proactively develops these skills and utilises them in interactions. Amanda, a Finnish-Korean operational level multicultural workplace employee in her 20s, born and brought up in Finland with a Finnish mother and a Korean father explains:

*“But this double background has become an advantage only through my efforts of processing how I relate to these differences in me.”*

Amanda emphasises that though handling internal diversity in their identity work might give a biethnic person enhanced skills to process external diversity, only purposeful self-development effort brings improved diversity management success. Sophia, a Finnish-Iranian multicultural workplace mid-level manager in her 30s gives an example:

*“Remember one Palestinian Christian woman in Finland experiencing racism even if she had to get the newspaper from her own letter-box. She couldn’t handle what she thought she was and how she believed others saw her. Some people use the racism-card everywhere.”*

Sophia suggests that being biethnic without the motivation and ability to handle tensions between external ascription and internal identity would negatively impact OS. Haruto explains how his biethnicity became an empowering factor through his conscious efforts, contributing to prejudice alleviation.

*“People generally trust me, tell me many personal things and ask me many questions. My cooperation with people is beneficial for everybody. Nobody sees me as a threat.”*

Asked if this trust comes from his biethnicity instead of his personality, Haruto clarifies how consciously working on his understanding of his biethnicity generated better adjustment skills: *“My life experience, biethnicity, personality and conscious efforts all contribute towards this as also my ability to easily adapt to the surrounding.”*



We have seen the adjustment enhancing ‘tools’ that biethnicity gives. The next section presents the OS differences between biethnics and monoethnics in Finland.

### 4.3 OS differences among monoethnic and biethnic individuals

The findings reveal OS differences and three potential OS advantages for biethnics over monoethnics in Finland: a) enhanced social skills due to their biethnicity possibly bringing enhanced knowledge of culture and languages, b) advantageous adjustment skills through familiarity of processing of internal ethnic/cultural differences, c) coping skills acquired through managing tensions between own identity and external identity ascriptions and possible power-relation issues.

Respondents of the pilot study found the monoethnic-biethnic OS comparison challenging. The strategy adopted to get respondents ponder and analyse OS differences between biethnics and monoethnics was to first make them answer, off-the-cuff, if ‘monoethnic people adapt to the norms and behavioural requirements of your current organisation better than you?’ and after they had answered, ask the control question ‘Do you think biethnic people adapt better the workplace?’ The first question explored the respondent’s own workplace where they compared a monoethnic to themselves, while the second question handled OS in general. The answers to the first question are below in Table 5:

|                        | <b>Monoethnics adjust better</b> | <b>Biethnics adjust better</b> | <b>It depends</b> |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------|
| Number of respondents  | 17                               | 11                             | 2                 |
| % of total respondents | 57                               | 36                             | 7                 |

Table 5 Do monoethnics adjust better to the workplace than biethnics?

The majority respondents believing monoethnics adjust better to the workplace in Finland relied on two arguments: firstly, monoethnics have a home-field advantage as the workplace norms reflect social norms they grew up with, they do not face immigration challenges as some biethnics do; secondly, monoethnics may not experience racism or discrimination as some biethnics might and being saved from these burdens makes their OS easier. Anastasia, an operational-level Finnish-Tatar multinational employee in her 50s with experience of living and working in many countries, explained the home-field advantage with a lack of alternative cultural norms complicating sense-making: *"Yes, of course, because they (the monoethnics) don't know of anything else. They were born with that only."* A majority of the respondents reasoned that monoethnics fit in easier because reference points of culture and norms are more familiar to them in an overwhelmingly monoethnic dominated society. Minna, a middle-management Finnish-Kenyan in her 30s, working in a Finnish monoethnic-majority state-run organisation justifies:

*"Being monoethnic is the default in this society, and that gives them a normative advantage, while biethnics need to negotiate their way rather often and persistently."*

Most respondents, including Anastasia and Minna, re-evaluated their off-the-cuff answers to the first question on hearing the second control question. Their answers to the second control question show own immigration experience, attitudes, upbringing, language and cross-cultural skills, personal exposure to ethnic and cultural diversity affecting OS. How biethnics experienced and handled discrimination in their OS is explained in section 4.5.1. Two respondents believed ethnicity being a smaller adjustment causal-factor compared to personality, upbringing and life experience. Minna explains:

*"Your attitude, your experiences matter, if you have been working much in international environments, are used to communicating with people from*

*different ethnic backgrounds. These factors may even count more than your ethnic background."*

Minna highlights a crucial point that diversity in one's ethnic background is not an automatic enabler of improved adjustment as monoethnics with increased exposure to ethnic and cultural diversity e.g., having lived abroad, may utilise their personal diversity experience for adjusting better if they are suitably motivated and skilled. Ciro, an Italo-Argentinian operational-level lawyer in his 40s, having immigrated to Finland from Argentina in his 30s, agrees with the monoethnic's possible home-field advantage but emphasises the adjustment motivation factor:

*"Adaptation to the workplace also depends much on what the motivations of adjusting are. Monoethnics have an advantage because they grow up within this culture and consider it as default whereas a biethnic person may have to navigate, not to talk about an immigrant who is coming from an entirely different set of circumstances."*

Ciro, reflecting on his own immigration to Finland, considers immigration a major challenge for an immigrant biethnic. Table 6 below presents answers to the second question: *'Do you think biethnic people adapt better the workplace?'*

|                        | <b>Biethnics adjust better</b> | <b>Monoethnics adjust better</b> | <b>It depends</b> |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Number of respondents  | 18                             | 7                                | 5                 |
| % of total respondents | 60                             | 23                               | 17                |

Table 6 Do biethnics adjust better to the workplace than monoethnics?

The 'it depends' answers increased compared to the earlier question. A slight majority of interviewees believed that biethnics adjust better, relying on the argument that a biethnic with two different ethnic and cultural code systems in

their family background, even without active exposure to both, still needed identity negotiations, and navigating internal diversity generated an increased tolerance for diversity and ambivalence, improving their OS. Riku, a Finnish-Japanese executive in his 40s explains this intra-family diversity-effect on OS through a the-more-one-has-to-rehearse, the-better-one-performs argument: *“But of course, as biethnics we have this experience of diversity inside our families and that gives us an advantage.”*

Timo, a German-Finnish multinational top-management in his 40s, fluent in both his background languages and three others, explained how increased diversity exposure within the biethnic’s intra-family background produces a potential advantage by giving additional adjustment tools, which the biethnic could utilise by applying emotional intelligence to improve OS.

*“You have to be intelligent, skilled in emotional intelligence. Then it does not matter if you are biethnic or monoethnic because you can cope anyway. But if you are of a mixed background, it helps you more.”*

Asked whether biethnicity increases emotional intelligence, Timo clarifies: *“First it comes from your character, then if you have a mixed background it is even better. So, a biethnic background gives you more tools.”* We have seen the differences between biethnic and monoethnic OS experiences. The next section presents factors affecting OS motivation.

#### ***4.3.1 Factors affecting OS motivation of biethnic individuals***

What motivation factors do biethnic individuals consider as the most and least important in their OS? Seemingly important features of employee motivational needs were identified from the OS literature, and after being tested in the pilot study were collated into possible themes, reviewed and refined to form the five themes. Respondents chose from the five themes what they considered the most

and the least important OS motivating factors. Table 7 shows the themes and the respondent's choices:

|  | Most important        |                  | Least important       |                  |
|--|-----------------------|------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
|  | Number of respondents | % of respondents | Number of respondents | % of respondents |
| <i>Being popular and liked at the workplace</i>      | 2                     | 6,66             | 9                     | 30               |
| <i>Getting more money and benefits</i>               | 2                     | 6,66             | 7                     | 23,33            |
| <i>Having power and high status at the workplace</i> | 1                     | 3,33             | 14                    | 46,66            |
| <i>Being regarded as professional</i>                | 8                     | 26,66            | 0                     |                  |
| <i>Learning and developing professionally</i>        | 17                    | 56,66            | 0                     |                  |
|  | 30                    | 100              | 30                    | 100              |

Table 7 Motivation for OS among biethnics in Finland

Two majority choices for the most important motivators stand out: *Learning and developing personally*, and *Being regarded as professional*. That the majority chose it as the most important and no one considered *Learning and developing personally* as the least important, demonstrates the centrality of learning in OS for biethnics. However, learning, by itself is not a reliable indicator of OS success but rather learning in connection to improvements in other outcomes e.g., job satisfaction and intention to quit.

For some biethnics, learning workplace norms and how things actually work at the workplace are connected with other outcomes i.e., achieving reliability and trust as we saw Noah explaining in section 4.2.1. For Noah, *learning* is antecedent to relationship building, trust and reliability, and *learning* directly improves the efficacy of bi-directional communication and therefore increases certainty and positively affects OS as Uncertainty Reduction and Sense-Making

Theories suggest. This causal-link is evident in *reliability* that can be evaluated, as Anastasia, an operational-level Finnish-Tatar biethnic in her 50s affirms how learning affects her reputation of reliability which, in turn, improves her OS:

*"I have been pretty good at this kind of learning as people at work always think and say "Ask Anastasia, she knows!" I at least know who knows."*

Almost a majority of biethnics choosing *Having power and high status at the workplace* as their least important option should be considered in a Finnish workplace context, which is rather egalitarian and low-hierarchy with low power-distance. This choice might be different in high-hierarchy cultures. Similarly, the high number of respondents choosing *Being popular and liked at the workplace* as their least important should be seen in the backdrop of work centrality and the notion of work success being earned only by hard work following the Protestant Ethics still strong in Finland (Castells & Himanen, 2002, p. 160). To justify, respondents used comments such as *"The workplace is not a popularity contest"*, *"If I'd be looking for power, I'd not be working here"*, *"I'm a boss here so I don't really care about being popular"*, *"Having power and especially the use of it is not my thing."* and *"I wouldn't be working in an NGO if these were important for me"*. Choosing *Having power and high status at the workplace* as their least important option and choosing *Being regarded as professional* as one of the most important go hand in hand as *Being regarded as professional* links directly to social ascription i.e., how others saw the respondent. Timo, a German-Finnish multinational top-management in his 40s, fluent in both his background languages and three others, explains:

*"Being professional is equally important in Finland and Germany, actually in northern Germany, you live by example, more than emphasizing what your studies were and what you have done otherwise in your job."*

The underlying assumption in Timo's understanding is that instead of aiming for high popularity, one requires high level of *learning*, producing higher level

of professional competence, making the adjustee a more valuable contributing member of the organisation. This reduces biethnic's and the organisation's uncertainty as the Uncertainty Reduction and Sense-Making Theories suggest and positively impacts the person's OS and career. Tina, a Finnish-Turkish biethnic middle-manager in her 30s explains how being regarded as more approachable positively affects her client interactions and OS:

*"Finnish monoethnic colleagues misunderstand certain body language that is more natural to me. Foreign clients, they'd rather tell me what they expect than my Finnish colleagues and we can take matters forward much faster. To them I am more approachable than my Finnish colleagues."*

Tina being seen as more approachable signals higher professional competence and generates more trust among her diverse clients. Higher trust reduces Tina's and the client's uncertainty. Most respondents claimed that *Learning and developing personally* is reflected in their interactions with others. When they are *regarded as professional* by others around them, this affirmation of their identity as approachable persons with high communication skills affects their identity formation, as suggested by Social identity theory and Cooley's Looking-glass Self Theory.

In conclusion, *Learning and developing personally* and *Being regarded as professional* emerge as the most significant OS motivation factors for biethnics in Finland. The next section presents the OS of biethnics with no visible differences from monoethnics.

#### ***4.3.2 OS of biethnics with no visible phenotype differences from monoethnics***

If a person's name or phenotype does not reveal their ethnicity component being different from the majority around them, their degree of mastery of behavioural norms might. Timo, a German-Finnish top-management

multinational in his 40s, fluent in both his background languages and three others, and with no phenotype difference from a stereotypical Finn, explains how his Germanness is operational in Finland: *"I like to be very frank and clear in my statements and sort out things and have clear responsibilities. In Finland, they clearly don't get straight to the point and in me this is more like a German feature."* As his multinational's organisational culture predominates the local Finnish culture, his Germanness may not be evident in workplace interactions but outside the workplace it might, depending on the situation and people involved.

If phenotype differences are absent, when and how these ethnicity/cultural differences surface can be critical, as Evita, a Finnish-Portuguese mid-level manager in her 30s explains this affecting her OS:

*"If these cultural and norm differences come into play as a surprise at a later stage of the cooperation, then it can turn into a big issue. If it conflicts with your own understanding of how you see the other person, it can become a threshold question negatively affecting your interaction. But, if the other person gets support from you in handling these differences, they reduce their impact. Some biethnics are very good in giving this support of helping others understand cultural relativism."*

In these biethnic-monoethnic interactions, increased familiarity may not automatically remove prejudices as the Contact Hypothesis claims. Evita shows that her proactively helping others handle even sudden revelations of ethnic 'difference' removes prejudices. Marina, a Finnish-Greek female interpreter in her 30s, liaising between Finns and foreign clients highlights the distinctive liaison possibilities of biethnics in a mostly monoethnic work community: *"A biethnic can function as a bridge-builder and dialogue builder between people at the workplace."*



Marina shows how with her help her often clueless Finnish monoethnic colleagues understand value differences and how these impact cultural norms and behaviours. This helps the monoethnics process these differences and avoid becoming stuck in stereotypical depictions of differences and cooperate better. Asked for an example, Marina explains:

*“When we have immigrants playing or singing in some group, their time concepts may be much at odds with the Finnish one. They might turn up one hour late for rehearsals or for concerts. I have been the bridge there, trying to explain to them how to adjust to the Finnish way.”*

Marina acts as a bridge-builder by explaining how cultural differences affect behaviour and relationships so colleagues can understand these and adapt their own behaviour. Her bridge-building efforts also helps Marina’s OS.

We have seen how absence of phenotype difference affects OS and how biethnics can proactively help interactions. The next section explains how upbringing affects biethnic OS in Finland.

#### **4.4 Effect of upbringing on OS of biethnics in Finland**

Respondents emphasised two aspects of *upbringing* for OS: depth of impact of upbringing through character formation in the formative years, and the permanency of the impact, often throughout the lifetime. Most respondents were born and brought up in Finland. From the minority born abroad half had immigrated to Finland as children. Most respondents had one Finnish parent, while for a minority neither parent was an ethnic Finn. Having one ethnic Finn parent, compared to others with two non-ethnic Finnish parents, provided OS advantages due to previous familiarity with Finnish culture and norms among at least one family member. Jaana, a Finnish-British biethnic in her 30s sees this home-field advantage transmitted through the ethnic-Finn parent.

*“Consider a Somali born and brought up in Finland. This person’s cultural and ethnic mix is radically different from the Finnish set and would make adjustment much more difficult for this person compared to me. If either parent is a Finn, then there is an advantage.”*

Jaana’s parents’ cultures and ethnicities (British and Finnish) are closer to the dominant culture in Finland than that of a Somali’s. Jaana suggests that this cultural ‘distance’ in her case being smaller due to Finnish and British cultures both being Western, European with a Christian ethos brings her an advantage over a Somali with a very different culture and visibly different phenotype adjusting to Finland. However, Jaana stresses the importance of *upbringing* over *ethnicity*: *“But if I’d consider components of my own ethnicity: Finnish and English,....Upbringing and experience of family are the weightier factors.”*

Respondents were asked which of their parent’s culture was dominant in their upbringing and whether this dominance was ethnicity-related or personality issues. Half of the respondents reported never having thought about how upbringing affected their OS. The break-up of the dominant parent’s culture is shown in Table 8. Half of the respondents thought that their mother’s ethnic culture was the dominant culture of their childhood home and characterised their upbringing. Of the 15 respondents reporting their mother’s culture being dominant, only Jane’s Thai mother, was a non-Finn. Jane was born and raised in Finland and the family had mostly lived in Finland.

|                       | Father’s culture | Mother’s culture | Hybrid culture |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Number of respondents | 6                | 15               | 9              |
| % of respondents      | 20               | 50               | 30             |

Table 8 Dominant culture in the family: Mother's or Father's

Jaana, a Finnish-British top-management biethnic in her 30s explains the depth of impact of upbringing:

*“But if I’d consider components of my own ethnicity: Finnish and English, they are not strong determinants in my own adjustment. Upbringing and family experience are the weightier factors.”*

Jaana’s comments show how character-building, ingrained values and attitudes as well as habits, which an individual acquires primarily through upbringing in their formative years, are the most important formative factors of OS. These characteristics influenced by upbringing become permanent personality features. The parent’s influence on OS is not ephemeral or life-stage limited, but still felt at the workplace years later, as Hans, a Finnish-German top-management executive in his late 40s with vast overseas working experience narrates: *“Even at this advanced age, my father’s effect on me is still discernible even though my parents divorced when I was 14 and my father moved away.”*

Hans stresses that his father’s impact on Hans’s values and attitudes was so enduring that only in his late 40s did Hans question them rather than continue blindly believing and obeying. The parents’ example of character, values and attitudes is sometimes the strongest upbringing influence shaping OS, as Anna, a Finnish-Filipino operational-level biethnic employee in her 20s narrates:

*“My dad had always been very hardworking, never had a sick leave. Finns generally know their rights very well and, people generally use those sick-leave rights quiet much. They know that, you are allowed to have two days a month sick leave without a doctor’s certificate so they really count them and use them so that they are not left unused. If I’m not deadly sick, I’m not going to stay home at all.”*

Anna suggests that though the legal rights and obligations are the same for every inhabitant, as a biethnic she operates differently from *them*, the monoethnic Finns. This disparity, Anna suggests is not any discrimination due to her phenotype, name, religion or ethnicity but it is her internalised code of conduct, a work-ethic that her immigrant Filipino father inspired by his example. Anna still feels, that as she has this different ethnic component in her, she has to perform 110% as Omer (section 4.5.1), to be seen as equal to monoethnic Finns. She clarified that *“Finns only talk much about being so hard-working but are not hard-working anymore nowadays, but this is a very taboo subject and you cannot talk about it publicly.”* Harry, an Italo-American operational-level employee in his 50s explains upbringing’s permanency aspect through how the parent’s conscious educating effort can be a positive life-shaping factor throughout working life:

*“If I think of my upbringing, it was much more important for my adjustment, especially my mother’s effect in terms of equality of pay. She instilled in us this idea that whatever a man can do, a woman can do and should be paid equally.”*

Upbringing as a character-shaper starting early in life and continuing throughout is an undeniable influence on later OS, as Minna, a middle-management Finnish-Kenyan in her 30s who works in a Finnish monoethnic-majority national organisation explains: *“Your upbringing shapes you as who you are or rather have become and so it must affect your adjustment outcomes also.”* For Minna, her parents have consciously highlighted the upbringing-OS link early on in life. We see how upbringing is clearly understood as a preparatory process for life, especially working life, for Amanda, a Finnish-Korean operational level multicultural workplace employee in her 20s, born and brought up in Finland with a Finnish mother and a Korean father:

*“Every upbringing aims to create a final outcome that creates the best possibility for adapting to different situations. Yes, I would almost say that your upbringing has a larger influence on your adaptation than culture.”*

What is the exact mechanism how upbringing affects OS? From the respondents' comments it appears that value inculcation, role-model acquisition and parents' examples during upbringing shapes attitudes, habits and behaviour that directly affect OS. Azra, a top-management Finnish-Moroccan in her 20s explains:

*"From home I have learned that I have to work hard, be independent and self-reliant and not be too much dependent on others. Also ambition and solid work ethics come from the home environment. It creates the foundation of everything else."*

Another example of how upbringing has transmitted values of *respect* for others and especially diversity, and affected his OS is evident in the words of Omer, a Turkish-Finnish mid-level manager in his late 20s, born and brought up in Finland to a Finnish mother and a Turkish father:

*"These values of understanding and respecting diversity and humans, come through upbringing and I consider it a great boon that I am biethnic, bicultural and bilingual."*

Omer explained that in his workplace, he is the only visibly biethnic person. The diversity respecting attitude he learnt from his parents has helped him immensely by helping him see other kinds of diversity than ethnicity, e.g., disability, sexuality/gender diversity and different working styles and mindsets among entrepreneurs or state-owned organisation employees. Omer's understanding of values for respect inculcated during upbringing directly impacting his OS is shared by Riku, a Finnish-Japanese mid-level manager in his 40s: *"The most important thing from my upbringing, with an impact on adaptation is I have learnt to respect all people, to value diversity."* Riku adds that as he has worked mostly in multinationals, he would hardly have been successful if respect for diversity had not been internalised due to upbringing.

Active habit monitoring in childhood helps a person acquire healthy and productive habits that directly affects OS, as Ben, a Finnish-Jamaican mid-level manager in his 30s explains:

*“Due to your mom, if you have a rhythm of going to sleep early and waking up early. If your parents don’t teach you that, then you are going to have problems at the workplace, as you would be going there late. Yes, it has greatly influenced my workplace adaptation.”*

Habits, norms and attitudes impacting behaviour, behaviour patterns and instinctive responses through upbringing, all affecting OS, finds validation from Ciro, an Italo-Argentinian operational-level lawyer in his 40s, who immigrated to Finland in his mid-30s: *“This upbringing factor is very important as it shapes our behaviour patterns and instinctive responses and creates our value systems.”* Ciro’s point about instinctive responses being shaped through upbringing become salient when the growing up culture e.g., the school, is a culture dominated by monoethnics with often almost no understanding of different norms, concepts or behavioural patterns from other cultures.

Upbringing, where the difference between behaviour patterns of the person’s ethnic culture and the surrounding ambience’s behavioural patterns are consciously processed by the parents, can become a potent knowledge-source and behaviour-model capital for the biethnic children. This provides deeper understanding and gives biethnics an ability to adapt their behavioural responses to contextual needs, and thus improve OS. William, a Finnish-SierraLeonese operational-level employee in his 20s explains:

*“I was born and raised here, so it’s really easy to adapt because I know, understand and relate to my colleagues as we have a similar background. Then, because I do have other layers in my background, it gives something extra. Something more.”*

William explains how through conscious processing of these ‘other layers’ he gained a significant OS advantage. Upbringing has to handle the tension between social ascription of their ethnicity by the ambient monoethnic society in Finland and the distinctiveness of the biethnic’s familial background. How successfully the biethnic’s upbringing does that significantly impacts their OS. Sophia, a Finnish-Iranian mid-level manager in her 30s explains:

*“My mother has been repeating all the time to me that ‘You are a Finn.’ It has confused me somewhat, this kind of denial of obvious facts. It has also raised my self-confidence that I am a 100% Finn though there is something else in me, it does not reduce that 100% but adds to it.”*

Sophia looks different from the monoethnic majority Finns around her and Sophia’s name reveals her father’s ethnicity. But her mother’s constant insistence on making Sophia stand in front of a mirror and repeat “*I am a Finn*” despite her seeing a child with darker (than typical monoethnic Finns) skin tone and darker hair stare back at herself, though it felt confusing, helped manage the social ascription-own identity tension and became a source of strength positively impacting her OS.

There is a caveat for the biethnic individual’s reaping the benefits of their enlightened upbringing, *proactivity*, as Haruto explains:

*“Upbringing and how I as an individual continuously work with these issues are linked intimately. As long as it is explicit that you are Finnish and that you have grown up in a Finnish environment, everything is fine for you but as soon as it becomes obvious that some other culture is the dominant influencer in you, things can be harder for you.”*

If Haruto, who had moved to Finland as a child, had not engaged in introspection and analysis to handle the tension between his own identity

concept and external ascription, he felt that he could not have coped with how some monoethnic Finns around him treated him as a foreigner, when they suddenly learnt that he was born in Japan and not in Finland. Sakura, a mid-level Finnish-Japanese manager in her 40s echoes the same feelings: *“People are always questioning you and your ability and your right to be here or there or your right to be anywhere.”* If challenged, Sakura reacts more assertively than Haruto in defending her biethnicity:

*“If someone asks me where are you from, I reply Finland, as I was born here. But if they ask me ‘but, you don’t look like Finnish or Japanese either’, I reply ‘Did I just say that I am half Japanese or did I say I was full Japanese? How do you expect a half-Japanese person to look full Japanese? Besides, did I just begin an analysis of your face?’”*

Even if upbringing is perceived deficient for not providing necessary guidance and role models, some biethnics managed, pro-actively, to adjust well. Marina, an operational level Finnish-Greek biethnic employee in her 30s narrates:

*“I was born in an artistic home and this placed me in the middle of much conflicts and coloured my upbringing. I or biethnic persons are kinder than monoethnic persons as we have to deal with different ways of seeing things in our own selves through our backgrounds and this brings a dimension of kindness.”*

Marina also narrates how a biethnic needs to actively process deceptive cultural value depictions. Asked for an example, Marina explained:

*“Finns brag about being diligent and hard-working and generally say that over there in Greece one doesn’t work hard at all. This is mind-boggling stupidity. Look at the boss of this restaurant, he works insane hours and very hard but Finns, who work the shortest hours probably in the world lecture him about hard-working Finns and lazy Mediterraneans.”*



Echoing Omer and Minna, Marina has to work harder than the monoethnics around her in order to be accepted. Another example of the biethnic turning deficient upbringing into resilience and coping skills is Jane, a Thai-Finnish mid-level manager in her 30s. She narrates:

*“I consider my upbringing fairly lacking. I was left with different relatives. At 14, I was left on my own completely. I’ve had to read people much as in my childhood the stable adult was not so stable. So, I spent much time figuring out people’s intentions.”*

In Jane we see again that practice in resolving one’s own biethnic background makes one skilful in OS. The most original connection between upbringing and OS, humour, comes from Noah, a top-management Finnish-Tunisian in his 30s:

*“The monoethnic Finns, when they get into the work environment they get into serious work and so when you speak to them it’s very serious. My body language, demeanour, sense of humour – these are all somehow different from the usual monoethnic Finn stuff. A sense of humour is very important for biethnics. This is the only way you can get through to them, otherwise any comment you get or any response you get or any behaviour that might shock them, if you don’t have a sense of humour you are really lost.”*

Noah’s ability to defuse tensions and relax different kinds of people through his humour, especially when culture-clashes make cooperation difficult, has repeatedly come in handy, and this skill he attributes to his biethnicity. The findings clearly established upbringing’s central role in OS. The next section presents four types of biethnic identity observed among the respondents.

#### 4.5 *Four types of biethnic identity among biethnic respondents in Finland*

Four biethnic identity types emerged from the interviews (Table 9 below). They are not stages, as each type can occur at different life phases and no order of progression is implied. As individuals might switch biethnic identity types, no judgement about type desirability is possible. Respondents reported these identity types as durable yet not static as they evolve in response to external or internal stimuli.

| Hyphenated ethnic-identity | Race-based superordinate identity (ethnicities in brackets are the respondents' parents' ethnicities) | Single ethnic group identity (ethnicities in brackets are the respondents' parents' ethnicities) | Fluid context-related ethnic-identity                      |
|----------------------------|---|--|--|
| Finnish-Turkish            | White- European (British-German)  | English (English-African-Indian-Kenyan parents)  | Finnish or Finnish-Japanese depending on context           |
| Thai-Finnish               | White Anglo-Saxon (Finnish-German)  | Finnish (Finnish-Tatar parents)  | Finnish or Tunisian, depending on context                  |
| Finnish-English            | European (Finnish-Portuguese)   | Finnish (Finnish-English)  | Finnish or Finnish-Japanese depending on context           |
| Italo-American             | Mixed (Finnish-Jamaican)  |  | Finnish or Filipino depending on context                   |
| German-Finnish             | British (Indian-British)  |  | Japanese or Finnish-Japanese depending on context          |
| Turkish-Finnish            | White other (Finnish-Moroccan parents)  |  | Finnish-Japanese or Japanese-Finnish, depending on context |
| Finnish-Swedish            |   |  | Finnish or Finnish-Sierra Leone depending on context       |

|                 |  |  |  |
|-----------------|--|--|--|
| Serbo-Croatian  |  |  | Finnish or Finnish-Korean depending on context |
| Finnish-Iranian |  |  | Finnish or Kenyan-Finnish depending on context |
| Italo-Argentino |  |  | Finnish or Greek depending on context          |
| Finnish-Turkmen |  |  |  |

Table 9 Biethnic identity types reported by the biethnic respondents

Half of the respondents identified with the biethnic identity type, *Hyphenated ethnic-identity*. This type has the biethnic individual's both ethnicity components, stemming from the parents' ethnicity, active and socially validated, with the dominant ethnicity in the beginning, e.g., Finnish-Turkish or Thai-Finnish. The multiple ethnic components of the *Hyphenated ethnic-identity* are categorised and 'compartmentalised' so that individuals feel belonging to both groups. The ethnic components are not *merged* but distinctly contextually operational so that when one identity is operational the individual might have a 'there's something more in me' feeling.

Sometimes the biethnic had to defend why one particular ethnicity is active. Jane, a Thai-Finnish mid-level manager in her 30s, who speaks both languages fluently explains:

*"I don't define my Thai ethnicity by labelling but I feel happier associating with that group as it is welcoming as opposed to Finland. It's normal to have mixed ethnicity in Thailand. Nobody makes a big noise about it, whereas in Finland I'm asked 'why do you speak Thai, why should you?'. My Finnish mother-in-law asked me 'why do you speak Thai to your kids as you're half Finnish?' But I'm also half Thai."*

Jane clarified that there was no strong discriminatory power relations aspect here as Thais were more used to ethnic diversity than Finns, and she gets on fine with her Finnish mother-in-law. Asked to explain if she always needs to justify her biethnicity, Jane clarified:

*“It really depends where I am, because in Thailand I would say that I am Northern Thai with partial Chinese descent. So, when you have Chinese descent, you are lot fairer. But if you are North-Eastern Thai, you’d be much darker.”*

In *Hyphenated ethnic-identity*, conflict between social ascription and subjective identity activation may seem paradoxical. Omer, a middle-management biethnic in his 20s, who defined his biethnic identity as Turkish-Finnish, and not Finnish-Turkish though he was born and brought up in Finland to a Turkish father and Finnish mother explained: *“When I am in Turkey, I am absolutely a Finn there. Both cultures and countries are my home, but I represent them in different ways, in different surroundings.”* By acting as a Finn in Turkey, Omer reduces social validation tension on his biethnicity from his Turkish relatives. He gets away with not having mastered local accent, manners and customs in his father’s native culture by being accepted as a “Finnish” relative, who has to be understood and helped rather than judged. Asked about his identity representation in Finland, Omer explains how his biethnic identity manifestation switches between contexts:

*“Yes, I see my identity as a hybrid culture. But when I am surrounded by monoethnic Finns, I represent Istanbul. But in a similar setting in Istanbul, I represent Helsinki.”*

The second biethnic identity type, *race-based superordinate identity*, was apparent among a few respondents who defined their ethnicity using generic terms e.g., *White European, white, mixed* or *White Anglo-Saxon*. Their main motive for choosing such a ‘superordinate identity’ was their feeling that reference to the

ethnicities of their parents did not define them adequately as they felt a socially recognised umbrella term describing their identity better. Choosing the race-based category, a common categorisation, was easiest, especially when their phenotypes did not conflict with this categorisation. Evita, a Finnish-Portuguese middle-manager in her 30s, who defined her identity as *European* explains:

*"I have chosen this umbrella identity of 'European' as this works better than if I always need to explain how I am Finnish-Portuguese and don't look like a standard Finn or look like a Portuguese but don't behave like one. 'European' is an umbrella identity that functions as a larger entity like gender or age-group."*

Evita referred to both the Portuguese and Finns as 'they' and 'them' because she felt different though she was equally at ease in both cultures and languages. With her umbrella identity she felt more at ease as it distanced her from both her ethnicity components, and working with people from other cultures, this umbrella identity supported how others saw her.

By choosing *mixed biethnic identity type*, Ben, middle-management, in his late 30s, with parents from Jamaica and Finland, aligns himself with a mass of people who are *mixed*, albeit in different combinations, and this strength in numbers empowers him. Ben is a heroic figure among local young sportsmen as he redefines his relationship to his ambient society and refuses to be seen as a victim of racism or discrimination. Ben's coping strategy resembles findings of biethnic discrimination studies (Section 2.22). Though Ben uses *mixed*, externally ascribed as an umbrella identity, he has adjusted extremely well as a respected contributing member in Finland and earlier in two other countries he had lived in, Ben's *own* culture integrates his personal experience of living abroad and aspects of his Father's Jamaican culture.

Managing power-relations is a strong motive for Azra, a top-management Finnish-Moroccan in her twenties, who describes her identity as *white other* by

arguing *"I don't want to be categorized as Muslim and always choose 'White other'".* She passes off as a typical Finn, and she wrote her forename to sound more Finnish so she would be seen as Finnish. But Azra clarifies that her power-relations strategy does not detract from her conscious choice to continue being biethnic by saying *"Other than this name issue, I have never wanted to be monoethnic."*

Some respondents (3 out of 30) had the third biethnic identity type, *single ethnic group identity*, with descriptors e.g., *English* or *Finnish*, which was one of their parents' ethnicity. Their identity formation resembles Roccas & Brewer's (2002) one identity *dominating* the other totally. The respondents adopted this identity as it was the easiest for them. It overlooked one of their component ethnicities, saving them from exploring it or for feeling guilty for not having explored that other side of themselves. As among the other biethnic identity types, there was a clear link between the respondent's upbringing and which parent's ethnic culture was dominant in their childhood home, to the ethnicity they identified as their dominant one, but causality cannot be established due to the small sample. Mia, a Finnish-English respondent in her twenties with experience of living and working in both background cultures explains why she chooses *Finnish* as her identity: *"I always find myself returning to the Finnish culture, it's like a base. It is a culture that I have respect for."* Mia's familiarity with being Finnish and despite having a common English forename, not feeling at home with being English, supports her identity choice. She added:

*"I am in my comfort zone here in Finland, as I know the rules and behaviour norms. In England, I don't feel comfortable. The communication is more superficial. I think the English are very difficult. Difficult in sort of, they are like soap to me. You can't get a grip and never get to the deep layers."*

Mia, and her 'comfort-zone' of *Finnish* identity resembles Layla, a biethnic woman in her 40s, born and brought up in England with an English mother

and an Indian father, who explains why she chose *English* identity though she has lived over 25 years and worked full-time in Finland:

*"I am very proud of the colour of my skin and very proud of being the daughter of my mum and also proud that I had some different blood in me, from whom or from where, I have no idea. I have no idea of that culture but it is enough to make me feel different and I am very blessed. This biethnic or multicultural thing is a good thing."*

Finding out more about her father and his culture was impossible as Layla didn't know her father's identity. Choosing her mother's ethnicity *English*, even though her darker skin tone and phenotype didn't always get social validation for *English* in England, made subjective sense for Layla.

The fourth biethnic identity type was *fluid context-related ethnic identity* e.g., Finnish or Tunisian, Finnish-Japanese or Japanese-Finnish depending on the context. The difference from *hyphenated ethnic-identity* is that though the individuals have compartmentalised and integrated their identities into a coherent sense of self, different contexts activate different identities or combinations. Finnish or Finnish-Japanese but not Japanese or Japanese-Finnish for Nina, a mid-level Finnish-Japanese manager in her 30s, who after having worked in different Finnish and Japanese large organisations, currently works in a mostly monoethnic Finnish state-run institution, meant that Nina's Japanese identity remained passive. Haruto, a mid-level Finnish-Japanese in his 30s, who speaks flawless Finnish and is currently working mostly among monoethnic Finns felt that he could switch from Finnish-Japanese in certain contexts to Japanese-Finnish in other contexts.

Differentiation and identity resolution mean different things for *fluid context-related ethnic identity* compared to the *hyphenated ethnic-identity*. Serbo-Croatian (a language and not an ethnicity) signifies to Emma, in her 20s, operational level employee, that her parents' 'ethnicities' (actually their nationalities) Serbian

and Croatian in this case, merge into something more than either but still retain something essential of Serbian and Croatian cultural characteristics, recognisable in her. Finnish or Filipino for one respondent, Anna, in her late twenties, meant being fully Finnish in some context so that her Filipino side was not activated. She was fully Filipino when her Finnish side was dormant, but not everybody could detect the dormant Filipino identity in that context. When asked if she felt any tension between her identity and the social ascription, Anna replied:

*“No, not really because I consider myself Finnish still and I don’t look different so people don’t put me in a different box. Maybe if I was half African or looked visibly different I’d get more attention in that way.”*

A fluid context-related ethnic identity allowed Anna to choose her own way of adapting to Finland, where she was born. She stressed the role of identity work in successfully resolving her biethnic identity and flourishing as a contributing member of society rather than experience her biethnicity as a burden.

*“Yes, a Finn with a richer and fuller life and heritage would be a good description of me. Maybe I also have an advantage in that I can travel in places where most Finns would never go and see daily life in a different culture, which monoethnic Finns maybe couldn’t or wouldn’t.”*

| Biethnic identity type            | Definition  |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Hyphenated ethnic identity        | Both of the ethnic identity components co-exist, and the individual identifies with both e.g., Thai and Finnish.  |
| Race-based superordinate identity | Individual identifies with neither of their ethnic identity components but uses generic race-based terms e.g., white, mixed or White Anglo-Saxon.                                   |
| Single ethnic-group identity      | Individual identifies with one of their ethnic identity components disregarding the other, e.g., individual with English and Finnish parents identifies as Finnish and not English. |



|                                       |  |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Fluid context-related ethnic identity | Individual identifies with either of their ethnic identity components depending on the context e.g., Finnish or Tunisian, Finnish-Japanese or Japanese-Finnish depending on the context. |
|---------------------------------------|--|

Table 10 Types of biethnic identity

We have seen the four biethnic identity types, summarised in table 10 above. The next section presents how biethnics experience power-relations due to their biethnicity.

#### ***4.5.1 Power relations affecting the OS of biethnics in Finland***

Does biethnic OS in Finland involve disadvantageous power-relations? Only Hans, a Finnish-Swedish-German in his 40s reported being bullied (in his early teens).

*“I have been bullied, because they think I am a German or that I am a Swedish speaking person. I have even been punched in the face a few times because of this.”*

Hans was bullied not because of his biethnicity but because his German background had historical significance in post-WWII Finland due to Finland’s WWII association with Germany. The antipathy to Swedish people was a leftover from their being the ruling class in Finland. Hans clarified that outwardly he looked like ‘*any other Finn*’ without visible cues of his biethnicity, but this classmate suddenly began bullying him because of his own personal issues and not because of Hans’s biethnicity.

*“Then towards the end of puberty he started admitting that there’s nothing wrong with me by saying that ‘you Swedish speaking people, there’s nothing wrong with you but with the immigrants.’*

What makes Hans's discrimination management outstanding is that despite his suffering, Hans emerges a richer person with his perceptive observation and understanding how linking *curiosity* with *risk-factor* analysis can shape *proactivity* into a potent tool for acquiring deeper insights and shape interpersonal encounters towards positive outcomes:

*"For me, for us biethnics, when experiencing something new the curiosity factor outweighs the risk factor, as there is an antecedence of diversity already in us. This means that as a biethnic person you are more predisposed to open up to new experiences. When this question of what have I got to lose pops-up in the mind, the answer is always 'not so much'. I would strongly claim that there are differences in this area between biethnics and monoethnics."*

No respondent in this study reported difficulties with workplace norms or experienced workplace bullying, yet most respondents suggested some indefinable difference, an *otherness*, between themselves as biethnics and monoethnics at the workplace. As seen in section 4.2, all respondents reported successful OS and this *otherness* was only a fleeting appearance, appearing during self-analysis and then vanishing. Omer, a middle-manager in his late 20s, born and brought up in Finland with a Finnish mother and a Turkish father explains:

*"I work in a government organisation with an old working culture. In such a work atmosphere, as a biethnic, you have to perform a bit better than the standard monoethnic employee because prejudice is very high. As a biethnic, you need to deliver 110% while a monoethnic can do with 90% and you have to leverage yourself."*

Asked to clarify who sets the scale how this 110% is measured, Omer explained that it was an internalised way of justifying that a biethnic is as good as the monoethnic majority. No one had ever said this to Omer, but he felt that as a biethnic in a monoethnic majority workplace in Finland he needs the 10%

performance increment to feel accepted. Other respondents supported Omer's assertion. Minna, a Finnish-Kenyan mid-level manager in her 30s said *"I am much more careful about many things than they are."*

For many respondents, this *otherness* surfaced as a trait for analysing the mostly monoethnic Finnish culture unsentimentally, bolstered by their conviction that biethnicity confers on them a distinctive gift of combining an *emic* insider in-one-culture view with an 'outsider' *etic* perspective. Omer gives an example:

*"Finns love rules. Even if they protest the rules, they always operate by the rules. Things are different in Turkey. For Finns, honesty is very crucial but for the Turkish people the image, how things appear, and self-respect is crucial. Finns claim to be individualistic but in reality, are not. There is a huge distance between values that people aspire to and their realities."*

This ability and need to perceive and critically analyse cultural and ethnic characteristics, using *etic-emic* lenses, reflecting many biethnic subject studies, produces illuminating insights into contemporary Finnish working culture by Timo, a German-Finnish top-management multinational executive in his 40s, fluent in both his background languages and three others:

*"In most places in Finland there is a gap between ambition and status quo, meaning that there is a gap between what you would like to be and what you are. You would like to be frank and open in your communication and that is not always possible."*

Timo explains that relating to monoethnic Finns requires understanding this dichotomy between aspiration and reality in openness to diversity: *"Finns claim that they are very open and honest and they are communicative and that they share openly. That's what they want to be, but that's not what they are."* Timo looks like many monoethnic Finns, and he explained how OS could be more challenging for a person with clear phenotype markers of ethnic difference: *"Maybe it's easier*

*for me than for a Russian, an African or an Indian to adjust here, especially for anybody who is not brought up in the Western hemisphere."*

Is this *otherness* caused by the tension between own biethnic identity and social ascription, roughly following stereotypical depictions? Most respondents experienced this *otherness* only occasionally during introspection. Some biethnic respondents felt consciously being *othered* by monoethnic Finns around them, and experiencing negative social ascription could detrimentally affect their OS as Minna, a mid-level Finnish-Kenyan manager in her 30s explains:

*"The feeling of otherness is conscious, as I am "othered" all the time. This kind of racial profiling attitude was not evident earlier but attitudes have toughened and stances have polarised in Finland. I cannot explain this change by anything else than it is some kind of defensive mechanism, which forces them to categorise me."*

Social trends affect the identity work of biethnics living in Finland. For Minna, the instantly visible phenotype difference from average monoethnic Finns caused this *othering*, and this behaviour has increased dramatically in the current decade following rapidly growing immigration of easily discernible foreigners to Finland. Haruto, a mid-level Finnish-Japanese in his 30s, who speaks flawless Finnish and is currently working mostly among monoethnic Finns explains how the changing social climate has forced him to redefine his identity and adjustment:

*"I was eight when I moved to Finland. From then on, I have lived continuously in Finland and till the age of about twenty I strongly felt that I was a Finn, like any other boy my age. Then I noticed in the mid-1990s, Finnish society started changing and I wasn't treated as a Finn anymore. Nowadays people speak English to me everywhere in Finland, for example in Helsinki shops. I am constantly reminded by others, of my Japaneseness."*

Newcomers adjust to *subcultures* and *microcultures* and not only to a monolithic work culture (section 2.5.4). About a quarter of the respondents reported adjusting to a subculture as more concrete and straightforward than adjusting to the overarching organisational culture. Haruto, Minna and Omer interacted with only few persons daily in their units/departments. With names, faces and personalities, these people personified the subculture whereas the overarching organisational culture was not personified in the same way. Personification made adjusting easier. With discriminatory power-relations in the subculture, adjustment becomes very challenging for the biethnic newcomer. Minna experienced being left out from informal coffee table chats in the beginning but felt accepted in her current department with a more welcoming subculture. Omer experienced the subculture of one work-unit as being very racist and unwelcoming but felt welcome in his current work-unit.

Ben, a middle management respondent in his late 30s with parents from Jamaica and Finland is an inspirational figure among young local sportsmen. For him, power-relations contain an opportunity to affect others' perceptions through own contribution:

*"You should carefully investigate what are you doing to improve the situation. What is your contribution? If you contribute positively, you do things the correct way, you are a hard worker, you live by the laws of the land and follow the norms of the society you live in, then you are smart enough to adapt and understand. But you really need to adapt and respect the local, that's all you need to do."*

We have seen how biethnics experience power-relations due to their biethnicity. The next section presents the role of adjustee proactivity in the OS of biethnics.

#### 4.6 *The role of adjustee proactivity in the OS of biethnics in Finland*

Findings show biethnic adjustee-proactivity impacting their OS more than their organisation's adjustment efforts. Three aspects of adjustee proactivity stand out: Firstly, the adjustee's *proactivity* is the condition for successful utilisation of the three possible competitive advantages biethnics have over monoethnics in their OS (section 4.3): enhanced social skills due to their biethnicity, advantageous adjustment skills through familiarity of processing of internal and familial ethnic/cultural diversity, and coping skills acquired through managing tensions between own identity and external ascriptions. Anastasia, an operational-level Finnish-Tatar multinational employee in her 50s with experience of living and working in many countries explains the importance of adjustee proactivity: *"One has to be personally motivated and active and use this extra thing to be able to see more. If you don't want to see, then you miss much."* Anastasia had '*frittered away*' her chances of advancing in her career, realizing only in her mid-thirties that she had to proactively utilise her potential. She also understood that this can be challenging, especially for some biethnics.

Respondents' comments in section 4.3.1 show that *learning and developing personally*, and *being regarded as a professional* were the prime OS motivators for biethnics, and proactivity was crucial there. This resonates in Anastasia's sage advice to biethnics: *"Be humble but have your goals clear. Listen well and try to adapt."* Timo, a German-Finnish top-management multinational executive in his 40s, fluent in both his background languages and three others concurs:

*"Everything else being equal, biethnicity gives an advantage, but the problem is how to measure that. Everything else being equal and you have somebody who has two or three cultures in their background, then it could be an advantage. It all depends on how proactive you are."*

Timo uses the *ceteris paribus* approach for evaluating the role of adjustee proactivity. Even with the difficulty of measuring any biethnicity advantage,

proactivity in utilising their biethnicity emerges as the decisive success factor as it allows for any potential advantage to come into play favouring the biethnics.

Secondly, adjustee proactivity is crucial to how an individual manages discrimination, racism and power-relations at the workplace (section 4.5.1). Ben narrates:

*“Nowadays, many workplaces are looking for employees with different viewpoints and backgrounds. If you are smart, you can use that as an advantage and I think I have done that. Many people go to the victim role, thinking and saying things like ‘I am not getting this position because I am different!’ If you can use your biethnicity or difference in a right way, you can be very successful!”*

Ben emphasises how in a world with increasing diversity, adjustee proactivity signals attitudes for learning and developing skills, necessary for complexity management, which is a crucial success factor in the workplace and in OS. Biethnics gain complexity management skills and attitudes through their sense-making of diversity in themselves and familial backgrounds, and through handling ambiguities if their identity conflicts with external ascription.

Thirdly, the ‘tools’ generated for handling issues that biethnics need to process in their identity work and monoethnics do not (section 4.2.2), show the advantages that biethnics get in having acquired these ‘tools’ e.g., more insightful communication skills. We have seen in section 4.3 that such ‘tools’ do not bring any automatic endowment, but require much introspection, analysis and identity work, understood as the ‘agency aspects of identity shaping’ (Watson, 2008, p. 126). Haruto explains:

*“Biethnicity has given you an advantage, which you have worked on and refined to give you an additional advantage in adapting, and that’s what people vibe with.”*

Respondents with no onboarding from their organisations reported adjusting solely on their own (section 4.6.1). Respondents also ranked adjustee proactivity as the most critical adjustment factor after *upbringing* (section 4.4). Haruto’s point that an adjustee’s proactivity becomes evident in their interactions, and others, noticing this proactivity resonating with their needs and attitudes can ‘*vibe with*’ it, sums up the importance of adjustee proactivity. The next chapter presents the effects of the organisation’s adjustment efforts on biethnic OS.

#### ***4.6.1 Effect of organisation’s adjustment efforts on OS of biethnics in Finland***

This study confirms the importance of understanding how adjustees see the organisation’s OS facilitating efforts or the perceived organisational support (POS) as most biethnics (90%) saw their organisation’s role affecting their workplace adjustment on a 5-point Likert type scale *somewhat to significantly*. Table 11 shows the responses.

|                       | Significantly | A lot | Somewhat | Very little | No effect |
|-----------------------|---------------|-------|----------|-------------|-----------|
| Number of respondents | 4             | 15    | 8        | 1           | 2         |
| % of respondents      | 13,33         | 50    | 26,66    | 3,33        | 6,66      |

Table 11 Evaluation of organisation’s role in the OS of biethnics

Though some successful onboarding examples appeared, the respondents’ experiences clearly showed that successful onboarding is difficult to design and implement, and one-size-fits-all solutions would hardly work for diverse needs



of the biethnics. Nina, a mid-level Finnish-Japanese manager in her 30s, who with experience of working in different Finnish and Japanese large organisations currently works in a mostly monoethnic Finnish state-run organisation gave examples of what her organisation has actually done to help her OS:

*“Maybe just verbally telling the rules that apply here, how you behave here. My boss did, my colleague also told how to behave here. In other companies, you just start like you are dropped into the ocean and start swimming. But here you are put into orientation courses, which tell about the organisation’s culture, for newcomers. I had a chance to attend such an orientation course after I had been working here for one month, that was quite helpful and the people are very open so they have been telling me.”*

Nina’s onboarding was a 2-day course for a small group (10) of newcomers. They learnt about the different functions of the organisations and asked questions. Newcomers who had been in the organisation for about a year shared their experience, feelings and examples of how they had handled their adjustment. Nina was impressed as the CEO of the organisation with 8000 employees briefly attended and greeted every newcomer. Nina considered this a model onboarding that other organisations should study and adapt for their purposes. Claiming that onboarding success depends largely on the people in the unit where they are adjusting to, some in Nina’s organisation saw the same onboarding as not helping them. Nina clarifies:

*“My colleagues who have teams where the average age is around fifty, all been working here for more than twenty years. Even to change their room, they are actually on sick leave for a long time.”*

Nina felt lucky with her own team (all monoethnic Finns) as half of them were young newcomers she had recruited while the other half had been there for decades. Having successfully adjusted herself, Nina helped them all overcome the change-resistance other managers reported. Nina’s bridge-building

contributed greatly to the onboarding success. William, an operational level Finnish-Sierra Leone employee in his 20s who currently works for a small organisation after having worked in several large multinationals, sees good communication in the form of constructive feedback as the crucial onboarding success factor.

*“The company that I worked for was just really laid back, something I could identify with. So, I think just with that and them being really down to earth, helped me adjust, and being positive and giving good feedback.”*

However, William also highlights the importance of his proactivity in his new workplace OS. He got to know new colleagues, asking questions and learning new things and eventually rather quickly became the hub of the work community.

*“I’ve gotten feedback that my role has been being the person who brings everyone together socially and being one of those guys who work well with other people. In Finnish they call it ‘yhteisön liima’, which would be like a person who functions like glue keeping the community together.”*

Here again, in William, we see a biethnic proactively contributing to the wellbeing of the work community. Respondents seeing no or very little effect of the organisation’s adjustment efforts condemned their organisation’s onboarding as ‘nominal’ and useless with comments e.g., *“No, they didn’t do anything at all. And what I have heard is that this is pretty common.”*, *“They haven’t done anything at all to help me adjust to the workplace.”* and *“I have adjusted totally on my own.”* They suggested that HRM in Finland should develop their new employee onboarding, especially for biethnics or foreign employees. Anna, an operational-level Finnish-Filipina employee in her 20s working in a Finnish monoethnic majority workplace explains:

*“Yes, in Finland there is much talk about ‘perehdytysohjelma’ (onboarding programme) but in reality, most newcomers just adjust on their own. Overall*

*my organisation did arrange some generic 'koulutus' (training) or job-related skills training sessions, but nothing that would help with the adjustment."*

Respondents' comments reveal that some Finnish workplaces have 'normative' onboarding programmes, usually self-study material or webinars, or training sessions where someone from the organisation gives a Power-Point monologue. These onboardings are seldom evaluated, and qualitative learning elements are totally missing. Further, these programmes are mostly self-learning on-the-job training for acquiring job skills, while transactional or relational onboarding is seldom undertaken. Organisations do not match content to individual employee adjustment needs. Anna, like many respondents, had to figure out things impacting her OS on her own. Disappointment with the content and nature of the organisation's adjustment programme is also shared by Riku, a Finnish-Japanese mid-level manager in his 40s who relates:

*"I just got some printed material and probably was supposed to read it all by myself. I don't recall that I had anything like a mentor. The boss told practical things, gave a tour of the office and that's it. That's very typical Finnish onboarding."*

Riku's Finnish multinational employer claims to have excellent newcomer onboarding programmes, but Riku's experience reveals a mismatch between the programme descriptions and the actual user experience. Organisations typically design onboarding to suit their schedules and training calendars. If no onboarding is available for adjustees at the early organisational entry-stages when they need help the most, they may experience later onboarding suited to the organisation's calendar as ineffective. Jaana, an operational level Finnish-British employee in her 30s explains how onboarding was somewhat useful in her case but with wrong timing as she would have needed help early in her adjustment:

*"I got into this programme after being in this organization two years. I know that our organization arranges such onboarding training programmes for our foreign employees once or twice a year. I'd say that in my adjustment these had barely any role."*

About a quarter of the respondents had similar experiences. Timing onboarding to better suit the newcomer's needs and not the organisation's schedules alone is a development area for organisations. Amelia, a middle-management Finnish-Turkmen in her 20s currently working in a Finnish monoethnic majority workplace suggests that in addition to suitable timing, Finnish organisations should begin giving supportive feedback about the adjustee's OS, currently lacking in Finnish organisations:

*"This guiding a new employee is something our workplace needs to get better at. When I started, I didn't get any feedback from my work and I wasn't sure whether I was doing good or not. If you have the 'kehityskeskustelu' (personal development discussion) only once a year, I wasn't there that long and missed it."*

Amelia makes an important point that newcomers often get feedback about job performance but rarely improvement tips or supportive feedback about their OS, to improve their adjustment motivation. Onboarding may not always be formally structured and implemented. Amit, a British-Indian operational-level multinational employee in his 30s who works mostly among monoethnic Finns in a one-on-one client-service role considered as onboarding the get-togethers like the annual Christmas party. But, as he explains, the impressions gathered from these could be counterproductive.

*"When I first came to Finland, at the Christmas party they told me that everyone is very quiet, shy and don't want to talk. It's not true. So, if you get this idea and apply it to your life here, it's not a healthy thing."*

Amit was surprised that inaccurate cultural clichés circulated in the work community but the management never gave newcomers an unbiased understanding of local work culture. They just assumed that as an adult working in a multicultural organisation a newcomer would adjust. Many respondents shared Amit's feeling that his supervisor discussed task-related details e.g., which forms to fill in, but never enquired about Amit's OS.

An organisation may interpret a newcomer's biethnicity and adjustment proactivity as a sign of their not needing onboarding. A quarter of the respondents thought that a person easily identified as biethnic or as a foreigner was seen by others in their organisation as being 'international', used to handling cultural differences. Haruto reveals a research gap in organisational studies by claiming that the cultural 'distance' of the newcomer from the default national (Finnish in this case) culture could affect the necessity and manner of onboarding:

*"It of course depends on whether this 'foreigner' is a white, Asian, Russian or black person, in whose case there may be a predilection to hate this person coming from stereotypes. This may also function as a catalyst that makes the work community behave in strange ways."*

Some supervisors told Haruto that as he spoke Finnish like a 'native', he was regarded as a monoethnic Finn not needing onboarding. A third of the respondents reported similar thinking among smaller organisations. One reason for smaller organisations not arranging onboarding is resource paucity. Tina, a mid-level Turkish-Finnish manager in her 30s after working in multinationals now works in a small NGO, understands the organisation's not offering adjustment support due to resource scarcity:

*"One of the reasons I was hired was that I would probably need less adjustment than other people. So, it was for them easy and ok, it would have required something else than they would have had."*

Tina valued working in a healthy relaxed environment with genuine two-way communication. She emphasised that achieving this was not a resource question but of attitude and skills, especially emotional intelligence skills. Minna, a middle-management Finnish-Kenyan in her 30s who works in a Finnish monoethnic-majority large national organisation emphasises the role of proactivity in OS: *"In my earlier job I have functioned as a mentor for other people but that was out of my own initiative."* Asked how she felt after not getting any onboarding especially since she had proactively mentored others in her earlier job and whether she had specifically requested onboarding. Minna replied that she was told to check the organisation's intranet pages for suitable training and had found nothing there. By wondering if they had considered her 'speciality' she touched upon a need for some kind of guidance or mentoring she felt as the only biethnic person in her department and with her darker skin and darker hair her biethnicity was clearly visible. Being asked to join in coffee-breaks signalled to her that she was accepted. Minna also said that 'special' cases like her would surely appreciate similar gestures of being accepted and this would have a big impact on their OS.

Newcomers expect adjustment clues and role-related information from supervisors. Every respondent considered subordinate-supervisor relationship crucial for OS success. Hans, a multinational top-management Finnish-German in his 40s with much experience of working abroad explains the importance of the supervisor's help:

*"I expect my supervisor to be some kind of mentor for me as I am like that for my team members. I can't accept that people don't care how others feel, especially if it wouldn't require anything besides walking a few steps and spending a few moments with that person. This behaviour is the poorest, the most deficient in Finnish society and it is widely accepted behaviour."*

Despite his supervisor's not supporting his OS, Hans felt that his organisation influenced his OS significantly. He clarified: *"The people in the organisation can*

*seriously improve the situation or destroy it completely for you.”* Hans warns that if the organisation had no onboarding with preferably a mentor, the odds of the newcomer finding a suitable mentor on their own is low.

*“I was lucky that my former boss walked the extra mile and I could always call and talk to him. Of course, I was also demanding of him by calling him and asking him to talk to me. I have seen many other bosses and imagined that they would not have measured up to this. I do miss my former boss now.”*

Most respondents considered the supervisor’s role crucial. Sakura, a top-management Finnish-Japanese in her 40s, working currently with subordinates from different cultures along monoethnic Finns explains:

*“I had two members from India and you could see that they were used to being mothered and expected the organisation to help them adjust. I had to call them twice a week to see what they are doing, not work supervision but just how they were doing and give them attention even if everything else goes fine, that’s how it goes.”*

Sakura, as a supervisor, differentiates between work supervision and onboarding support and uses her biethnicity-enabled skills for improving their OS. When asked if her Indian subordinates were immature people needing constant guidance, Sakura explained:

*“No, no. It’s just constantly reaffirming that things are in context. The boss’s role is paramount and they thought it very important when I rang them. We had a telephone “meeting” and they felt involved. For them, it had some different significance. In Finland, many foreigners criticize that Finns are hiding behind systems and messages. When they try to reach the Finnish people, they are never available, as they are either busy, or on training, or on leave, whatever.”*

Sakura's example reveals cultural differences in management styles, and also why supervisors of people coming from different cultures need expanded people-relations awareness. Sakura added:

*"Seeing the context, the background, not immediately obvious, this is something many Finnish monoethnic bosses usually don't get – if I'm talking to you and telling you things, you immediately understand that there is something going on behind that needs to be addressed, otherwise performance cannot be delivered."*

Sakura's examples show how her mentoring efforts as a biethnic supervisor helped her subordinates' OS, supporting suggestions other respondents gave for improving the organisation's OS facilitating efforts. Three things characterise the organisation's role in the OS of biethnics in Finland: firstly, onboarding should be provided at the adjustee's entry stages. Secondly, for biethnics, onboarding is necessary and even a default expectation in many cultures. Thirdly, an easy-to-approach and engaging mentor who asks, listens to the adjustee's OS concerns and gives supportive guidance would improve OS success significantly. We have seen how the organisation's efforts affect the OS of biethnics. The next section presents how biethnic identity formation and OS are related.

#### ***4.7 How biethnic identity formation and OS are related***

Every biethnic respondent believed their identity formation being different monoethnics (Table 12 below).

|  |     | Number of respondents | Percentage of respondents |
|--|-----|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Is your identity formation different from that of monoethnics? | Yes | 30                    | 100                       |



|  |    |   |   |
|--|----|---|---|
| Is your identity formation different from that of monoethnics? | No | 0 | 0 |
|--|----|---|---|

Table 12 Biethnic-Monoethnic identity formation differences

What factors affect the identity formation differences? Eleven factors affecting identity formation were identified from studying identity literature. Respondents were asked to choose from these eleven factors (Table 13) three factors that affect their personal identity formation the most. They chose *upbringing*, *culture* and *ethnicity*. As the aim of the question was to identify three crucial factors, the other eight factors are not discussed.

| What factors affect your personal identity formation the most? | Number of respondents | Percentage of respondents |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| Religion   | 7                     | 23,33                     |
| Gender (Sex)   | 13                    | 43,33                     |
| Language   | 20                    | 66,66                     |
| Age Group  | 10                    | 33,33                     |
| Ethnicity  | 21                    | 70                        |
| Social Class / Level / Caste                                   | 11                    | 36,66                     |
| Upbringing   | 30                    | 100                       |
| Order of Birth   | 8                     | 26,66                     |
| Nationality (Passport)   | 14                    | 46,66                     |
| Education / Training   | 18                    | 60                        |
| Culture  | 25                    | 83,33                     |

Table 13 Biethnic and monoethnic identity formation factors

Every respondent chose *upbringing* as the crucial factor in their biethnic identity formation reflecting upbringing's centrality for OS (section 4.4). Haruto, a

Finnish-Japanese in his 30s, highlights through examples where upbringing failed to give necessary tools, examples and support:

*“Upbringing and how we work as individuals are linked intimately. All what they have been through does not become helpful resources or sources of strength for them but just become this avalanche of shit on their heads.”*

Haruto described two biethnics who claimed negligent and non-caring upbringing making them social drop-outs. Anna, a Finnish-Filipino operational-level biethnic employee in her 20s supports Haruto’s affirmation of upbringing centrality: *“I think it’s with my tight family relationships and that I value family more than maybe the ‘normal’ monoethnic Finnish person.”* Anna admits how her father’s Filipino upbringing shaped her identity differently from the monoethnic Finnish ones. The link between home upbringing, identity formation and OS is also direct and strong for Evita, a Finnish-Portuguese middle manager in her 30s, who defined her identity as *European*:

*“I think that upbringing is extremely significant in adaptation. I am very close to my parents and we also work closely together. In my upbringing, the role of work has played an important role and my parents have stressed this role.”*

For Evita, acquiring the ability to work closely with her parents through her upbringing became her model for workplace close cooperation, greatly improving her OS. Like most respondents, Evita chose *culture* as the second most important factor. For Evita, *culture* means assimilating different experiences into a composite whole impacting her own identity, e.g., immigrating to Finland at the age of seventeen unable to speak a single word of Finnish despite a Finnish mother, and functioning as the managing director of her multicultural organisation for the last four years, as she proudly points out. Evita, like most respondents felt that *culture* and *ethnicity* are closely related.

Asked to specify how culture impacted their identity formation, most respondents mentioned better communication skills and ability to understand mindset diversity among people. However, increased exposure to diverse experiences, training, or a combination of these may generate better communication skills in a person. Still, respondents felt that their communication and mindset-reading-skills advantage came from their having experienced different languages, cultural interaction patterns, habits, values and communication styles in their own biethnic upbringing. Emilia, a top management Finnish-British in her late 20s, illuminates her understanding:

*"This twin language as a mother tongue has made it so that I understand other cultures much quicker. Even if someone speaks to me in bad Finnish, I understand them much quicker than monoethnic colleagues. With my friend who is also monoethnic Swedish-speaking-Finnish, we were working in Norway and Denmark, while we both have the same understanding of Norwegian and Danish, I was much quicker than her in reading people and understanding what they want."*

As all other respondents, Emilia uses the the-more-one-has-to-rehearse, the-better-one-performs logic to justify her better proficiency in understanding different people even with insufficient language skills. Her argument is substantiated by neuroscience research (Berkman, 2018), showing that with focussed interventions such as conscious attention, the human brain's executive function ability is improved by habit-learning systems. Focussed intervention is the key element. When *upbringing* provides such focussed intervention as guidance, encouragement, limit-setting, perspective widening, *upbringing* turns the biethnic experience into an advantage. The reverse is also true as we saw earlier in Haruto's examples of deficient upbringing with negligent focussed familial/parental interventions ruining the lives of two biethnics. Emilia, proficient in five languages, says that that it was her parents' and also her extended family's role in supporting, encouraging and exposing her to positive

stimuli that encouraged her to communicate better compared to her monoethnic friends and colleagues.

Focussed intervention of upbringing meant aligning his biethnic identity formation with ambient expectation of what a stereotypical Japanese identity was, as Riku, a Finnish-Japanese mid-level manager in his 40s narrates:

*“I worked at Nokia and I worked rather long hours and someone mentioned that I work so long hours because of my Japanese thing. Yes, now that I think of it may be the difference (of identity formation) are based on these factors ethnicity, upbringing and culture”*

Riku’s Japanese mother was very strict in his upbringing. She physically beat him sometimes whereas his Finnish father was gentler. He attributes his diligence to his mother’s Japanese upbringing of him in Finland and not to his Japaneseness though others see only the Japanese diligence stereotype operational in him. Riku also revealed that Japanese identities are different from Finnish or Western identity concepts. The next section presents these findings of non-Western identity concept Riku mentions.

#### ***4.8 Presence of non-Western identity concepts among biethnics in Finland***

Respondents with ethnicities from non-Western backgrounds e.g., Japanese, Korean, Indian, Iranian in their ethnicity mix, reported personal identity concepts different from the binary personal and social identity construct commonly found in organisational studies (section 2.10). These supported Riku’s observation of Japanese identity manifesting differently depending the nature of social interaction, the issues at stake and the context. Haruto, elucidates:

*“For a Japanese person, personal identity is always related to specific contexts, which would be clarified, explained or referred to in the attempts to describe the identity. My personal identity is context related and is defined by external reflections and is also somewhat influenced by the ambient culture. It is as if an individual is walking around with an array of mirrors all reflecting their perceptions of this person back to that person.”*

Haruto’s ‘array of mirrors’ concept has an individual’s identity constantly morphing. The “Who am I?” question asked by an individual defining their “Western” concept of personal identity is replaced by “Who am I supposed to be, now, in this context, in relation to whom?” for these non-Western identity concepts. Amanda a Finnish-Korean operational level multicultural workplace employee in her 20s, with a Finnish mother and a Korean father, agrees:

*“Korean identity is context related unlike Finnish identity-making. I don’t have any absolute descriptors in my identity.”*

Amanda, familiar with both Finnish and Korean languages and culture, though born and brought up in Finland, describes these non-Western identities avoiding ‘absolute descriptors’ like *I am an engineer* or *I am an anthropologist* that typical monoethnic Finns define their identities by. Amit, a British-Indian operational-level employee in his 30s working mostly among monoethnic Finns in a one-on-one client-service role describes how language is a situational tool for ascribing and shaping the identity in the Indian side of his background.

*“You have different behavioural cues among different relatives depending on the generation, age and status within the extended family. It is also reflected in the language you use or rather are supposed to use. It’s not like here in Finland where you use first names to address your grandparents.”*

Amit’s identity automatically morphs among his Indian relatives, even after living decades with his Finnish absolute descriptor (English teacher) identity.

As this non-Western identity is contextual and reacts to external ascription, ascription biases also affect the identity. Amanda explains how this external ascription is heavily biased:

*“It’s very ethnocentric, if the person is from White Europe, then it’s a different story from someone from Africa. If this ‘difference’ is invisible, then things are as with monoethnic persons, but the moment this ‘ethnicity’ is visible through the person’s name, physical appearance, then the person is treated like an immigrant and the identity ascription is different.”*

Respondents with non-Western backgrounds where their non-Western ‘ethnicity’ was apparent in their physical appearance, name or manner of speaking shared Amanda’s experience.

In conclusion, findings rebut earlier depictions of biethnics mal-adjusting to working life and society, as biethnic respondents reported good or excellent OS, mostly through their own proactivity and not due to the organisation’s onboarding, which they considered deficient; upbringing is an important factor in the OS of biethnics; four biethnic identity types emerged; findings indicate that non-Western (e.g., Indian, Japanese, Korean) personal identity concepts are present, co-affecting identity management and OS of biethnics.

## 5 DISCUSSION

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### 5.1 *Introduction*

This chapter discusses the findings about the identity formation and management of biethnic individuals in Finland, and their OS. The research questions are discussed with the relevant findings, against the theoretical backgrounds, along with the theoretical and practical implications. Future research avenues along with the strengths and limitations of this research are also discussed.

Due to increasing employee mobility and demographic changes, there is growing interest in how to facilitate OS. However, despite voluminous research, theoretical and methodological gaps exist, especially for biethnic/biracial persons whose numbers are growing fast in different parts of the world. This research advances the understanding of the OS and identity formation of biethnic individuals by examining four research questions:

- How do biethnic adults see themselves adapting socio-culturally to the workplace in Finland?
- What factors do biethnic adults in Finland consider advantageous or disadvantageous in their OS?
- Do biethnic adults consider their biethnicity a detrimental factor or a factor contributing towards the success of their OS process in Finland?
- Do biethnic adults in Finland see their own proactivity as being more important than the role of the organisation facilitating the success of their OS as Ashford and Black (1992) have suggested?

To explore the significance of these research questions, findings will be compared to relevant Finnish and global research, whenever applicable. First,

the findings related to the first research question, concerning the OS-biethnicity relationship are discussed. Next, findings related to the second research question, concerning the motivational factors, the role of familial upbringing and learning norms affecting the OS motivation of biethnics in Finland are discussed. The findings related to the third research question, concerning the OS difference between biethnics and monoethnics in Finland are then discussed, followed by a discussion of the findings related to the fourth research question concerning the interrelations of the organisation's socialisation tactics and POS, and adjustee proactivity in the OS of biethnics in Finland. The theoretical and practical implications of the research are discussed in each section, followed by a brief summary of this research's implications.

## ***5.2 Discussion of findings about biethnics' evaluation of their OS in Finland***

How do biethnic adults see themselves adapting socio-culturally to the workplace in Finland? The findings show biethnic individuals in Finland adjusting well to the workplace. Comparing this study with existing Finnish studies is difficult as there is no Finnish research studying OS with a biethnicity lens, but the closest we can get is to compare this study with Finnish ethnicity studies are the studies of immigrants' feelings after entering the labour market, beyond the context of any particular organisation (section 2.8). This study's findings show higher adjustment success, mostly due to adjustee proactivity, compared to the Finnish general OS and immigrant adjustment studies, which treat all immigrants as a monolithic entity in a background of supposedly monoethnic Finns.

Comparing this study's findings with international studies reveals the concatenation of the two themes from OS literature (section 2.5.2): 'interactionist perspective' of the organisation as well as the newcomer's effect on the adjustment process, and adjustment-learning link. The comparison reveals that for the biethnics in Finland, the dependence on adjustee proactivity was much



higher than in the international studies, irrespective of whether their organisation provided them onboarding, as some did. The respondents were dissatisfied with the relevance, timing, nature and manner of their organisation's onboarding.

Biethnics felt that *learning* for them often meant seeing things with multiple lenses caused by their identities having multiple ethnic, cultural and linguistic components; distinctive familial upbringing; immigration experiences, discrimination and power-relations at the workplace and outside. Transactional or relational onboarding would have suited their information processing needs better as they were used to identity negotiations and handling tensions between own concept of identity and external ascription. The various learning theories (section 2.4) suggest individuals gathering information, learning, and constructing meaning socially, by giving importance to the views and opinions of credible and significant persons and comparing themselves with these others, organisational insiders. This study's biethnic respondents considered finding even one credible and significant person, an organisational insider with an understanding of their distinctive learning perspectives challenging, and not recognised by the organisation's onboarding efforts.

Researchers claim that OS attempts to navigate two cross-interests: firstly, the organisation moulding the employees to fit in with the organisation's needs, and employees' attempts to define themselves in the organisation (Allen et al., 2017, p.324). The respondents felt that their organisation's OS efforts were mostly concerned with moulding employees to suit their organisation's needs through standardised interventions dictated by the organisation's timetables, schedules or aims. They also felt that their organisation's OS's shortcomings were not only due to a lack of attention to employees' socioemotional needs, but due mostly to the organisation's not recognising the impact of the biethnic newcomer's distinctive ethnicity combinations, biethnic identity formation efforts and upbringing on their OS.

### ***5.2.1 Theoretical implications of findings about biethnics adjusting well***

There are three theoretical implications of the findings about biethnics adjusting well: Firstly, being the first empirical study showing that biethnics adjust well to the workplace in a monoethnic majority environment in Finland, this study rebuts earlier theories claiming that biethnics do not adjust well to the workplace or society. They also validate contemporary research refuting the early theories. Secondly, they support the literature (section 2.23) showing that biethnicity may even help biethnics to adjust better than monoethnics, mainly because of their being able to utilise more insightful learning and communication skills generated by their biethnicity. Thirdly, these findings reveal the theoretical relevance of social learning theories to OS, in showing how the organisation not considering the distinctive learning needs of biethnic adjustees in onboarding produces ineffective OS for them. Biethnics criticised as ineffective the nominal onboarding provided by organisations that fail to recognise how biethnics, used to negotiating internal ethnicity components and distinctive familial upbringing, might require nuanced learning approaches than those offered by nominal onboarding. Social learning theories (section 2.4) recognise social influence as a source of learning and the importance of observing reinforcement of behaviour and learning, but the biethnic respondents reported missing these aspects e.g., enquiring from adjustees about adjustment progress, in their OS.

### ***5.2.2 Practical implications of findings about biethnics adjusting well***

These findings offer organisations important practical insights. Firstly, the proportion of biethnics in the workforce in Finland is growing rapidly (section 1.3), yet these findings reveal that OS planning has not considered the distinctive needs of this growing segment of the labour force, and OS success of biethnics in this study has relied mostly on adjustee proactivity. Organisations should consider that biethnics may possess certain ‘tools’ e.g., more insightful communication skills, as OS advantages conferred by their biethnicity (see section 4.2.2). Enriched by this knowledge, organisations could implement

effective OS better suited for biethnic newcomers. Secondly, the findings showed that the content and nature of OS interventions should be more transactional and relational, to better serve the needs of biethnic newcomers, which were different from the needs assumed in the organisations' standardised OS. Despite many acculturation studies (section 2.5.5) conceptualizing acculturation as a bilinear (rather than unilinear), two-directional (rather than one-directional), multidomain, complex process, these insights are often missing in OS practices in Finland. Tailoring the socialisation intervention to the distinctive needs of the biethnic/biracial adjustees would enable organisations to better harness the significantly higher adjustee proactivity among biethnic adjustees in Finland, and gain higher returns on the organisation's invested supportive practices.

### ***5.3 Discussion of findings about factors affecting the OS of biethnics***

In exploring the factors biethnic individuals consider advantageous or disadvantageous in their OS, the second research question probed intrinsic motivational factors impacting their OS. Extrinsic factors e.g., national economic situation or labour market conditions possibly affecting OS were not explored. Ashforth et al.'s (2007b) observation that '*how newcomers are socialized has substantive and symbolic value over and above what they actually learn.*', informed the analysis as the motivational factors affect the *how* of adjustment.

Two aspects of the motivational factors affecting biethnic OS in Finland should be considered as we compare this study's findings with motivational literature of socialisation (Egan, 2008; Ge et al., 2015; Matschke & Fehr, 2015). The first aspect is motivational needs: *Learning and developing personally* and *being regarded as professional* were the two most important OS motivator needs among the biethnics in this study (section 4.3.1). The findings resonate with the four employee manifest needs for: achievement, affiliation, autonomy and power (Taormina, 2009) in that both *Learning and developing personally* and *being regarded as professional* support the fulfilling of these manifest needs barring *Power* in

Taormina's (2009) concept, which meant something different for the biethnics in the current study. All respondents clarified that they were not aiming to acquire *power* for power's sake, as a tool for gratifying one's ego or amplifying one's sense of importance, but that *power* for them signified a recognition for achievement, affiliation, and *power* symbolised being given autonomy for functioning as a respected and recognised work community member. It is established in the research on *learning* and *information seeking* (section 2.5.2) especially among those investigating information-seeking in different cultures (section 2.7), that individuals are very proactive in receiving and processing socialisation messages, but knowledge about the *how* and the *why* of the information-seeking is deficient and would be valuable both for the adjustees and the organisation. By choosing *Learning and developing personally* as a central OS motivator the respondents signalled that learning and information-seeking is crucial to OS. *Learning and developing personally* can also be seen as the means by which the aim of *being regarded as professional* is achieved.

*Being regarded as professional* directly affected the distal outcomes of the biethnic's OS: organisational identification, job satisfaction and intentions to quit. Very low intentions to quit and the relatively long length of current employment reported by the biethnic respondents support the salience of these distal outcomes to their OS. Here *learning* is not only learning the proximal outcomes of the OS content, helping adjust to one particular organisation, but there is the distal aspect of transferable skills development impacting the adjustee's possible career beyond the organisation to which the adjustee is adjusting. Further, *being regarded as professional* impacts the identity of the biethnics. *Being regarded as professional* in whose eyes? Perceived employee person-organisation (P-O) fit literature conceptualises a reciprocal relationship between the individual and the work environment as P-O fit. Recent studies show that employee-perceived P-O fit and supervisor-rated performance depends on how the supervisor saw the adjustee's P-O fit. There is a direct causal link between supervisor-rated job performance, job satisfaction (Alessandri et al., 2017) and intentions to leave (Ahmed et al., 2018). In this light, *being regarded as professional* or more specifically, *being regarded*

*as professional by the supervisor* directly affected the distal outcomes of performance, organisational identification, job satisfaction and intentions to quit. Within the P-O literature, the dominant conceptualisation of P-O fit is value congruence, as values are seen as playing a central role in shaping attitudes, judgements and guiding behaviours. As respondents in this study, reflecting the P-O fit literature, saw *learning and developing professionally* and *being regarded as professional* as desirable values, it is easy to see how both of them function as crucial OS motivators for the biethnics.

The second aspect of motivational factors affecting the OS of biethnics in Finland is *upbringing*, resonating with studies of how *upbringing* affects identity management, identity perceptions and how *upbringing* impacts OS. That most of the biethnic respondents emphasised *upbringing's* central role, impacting OS more than their ethnicity, supports research linking *upbringing* to various racial stereotype activation that directly affects discrimination, power-relations and in general affects how persons from different backgrounds are perceived at the workplace, which all impact OS. The two facets of upbringing in the findings: depth of impact of *upbringing* through character formation in the formative years, and the permanency of this impact often lasting throughout the lifetime, also resonate with the latest research affirming how both upbringing facets impact OS. The difficulty of establishing the impact of *upbringing* is that attitudes to upbringing's impact in a work context 'are mostly unconscious and embodied rather than conscious and intellectual, and hence are taken for granted.' (Lupu et al., 2018, p. 160) was apparent in the findings of this research.

Biethnic respondents consider two factors other than motivational factors impacting their OS: Firstly, organisational newcomers adjust also to *subcultures* and *microcultures* and not only to a monolithic work culture in the organisation as hypothesised in early literature (section 2.5.4). Secondly, discrimination and power-relations issues can seriously hinder OS success, more so if discrimination and power-abuse is experienced in a sub-culture or micro-culture typically involving more frequent and face-to-face interactions with only a few persons, as

they personify the sub-culture or the micro-culture and especially their negative effects.

### **5.3.1 Theoretical implications - findings about factors affecting biethnic OS**

*As being regarded as professional* often meant the biethnics *being regarded as professional by the supervisor*, the supervisor's role is accentuated. The theoretical implication is that though the supervisor's role in OS success is central and recognised in leader-member exchange (LMX) and P-O fit research, how exactly does the quality of the newcomer's work relationships, especially with the supervisor, impact their OS has not been studied. Further, as LMX research (Tremblay et al., 2017, p. 53) has established consistently that the quality of supervisor-subordinate or leader-member exchange relates causally to the member's organisational commitment and performance, and as the motivational factors *Learning and developing professionally* and *being regarded as professional* also impact organisational commitment, performance and OS, *learning and developing personally* and *being regarded as professional* as motivator values should feature in OS research more because understanding better the *how of learning and developing personally* and *being regarded as professional* would improve the understanding of what is learnt in OS.

Another theoretical implication is that LMX-research should consider exploring *upbringing's* OS impact. Lupu et al.'s (2018, p. 160) explanation of why the impact of *upbringing* on OS is elusive, in tandem with these findings, should spur future research, the least because such targeted research attention is necessary in the light of demographic changes where biethnicity features crucially (section 1.3) in the workplace.

### **5.3.2 Practical implications - findings of factors affecting the OS of biethnics**

There are three practical implications for organisations: Firstly, as the respondents have highlighted *learning and developing personally* and *being regarded as professional* as their principal motivators, onboarding should consider the specific needs of biethnic newcomers arising from their biethnicity as they negotiate internal ethnic component mixtures and distinctive familial upbringing, and also handle tensions between own concept of identity and external ascription.

Secondly, organisations can utilise this study's findings of *upbringing's* role in OS success. Research in identity studies show how *upbringing* shapes attitudes profoundly throughout life. Attitudes to upbringing's impact in a work context 'are mostly unconscious and embodied rather than conscious and intellectual, and hence are taken for granted.' (Lupu et al., 2018, p. 160). Therefore, organisations should make qualitative and engaging attempts to raise awareness among both adjustees and people around them of upbringing as an agent of attitude-forming and behaviour-shaping in the workplace. Thirdly, if the organisation identifies the newcomer is adjusting to a sub-culture or micro-culture, finding the newcomer a mentor from within the subculture helps the subculture accept the newcomer. This improves the newcomer's adjustment to the overarching organisational culture.

### **5.4 Discussion of findings of biethnicity's role in the OS of biethnics**

This research has explored whether biethnic individuals consider their biethnicity as a detrimental or an enabling factor in their OS success, how they engaged with their biethnic identity and utilised it in their OS. The significance of how the respondents utilised their biethnic identities in their OS are discussed next along with the theoretical and practical implications.

Examining the impact of biethnicity on the OS of biethnic individuals necessitated understanding their identity formation and manifestation. Comparing the four types of biethnic identities observed among the respondents in this study to existing typology of biethnic identities reveals an interesting aspect of ethnic identity perceptions. From Phinney (1989) onwards, researchers have shown people belonging to predominant ethnic majorities believing that 'ethnic' identity concepts apply only to minorities but not to them as they constitute the majority. This persistent belief resonates in the literature on biethnic identity, and in the results of this study as half of the respondents reported observing this belief among monoethnic persons around them.

Among biethnic identity models (section 2.20), there are two strands. The first strand of Biethnic/biracial identity stage models originate mostly in Black-White US contexts. The second strand involving combinations beyond Black/White, emerging globally, are fairly recent and their impact on ethnic identity studies and OS are yet to be seen. The four identity types of this study are not stages, but can occur at any life stage, and they belong to the second strand. These four identity types reflect both the personal identity concepts (see section 2.1) of Locke and Foucault as they are durable yet dynamic, evolving in reaction to contexts and life situations. They also echo Poston's model's (1990) assumption that biethnics function in a 'monoracially defined world' (p. 194), and also echo Root's (1990) finding that there can be multiple healthy psychological identity outcomes. Another feature these four identity types share with biethnic identities in both strands is that identities are fluid and context-related in varying degrees.

How does identifying different biethnic identity types add to our knowledge of biethnic identity? By confirming Root's (1990) idea of multiple healthy identity outcomes, by reflecting Rockquemore's (1998) four meaning of biracial identity, and also Renn's (2000) identity formation patterns, they affirm that biethnic identity is complex, fluid and contextual with stable, healthy and functional outcomes. Previous research (Hoa, 2009) identified five biethnic identity types and found this knowledge of types contributing to knowledge of biethnic



identity formation and management. In the first biethnic identity type, *Hyphenated ethnic-identity*, there is recognition for the ethnicity components available to the individual, stemming from the parents' ethnicity and identities, both of which are active as a result of social validation, they are not *merged* but distinctly operational, depending on the context. Biethnic individuals manifesting *Hyphenated ethnic-identity* managed the tension between external ascription and their own contextual ethnic identity activation in novel ways, sometimes even by resorting to paradoxical ethnic identity manifestation choices. This was not accidental or instinctive, but a well-thought-out coping strategy of handling the ascription-identity manifestation tension. During their OS, biethnics manifesting *Hyphenated ethnic-identity* reported sometimes noticed themselves using lenses from both their ethnic backgrounds though they predominantly used their dominant ethnicity lens. The differences in values and perceptions in their ethnicity components often gave them a plurality of viewpoints and by increasing openness in relating to others during their OS contributed towards reducing their uncertainty as *Uncertainty Reduction Theory* suggests.

The second biethnic identity type, *race-based superordinate identity*, also demonstrated a coping mechanism of handling power-relations through identifying oneself with a very broad-based generic category e.g., *White European*, *white*, *mixed* or *White Anglo-Saxon*, believing that aligning themselves with a large mass of people in the generic category brought them a sense of belonging and security as suggested by *Belongingness theory*. Here, compared to the first identity type, external ascription did not contradict but ratified their choice. The respondents felt this happened mostly because their phenotypes and names did not contradict their chosen category. Here, causality between choice of identity category and ratification through external ascription cannot be ascertained as the sample was fairly small.

The third biethnic identity type, *single ethnic group identity*, was not a conscious well-thought-out plan of the biethnic individual, but reflected which parent's culture was dominant in their upbringing. Here, the biethnic individuals

unquestioningly adopted their identity status dictated by their more dominant parent's ethnicity in their upbringing. Reducing uncertainty as *Uncertainty Reduction Theory* has suggested was a goal for these biethnics too, but they believed their identity status quo functioned well, and the additional efforts needed for the identity work of exploring their non-dominant ethnicity component and integrating it with their dominant identity would not bring them incremental benefits.

The fourth biethnic identity type, *fluid context-related ethnic identity*, demanded the most conscious effort from the individual who had to know both their ethnicity components, cultures and languages. It was not external ascription but the individual's conscious decision that dictated when to manifest a certain ethnic identity option. Sometimes, individuals identified with only one of their ethnicity components e.g., Finnish for a Finnish-Japanese person, and external ascription supported this identification. Why this happened could not be clearly identified as the phenomenon was rather complex, but respondents reported becoming rather expert in switching their identities to suit different contexts. This being skilled at effortlessly manifesting the most suitable identity, and for managing potential tension between external ascription and the individual's own ethnic identity activation during their OS reduced their uncertainty about belonging to the workplace as *Belongingness theory* and *Uncertainty Reduction Theory* suggest.

All four biethnic identity types were durable identities continued from earlier life stages reflecting the individual's evolution as a biethnic person. During their OS, the respondents experienced their particular biethnic identity type almost as a given, e.g., their height, and respondents did not report bouts of self-doubts and debilitating identity crises. This 'stability' of biethnic identity could be attributed to earlier conscious identity work where purposeful self-examination and analysis produced these stable identity types. The energy freed-up from ongoing introspection and self-doubt allowed them to focus more on what they needed to learn and how to do it, making their biethnicity an empowering attribute for their

OS. The suggestion of Contact Hypothesis that increased social contact decreases prejudices meant that biethnics had inherent advantages in managing the differences in national and organisational cultures because they were used to handling cultural differences due to their distinctive familial backgrounds and upbringing. This gave biethnics an OS advantage compared to monoethnics around them.

#### ***5.4.1 Theoretical implications - biethnicity's role in OS of biethnics***

In addition to the theoretical implications of rebutting earlier theories claiming biethnics as not adjusting well, these findings about biethnicity being an adjustment boon supports the literature (section 2.23) showing that biethnicity may even help biethnics to adjust better than monoethnics, mainly because of their being able to utilise more insightful learning and communication skills generated by their biethnicity. They also support the identity theory research claiming that studying identity work is key to understanding organisational changes (Brown, 2018, p. 6). Including biethnic identity formation into this research area would enhance current understanding of OS as biethnics are a fast-growing workforce segment in many places.

The theoretical implication of the four biethnic identity types is that they challenge the suitability of biethnic identity stage models (section 2.20). They reveal the current understanding of biethnic identity as fragmented. Much more research is needed to illuminate the identity formation of biethnic individuals, functioning in a 'monoracially defined world' (Poston, 1990, p.194), experiencing their OS differently from monoethnic adjustees and achieving OS success through different strategies reflecting their distinctive ethnicity and upbringings, and, producing multiple psychological identity outcomes (Root, 1990).

The four biethnic identity types aim to avoid uncertainty as *Uncertainty Reduction Theory* suggests, but the theoretical implications for identity studies and OS are in the manner how different biethnic respondents used their biethnic identity

type to achieve uncertainty reduction and facilitate improved OS. Another theoretical implication is how *Social exchange theory* can explain biethnic newcomers' evaluating their information gathering cost-efforts through social interactions and reciprocity in manager-subordinate relationships. Its application for studying the OS of ethnic and biethnic minorities would bring understanding that could be utilised for avoiding deficient OS.

#### ***5.4.2 Practical implications - biethnicity's role in the OS of biethnics***

There are two practical implications for organisations: Firstly, organisations aware of biethnic types and their different strategies of identity formation, maintenance and OS would benefit from adopting a more nuanced and specifically targeted onboarding that would consider specific learning needs and challenges than a one-size-fits-all approach many organisations currently employ and biethnics in this study found insufficient. Secondly, best adjustment practices identified from how different biethnic identity types utilise attributes generated by their biethnicity for their OS could be adapted and applied to improve the OS of others who find one-size-fits-all nominal onboarding offered by the organisations unsatisfactory. These would improve returns on the organisation's onboarding investment.

#### ***5.5 Discussion - findings of adjustee proactivity in biethnic OS in Finland***

The respondents' understanding of their proactivity better utilising their biethnicity-enabled skills for facilitating OS, compared to their organisation's efforts doing so, are presented next. An overwhelming majority of the respondents reported adjusting well because of their own proactivity and not due to their organisation's onboarding efforts. This is a significant finding, as *proactivity* is at the core of the 'interactionist perspective', one of the main OS research themes (see section 2.5.2) and reflects the findings of influential research showing how crucial adjustee proactivity is for OS success. What are

the inherent biethnicity-enabled skills, that adjustees feel their own proactivity utilises better than their organisation's adjustment efforts to achieve OS success?

Section 4.6 shows how a biethnic adjustee's *proactivity* is the pre-condition for successful utilisation of the three possible competitive advantages biethnics have over monoethnics in their OS: enhanced social skills due to their biethnicity, advantageous adjustment skills through familiarity of processing internal and familial ethnic/cultural differences, and coping skills acquired through managing tensions between own identity and external ascriptions. Organisations in Finland do not show any interest in harnessing these competitive advantages as they are unaware of these features probably due to stringent national anti-discriminatory legislation in Finland (see section 1.4). So, research distinguishing the experience of biethnic-biracial identity development and OS from other ethnic-racial minority experiences is glaringly missing in Finland as researchers tend to cluster biethnic-biracial identity formation and OS experiences of biethnics incorrectly into generic immigrant or other ethnic-racial minority perspectives.

Another significant finding of this study is that biethnic respondents with ethnicities from non-Western backgrounds e.g., Japanese, Korean, Indian, Iranian in their ethnicity mix, reported personal identity concepts different from the binary personal and social identity construct commonly found in organisational studies (section 2.16). *Identity* studies in non-Western cultures: (section 2.16), and comparisons between multi-nation Western and non-Western samples (section 2.16) show the *structure* of identity between Western and non-Western cultures to be different in the sense that the representation of *self* in Western cultures as a self-contained agent of exploration and identity construction, in many non-Western cultures should accommodate larger and more collective sense of *self*. Further, the non-Western identity concepts also differ in how the 'beliefs and values in an individual's context', rather than the 'individual's own beliefs and values' affect identity formation (section 2.16) show "Westerners" using personal

attributes to define their identities while “Easterners” rely on external attributions (Schwartz et al., 2012 p. 9).

Organisational studies affirm that *Identities* are central for understanding adjustment processes. Two aspects of biethnic identities: the four types of biethnic identity (section 4.5), and the non-Western identity concepts seen above, both affect the identity formation and thus the OS of biethnics. Since organisations featured in this study neglect these two crucial aspects in the case of biethnics, it is no surprise that the organisations’ onboarding efforts, unaware of the distinctive background-related conditions affecting the learning of biethnics and their competitive advantages, are considered deficient by the biethnic adjustees.

### ***5.5.1 Theoretical implications - proactivity in OS of biethnics in Finland***

These findings extend the OS and identity in organisational context literature in two ways: Firstly, this research establishes the crucial role of adjustee proactivity in OS by showing how biethnic newcomers have adjusted well, not because of their organisations’ onboarding, but mostly due to their own proactivity. Secondly, the findings also extend the POS literature by suggesting that biethnics adjustees do not see their organisations efficiently harnessing the three possible competitive OS advantages (see section 4.3) of biethnics over monoethnics, compared to how biethnic adjustees’ own proactivity achieves this harnessing. Organisations can achieve OS improvements by harnessing these competitive advantages through increased openness to how the differences in subjective perspectives caused by inherent background differences due to biethnicity, immigration and distinctive upbringing affect adjustee proactivity. Further, this study opens a new avenue for POS research, which is heavily influenced by *Social exchange theory* and the reciprocity norm ‘obliging employees to recompense advantageous treatment they receive from their work organization’ (Eisenberger et al., 2001, p. 42). With POS’s moderating role on OS, how biethnic newcomers

see their organisation understanding their differences from a monoethnic majority could be a potential mechanism for improving OS.

### **5.5.2 *Practical implications - findings of adjustee proactivity in biethnic OS***

There are two practical implications for organisations: Firstly, richer understanding of the *adjustee proactivity's* crucial impact on OS requires the planning and implementation of OS to make OS more relevant to the adjustee. OS with better understanding of adjustee needs and proactivity can replace OS efforts newcomers consider unsuitable for their needs. Secondly, investigating *what* the adjustees were proactive *about* in their OS would help organisations understand better the relevance and value of learning and information-seeking to the newcomers and also the manner of their information-seeking and learning. Understanding that e.g., proactivity about learning norms required different approaches than proactivity in network building among respondents, would help organisations better harness the adjustment 'tools' (see section 4.2.2) the respondents felt their biethnicity gave them. Most respondents considered the standard one-size-fits-all nominal onboarding from their organisation failing to engage them as there was no recognition for these adjustment 'tools' that biethnic respondents believed gave them an edge over monoethnics in their OS. As respondents have emphasised proactivity centrality in their OS success, organisations must understand how much and which types of proactive behaviours to encourage in biethnic newcomers to help them become active contributors in their new organizational settings (Yu et al., 2016, p.172).

## **5.6 *Implications of this research***

This study showed that adjustee's skills, motivation, upbringing and proactivity, their organization's adjusting efforts, four biethnic identity types, and different non-Western personal identity concepts (e.g., Indian, Japanese, Korean etc.), affect the identity formation and OS of biethnic adjustees. By rebutting earlier

depictions in academic literature of biethnic individuals not adjusting to working life and society in general, this study lends support to a growing corpus of research (section 2.11) showing biethnic individuals as being equally healthy, productive and well-adjusted in work and society as monoethnic individuals. By showing the strong impact of familial *upbringing* on OS, this study's findings reveal how *upbringing* has been overlooked by OS research but has started interesting researchers (section 2.7).

The implication of the four biethnic identity types is that biethnic individuals, functioning in a 'monoracially defined world' (Poston, 1990, p.194), experience their OS differently from monoethnic adjustees and achieve OS success through different strategies reflecting their distinctive ethnicity and upbringings, and as Root (1990) suggests, produce multiple psychological identity outcomes. This study's findings of non-Western personal identity concepts questioning the binary personal identity concepts common in identity studies and organisational studies, and the applicability of OS theories in diverse cultures, are confirmed by researchers (section 2.7). The effects of biethnicity on identity formation and OS require further studies.

A summary of this research's theoretical, practical and methodological implications, presented below, shows four theoretical implications. Firstly, being the first empirical study showing that biethnics adjust well to the workplace in a monoethnic majority environment in Finland, this study refutes earlier theories claiming that biethnics do not adjust well to the workplace or society. Secondly, social learning theory could be used in identity formation and OS studies as upbringing and earlier familial experience of biethnics adjusting to different cultural situations, concepts, values and norms, is shown to impact their identity formation and OS differently from that of monoethnics. Thirdly, personal identity theories need to reconsider the representativeness of their personal identity concepts and models for identity studies and for OS studies in the light of non-Western identity concepts reported by biethnics in this study. Fourthly, social exchange theory and POS (Perceived organisational support) should



expand to consider how proactivity generates improvements in adjustee commitment and performance as biethnic respondents saw their proactivity better harnessing the possible competitive advantages biethnics have over monoethnics in their OS generating more effective OS than their organisation's efforts.

There are four practical implication of these research findings: firstly, organisations should consider that biethnics may have certain 'tools' as advantages over monoethnics in their OS due to their biethnicity and harnessing them for OS would impact OS success positively. Secondly, OS success could be improved by making the content and nature of the organisation's OS interventions more transactional and relational to suit adjustee proactivity and better serve distinctive biethnic newcomer needs than the one-size-fits-all onboarding many organisations currently use. Thirdly, understanding how much and which type of proactive behaviours to encourage among biethnic newcomers would improve their OS efficiency. Fourthly, understanding how upbringing can function as attitude-forming and behaviour-shaping influences would help biethnic newcomers form meaningful workplace mentoring relationships promoting their OS.

A methodological implication of this research's findings is that in research scope, design and sampling, a nuanced classification than clustering biethnics' experiences with other ethnic-racial minority experiences or into a generic newcomer group, would improve studies of biethnic-biracial identity formation and OS experiences.

## 6 CONCLUSION

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### 6.1 *Contributions of this research*

This thesis makes four contributions to OS, and to identity formation and identity management studies: Firstly, the findings rebut earlier depictions in academic literature of biethnic individuals not adjusting to working life and society in general, as biethnic adults reported adjusting well to the workplace in Finland. Secondly, biethnics adjust mostly through their own *proactivity* and not necessarily due to the organisation's onboarding efforts, which they considered deficient. Thirdly, *upbringing* is recognised as an important factor in the identity formation and OS of biethnics; thirdly. Fourthly, four types of biethnic identity are operational, these are durable, flexible and even contextual. They are not stages as each type can occur at different life stages.

A conceptual contribution of this study is the findings indicating that non-Western (e.g., Indian, Japanese, Korean etc.) personal identity concepts, which differ from binary Western (personal and social) identities, are often present, co-affecting identity management and socialization efforts of biethnic employees. The four practical contributions of this study are: Firstly, Organisations should consider that biethnics may have certain 'tools' as advantages over monoethnics in their OS due to their biethnicity. Secondly, organisations should make the content and nature of the organisation's OS efforts more transactional and relational, to suit adjustee proactivity and better serve the distinctive needs of biethnic newcomers than the one-size-fits-all onboarding many organisations currently use. Thirdly, organisations with better understanding of how *upbringing* as an agent of attitude-forming and behaviour-shaping affects workplace relations can improve their OS. Fourthly, organisations should better understand how much and which types of proactive behaviours to encourage in biethnic newcomers to facilitate their OS.

## ***6.2 Recommendations for practice in the area of OS***

This study has some practice recommendations, especially for organisations with ethnic diversity. Firstly, instead of standard one-size-fits-all onboarding suited to the organisation's timetables, schedules and needs, which fail to engage biethnic newcomers, the organisation's onboarding efforts should consider the adjustee's individual needs e.g., by recognising the adjustment 'tools' that biethnic respondents believed gave them an OS edge over monoethnics. Secondly, the organisation's OS efforts should be more transactional and relational, to better serve the biethnic newcomers' needs, and reflect their upbringing. Thirdly, organisations should consider the probable need of the newcomer to adjust also to sub- and micro-cultures in the work environment and how this could be turned into a tool for increased engagement and acceptance gaining e.g., by appointing a mentor who could personify the sub- or micro-culture for the newcomer. Fourthly, consider how adjustee *proactivity* could be better harnessed for enhancing the biethnic's OS.

## ***6.3 Strengths and limitations of this research***

The research limitations are explained in section 3.12. The distinctiveness of the research location, Finland (explained in section 1.4) is that a very high proportion of monoethnic inhabitants live among a rapidly growing biethnic population gradually entering the workforce. Finland, stands apart from other Western countries in how ethnic composition of communities, neighbourhoods, workplaces, educational institutions affects societal tolerance of ethnic minorities, interethnic relationships and biethnic offspring, which all affect the identity formation of biethnic individuals and their OS. However, possibly due to stringent national anti-discriminatory legislation, Finland does not collect statistics about the current number of biethnics, especially in the workforce, and there is a glaring shortage of ethnicity/biethnicity research in Finland. This qualitative research studied a previously unresearched phenomenon, the OS of biethnics in Finland. The research location is distinctive among other Western countries as there is no local data on biethnicity or previous research on the OS

of biethnics that would have primed the respondents. This is a strength of this pioneering research.

#### ***6.4 Future research avenues in biethnic identity formation/management***

Future studies could build on the current study to investigate promising future research avenues in identity studies and OS. Currently, there is no research about biethnic identity types, why and how they are operational, beyond what this study's respondents contributed, and barring scant research e.g., (Albuja et al., 2018; Hoa, 2009). How within-person variability and contexts impact biethnic identity and why certain biethnic identities emerge in particular individuals, what background factors e.g., combinations of parent's ethnicities, familial upbringing, education, experience of emigration/immigration, social ascription of ethnic identity, discrimination impact the identity type manifestation, and how the biethnic individuals utilise their biethnic identity types in their OS would be valuable further research avenues.

Future research could investigate whether an integrated identity is a prerequisite for biethnic individuals to be well-adjusted, functional and happy, and whether this claim extends to psychological outcomes like well-being, self-esteem, career or academic success and if there are other biethnic identity types. The importance of non-Western context (section 4.8) identity research is an exponentially growing field of research producing identity studies in non-Western cultures (section 2.16). This is a strong influence mostly neglected by organisational studies and should be researched more.

How biethnic individuals experience discrimination, racism and disadvantageous power-relations due to their biethnicity in the globalising world would be a future research avenue enriching the extant literature on identity formation, (PE) fit, (PO) fit, (PS) fit and OS for persons experiencing lack of social validation through discrimination from colleagues or non-supportive supervisors. Future research should investigate the shortcomings of OS identity

studies (section 2.13), and expand research beyond single country contexts, consider complexity due to mixtures of ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identities, and integrate recent immigrant newcomers' (RINs) experiences impacting their OS.

### ***6.5 Future research avenues in organisational socialisation***

POS or perceived organizational support studies have started considering the effects of culture, ethnicity or upbringing. However, OS research considering ethnicity aspects, still fails to differentiate between the experience of biethnic-biracial identity development and other ethnic-racial minority experiences (Soliz et al. 2017, p.268). Targeted research studying how ethnicity, culture and experiences of emigration/immigration and the distinctive mixtures of these factors affect different ethnic/biethnic groups and individuals should be researched. 'Tools' that biethnic individuals saw their biethnicity giving them – what they mean for the individuals and how they utilise them in their OS would be a field of research yielding valuable information about how adjustee proactivity impacts biethnic OS. This knowledge would enrich both proactivity and LMX aspects in OS studies and yield valuable practical insights for organisations about what kind of proactivity to support.

### ***6.6 Concluding remarks***

This qualitative research studied a previously unresearched phenomenon, the OS of biethnics in Finland. The research location is distinctive among other Western countries as there is no local data or research on biethnicity or on the OS of biethnics that would have primed the respondents. Academic analysis of biethnic individuals has often depicted individuals as adjusting poorly to working life and society (Section 2.11). This thesis serves to rebut these negative descriptions; biethnic adults reported adjusting well to the workplace in Finland. This adjustment was typically achieved through their own efforts and proactivity, and not due to their organisation's onboarding efforts, which they considered deficient. Upbringing is recognised as an important factor in the OS of biethnics.

Four biethnic identity types emerged, these are not stages as each type can occur at different life phases and no order of progression is implied. Findings indicate that non-Western (e.g., Indian, Japanese, Korean, etc.) personal identity concepts are often present, influencing identity management and OS of biethnic employees. These original insights of this thesis contribute to OS, and to identity studies. This thesis argues that the current theoretical understanding of identity formation and OS should expand to include upbringing, ethnicity, biethnicity, and non-Western identity concepts.

## 7 APPENDICES

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### *Appendix 1*

#### **Interview form**

**HOW BIETHNIC ADULTS SEE THEMSELVES ADAPTING SOCIO-CULTURALLY TO THE WORKPLACE IN FINLAND.** University of Leicester Doctorate of Social Sciences research interview by Rana Sinha

| Questionnaire  | Serial #                 | Code #                   |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. What is your age? 20-30 <input type="checkbox"/> 31-40 <input type="checkbox"/> 41-50 <input type="checkbox"/> 51-60 <input type="checkbox"/> 61- <input type="checkbox"/>  |                          |                          |
| 2. What is your ethnicity?   |                          |                          |
| 3. Do you define your ethnicity mainly by?   |                          |                          |
| 1. ancestry <input type="checkbox"/>   |                          |                          |
| 2. memory of origin <input type="checkbox"/>   |                          |                          |
| 3. migration <input type="checkbox"/>  |                          |                          |
| 4. culture <input type="checkbox"/>  |                          |                          |
| 5. experience of racism <input type="checkbox"/>   |                          |                          |
| 6. low/high socio-economic status <input type="checkbox"/>   |                          |                          |
| 7. high social support <input type="checkbox"/>  |                          |                          |
| 4. What is the ethnicity of your father?   |                          |                          |
| 5. What is the ethnicity of your mother?   |                          |                          |
| 6. Which is the dominant ethnic culture for you: your father's or your mother's?   |                          |                          |
| 7. Do you now live in the area you were born? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Born where?   |                          |                          |
| 8. How long have you lived in the area where you now live?   |                          |                          |
| 9. How long have you worked in the organisation you currently work?  |                          |                          |
| 10. How successfully have you adapted to the norms and behavioural requirements of your current organisation? Extremely Well <input type="checkbox"/> Well <input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactorily <input type="checkbox"/> Could be better <input type="checkbox"/> Not at all <input type="checkbox"/> |                          |                          |
| 11. What norms and behavioural requirements in your current job were new to you?   |                          |                          |
| 12. Do you think that monoethnic people adapt to the to the norms and behavioural requirements of your current organisation better than you? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>  |                          |                          |
| 13. Do you think that biethnic people adapt better to the workplace? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>  |                          |                          |
| 14. What is the most and the least important for you personally at the workplace?  |                          |                          |
|  | Most                     | Least                    |
| Being popular and liked at the workplace   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Getting more money and benefits  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

- Having power and high status at the workplace ☐ ☐
- Being regarded as a professional ☐ ☐
- Learning and developing personally ☐ ☐
- Has your own culture affected how you prioritize these factors?
- Has the culture of your organisation affected how you prioritize these factors?
15. How much does host country culture affect the way you consider yourself to be successfully adapted to your workplace?
- Significantly ☐ A lot ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ No effect ☐ How?
16. How does the culture of your upbringing affect your adaptation to your workplace?
17. How important was the organisation's role in helping you adapt to the norms and behavioural requirements of your current organisation?
- Significant ☐ Important ☐ Fairly important ☐ Not so important ☐ No role ☐
18. How does your organisation's efforts to help you adjust to the workplace affect your work identity?
- Significantly ☐ A lot ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ No effect ☐
19. What exactly has your organisation done to help you adjust to the workplace?
20. How has adjusting to this workplace affected your personal identity?
- Significantly ☐ A lot ☐ Somewhat ☐ Very little ☐ No effect ☐
21. Do you notice any difference in how you construct your personal identity with how monoethnic colleagues at your workplace construct theirs? Yes ☐ No ☐ How?
22. Can you say a few words about how you construct your personal identity? What factors affect your personal identity construction most:
- |              |                          |                        |
|--------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| Religion     | Ethnicity                | Nationality (passport) |
| Gender (sex) | Social class/level/caste | Education/Training     |
| Language     | Upbringing               | Culture                |
| Age group    | Order of birth           | Something else, what?  |
23. Do you construct your personal identity differently from monoethnic persons you interact with regularly? In which areas do you notice major differences?
24. Due to their background, biethnic employees have an advantage over monoethnic employees and perform better than monoethnic employees in certain settings, e.g. multicultural workplace!
- Totally agree ☐ Agree ☐ Undecided ☐ Disagree ☐ Strongly Disagree ☐
25. Do you have any experience of such settings where biethnic employees have an advantage over monoethnic employees and thus perform better? Yes ☐ No ☐ Where?
-



## *Appendix 2*

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### **Interview Information Sheet – given to each interviewee before the interviews.**

#### **Information Sheet**

(You can keep this information sheet and a copy of the consent form you have signed.)

**Purpose of the Study:** As part of the requirements for Doctorate in Social Science studies at the University of Leicester, UK, I have to carry out a research study. The study is about “The organizational socialization or socio-cultural adaptation processes of biethnic adults at the workplace: How biethnic adults see themselves adapting socio-culturally to the workplace”.

**What will the study involve?** The study will involve qualitative interviews of 30-35 biethnic adults, living and working in Finland, over 18 years old persons working in their current jobs less than two years, who will be interviewed using semi-structured interviewing technique. The interviews will take place between December 2014 and April 2015, at a place, which is convenient for you and me, the researcher. Only the researcher and you will be present at the interview unless you choose otherwise.

**Why have you been asked to take part?** You have been asked to participate because you are a biethnic individual as you have yourself stated, are over 18 years old and have been working in your job less than two years. No one other than the researcher will know that you have been asked to or will participate.

**Do you have to take part?** This study is 100% voluntary. You can withdraw from the interview at any time you choose. If you change your mind after the end of the interview, you can still add to your interview or withdraw within two weeks of the completion of the interview and ask for all data to be destroyed and it will be destroyed.

**Will your participation in the study be kept confidential?** Yes. Following standard University of Leicester protocol, I will ensure that no clues to your identity or the identity of your employer appear in the thesis or in any following

publication. Any extracts from what you say that are quoted in the thesis will be entirely anonymous. All clues for detecting your identity or where you work will be removed.

**What will happen to the information you give?** The data will be kept confidential for the duration of the study. Six months after the thesis is approved, the data will be destroyed. No one from your organisation or outside will at any point have any access to the data collected or know that you have been interviewed.

**What will happen to the results?** The results will be presented in the thesis, to be seen by my two supervisors, an internal and an external examiner designated by the University of Leicester. Students and researchers may read the approved thesis, which may also be published in a research journal.

**What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?** I can't think of any negative consequences for you. It is, however, possible that talking about your experience may cause you some distress.

**What if there is a problem?** At the end of the interview, I will discuss with you about the experience and how you feel about it. You can contact the Ombudsman for Minorities in Finland, Eva Biaudet if you have experienced or observed ethnic discrimination in your work experience. Contact details can be found here [www.ofm.fi](http://www.ofm.fi)

**Who has reviewed this study?** In accordance with national research requirements, the University of Leicester regulations stipulate that all students undertaking research must receive official ethical approval before conducting any research.

**Any further queries?** If you need any further information, you can contact me: Ranadhir Lal Sinha. +358 50 3535044. Email: [rana.sinha@dot-connect.com](mailto:rana.sinha@dot-connect.com)  
If you agree to take part in the study, please sign the consent form overleaf.

### *Appendix 3*

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**Consent Form - given to each interviewee before the interviews. They read it thoroughly, sign it and return it to the researcher.**

I \_\_\_\_\_ agree to participate in Ranadhir Lal Sinha's research study that he is undertaking for his Doctorate in Social Science studies at the University of Leicester, UK.

The purpose and nature of the study has been explained to me orally and in writing.

- I am participating voluntarily.
- I give permission for my interview with Ranadhir Lal Sinha to be digitally recorded.
- I understand that I can withdraw from the study, without repercussions, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use the interview data within two weeks of the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I understand that anonymity will be ensured in the write-up by disguising my and my organisation's identity.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the thesis and any subsequent publications if I give permission below:  
(Please tick one box below:)

☐ I agree to quotation/publication of extracts from my interview where my identity is not revealed.

☐ I do not agree to quotation/publication of extracts from my interview where my identity is not revealed.

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix 4

### Extract of interview transcript

(This is an extract from an interview of the biethnic respondents. Some parts have been marked with x to obscure information that could identify the interviewee. The rest of the interview also contains such content that could potentially identify the respondent and have been left out).

### HOW BIETHNIC ADULTS SEE THEMSELVES ADAPTING SOCIO-CULTURALLY TO THE WORKPLACE IN FINLAND.

byv6/20 – Interview transcript 17.6.2015. Venue: Café. Time: 16:30-18:35.

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| Researcher:  | What norms and behavioural requirements in your current job were new to you?  |
| Interviewee: | I am working in a multicultural organisation. Our office, most of my colleagues are not from Finland. I am also working a lot with immigrants. They come from various cultures. In that sense it's not a very typical Finnish working atmosphere. The expertise and knowledge of different cultures is relevant for my daily work and I benefit from that. But also, my personal history – half Finnish and half Turkish, definitely helps me in my job.  |
| Researcher:  | It's a good plus for you? How?  |
| Interviewee: | It's a good plus.   |
| Researcher:  | Can you give some examples of norms and behaviour requirements in your daily work that you notice you are good at?  |
| Interviewee: | I think I have aspects from Finnish culture and Turkish culture that help me.   |
| Researcher:  | How do you notice these aspects? Can you give some examples?  |
| Interviewee: | I am organised to take tasks forward in an organised manner, that comes perhaps more from my Finnish side. Or at least I have learnt it in Finland. On the other side, communicating with people coming from different backgrounds and ethnicities, the communication – most of them needs to be flexible and understanding – that skill probably comes from my Mediterranean background, that sounds like Turkish. I would consider myself to be a social person. I like talking with people. I also believe I am a good observer, noticing small things that others, e.g. my Finnish colleagues miss. This also |

|                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
|                     | helps me in my job. These are characteristics that have been formed in me due to my biethnic background.  |
| Researcher:         | So, would you say that you have to operate with a different skill set than the average Finnish monoethnic person?   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | Yes. Of course.   |
| Researcher:         | Do these skills have to do with noticing nuances or subtle signals. Could you please elaborate?   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | Yes. I see every now and then Finnish colleagues, who, are not as open as they should be or are expected to be from the point of view of the foreign clients.   |
| Researcher:         | In what way do you see yourself being better than your monoethnic colleagues in communicating?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | They misunderstand certain body language that are to me more natural. In that sense I can communicate more effectively with foreign clients. They'd rather tell me what they expect than my other Finnish colleagues and we can matters forward much faster. It seems to me that I am more approachable than my Finnish colleagues. |
| Researcher:         | Do you think that your clients see in you a broader range of communication skills?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | At least multicultural clients, yes. I deal a lot with immigrant background people but also co-work with a lot of Finnish organisations, officials, decision-makers and people at different levels who are born and brought up in Finland.  |
| Researcher:         | So, let me get this clear, you said that you have different behaviour for people from different cultural settings?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | Yes. The difference between me and my Finnish colleagues is that when I notice the different communications patterns inherent in their culture, I respond. Then I am connecting with them in a connective manner, compared to my monoethnic colleagues.   |
| Researcher:         | Impressive! Okay. Let's proceed to Question No. 12. You say that your culture has affected how you prioritise the factors affecting you at the workplace. Could you please say something more about this?   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | I underline the phrase "own culture". When I use "own culture", I don't refer to that of Finland, I refer to both of my background cultures. My own culture is a mixture. I'd also add that my "own culture" has some German spices in it as I grew up in a family of three: my father, mother and me. I have no siblings.          |
| Researcher:         | Can you give an example of how this relates back to what you earlier said about your upbringing makes your communication skills better than your monoethnic colleagues?   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | We spoke four languages as we grew up. Me and my mum spoke Finnish mostly. Me and my dad spoke Turkish. They spoke German in between as they lived in Germany more than ten years together and have a German educational  |

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
|                     | background so I'd say that German culture was present in my upbringing. We wrote to each other in English. I don't know where that came from. Still, our written communication is in English. But we also speak Turkish. This package is my own culture.   |
| Researcher:         | So that is what you refer to as "my culture"?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | Yes, and this mixture affects whatever choices I make.   |
| Researcher:         | Can you say a few words about why you consider "Being regarded as a professional" as the most important for you?   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | Ah! I like my job and I always try to do it to the best of my abilities. I would like to be seen and regarded as such, in combination with my cultural background, my education and my expertise combined together. It gives me a better motivation as well.   |
| Researcher:         | Being regarded by whom?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | My colleagues, co-workers, clients.  |
| Researcher:         | Not bosses?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | I see my boss as my colleague.   |
| Researcher:         | And your boss is fine with that?   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | Yes, she is.   |
| Researcher:         | A couple of things about question 14 – How does the culture of your upbringing affect your adaptation to your workplace.   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | My upbringing is bicultural, or I'd say multicultural.   |
| Researcher:         | I need a bit more on that, please elaborate.   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | And I was lucky enough to go to a private high school in Turkey, which was an American culture dominated high school and that surely has some effect as well. I don't have any difficulties, to be honest, in adapting to my workplace. For me it was very natural to work with multicultural colleagues, with people coming from different backgrounds, it's natural to me, in that sense it was easy.  |
| Researcher:         | Have you had any situations where you really had to think carefully and rethink?   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | Yes, in keeping the working life and personal life separate and keeping a clear line between them, I'd say, and I'm learning fast.   |
| Researcher:         | Could you give an example of that?   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | It's clear to me but perhaps not so clear as the picture I give. Through my work I have got acquainted with African culture, working with African immigrants. That was new to me. I do use my wider communication skills, but often especially Africans, they see it as being me, 100% me, even though it is my job. Yes, it is me, the way I communicate, the way I use my time, the way I am. It is me, in that context, I don't change, my face doesn't change but, however, I wouldn't like to receive phone calls at the weekends or after 10 O'clock at night. |
| Researcher:         | Does that happen very often?   |

|                     |   |
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| <b>Interviewee:</b> | Yes, that happens often.  |
| Researcher:         | What do you do then?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | Then I don't want to be rude. One has to answer politely as one wants to keep on working though one is not interested in their personal lives either.   |
| Researcher:         | Could you narrow down this "African"? Are they North African, Arab African or East African, West African or Sub-Saharan African?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | A lot, I'd say all. Yes, there are very large differences among them. Yes, definitely, surely, surely, surely!  |
| Researcher:         | You notice all those differences, but how does your biethnicity or upbringing help you with that?   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | The Middle Eastern culture is for me closer and familiar through Turkish, the rich culture it has. Also, North African with the Muslim background people, I do share certain, well I don't know what but something. I know that culture well, maybe. Then the West Africans from Nigeria, Cameroon and Liberia and also people from Kenya maybe, those are the countries whose people I deal with the most. |
| Researcher:         | That's wonderful, thanks. Let's now go on to what has your organisation exactly done to help you adjust to the workplace?   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | I'm working in the third sector (NGO) and usually NGOs have limited resources to support their employees, especially. I must say that I haven't received any particular adjustment help.  |
| Researcher:         | Is there any reason why you didn't get onboarding? Is it only you who didn't get onboarding or nobody gets onboarding there?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | I think one of the reasons I was hired was that I would probably need less adjustment than other people for the work that I am doing. So, it was for them easy and ok, it would have required something else than they would have had. I am happy to be working in a healthy environment, but with limited resource I don't think I have received any help.   |
| Researcher:         | Among the NGOs you know about, have you heard of anyone getting any help with their workplace adjustment?   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | The larger NGOs with bigger budgets and resources – there are more chances of them organising certain training, workshops or visits to even other countries. I have heard that some of the international NGOs we have like Red Cross, Oxfam or domestic ones like xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx have such services.  |
| Researcher:         | So, thinking about the next time you'd start on a new job, what kind of onboarding help would deem necessary?   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | Communication skills, reading and writing skills as well skills for marketing of whatever you are doing.  |
| Researcher:         | Imagine you're helping me plan such an onboarding. Give me some points, in bullet points, you'd like to see in onboarding.  |

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| <b>Interviewee:</b> | Finnish culture of marketing is very different from the cultures elsewhere. For example, communicating only by email is considered very efficient among the Finnish people, but not necessarily among others. Even though one is working in a multicultural organisation, using only Finnish habits and means to reach people is simply wrong. It doesn't reach the client. Both online communication and verbal communication need to be developed in order to reach people.   |
| Researcher:         | So, you are saying that relying mainly on email is the default in Finnish culture. Why is it so?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | That's what they know.  |
| Researcher:         | Do you mean that you are using a mixture of cultural approaches, other than the default Finnish one?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | Yes. A combination of different methods. It depends on the target group you have and what you are trying to achieve. Use a combination of different channels. In Finland people do what they know but the world is changing so we need to know the others.  |
| Researcher:         | Q. 20. How do you actually construct your personal identity?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | I am Finnish. I see myself as Finnish.  |
| Researcher:         | Wow! That's like a Finnish movie dialogue. Give me a Turkish version of that, please, some more details.  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | Even if I moved here when I was 18. If, at the age of 18 you would have asked me which do you feel more that would have been Turkish definitely as I grew up there and my education, it was more than that. Now I have spent all my adult life in Finland. My university life was in Finland and work experience mostly from here. Of course, now it is 50/50 although it has shaped me having stayed here so long. Then it was 80% Turkish and 20% Finnish but now it is 50% Finnish and 50% Turkish. My Turkish husband sees me as being more Finnish than Turkish. |
| Researcher:         | Wow! On what does he base that?   |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | You should ask him that, I don't know.  |
| Researcher:         | How do you think he'd reply if I'd ask him that?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | The way I look at things from different angles. My Turkish identity, my Finnish identity make a multicultural identity as it also has German elements, and American high school, and I have also lived in xxxxxxxxx some time and in xxxxxxxxx for two years. I have always been social. I always like to keep one foot in the other direction. I work in a multicultural field and that has become my identity as well. I am a woman, I am married – all these construct my identity.  |
| Researcher:         | Do you need to negotiate your identity in different settings? E.g., work is a different identity, home is a different identity and with some friends it is something else?  |
| <b>Interviewee:</b> | I don't see myself doing it but others do it to me. Are you Finnish or are you Turkish? – I get that question all the time.   |



|              |   |
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|              | <p>For me it's natural. Actually, there was a time I recognised that when I was an exchange student at a college xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx. All the people studying there were from different international backgrounds. They were children of diplomats or had lived in several countries or were half and half. I went there and I realised how great the people were and I was asking when I met people "You're half Dutch and half Japanese, wow! What a combination" or "you're half South African and half Norwegian" or someone was half Thai and half Irish, I was mesmerised. Great combinations and then they looked at me and they said "You are half Turkish and half Finnish, wow". That was the first time I realised that it was something I was to be proud of. Before that I had always been like others, nothing unique or weird, nothing positive or negative about that. I was who I was. When I saw all those people and got excited about their identities, and then I began looking at me the same way. That's when I woke up to me. Actually, when I was with that crowd, we were all mixtures of different cultures and having a great time. It was for very easy for us to communicate as we didn't have to explain ourselves. I think I have adapted to that. Maybe now I am more patient in telling people who I am.</p> |
| Researcher:  | <p>So, do you feel that you only feel a sense of belonging, a "us" only when you are among multicultural people? Are you alienated in either Finland or Turkey?</p>   |
| Interviewee: | <p>No, not at all. When I am in the host culture, let's say Turkey, I feel as belonging 100% to that group. Conversations start very smoothly, very easily. However, I feel that they see in me something they don't have. Yes, you feel that in the questions and in the conversations as well.</p>  |
| Researcher:  | <p>Do you consider your personal identity as static or being fluid?</p>   |
| Interviewee: | <p>I think anyone's identity no matter what their background is, changes over time. Certain things remain unchanged while some others change with history as we always add some things new.</p>   |
| Researcher:  | <p>What aspects of your identity wouldn't change?</p>   |
| Interviewee: | <p>I am half Finnish half Turkish – that's not gonna change. Things like work change you, you gain more experience, the working environment may change. Even the culture where I reside might change. That will surely have an effect. I am open, I don't necessarily see myself living forever in the culture where I am now. I think I can adjust easily to wherever I need to be.</p>  |

## Appendix 5

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### INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

#### HOW BIETHNIC ADULTS SEE THEMSELVES ADAPTING SOCIO-CULTURALLY TO THE WORKPLACE IN FINLAND.

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##### Opening

1. (Establish Rapport) [shake hands] My name is Rana Sinha. I am doing my doctoral studies at Leicester University. As we spoke earlier, I'd like to interview you. It'll take about an hour.
  2. (Purpose) I would like to ask you some questions about your background, your parents' ethnicities, how you have adjusted to your workplace and some experiences you have had and how you construct your ethnic identity.
  3. (Motivation) I hope to use this information to help understand how biethnic people construct their ethnic identities and adjust to the workplace in Finland. This has never been researched in Finland before.
  4. (Time Line) The interview should take about an hour and a half. If it's alright with you, I'll record the interview. In the final published thesis there will be no reference to you, to your organization. I will be using some quotes from what you say, but I'll remove and disguise anything that can be linked to you.
- 

Transition: Let me begin by asking you some questions about your age group.

##### A. Topic - General demographic information

1. What is your age group?
2. Then I can fill in your gender.
3. The next question I need to ask you is about your level in your organisation. Which one shall I tick for you: Operational, Middle-management or Top-Management?

Transition to the next topic: Ethnicity

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##### B. Topic - "Ethnicity" - Questions 2-5.

1. Do you define your ethnicity by a, b, c, d, e, f, g
2. What is the ethnicity of your father?
3. What is the ethnicity of your mother?

Transition to the next topic: asking about dominant culture in the upbringing family in order to get the interviewee probe deeper into own ethnic background and how his/her ethnic identity is formed.

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##### C. Topic -Dominant culture in family – Q. 6-8

26. Which is the dominant ethnic culture for you: your father's or your mother's?
27. Do you now live in the area you were born?
28. How long have you lived in the area where you now live?

Transition to the next topic: Evaluating own workplace adjustment.

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##### D. Topic -Evaluating own workplace adjustment – Q. 9-11

- How long have you worked in the organisation you currently work?

- How successfully have you adapted to the norms and behavioural requirements of your current organisation?
- What norms and behaviour requirements in your current job were new to you?

Transition to the next topic: Comparing own adjustment to monoethnic colleagues' adjustment.

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E. Topic - Comparing own adjustment to monoethnic colleagues' adjustment. – Q. 12-13

- 29. Do you think that monoethnic people adapt to the to the norms and behavioural requirements of your current organisation better than you?
- 30. Do you think that biethnic people adapt better to the workplace?

Transition to the next topic: What is the most and least important for the interviewee at the workplace. The idea is to make the interviewee focus deeper on values and then on how identity is formed.

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F. Topic - What is the most and least important for the interviewee at the workplace. – Q. 14

- What is the most and the least important for you personally at the workplace?
- Has your own culture affected how you prioritize these factors?
- Has the culture of your organisation affected how you prioritize these factors?

Transition to the next topic: Workplace adjustment.

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G. Topic - Workplace adjustment – Q. 15-19

- 31. How much does host country culture affect the way you consider yourself to be successfully adapted to your workplace?
- 32. How does the culture of your upbringing affect your adaptation to your workplace?
- 33. How important was the organisation's role in helping you adapt to the norms and behavioural requirements of your current organisation?
- 34. How does your organisation's efforts to help you adjust to the workplace affect your work identity?
- 35. What exactly has your organisation done to help you adjust to the workplace?

Transition to the next topic: Identity construction and management

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H. Topic - Identity Management– Q. 20 -23

- 36. How has adjusting to this workplace affected your personal identity?
- 37. Do you notice any difference in how you construct your personal identity with how monoethnic colleagues at your workplace construct theirs?
- 38. Can you say a few words about how you construct your personal identity? What factors affect your personal identity construction most?
- 39. Do you construct your personal identity differently from monoethnic persons you interact with regularly? In which areas do you notice major differences?

Transition to the next topic: Workplace Adjustment of biethnic employees

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I. Topic - Workplace Adjustment of biethnic employees – Q. 24 -25

40. Due to their background, biethnic employees have an advantage over monoethnic employees and perform better than monoethnic employees in certain settings, e.g. multicultural workplace!
41. Do you have any experience of such settings where biethnic employees have an advantage over monoethnic employees and thus perform better?
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### **Closing**

A. (Summarize) You have given me very detailed and useful information that would help understand the organisational socialization of biethnic employees in Finland.

B (Maintain Rapport) I appreciate the time you took for this interview. Is there anything else you think would be helpful for me to know?

C. (Action to be taken) I should have all the information I need. Thanks again. I look forward to inviting you to my *karonkka* celebrations after I get my doctorate.

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