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The Significance of Child Friendly Spaces in Promoting
the Well-being of Asylum Seeking Children
Case Study at Heikinharju Reception Centre, Finland

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The Significance of Child Friendly Spaces in Promoting the Well-being and Safety of Asylum Seeking Children: Case Study at Heikinharju Reception Centre (Rima Hadid)

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This study took place at the Heikinharju Reception Centre in Oulu, Finland, between 2015 and 2018. The main goal of the study was to assess the significance of Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs) and their contribution to the well-being of asylum seeking families, especially to that of the children. The data was collected in a period of two years through observation and active participation in weekly gatherings with the children and their guardians as well as through other qualitative data collection methods (e.g., field notes, interviews, and focus group discussions) that took place mainly between October 2016 and May 2017.

The following research questions have been used to achieve the aims of this master's thesis project:

1. How significant are CFS practices in promoting well-being and psychological support for children and their families?

a) What are the conditions to increase safety?

b) What are the conditions to increase well-being and happiness?

2. How could CFSs be developed and progressed to better serve their goals?

Based on the research questions, an *Ethnographic case study* that was supported by an interpretive ontology and a social constructivist epistemology were used to elicit an in-depth picture of the phenomena explored. Despite the fact that data analysis process took place throughout the research, after completing the data collection phase, the researcher gathered the entire data for a final systematic data analysis.

The findings affirm a significantly positive relationship between the CFSs and children's and families' well-being. Moreover, data analysis revealed that despite the different perspectives in defining safety, safety still remains vitally important for increasing the well-being and happiness of children. Several recommendations have been made by the researcher to further the development of CFSs. Providing a larger space for the activities and increasing the frequency of the sessions were the first ones that came forward. Additionally, implementing different methods to increase the interactions between asylum seeking children and the local (Finnish) children has been strongly solicited. Finally, introducing Finnish culture through outdoor activities as well as more cultural activities to the children of the CFS has been suggested as a means of increasing the positive impacts of CFS on the asylum seeking children's and families' psychosocial development.

Keywords: Child friendly spaces, refugees, well-being, safety, asylum seeker, happiness, Reception Centres, Finland, migration

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1 Introduction

Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs) have been used as a means of providing protection and psychosocial well-being for children in emergency settings through community-organized, structured activities conducted in a safe, child friendly, and stimulating environment (Child Protection Working Group, 2012). CFSs mostly help communities in providing support for child protection during disasters. The aim of CFSs in Finland is to support asylum seeking children and their families in Finland (Häikiö, Viitanen & Tervonen-Arnkil, 2017).

This research investigates the characteristics of CFSs run by *Save the Children Finland* in reception centres in Finland. According to UNICEF (2009), the reasons behind establishing CFSs in humanitarian emergencies are including but not limited to: their potential for the quick establishment, low costs, easy scaling, and adaptivity. Keeping in mind the basic missions of CFSs, the primary aim of this research is to report: (1) Evidence of the impact CFSs have on children's well-being, (2) Impact of the activities on the relationship between the child and his/her primary guardian, and (3) Suggest solutions to improve CFSs. While this study is predominantly interested in the impacts of CFSs, it will also report the challenges faced by the CFS project during the time span of this research (January 2016 - May 2018).

The importance of CFSs during crises has been gradually recognized in academic research (Wessells & Kostelny, 2013; Save the Children, 2008; UNICEF, 2009; Save the Children Sweden, 2010; Madçs, Martyris & Triplehorn, 2010; Ager, Metzler, Vojta, & Savage, 2013). Therefore, this research has aimed to discover how CFSs impact children *during* the time of crisis and crisis-related migrations.

As support programs, CFSs are not meant to only provide protection for the children but also elevate the psychosocial well-being of children who are in danger of being affected (or have been affected already) by the circumstances around them. As evident in various research, there is a need for, and a growing interest of, adopting CFSs as a predominant intervention strategy during a crisis (Ager, Metzler, Vojta & Savage, 2013, p. 133). Correspondingly, there have been over 100 programs established all over the world that have utilized CFSs in various emergency situations/disasters such as the ones in Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq for Syrian refugees; CFSs for the crisis in South Sudan and Congo (ibid., p. 134). There have been a number of different agencies, such as Lutheran World Federation, Mercy Corps, Plan, Save the Children, SOS Children's Villages, UNICEF, War Child and World Vision which have been

involved in establishing CFSs. Furthermore, not only in conflict-oriented crises but also in natural disasters CFSs have been utilized e.g., in India, Hong Kong, and the Philippines in 2012. CFSs are mainly intended to achieve three objectives. Ager et al. (2013, p. 133) describe these objectives as:

1. Serve as a protective mechanism: CFSs are primarily focusing on protecting children of all ages from violence, abuse, and exploitation.
2. Provide psychological support: CFSs are intended to strengthen children's emotional and social well-being as well as their skills and knowledge by providing psychological support.
3. Mobilize communities for the well-being of children: CFSs are primary players in helping communities in strengthening their protection mechanisms towards children and their well-being.

CFSs are crucial in increasing the well-being of asylum seeking children. Owen (2012, p. 1) states that a strong sense of well-being is fundamentally connected to children's sense of belonging, being and becoming.

Belonging is a theoretical concept that is often linked to migration and to categories of people who are seen as 'displaced,' that is, the opposite of what is regarded as being 'in place'... [It] is a process by which distinction is made between those who are regarded as belonging, and those who are not and, thus, excluded or ascribed as belonging to another (subordinated) collectivity. (Wernesjö, 2014, pp. 452-453)

When children feel well, happy, secure, and socially successful they are able to fully participate in, and learn from, the daily routines, play, interactions and experiences in their early childhood setting. Even though the importance and utilization of CFSs have been growing lately, some researchers note that there is limited evidence on the outcomes and impacts of CFSs on the well-being of children.

The evidence base for the outcomes and impacts of CFSs is generally considered to be limited. As efforts are made to develop standards and international guidelines to support CFSs work in emergencies, it is important to develop and consolidate evidence regarding the protective, promotive and mobilizing effects CFSs have on children and youth. (Ager & Metzler, 2012)

By aiming to make a meaningful contribution to the limited evidence on the topic, this research strives to present data on the outcomes of CFSs practices on the well-being of children after

analysing data collected by using a qualitative method. The data was analysed concerning the effects of CFSs on the children, their safety, and their well-being as well as the effects of CFSs on the relationship between the children and their primary guardians (e.g., mom, dad, closest relative). It could be argued that CFSs this research might be significant in the Finnish context because of the need that had raised in Finland since 2015 when the country witnessed a massive influx of refugees and asylum seekers.

To sum up, this study strives to help (1) evaluate the significance of CFSs in providing protection and psychological support for the children and their families during their waiting time in Finland, and (2) to serve in the development of CFSs in order to better respond to children's and their guardians' expectations. Because this study is primarily focused on minors, necessary permissions to observe, participate, and report have been obtained from the *University of Oulu*, *Save the Children*, and the authorities of the *Reception Centre of Heikkinharju* in Oulu.

2 Research Aims and Research Questions

This research is aimed at evaluating the role of CFSs in providing protection and psychological assistance for children and their families during their waiting time (time needed to process their application for asylum) in reception centres. Evaluation has been conducted by monitoring the impact of CFSs on children, their behaviour, their attendance to the CFS, and any changes in their relationship with their primary guardians. By using qualitative data collection and qualitative data analysis methods, the research was intended for gaining knowledge about the value of CFSs based on the participants' views and researcher's observations.

The research's aims are in parallel with the main goals of CFSs, that is, CFSs are ultimately grounded in the belief that the physical environment both reflects and conditions the well-being and safety of children, and gives the children a clear message about how they are valued within the community. Furthermore, even though CFSs' goals and activities are child-centred (Ager et al., 2012), after initial observations, the researcher additionally wanted to explore the changes in guardians' behaviour towards their children after their regular attendance in CFSs practices. Therefore, this research will also serve at bringing attention to this overlooked effect of the CFSs. Upon sharing the research findings, suggestions based on the gained knowledge to improve the practices of CFSs will be provided.

On the basis of the multifaceted and multi-layered aims of the research, the research questions and two sub-questions have been formed to serve as a basis for this research.

1. How significant are CFS practices in promoting well-being and psychological support for children and their families?
 - a) What are the conditions to increase safety?
 - b) What are the conditions to increase well-being and happiness?

2. How could CFSs be developed and progressed to better serve their goals?

3 The Context of the Research

This chapter introduces definitions of asylum seeker and the process of asylum seeking, particularly in Finland. The concepts of safety, happiness, and well-being, which are thoroughly explored in “Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework,” are connected to the concepts of asylum seeking families in Finland. Thus, it is important to discuss what is meant by asylum seeking before laying out the theoretical foundations of the research.

3.1 Asylum Seekers in Finland

Cambridge Dictionary defines an asylum seeker as “someone who leaves their own country, often for political reasons or because of war, and who travels to another country hoping that the government will protect them and allow them to live there” (“Asylum seeker”, 2018). In Finland, one can be granted asylum if he or she is currently residing outside of his or her home country of permanent residence due to a probable (justifiable) reason for persecution there (“Asylum and international protection - The Finnish Immigration Service”, 2017). The justifiable reasons for persecution include “origin, religion, nationality, membership in a certain social group, or political opinions” (ibid. Para. 1). More often than not, “asylum seeker” and “refugee” are used interchangeably, which leads to confusion and wrong perceptions. While refugee is the person whose initial asylum seeking application has been successful, it can be argued that asylum seeker is a neutral statement in the sense that no connotations as to whether the person’s claim for asylum is justified or not (Mitchell, 2017, para 2).

Bearing in mind the distinction between an asylum seeker and a refugee, it is imperative to explain how these terms came into being. United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, commonly known as the “Refugee Convention,” signed in 1951 after World War II was mainly aimed at protecting people running away from Europe. Almost two decades after the Refugee Convention, in 1967, the Convention has been amended once and signed by 146 states to extend the protection for those outside of Europe as well, and defined the refugee as a person:

[Who] owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual

residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it. [United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951, Article 1A (2).]

Naturally, not everyone who applies for asylum meets the strict criteria laid by the Refugee Convention and various regulations of each country, and hence is granted permission to stay in the country in which they are seeking asylum. This fact is especially important for this study since the target group of the data collection are residing in reception centres (Transit Centres) in Finland, and most of them if not all, live in anxiety as to whether they will be granted asylum or not.

According to Finnish Immigration Service (MIGRI), a total of 32,476 persons applied for asylum in Finland in 2015, out of which the vast majority “were young Sunni Arab men from the Baghdad region in Iraq ... [and] a large share of the asylum seekers were Iraqi families with children.” (The Finnish Immigration Service, para. 2, 2017). In 2017, however, the number of applicants seems to have returned to the previous much lower levels as stated by MIGRI:

In 2014 – before the record-breaking year 2015 – a total of 3,651 asylum seekers arrived in Finland. The number of applications has now returned to the 2014 level. This year [2017] a total of 3,560 applications were submitted by the end of August. This number includes more than 1,500 subsequent applications by persons whose first applications have been rejected. The number of subsequent applications is usually not this high (ibid., para. 3).

Out of 42,822 applications that were received within a two-year period (1 January 2015 and 31 December 2016), in its peak, 27,612 adults, 5770 minors with his or her family, and 3325 unaccompanied minors applied for asylum in Finland (The Finnish Immigration Service, 2017). Moreover, during those most hectic times (1 January 2015 to 31 August 2017), 36,988 asylum interviews have been conducted and 42,822 decisions have been made (The Finnish Immigration Service, 2017). The details of asylum seekers have been presented in the tables below.

Table 1. Numbers of Asylum Seekers in Finland between 01.01.2015 and 01.06. 2017.

	2015	2016	2017 (First 6 months)
Adult	25,039	2,573	1,497
Minor with family	4,745	1025	555
Unaccompanied minor	3,113	212	107
Other (EU citizen, Relocation, Subsequent Application)	273	1094	1492
TOTAL	33,170	4,904	3,651

Moreover, the majority of people among the asylum seekers, with a staggering amount of 23,810 people, who applied for asylum between January 2015 and June 2017 were between 18-34 years old, and the least represented age group was 65+ year-olds with only 127 people. The breakdown of age groups according to MIGRI (2017) is given in the following Table.

Table 2. Age Groups of Asylum Seekers in Finland between 01.01. 2015 and 01. 06. 2017.

0-13	6,338
14-17	3,883
18-34	23,810
35-64	6,517
65+	127
Unknown	196

Also, among the aforementioned asylum seekers, only 8827 were women while the vast majority is men, almost 30,000 people.

Table 3. Gender/Sex of Asylum Seekers in Finland between 01.01. 2015 and 01. 06. 2017.

Men	31,989
Women	8,827
Unknown	55

To sum up, out of over 40,000 asylum seekers in a two-and-a-half-year period, approximately 75% were men, approximately 50% were between 18-34 years old, and approximately half of the asylum seekers (22,285) were from Iraq.

The Finnish Immigration Service states that “Those who receive a positive decision also receive a residence permit” (The Finnish Immigration Service, 2017). Therefore, the given statistics also represent the decisions on *residence permits* for asylum seekers. As given in Table 4 below, there were over 40,000 asylum applications between January 2015 and June 2017, out of which almost 30 per cent got a positive answer, 43.63 per cent were negative, and about 10 per cent were “dismissed.” Dismissed application means that the asylum seeker “has arrived in Finland from a safe country or if another country is responsible for the processing of his or her application” ("Statistics", 2017; "Information on statistics - The Finnish Immigration Service", 2017). “Expired matter” were about 17 per cent of all decisions on asylum applications. It should be noted that “expired matter” or “dismissed” are also indications of rejection. Therefore, only the category of “positive” represents those who are given asylum in Finland.

Table 4. Decisions on Asylum Applications in Finland between 01.01. 2015 and 01. 06. 2017.

Asylum Applications	Positive Decision	Negative Decision	Dismissed	Expired Matter
41,897	12210	18280	4028	7379
Percentage	29.14%	43.63%	9.61%	17.61%

As for genders, Table 5 below shows that out of 9004 women who applied for asylum between January 2015 and June 2017 in Finland, 3728 have resulted in positive decisions (41.403 per cent). In regard to men, out of 32867 applications, 8482 have received a positive decision (25.807 per cent).

Table 5. Decisions on Asylum Applications Based on Sex in Finland between 01.01.2015 and 01.06.2017.

	Numbers	Positive	Negative	Dismissed	Expired matter
Men	32867	8482	14699	2998	6688
Women	9004	3728	3573	1027	676
Total	41875	12210	18272	4025	7364

To sum up, around 12000 men, women, and children, which is roughly 29% of all applications, have been given residence permit in Finland between January 2015 and June 2017.

Evidently, there was an unprecedented increase in asylum seekers in Finland in 2015, and to help the workload two new offices in Vaasa and Rovaniemi were opened and were active until the beginning of 2017 (The Finnish Immigration Service, 2017, para. 11). Even though many decisions have been made within a year, a lot of asylum seekers had to wait for over a year for a decision as stated by MIGRI (2017):

The majority of asylum seekers who arrived in Finland in 2015 received the first decision on their applications in 2016. Some have had to wait for a decision until this autumn because of the backlog of applications. At the end of September 2017, approximately 600 asylum seekers who arrived in 2015 are still waiting for a decision. Decisions on the final applications remaining from 2015 will be made by the end of October 2017. (para.12)

3.2 Child Friendly Spaces (CFSs)

Used widely since 1999 Kosovo crisis, CFSs were planned to serve as a safety environment for children by providing them a safe space “with supervised activities, by raising awareness of the risks to children, and mobilizing communities to begin the process of creating a protective Environment” (UNICEF, 2009, p. 9). More often than not, they are short and/or medium-term

programs that operate in temporary structures such as a vacant building or a tent and are usually operated by NGOs or governments. It is important to note that “Child Friendly Spaces” are referred to by different names by different agencies. For example, Christian Children’s Fund uses the term “Child Centred Spaces (CCS)” while Save the Children organization generally refers to them as “Safe Spaces,” and the International Committee of the Red Cross chooses the term “Safe Play Areas” (UNICEF, 2009). Regardless of how they are being referred to, CFSs are the environments that exist to help disaster-affected children (e.g., war, relocation, migration etc.) return to a normal life with the aids of games, informal but structured education, and activities. Therefore, it can be stated that CFSs are designed to serve as a place where the children’s needs are met.

By creating safe environments for children, CFSs are fulfilling an important role because one can argue that emergencies tend to affect children the most, and that children are prone to injuries, exploitation, abuse and other types of dangers especially in times of emergency. Ager, Metzler, Vojta and Savage (2013) note that CFSs “are widely used in emergencies as a mechanism for protecting children from risk, as a means of promoting children's psychosocial well-being, and as a foundation for strengthening capacities within communities for child protection” (p.134) Thus, by offering children a safe place, understanding instructor-friends, and providing support, CFSs work as an agent for children in order for them to deal with suffering and loss. Furthermore, CFSs are inclusive, i.e. they open their doors to all children regardless of where they come from and how they have been affected by disasters.

It can be argued that activities of CFSs would be including but not limited to: fun activities, learning opportunities (albeit informal learning), advocacy for children to express themselves. Moreover, CFSs strive to ameliorate the well-being of disaster-affected children by providing them with a safe, educational, and fun environment. Each of the aforementioned features is extremely important for the children. Moreover, because of CFSs providing safety and caring for their children, parents can live their daily lives, even for a limited amount of times, without worrying about their children.

Research in the field suggests that CFSs are engendering positive outcomes on children, especially with regards to their psychosocial well-being (Ager et al., 2013). The effectiveness and positive outcomes of CFSs are often considered to be evident. However, one should bear in mind that many analyses suggest that studies and methodology on CFSs practices must be increased and research must become more systematized. Ager et al. (2013) note that more

prominent responsibility regarding documentation and measurement of outcomes (e.g., more standardized and thorough measurement of procedures, outputs, results, and impacts) is required.

It is evident that waiting for the result of their applications mostly takes its tolls on the asylum seekers in reception centres and affects their overall happiness and well-being. Because *Save the children* was an organization with broad experience in assisting children and unaccompanied children in situations of conflicts, their reaction to the flow of refugees entering Finland from Sweden and Russia in 2015 was prompt. Save the Children's help began by directing the children and their families arriving at the railway station to the police station and the reception centres. The first temporary Save the Children's CFS was a tent in the courtyard of Pasila police station (Helsinki Police) where the families and children were offered clothes and the help of volunteers (Häikiö, Viitanen, & Tervonen-Arnkil, 2017, p. 3).

In order to attend to the needs of asylum seeking children, Save the Children Finland worked applying a child protection approach with the support of a strong advocacy work. In autumn 2015, with the fund from the Finnish Immigration Service, the organization established two units for unaccompanied minors. Four CFSs in Finnish reception centres were established by Save the Children Finland with the help of private funding and funding from Save the Children United Kingdom. Three of these CFSs were located in the Finnish Red Cross managed reception centres in Lahti, Kitee and Kemijärvi and one in the state-owned reception centre in Oulu (ibid., pp.11-12).

This research was conducted in a permanent transit centre in Oulu. The transit centre has been run by the government for more than 25 years and has been hosting the second established CFS since March 2016. In Oulu, the first trainings for the volunteers to work in the CFS were organized in December 2015 and January 2016. The space for the CFS was painted and furnished by the Reception Centre, the local coordinator, and the volunteers; and the first activities were carried out in March. The local branch of Save the Children Finland was actively involved in planning and establishing the CFS as well as in recruiting and supporting the volunteers from the beginning.

The four CFSs established by Save the Children Finland provided the asylum seeking children with opportunities to socialize, develop, learn, play and build resilience. To further support children's healthy development and well-being, the spaces were furnished in the most child

friendly, colourful way and equipped with various materials such as games, toys, clay, crafting material, and costumes.

4 Theoretical Framework

As stated before, CFSs are meant to improve children's safety, well-being, and happiness. Because this study primarily focuses on evaluating how do various participants (children, guardians, the Reception Centre staff, and Save the Children Finland Staff) view the characteristics of CFSs and their conditions for children's safety, well-being, and happiness, it is of utmost importance to discuss first what these three concepts mean before expanding the theoretical discussion on the role of CFSs on the well-being of asylum seekers particularly in the reception centres. Furthermore, it is crucial to answer the following questions: (1) "What are well-being and happiness?" (2) "What is safety?" and (3) "How do these concepts differ in definition and meaning regarding children and adults?"

4.1 Well-being and Happiness

The concept of happiness has been most extensively analysed by philosophers and social science researchers. Most of them agree that the concept of happiness in antiquity centered around external forces, good luck and fortune, whereas contemporary society views happiness as something over which people have some control and something that they can actively pursue (Kesebir & Diener, 2008; McMahon, 2006; Oishi, 2012). For example, Aristotle stated that:

Happiness evidently also needs external goods to be added [to the activity], as we said, we cannot, or cannot easily, do fine actions if we lack the resources. For, first of all, in many actions we use friends and political power just as we use instruments. Further, deprivation of certain [externals] -for instance, good birth, good children, beauty.... for we do not altogether have the character of happiness if we look utterly repulsive or are ill-born, solitary or childless, and have it even less, presumably, if our children or friends are totally bad, or were good but have died. (Irwin & Fine, 1995, p. 359)

Although nowadays the research on happiness seems to focus on people's inner feelings and perceptions, one cannot deny that external forces have an effect on happiness as well. CFSs are built to increase safety and through that add to the possibilities of children's well-being. Over the past thirty years, scholarly works on happiness have been steadily increasing (Oishi, Graham, Kesebir & Galinha, 2013, p.1). However, "happiness" may carry numerous meanings such as joy and satisfaction, therefore many scholars prefer to use the term "subjective well-being" (hereafter SWB), which has been frequently used to evaluate people's lives as a whole such as the existence of cheerful emotions that people have (ibid, p.1). In the most concise form,

SWB is defined as “how a person evaluates his or her own life” and it can manifest itself in various forms, ranging from a broader “life satisfaction” to “satisfaction with one’s car” (Diener, 2009, para. 6). One of the leading researchers in the area of SWB, Diener (1984) notes that the literature on SWB is focusing on “how and why people experience their lives in positive ways, including both cognitive judgments and affective reactions” (p. 542).

With regard to children’s well-being, Sandin (2014) notes that historically the well-being of children has been evaluated based on various social and political issues such as “participation in the labour force; the character, nature, and extent of schooling; notions of parenting; and the evaluation of the quality of family life” (p. 31). Sandin (2014) further elaborates that:

These issues have, in the past, involved evaluation by societal agents representing different kinds of “normal” childhood expectations and the environmental and structural conditions of the life of children, but largely without the use of concepts associated with well-being. (p. 31)

Diener (2009, para. 5) acknowledges that philosophers and thinkers have written about happiness throughout the centuries and that there is a lot of literature about it. He further elaborates that scholarly studies on SWB are based on extensive empirical methods. Thus, the studies on SWB embody scientific approaches which have used a diverse set of terms, i.e., “happiness,” “satisfaction,” “morale,” and “positive affect.” Moreover, the author elaborates that SWB is an umbrella term “that includes the various types of evaluation of one’s life one might make” which may include such feelings as self-esteem, pleasure, fulfilment. However, the author further underlines that the most important aspect of the term SWB is that the person himself/herself is the one who is evaluating his/her life. That is, the person himself/herself is the expert here; not the philosophers, scholars or others (2009, para. 1).

To lay the foundation to the study of SWB, Diener (1984, p. 543) groups the definitions of well-being and happiness under three categories: (1) Well-being is defined by external criteria (e.g., virtue or holiness), (2) Well-being is defined by life satisfaction which relies on the “standards of the respondent to determine what is the good life” (p. 543), and (3) Well-being “denoting a preponderance of positive affect over negative affect” [Bradburn (1969) as cited in Diener (1984)]. Diener further elaborates the third definition as “This may mean either that the person is experiencing mostly pleasant emotions during this period of life or that the person is predisposed to such emotions” (p. 543). Bradburn’s definitions, according to Diener, are the closest ways the term is used in our daily discourse.

Furthermore, Diener notes that there are three components within the area of SWB. Those are, respectively, (1) SWB is subjective, (2) SWB contains positive measures, (3) SWB measures usually accommodate a global assessment of all facets of one's life (1984, p. 544). That is, each person would assess their happiness differently over different independent components. Since these components are not dependent on each other, in order to be “happier” one needs to either increase positive affect or decrease negative affect (2009, para. 2). In addition to the three components of SWB (basically, “pleasant emotions and moods, lack of negative emotions and moods, and satisfaction judgments”), Diener (2009) states that there might be a fourth main component to SWB: “optimism and feelings of fulfilment” (para. 6).

As Diener (2009) noted, SWB can be defined and categorized scientifically. However, *measuring* the SWB proves to be difficult, albeit possible. Historically, well-being of children has been defined differently than today's definitions (Sandin, 2014). In fact, what is deemed important today about children's well-being has often been disregarded or misconceptualized in the past. Today, “well-being is also dependent on the definitions of childhood as shaped by gender, class, age definitions, and ethnicity, as well as on how care for children has been organized in different societies” (ibid., 2014, p. 31).

[Children's well-being] Is intimately associated with how welfare surrounding children is historically understood, which, in turn, is also dependent on, among others, the definitions of the rights and social status of children and the legal role of the family.... Measures and definitions of well-being are closely connected to systems of political governance and to the scholarly and intellectual traditions for which the life of children is, or has been, an important scholarly quest. (Sandin, 2014, pp. 31-32)

According to Diener (2009, para. 6), today, one's well-being can be measured by using the following metrics: asking people about the *level of happiness* they have or the *satisfaction* with their lives, using *informant reports* (what does one's close circle -family, friends and so on- say about his/her SWB), *experience sampling* (collecting samples of one's happiness in random moments), *memory measures* (whether or not one can quickly recall good moments), and *interview or qualitative measures*. Some researchers also prefer to use biological measures of SWB such as frontal brain asymmetry, facial electromyography, saliva cortisol levels, and eye blink startle (Diener, 2009, para 6).

Measuring happiness and well-being has also been an interest of governments and intragovernmental organizations all around the world. Most notably, for the past six years (except for 2014), a report series, *World Happiness Report*, published annually by the United

Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Solutions Network, has been a point of interest all around the world. The report presents rankings of national happiness by analysing the data collected throughout the world (Helliwell, Layard & Sachs, 2018). According to the latest report, which was published in March 2018, Finland is the happiest country in the world. In previous reports, it was also considered one of the happiest countries.

The rankings of country happiness are based this year on the pooled results from Gallup World Poll surveys from 2015-2017, and show both change and stability. There is a new top ranking country, Finland, but the top ten positions are held by the same countries as in the last two years, although with some swapping of places. Four different countries have held top spot since 2015 – Switzerland, Denmark, Norway and now Finland. (Helliwell et al., 2018, p. 39)

Moreover, Finland has been ranked as the top country for immigrant happiness as well. Helliwell et al. (2018, pp. 28-29) note that “Finland is in the top spot for immigrant happiness 2005- 2017, just as it is also the overall happiness leader for 2015-2017.” The report notes that top countries for immigrants (e.g., 1. Finland, 2. Norway, 3. Denmark, 4. Iceland, 5. Switzerland, 6. Netherlands, 7. Canada, 8. New Zealand...) are attractive for international migrants, willing to accept migrants, able to achieve integration in ways that maintain life evaluations for locals and immigrants (2018, p. 39). Therefore, Finland is regarded as one of the happiest countries in the world.

It has been empirically proven that happiness and life satisfaction in people lead to healthier and longer lives (Diener & Chan, 2011). However, despite being used as an indicator in rankings, such as World Happiest Report, it is of utmost importance to keep in mind that the field of SWB is still at theory building stage. That is, there are many theories of SWB; besides, there has not been an “all-encompassing” theory that can explain most of the data (Diener, 2009, para 18). Mainly, there are theories that focus on some aspects of SWB (e.g., social comparison, adaptation, and so on) that allows data to be interpreted from that particular aspect.

In addition, despite the obvious consensus of the high value of children’s well-being, not enough research has been conducted on the positive well-being of the children (Holder, 2012, p. 6). Holder (ibid.) further supports his claim by citing Mahon and Yarcheski (2002) and Amato (1994):

Most empirical work on happiness has examined adults, and to a lesser extent examined adolescents and the elderly. Furthermore, investigations of positive well-being that do incorporate children, often study the children in terms of their impact on the parents’ happiness and life

satisfaction, or the impact of childhood experiences and memories on the happiness of the individual once the individual has reached adulthood. (p. 6)

As a result of the “moral coherence and identity of the nations,” the beginning of 20th Century marks the special emphasis put on the meaning of childhood (Sandin, 2014, p. 41). Since then, “children were not only a matter for the family but also for the survival of the nation, both morally and physically” (p. 41). Therefore, “special focus was put on both the physical and moral environment of the working classes. This developed differently in various national contexts, depending on the character of the demands for national cohesion, social responsibility, and the democratization of education” (ibid., p. 41).

One could expect research on children’s happiness to be extensive. However, as Holder (2012, p. 6) notes, this is not the case. In fact, scientific research on children’s happiness is amazingly narrow and limited (Holder, pp. 6-7). Qvortrup (2014, p. 663) also underlines that sociology failed to show interest in childhood and that the individual child and his or her developmental psychology had been the sole object of research. Thus, it is imperative to focus on the research that investigates children’s happiness; however, it might not be as easy as researching older participants who can express their feelings more explicitly.

On the other hand, it should be noted that “limited data” does not necessarily mean that there is “no data” about children's SWB. Sandin (2014) notes that studies in the fields of education, medicine, and psychology which were specifically focused on children in the early 20th Century mark an impressive start. Stevenson and Worthman (2014, p. 485) assert that:

A lapse in attention to children and childhood by mainstream anthropology in recent decades has been balanced by a current surge of interest in the place of children in society and appreciation of the value of anthropological studies for understanding child well-being.

Based on the empirical data gathered from various research (Avey et al. 2006; Cohn et al. 2009; Frey and Stutzer 2007; Hershberger 2005; Lyubomirsky et al. 2005; Mahon et al. 2005; Tugade and Fredrickson 2004), Holder (2012, pp. 7-14) points out that there is a strong relationship between children’s positive well-being and the following health, enhanced creativity, facial recognition and attention, workplace and school success, social relationships, resilience and posttraumatic growth. Each of these domains is extremely important for a better and healthier life and the relationship between these domains. According to Holder (2012, p. 15), “Research designed to uncover the predictors of subjective well-being in children, and to assess the

efficacy of strategies designed to enhance children's well-being, is clearly warranted.” McKendrick (2014, p. 279) points out that well-being of a child is shaped by where they live. He further underlines that his theory “does not suggest that where they live determines their well-being” but instead “it argues that where children live is one of several factors that contribute to their well-being.”

In order this research to be achieve its aims, it is imperative to try to find out suitable measures to evaluate well-being. To illuminate the issues and challenges concerning the assessment of the different dimensions of well-being, the next section discusses the assessment of one of these dimensions: safety.

4.2 Safety and Children

Protection, safety, and security are among the most important aspects of human goals (Davies, Winter & Cicchetti, 2006, p. 709). With regard to children, it is a universal aim to provide safety and protection to children in each culture (Harden, 2004, p. 32). Kutsar and Kasearu (2017) state that “Safety is the utmost, universal emotional need for everyone, including every child” (p. 7). Family is considered as one of the most important units in providing secure, stable, and developing environments for children. Those who are raised in a safe and stable environment “have better short and long-term adjustment than children who are exposed to harmful experiences” (Harden, 2004, p. 31). Consequently, those who have experienced violence and unstable environments are prone to develop developmental difficulties (ibid). Sandin (2014, p. 56) states that:

Children are experiencing the effects of changed patterns of household formation and dissolution, transnational migration, religious and civil tensions and conflicts, increasing economic inequality, and more socially differentiated spatial patterns in cities. This means that the experience and contexts of the lives of children are becoming – or at least are understood to be – more diverse but also more influenced by factors that create greater similarity.

Cummings and Miller-Graff (2015, p. 210) note that the development and family-level processes have a direct impact on children's perception of security in their local community. Thus, subsequent of a trauma, emotional security is considered a critical intervention point. It is important to achieve the sense of safety in children as fast as possible for it is evidenced that prolonging it increases children's vulnerability (Davies & Martin, 2013). The importance of a

stable and safe family environment for children's well-being is also touched upon by Harttgen and Klasen (2009):

It is important to consider that the well-being of children will depend greatly on the households they live in; something over which they tend to have little control. While attempts should be made to measure their individual well-being, often it is only possible to comment on the economic and social situation of the household. (p. 39)

Correspondingly, Owens (2012) notes that children's health and safety are not only about their physical well-being but also their whole welfare. Sandin (2014) argues that "Important aspects with consequences for the understanding of children are the focus on children's need for protection, the responsibilities of society, and the idea that children have rights of their own that are not subordinated to the family" (p. 58). Therefore, "Children's own voices should be heard and respected, and they should have access to independent information" (ibid.). As noted in Wernesjö (2012), although there can be found extensive research on safety in literature, the overarching theme is the well-being of humans (this is especially evident in children literature), therefore, the currently frequent primary focus of exploring the children's well-being from the psychiatric and medical point of view is too narrow and should be expended. *Children's Health and Safety of the National Quality Standard*, as cited in Owens (2011, p. 50), states that:

All children have the right to experience quality education and care in an environment that provides for their health and safety. This should be complemented by a focus on promoting each child's well-being and providing support for each child's growing competence, confidence and independence.

Children of immigration, those who spend a considerable time migrating with their guardians (may or may not be their parents) or without a guardian (unaccompanied) from one place to another are in dire need of safety and protection. Over the past decades, migration has reached an unprecedented scale throughout the world. In 2015, over 31 million children have been documented as international migrants while, according to UNICEF (2016), the number of internal migrant children were several times larger than that of international migrants (Xu, Wu, Zhang & Dronkers, 2018, p. 692). The ever-increasing numbers of international migration will require a different approach to research on family unit.

Over the past decade, research on immigrant families has evolved to include elements such as community context, environment of the family, and individual attitudes (Mazzucato & Schans, 2011, p. 704). However, this new approach does not change the fact that, in scholarship,

families are still predominantly perceived as “nuclear, living together, and bounded by the nation state” (p. 704), although family situations are diverse. Thus, one can argue that children’s SWB is a multi-layered phenomenon which is integrated directly in one’s life, and includes various life domains such as families, acquaintances, and education environment as well as “material situation, feeling of safety, health or time use and their influence on children’s SWB” (Strózik, Strózik & Szwarc, 2015, p. 49).

Ruiz-Casares, Guzder, Rousseau and Kirmayer (2014, p. 2381) suggest that understanding children’s well-being can only be possible if the concepts of social realities, generational histories, and collective meanings are taken into consideration. Thus, as cited in Ruiz-Casares (2014), Diener and Suh (2000) note that well-being is to a certain extent attached to cultural norms, practices, and values. Therefore, a comprehensive attempt to investigate children’s SWB must include the various cultural and socioeconomic elements in children’s lives. It must be also carefully elaborated on by including “current but historically often excluded subpopulations of children e.g., those with disabilities; indigenous minorities; very poor or isolated populations; those separated from families; and those who are homeless, refugees, or immigrants” (Ben-Aryē, Casas, Korbin & Frønes, 2014, p. 5). In Europe, where the unprecedented migration took place in 2015, an emphasis was put on the well-being of migrant children, including “their reception, caring facilities, and interpretation of the best interests of the children as well as the grounds on which some children are extradited” (Sandin, 2014, p. 62). Sandin further elaborates that there was also a debate on how to describe the mental state of migrant children since there were cultural biases of psychiatric diagnoses and a political debate on how to define childhood.

In conclusion, the evolution of internationalization necessitates the need for comparative data on safety and well-being of children in various parts of the world, which, as a result, means a need to conceptualize the terms in describing and defining children’s safety and well-being.

4.3 Well-being, Safety, and Happiness Among Children Compared to Adults

As mentioned previously, the research on children’s well-being is suffering from neglect while the research on adults’ well-being is relatively more “common,” albeit not in abundance. Nevertheless, the importance of how the SWB has been perceived, defined and explained among children is eminent since children’s happiness is an important topic that concerns families, educators, policy makers, and researchers alike (Lopez-Perez, Sanchez & Gummerum,

2015, p. 4). Moreover, despite the lack of research on the topic, some big organizations such as United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) have conducted research, mostly in large-scale survey form, that focuses on elements of children’s well-being to shed some light on their SWB, and compare the phenomena across different countries (ibid., p. 4).

Lopez-Perez et al. (2015) stress that how children interpret or understand the term “happiness” has not been thoroughly explored in the previous research, and the research in the field has mostly focused on intelligence, personality, peer relationships, and motivation. According to Dweck (1999), as cited in Lopez-Perez et al. (2015), “children’s and adolescents’ lay beliefs about a specific area (e.g., intelligence) affect their behaviour, judgments, and emotions in that domain” (p. 7). Lopez-Perez et al. further elaborate that the theories of happiness from children’s point of view might be useful for providing articulated insight into children’s emotions and behaviours.

According to Giacomoni, Souza, and Hutz (2014), the children who have participated in their research (age five to twelve) defined happiness in eight different ways as follows: (1) Positive feelings, (2) Leisure, (3) Family, (4) Friends, (5) Basic needs, (6) School, (7) Nonviolence, and (8) Moral actions. Among these eight categories; nonviolence, friends, and positive feelings have been mostly mentioned by older children, while leisure (fun activities) have been mentioned by younger children. Girls stressed the positive feelings when defining happiness, while boys underlined more the leisure.

Surely, Giacomoni et al. (2014) are not the only researchers who have studied how happiness is regarded by children. The literature on the field is limited but not non-existent. In fact, in their extensive study, Lopez-Perez et al. (2015) comprise a Table (see: Table 6) that summarises the findings of different scholars on the topic of happiness and how it is perceived by adults, children, and adolescents. As can be seen in the “shared categories column” (i.e., frequently overlapping themes) of Table 6 below, adults from seven different countries identified happiness and related it to *harmony, emotions, well-being, achievement, satisfaction, freedom, relationships, and family* (Delle Fave et al., 2011) whereas children from Brazil identified and related it to *Positive feelings, leisure, family, and friends* (Giacomoni et al., 2014). It seems that “Emotions” for adults and “positive feelings” for children, and “family” for both adults and children are the overlapping themes.

Moreover, adolescents identified and related happiness to *satisfaction, harmony, well-being, autonomy, competence, purpose, self-actualization, relationships, family, leisure* (Freire et al.

2013). While “leisure” and “family” are overlapping among children and adolescents, “harmony,” “well-being,” “satisfaction,” “freedom (autonomy),” “family, and “relationships” are overlapping among adolescents and adults. Based on the data presented in Table 6, one could argue that happiness is defined almost identically by adolescents and adults.

Table 6. Different Categories of Happiness Identified in Previous Qualitative Research.

Study	Lu (2001)	Lu & Gilmour (2004)	Pflug (2009)	Delle Fave et al. (2011)	Giacomoni et al. (2014)	Freire et al. (2013)
Shared Categories by adults, children, and adolescents	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mental state of satisfaction and contentment 2. Positive emotions 3. Harmonious homeostasis 4. Achievement and hope 5. Freedom from being ill 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Mental state of satisfaction and contentment 2. Positive emotions 3. Self-autonomy 4. Achievement and control 5. Freedom from being ill 6. Relating to people 7. Ultimate value in life 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Satisfaction 2. Contentment 3. Positive affect 4. Social relationships 5. Freedom 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Harmony 2. Emotions 3. Well-being 4. Achievement 5. Satisfaction 6. Freedom 7. Relationships 8. Leisure 9. Family 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positive feelings 2. Leisure 3. Family 4. Friends 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Feelings 2. Satisfaction 3. Harmony 4. Well-being 5. Autonomy 6. Competence 7. Purpose 8. Self-actualization 9. Relationships 10. Family 11. Leisure
Nonshared categories			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. The opposite of happiness 7. Surprising events 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Optimism 11. Fulfilment 12. Engagement 13. Awareness 14. Meaning 15. Health 16. Daily life 17. Standard of living 18. Work 19. Spirituality 20. Society 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Basic needs 6. School 7. Non violence 8. Moral actions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 12. Awareness 13. Meaning 14. Lack of negative feelings 15. Personal growth 16. Optimism 17. Daily life 18. Health 19. Standard of life 20. School 21. Spirituality 22. Society

Countries	China Taiwan	China USA	Germany South Africa	Australia Croatia Germany Italy Portugal Spain South Africa	Brazil	Portugal
Type of Sample	Undergraduate students	Undergraduate students	Undergraduate students	Adults	Children 5 - 12 years	Adolescents

Source: Lopez-Perez et al. (2015)

In conclusion, the nature of this study, that is, children’s well-being, happiness and safety within the CFSs environment require a thorough understanding of the concepts of the asylum seeker, refugee, and SWB; and how SWB is perceived among children. To this end, this theoretical framework primarily focused on the extensive studies of Diener (1984; 2008; 2009; 2011) to unveil children’s conceptions of happiness, or as Diener refers to it, “subjective well-being” (SWB). Secondly, the definitions and descriptions of happiness and safety, and how they were defined and understood by different age groups (children, adolescents, and adults) have been investigated. The last but not the least, the overarching theme of the entire study, CFSs, was studied in the previous chapter in order to lay the theoretical foundations to this research and understanding the context. Considering the empirical part of this research, the evaluation of children’s happiness and well-being is based on what participants (children, parents, the Reception Centre staff, and Save the Children Finland staff) expect it to be, or what participants and the researcher observe about it. The focus is also on the conditions that in CFS are meant to increase safety and well-being.

5 Methods and Methodology

The phenomenon that this research focuses on is the meaning of CFSs for asylum seeking children and their families with the aim of suggesting improvements on the basis of the knowledge gained from the main stakeholders. The significance of the CFSs is evaluated particularly from the perspectives of well-being, safety, and happiness. Their meanings are of course subjective to a certain extent and change from person to person. However, it is assumed that certain conditions are needed for safety and well-being, and thus some conditions are common for every asylum seeking child in spite of many differences.

This chapter consists of three subchapters in which an overview of the method of this research is outlined and the methodology that is used in this research is discussed. While the first subchapter, ontology and epistemology, discusses the philosophical underpinnings (i.e., what are the prevailing ontological and epistemological assumptions for this research); the second subchapter, methodological approaches, discusses the paradigm that is chosen for this research and; the third subchapter, method, concludes the chapter with the discussion on the method of this research. Overall, this chapter binds the dominant methods used in this research with the research problem in order to justify the methods of data collection and analysis.

5.1 Ontology and Epistemology

Researchers' assumptions have direct impacts on their methodological concerns because different ontologies and epistemologies demand different sets of research methods (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2009, p. 8). For example, a researcher adopting a positivist (or objectivist) approach to the world around him or her will treat the world as a natural phenomenon that is real and external to the individual. On the other hand, an interpretive (or subjectivist or anti-positivist) researcher will consider the world as a more personal and "humanly created." Positivists treat the social world as the natural world, that is, there is an "external and objective reality."

On the other hand, an interpretive researcher will treat the world as creation, modification and interpretation of individuals (Cohen et al., 2009, p. 8). Therefore, methods utilized by objectivists and interpretivists vary greatly. Positivists, being more concerned with uncovering natural and universal laws that determine social behaviours, generally prefer to utilize more quantitative approaches such as surveys and experiments. Interpretivists, on the other hand, are

more concerned with explaining and describing human behaviour with an emphasis on the differences of human beings, and they mostly utilize qualitative approaches such as observation and interviews.

The distinctiveness of these views stems from the conceptions of how the social reality is perceived. Thus, it is crucial to examine both explicit and implicit assumptions of conceptions of the social world. There are four different sets of such assumptions identified by Burrell and Morgan (1979): (1) assumptions of ontological kind, (2) assumptions of epistemological kind, (3) assumptions concerning human nature, and (4) methodological issues. Among these four assumptions, the first three have an undeniable impact on the methodological concerns of researchers because, inherently, different approaches to these assumptions require different sets of methods.

Following the discussions laid out by Morgan (1979) and Cohen et al. (2009) above, and others in the literature, [Guba & Lincoln (1994), Crotty (1998), Creswell (2007)], it is imperative to present the concept of the ontology. Ontology is the very nature of reality or, in other words, it is the study of being and existence in the world, and it is concerned with what can be known about reality (Hudson & Ozanne, 1988; Guba & Lincoln, 1994; Crotty, 1998). Since the ontology is the basis of the social phenomena being researched, a researcher starts his or her research by asking whether the social reality is external (objective nature) to individuals or is it the product of personal consciousness (individual cognition). Cohen et al. (2009, p. 7) state that:

Is reality of an objective nature, or the result of individual cognition? Is it a given 'out there' in the world, or is it created by one's own mind? These questions spring directly from what philosophy terms the nominalist-realist debate. The former view holds that objects of thought are merely words and that there is no independently accessible thing constituting the meaning of a word. The realist position, however, contends that objects have an independent existence and are not dependent for it on the knower.

According to Guba and Lincoln (1994, p. 108), there is a strong correlation between a researcher's ontological stance and epistemological assumptions. Therefore, upon discovering the ontological assumptions she has for her research, the researcher needs to clarify her position with her epistemological assumptions because ontological assumptions shape one's epistemological stance. Epistemology, simply put, strives for defining "knowledge."

With respect to ontological and epistemological assumptions, this study takes the interpretive approach. The researcher studies the significance of CFSs, and she assumes that safety, well-

being, and happiness are closely connected to each other. She believes that conceptions of the successfulness of CFSs are individual and different; however, there is also some overlapping in people's views. She begins her study with individuals and then sets out to understand these individuals' interpretations of the world around them. She analyses data inductively: constructs are formed throughout the data collection as well as during the analysis processes of the research. In this research, the researcher shares the foundational assumptions laid out by Lincoln and Guba (1985, pp. 39-43). That is, the research must be set in their natural settings because individuals are the research apparatuses and utilization of implicit knowledge is unavoidable. For that, it is undeniable that using a qualitative method fits better than a quantitative one for this research.

In this research, the researcher constructs her knowledge on the stakeholders' views (the way the children and adults make meaning of CFSs). Cohen et al. (2009, p. 7) note that epistemological assumptions are concerned with the very bases of knowledge – its nature and forms, how it can be acquired, and how it is communicated to other human beings. The authors later elaborate on the relationship between a researcher's allegiances and her approach to uncovering knowledge of social behaviour:

The view that knowledge is hard, objective and tangible will demand of researchers an observer role, together with an allegiance to the methods of natural science; to see knowledge as personal, subjective and unique, however, imposes on researchers an involvement with their subjects and a rejection of the ways of the natural scientist. (Cohen et al., 2009, p. 7)

5.2 Methodological Approaches

Based on the epistemological assumptions discussed above, this research is clearly based on how individuals are making sense of the world around them, hence a constructivist paradigm is chosen for this study. Guba (1990, p. 17) describes paradigms as “a basic set of beliefs that guide action,” while Creswell (2014, p. 6) defines them as “a general philosophical orientation about the world and the nature of research that a researcher brings to a study.” Drawing upon this definition, Creswell (2014, p. 6) calls paradigms as “worldviews” and states that they arise from the researcher's field of study and topic of research as well as his or her own experiences. According to Creswell (2014, p. 6), there are four major paradigms/worldviews in the literature: (1) Postpositivist paradigm, (2) Constructivist paradigm, (3) Transformative paradigm, and (4) Pragmatist paradigm.

Among the four prevailing research paradigms, constructivism seemed to be the most suitable one for this research since the researcher sees a strong connection with the focus of the research and her ontological and epistemological assumptions: this research is predominantly interested in CFSs and how it is perceived by asylum seekers, which is based on personal experiences in Reception Shelters in Finland. Creswell (2014) points out that constructivists seek understanding of the world they live in by developing “subjective” meanings - that are mostly directed toward certain objects or things - of their experiences. In constructivism, it is essential to understand the experiences of people in the environment in which they are living, therefore, a constructivist approach underlines the researcher’s own experiences that affect the way he or she interprets her own research. To that end, as Creswell (2014, p. 9) suggests, this research relied on as much as possible on “the participants’ views of the situation being studied.”

Once the researcher discovered her ontological and epistemological assumptions and decided on using a constructivist paradigm, she continued with deciding what type of constructivism defines her research approach the best. Sridevi (2008, pp. 10-16) presents six types of constructivism:

1. Trivial (personal) constructivism: Personal constructivists believe that “knowledge is actively constructed by the learner, not passively received from the environment” (p. 6).
2. Radical Constructivism: The knower does not necessarily construct knowledge of a "real" world," but rather believes that coming to know is a process of dynamic adaptation towards viable interpretations of experience. In radical constructivism, the notion of external reality is challenged (i.e., there is no way of experience or thinking to prove the existence of external agent). Radical constructivists do not deny an objective reality, they state that there is no way of knowing what the reality might be.
3. Social Constructivism: "The social world of learner includes the people that directly affect that person -teachers, friends, students, administrators and participants in all forms of activity."
4. Cultural Constructivism: “Beyond the immediate social environment of a learning situation are the wider context of cultural influences including custom, religion, biology, tools and language.”
5. Critical constructivism: "Critical Constructivism looks at constructivism within a social and cultural environment, but adds a critical dimension aimed at reforming these environments in order to improve the success of constructivism applied as referent."

6. Psychological Constructivism: "The process focuses on learning as a personal, individual, intellectual construction based on experiences of one in the world. For Jean Piaget, the child's mind is self-organized by a constant antagonism between internal, subjective mental states and external reality."

Among these six constructivist approaches, social constructivism resonated with the researcher the most because social constructivism takes into account the social nature of both the local processes in collaborative learning and in the discussion of wider social collaboration in a given subject (e.g., in this research's case, CFSs). Creswell (2007, p. 20) describes social constructivism as a paradigm in which individuals strive for understanding the meanings of their experiences in the world they live in. These meanings are varied and multiple, hence the researcher is led to discover the complexity of these meanings instead of narrowing them into a few ideas or themes. According to Creswell, the aim of the research is to depend on the participants' views on the situation as much as possible. Basically, the meanings are subjective and are negotiated historically and socially, and they are constructed by the individuals through historical and cultural norms of their lives. Correspondingly, the researcher follows the qualitative constructivist paradigm because she is interested in the meanings people give to matters instead of cause-effect series of numerical explanations. Thus, it is clear that the research objective of this study (i.e., the significance of CFSs and the connection between their activities and participants' safety, well-being and happiness) is best explored by the social constructivist paradigm.

Having discussed the ontological and epistemological assumptions supporting this study as well as the methodological approach that is used in this research, it is crucial to advance the discussion about the method that is applied to this research.

5.3 Method

Hitchcock and Hughes (1995, p. 21) assert that ontological assumptions engender epistemological assumptions and, afterwards, both of them give rise to methodological considerations; and all these three, in turn, lead to issues of instrumentation and data collection. Based on the ontological and epistemological assumptions and the methodological approach of this study, a suitable research method is needed for this research. The objectives of the research required to stay in the field (CFS) for a long time to collect multisided data on the case.

Ethnographic case study has been deemed as the best suitable method for this research by the researcher. This study is ethnographic because it strives for discovering and describing the beliefs, values, and attitudes that form the behaviours of a group (children and their guardians in CFSs). It is also a case study because it is impossible to separate the variables of the phenomenon (significance of CFSs and the connection between their success and safety, well-being and happiness) from their context (Yin, 2014). This study is an ethnographic case study because “the culture of a particular social group is studied in depth” to reach the objective of the research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 39).

In anthropology, ethnographic researchers spend years involved in the cultures they study in order to understand the behaviours and social rituals of an entire culture. As cited in Creswell (2007, p. 18), Guba and Lincoln (1988, p. 94) state that a good ethnography requires a long period of time spent at the research site where the researcher aims at minimizing “the distance or objective separateness between himself or herself and those being researched.” In order to address the research questions by utilizing an ethnographic case study research design, the data in this study were gathered by using semi-structured interviews, observation, fieldnotes, and focus group discussions.

To summarise, an interpretive ontology and a social constructivist epistemology have underpinned this research. A qualitative methodology has been chosen for this study to provide an in-depth picture of the phenomena explored. Finally, ethnographic case study was chosen as the method to gather and analyse data. The following section describes the setting, participants, sources of data and the process of data collection as well as data analysis.

6 Data Collection

This research aims at discovering the significance of CFS for the children and their families living at the reception centres while the families are waiting in the middle of the asylum seeking process. A wide range of international development organizations' documents, academic sources and articles on CFS, and the main concepts were studied. The literature review allowed a better understanding of the barriers to well-being, protection, and inclusion in the context of living in the reception centres as asylum seekers, and helped to identify good practices to address those barriers. In order to collect and analyse the data to serve the aims of this research the best possible way, traditional means of data collection such as observations and fieldnotes are supported by other data collection methods such as ethnographic interviews and ethnographic focus group discussions.

The main part of the data collection took place between January 2016 and January 2018 and was carried out during the fieldwork at the CFS in the Reception Centre in Oulu while the researcher was volunteering as a CFS instructor. Before the data collection phase began, participants (e.g., the guardians of children, the children, volunteers at the Reception Centre, the persons responsible for the Reception Centre) were informed about the aim of the research, how and why the data will be collected, and how the participants' identities will be kept confidential. The aim was explained as follows: "I want to understand the meanings of well-being, happiness, and safety from your perspective and in relation to the CFS and your attendance in these. I trust that it will help us to understand the meaning of CFS. I define my study as a description of how well CFS is supporting the children and their families while they are waiting at the reception centres."

In order to collect the most accurate data to help to achieve the goals, the researcher positioned herself as an ethnographer and she followed an example of being an "omnivore," that is, as Spindler and Spindler (1992), as cited in LeCompte and Schensul (2010, p. 21), note, ethnographers are data collection omnivores: they make use on all types of data that could possibly help to answer the research question.

6.1 Observations and Fieldnotes

Fieldnotes or as Sanjek (1990, pp. 93-114) names fieldnotes, 'headnotes,' 'scratch notes,' 'fieldnotes proper,' 'fieldnote records,' 'texts, journals and diaries,' and letters, reports, papers

are also of utmost importance in ethnographic data collection as carrying out an ethnographic research involves two distinct activities: Firstly, the researcher enters into a social setting and gets to know the people involved in it, and then participates in the daily routines of this setting while she develops ongoing relations with the people in it, and observes the interactions and the daily life as thoroughly as possible. Indeed, the term "participant observation" is often used to characterize this basic research approach. As a data collection method, participant observation aims at understanding the experiences of the people who are being observed by the researcher. Bow (2002, p. 267) notes that participant observation allows a researcher to be very flexible in research since the researcher is able to combine various techniques (e.g., interviews, focus groups, questionnaires) while at the same time has the flexibility to choose some techniques over others or leave altogether.

Secondly, the ethnographer writes down in regular, systematic ways what he or she observes and learns while participating in the daily rounds of life of others. Thus, the researcher creates an accumulating written record of these observations and experiences. These two interconnected activities comprise the core of ethnographic research: first hand participation in some initially unfamiliar social world and the production of written accounts of that world by drawing upon such participation. In the following sections, these activities will be examined in detail and then their implications for writing fieldnotes will be traced out.

- As part of the ethnographic approach in this study, children and other CFS participants were observed by the researcher mainly at the CFS where active CFS sessions in which children and facilitators congregated took place at the Reception Centre in Oulu. Additionally, children were observed during times when the CFS did not have any formal sessions (e.g., outdoor activities). It is important to mention at this point that the researcher has a high command of the Arabic language, one of the most common languages of asylum seekers in Oulu. This provided a considerable asset in her research for (1) She was able to communicate directly with the participants without soliciting the help of an interpreter, (2) Participants were able to express themselves in their mother tongue, hence more insights have been provided, (3) A sense of “familiarity” was established between the researcher and the participants which allowed the researcher to collect her data in a more “daily life” setting. Moreover, being one of the few academic researchers that could speak Arabic in the Reception Centre of Oulu, she immediately gained the CFS participants’ attention and their trust. Once the researcher had created

the connection with the participants, she started to observe the children and families, and participated in the activities:

- To see what kinds of children attend CFSs. Do they vary in background?
- To assess children’s socialization practices within the CFSs.
- To monitor change in behaviour, mood and their drive.
- To understand children’s and their parents’ feelings and expectations.
- To see what seemed to please children and make parents and children happy.
- To see what activities seemed particularly successful.
- To see what barriers there were to increase children's and parents’ safety and well-being.
- To see what conditions/barriers there were to increase CFSs’ significance providing safety and well-being.

Observations and fieldnotes concerned discussions and description of general situations and happenings at the CFS sessions. After a couple of months of collecting the notes, the researcher began to group data into themes. Then, the notes were divided into “subjective” (not a universal truth but her perspective) and “intersubjective” (aspects that were applicable to other contexts as well). This will be further elaborated in “Validity and Reliability” chapter.

6.2 Ethnographic Interviews

In addition to observation, an ethnographic study can be centrally based on open-ended narrative, or life history interviews, which can also be called ‘ethnographic interviews’ (Heyl, 2007). Interviews provide an opportunity to learn how people directly reflect on their own feelings, behaviour, circumstances, places, and events.

In order to gain insights on participants’ views on CFS and the impact of their attendance on their activities, a series of open-ended interviews with CFS beneficiaries and instructors, who work and/or volunteer at CFSs, were carried out. The interviewees were grouped into “staff” (volunteers, coordinators, implementers, etc.), “academic researchers,” and “beneficiaries.” The beneficiary group consists of parents (guardians) who had direct experience with the CFS. The main beneficiaries were of course children, who were also heard. However, these views and feelings were mainly interpreted from their discussions, activities, and drawings during the sessions at the CFS.

Interviews with adult participants were held mainly in Arabic but English was also used. Interviews with children, however, were held solely in Arabic. To create a good connection and trust, the interviews were based on listening rather than conversing. Being part of the CFS in Oulu, the researcher without much effort convinced the participants that her interest in their situation is genuine. This proved to be helpful as it made the participants socially comfortable. Each interview has been conducted outside of the CFS activities and the settings were chosen by the participants to ensure they could relax and talk openly. For example, “Interview 1” took place in a cafeteria in Oulu as per request of the family one, while “Interview II” took place in the family’s room at the Reception Centre. The researcher made sure that participants knew that the interviews form one part of the researcher's data and that they understood the implication of being interviewed. The interviewees are described below.

Interview 1: Parents of a six-year-old boy and a three-year-old girl attending CFS regularly. The mother attended occasionally with their six-month-old baby. The interview took place in a quiet Cafeteria in Oulu. After a small talk and ordering coffees, the parents’ consent for recording the interview was acquired and the interview started. The parents took an occasion at the end of the interview to ask questions about concerns they had about the CFS aims providing such a great space for the children free of any charges. The parents were reassured about the good intentions of Save the Children as a non-profit organization that cares for securing children’s rights and well-being during the interview. The concerns were reported to the coordinator who forwarded the message to CFS project managers for further instruction on how to comfort and reassure the family. The researcher was contacted for more details on the concerns in question to determine their sources. Following the instructions obtained from the superior, the researcher approached the family in a more comforting discussion about the topic of their concern.

Interview II: Father of a five-year-old child attending CFS regularly and who volunteered at CFS. The interview took place in the language classroom known as “*Toimela*” at the Reception Centre of Oulu. Time for the interview was booked ahead and the father participated with his five-year-old son. The child spent the interview time drawing and colouring pictures printed for him in advance, which allowed the father to be relaxed and detailed in his answers to the interview questions. The father’s consent to record the interview was as well obtained without any objection.

Interview III: Mother of three children of which two attended CFS regularly. Parents did not attend CFS. The interview took place at the room of the family at the Reception Centre of Oulu as the family wished. After reminding the parents of the aim of the research and the confidentiality of the interviews and the data collected, the interviews took place sipping tea with the parents while the children watched a cartoon on their father's notebook computer. The parents took freedom while answering the interview questions to compare their experiences in different countries they had lived in during the journey of asylum seeking. Allowing the participants this freedom and devoting maximum time to listening has been very fruitful in terms of findings and unexpected emerging findings.

Interview IV: Father of an eight-year-old boy attending CFS. The interview took place in "Toimela," the language club classroom at the Reception Centre of Oulu, right after one of the CFS sessions. The father was informed about the interviews and their goal a couple of weeks beforehand. The father was suggested to be interviewed when he came to pick up his son from the CFS at the end of one of the sessions. Because the father was not comfortable with recording the interview, his answers were recorded in a written form. The answers were further edited after the interviews to clarify the fast writing notes.

Interview V: Interviewees of the *Interview I* were interviewed a second time after moving out of the Reception Centre and settling in their new house in Oulu. The family (the mother and two children) attended CFS regularly for a period of about six months. The interview was planned ahead already before the family's moving out, and it took place after the children started attending Finnish day cares. When contacted again, the family expressed a great joy of participating in a second round of the interview. The interview took place at the house of the family and the parents happily shared another version of their experience of the Reception Centre and the positive role of CFS in supporting them as a family and preparing their children for a smooth start at the day cares. A considerable positive shift in attitude was noticed after the beginning of the interview and the parents showed more enthusiasm answering the questions than in the previous interview, and little if any support was needed for more details on the topics covered.

Interviews were recorded with the participants' consent. Recording allowed the transcribing of the interview data for closer analysis. One of the participants who agreed gladly to being interviewed did not feel comfortable with the interview being taped, thus notes were taken during the interview and enough time was taken afterwards to write down more complete notes

about what was said. The interviews varied in length but on average they took 90 minutes, while the longest took approximately 120 minutes and the shortest took about 60 minutes.

Table 7. The List of the Interview Questions.

1	Could you please briefly describe your background and your experience in CFS?
2	What do you think about the activities of CFS?
3	What makes the space safe?
4	How do your children feel about CFS?
5	Given the cultural differences, how do you judge the CFS rules in comparison with your definitions/understanding of well-being and protection?
6	In your opinion, what are the positive things about CFS?
7	In your opinion, what could CFS do better to improve the children's/guardians' well-being?

The questions above are the direct translations from Arabic, translated by the researcher herself. Interviewees were also informed that the data they provide would be translated to English and the report would be written in English.

6.3 Focus Groups

A Focus group is an environment created by the researcher that encourages the participants to share opinions and perceptions without being pressured to vote or reach consensus (Krueger & Casey, 2009, p. 2). Moreover, a focus group is a "permissive, non-threatening environment where confidentiality is assured" (ibid., p. 193). Kitzinger (1995, p. 299) states that:

Focus groups explicitly use group interaction as part of the method. This means that instead of the researcher asking each person to respond to a question in turn, people are encouraged to talk to one another: asking questions, exchanging anecdotes and commenting on each other's

experiences and points of view.' The method is particularly useful for exploring people's knowledge and experiences and can be used to examine not only what people think but how they think and why they think that way.

Denscombe (2011) notes that a focus group discussion encourages the participants to discuss among themselves the topic that is brought to their attention by the researcher. One of the main reasons for using this approach is to help the researcher to better analyse and understand the arguments expressed by group members, hence providing the researcher with a "method of investigating the participants' reasoning and a means of exploring underlying factors that might explain why people hold the opinions and feelings they do" (ibid. p. 353). Correspondingly, Morgan (2006, p. 121) states that members of the focus group:

Share their experiences and thoughts, while also comparing their own contributions to what others have said. This process of sharing and comparing is especially useful for hearing and understanding a range of responses on a research topic. The best focus groups thus not only provide data on what the participants think but also why they think the way they do.

Another important aspect of focus groups is to help the researcher to comprehend various forms of communication that people use in daily life, such as jokes, anecdotes, teasing, and arguing (Kitzinger, 1995, p. 299). This was especially crucial in this research because the participants had arrived from different parts of the world, and although the researcher was able to communicate with them in their mother tongue, some of the expressions and words were unfamiliar to her because of the cultural and contextual differences. Kitzinger (1995, pp. 299-300) further elaborates in the following way:

Gaining access to such variety of communication is useful because people's knowledge and attitudes are not entirely encapsulated in reasoned responses to direct questions. Everyday forms of communication may tell us as much, if not more, about what people know or experience. In this sense focus groups reach the parts that other methods cannot reach, revealing dimensions of understanding that often remain untapped by more conventional data collection techniques.

Moreover, Morgan (1988, p. 12) explains that the essential characteristic of a focus groups is "the explicit use of the group interaction to produce data and insights that would be less accessible without the interaction in a group." The researcher in this study aimed at encouraging participants to make connections to many different concepts through the interaction with others in the group. It was an important advantage of focus groups since this kind of interactions hardly occur in an individual interview.

Morgan (1988, p. 22) states that a frequent goal of focus group is to “conduct a group discussion that resembles a lively conversation among friends or neighbours.” Therefore, focus group discussions (FGDs) in this study took place at the Reception Centre of Oulu in order to spark a friendly conversation with the participants. Information about views, beliefs, attitudes, feelings and emotional reactions -all aspects that affect a group’s perception of well-being and safety, and the impact of CFS in relation to these concepts- were gathered throughout the FGDs. Understanding the participants’ perspectives helped the researcher to evaluate the significance of CFS and informed her of contextually-appropriate recommendations for improving the design and implementation of CFSs.

Discussions were conducted in Finnish, Arabic and English and the researcher served as an interpreter between the participants. During all the focus group discussions, the researcher acted as a moderator or a co-moderator and observer. As an observer, the researcher documented all the highlights of the topics discussed, especially new or unique information. The recordings and the notes were organized and detailed to be analysed later on.

The focus group discussions lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. The settings where the focus group discussions took place were selected and prepared ahead of time to ensure that they would be undisturbed for the duration of the discussion. Two of the discussions were tape recorded to be transcribed word by word in order to be coded and analysed. The discussions were semi-structured, and the topics of discussions were defined before the focus group discussion began. A set of questions and activities were included to help engage all the participants and stimulate the discussion.

The researcher’s involvement in the CFS activities was of a significant help in moderating the Focus Group discussions. Her familiarity with the parents and children allowed her identifying the participants who may try to dominate the conversation and those who may be shy. As a moderator, it is important to make sure that each of the participants has a turn to speak.

FGD1: A group of nine parents (guardians), a volunteer and one responsible from the Reception Centre’s staff members gathered to discuss the parents’ feelings and views about CFS, and its safety rules. The researcher acted as a moderator jointly with the responsible member from the Reception Centre. Coffee and tea were served and some of the families had their children sit and play as the group discussion took place at the CFS room. Due to interpretation breaks the discussion was two-sided. On one side, the parents took turns in commenting and expressing opinions and, on the other side, the researcher and the Reception Centre’s responsible took turns

in answering the comments and discussing the expectations from the parents while they are participating at CFS in terms of ensuring the safety of the children. Other topics such as encouraging the parents to attend CFS more often with their children were approached. The volunteer who took part was of great help taking notes of the discussion and sharing them with the researcher. Once the discussion ended, the parents and the researcher exchanged small talk about their general feelings in relation to discussion and the parents helped tidy the CFS room.

FGD2: A group of five CFS participant children and their parents at the Reception Centre during one of the CFS sessions. The researcher served as a moderator and an observer. The discussion was held in Arabic at the CFS school club room. The participants helped each other communicate and served as interpreters for other languages such as Kurdish. The discussion was held to determine which activities would promote the well-being of the children at CFS. The children took turns talking about their skills and hobbies, and their parents commented on what would make their children happy. The parents discussed the behaviour and play time of the children in their home countries in comparison to Finland. Two volunteers served as moderators and assisted with keeping the younger children occupied doing craft work around a table. A snack was offered at the end of the conversation and the guardians continued discussing in smaller groups while the children enjoyed some free play time before closing the CFS session.

FGD3: The third focus group was held with seven school-aged children attending CFS. The researcher served as a moderator and the discussion was held in the most common language: Arabic. The participants helped each other communicate serving as interpreters for other languages such as Kurdish. During this Focus Group Discussion, the children participating were introduced to *Rory's Story Cubes*, which is a board game that designed to stimulate ones' imagination and help participants create a story with the support of different pictures printed on the faces of cubes. Using pictures was a great help for triggering stories but they also allowed the children to realize that there are many ways to interpret what is seen. The discussion had a less structured approach than the other ones but was very productive in terms of credibility. The children were very relaxed while discussing the emotions of the characters in the pictures and comparing the experiences of each other's.

7 Data Analysis

Data analysis is the most difficult, mysterious, and vital part of a qualitative research (Thorne, 2000, p. 68). It is a dynamic, reflective, and intuitive process (Merriam, 2009). Thorne (2000, p. 68) asserts that in order to transform the raw data into knowledge, “a qualitative researcher must engage in active and demanding analytic processes throughout all phases of the research.” Basically, as one of the most crucial aspects of qualitative research, the analysis process must take place throughout the study. Similarly, Merriam (2009, p. 11) notes that “The importance of analysing data while they are being collected is underscored.” A researcher of a qualitative case study should not postpone the data analysis process to the end of the data collection phase, instead, he or she must continually analyse the data throughout the process. Thus, in this ethnographic study, the researcher analysed her data throughout her research and, accordingly, adjusted her study to adapt to new techniques along the way.

In addition to the analyses that took place in the course of the research, one final analysis has been done after the data collection process: the researcher gathered all the information she had collected and made a final analysis based on the entire data and on her previous findings. This last stage of data analysis is called, as Yin (2014) suggests, “intensive phase.” The intensive phase of data analysis means gathering together all the information that is collected throughout the research (i.e., interview logs, fieldnotes, reports, recordings, the researcher's own diary). Basically, "a systematic archive of all data" is created and organized by the researcher in such a way that they are easily accessible throughout the analysis phase.

The researcher kept a notebook where fieldnotes were written during and after each CFS session. The Reception Centre location being slightly remote, the ride back home after every session was devoted to reflection upon the happenings and the observations made at the CFS. She took time to copy the fieldnotes and headnotes to a computer-based document named “fieldnotes.” The notes were stored and organized by dates, topic, and participants (age, gender, etc.). Further comments were added to the primary notes to shed more light on their meaning in relation to the research. It is only after a considerable period of data collection that notes, observations, and other information started grouping into themes and categories. After reading through the data several times, tentative labels were created for chunks of data that summarise what was seen to be happening. Labelling was not done based on an existing theory but based on the meanings that emerged from the data.

Periodically, the researcher devoted considerable time to the organization of the data which was only the beginning of the analysis phase. Once a sufficient number of themes and categories emerged from the whole data, the data were processed into final categories while ensuring confidentiality and maintaining the anonymity of the participants and, more importantly, to ensuring the safety of the minors involved in this research. Table 8 below illustrates the two phases of the data collection.

Table 8. The Summary of the Two Phases of the Data Collection.

1st Phase	2nd Phase
Primary analysis throughout the research while collecting more data simultaneously.	All data and information have been gathered and archived.
Reflection upon data after each session at the CFS.	Primary codes that have emerged during the 1st phase have been grouped together, hence the creation of the themes.
The fieldnotes had been transferred from the ‘field notebook’ to the word document.	Data has been read through thoroughly a couple of times to digest and reflect upon.
Periodic analysis of the existing data.	Themes have been finalized.
Codes started to emerge.	Results have been organised based on the emerged themes.

Processing raw data, or as Yin (2014) calls it, “editing of the information” involved sorting out the redundancies, connecting the separate information, and the organization of every piece of information based on their topics for easy access. For example, in the coding process, which is, according to Patton (2002), one of the most important phases of qualitative data analysis, the researcher assigned a code (or label) to each important quote. After that, these codes have been associated with each other and formed into the themes. Then, themes have been combined with each other to produce the findings. An example of how the codes created a theme and then themes resulted in a finding can be found in Table 9 and Table 10 below wherein the aforementioned process has been illustrated.

Table 9. The Steps of Data Processing.

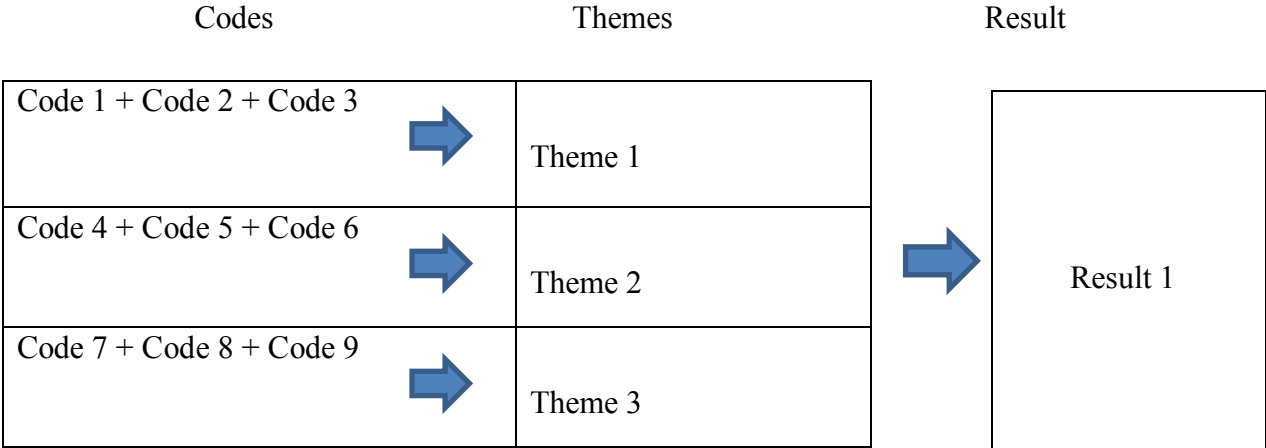
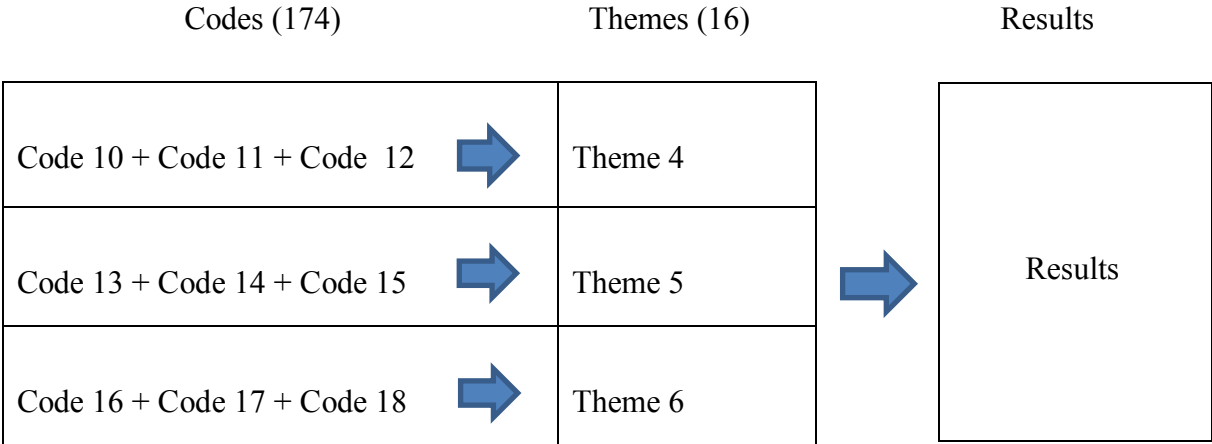


Table 10. Actual Numbers of Codes and Themes.



Overall, the researcher created 174 codes throughout the 1st phase of the data analysis process. Afterwards, in the exhaustive second phase of the data analysis, the codes were combined into 16 themes based on these 174 codes. Then, in the final stage, these themes have been grouped to form the results. The process of the construction of result area “safety” is presented below.

Table 11: The Analysis of Content Area “Safety”

Codes	Themes	Result
Autonomous + Independent + Age + Burden + Surveillance	Accompanying the Children	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 20px; width: fit-content; margin: 0 auto;"> Safety </div>
Quietness + Location + Nature + Remote + Indoors + Peace	Different Perspectives on Defining Safety	
Same + Equal + Care + Importance + Attention	Equal Treatment	
Leisure time (for adults) + Education + Play time + Creativity + Material	Professionalism	
Alternative + Child’s voice + Decision + Flexibility	Freedom of Choice	
Practice + Cultural exchange + Diversity + Group + Together	Inclusion	

It is important to note that this study is not a comparative or multiple case study. Data is mostly collected in one setting (the Reception Centre of Heikinharju). It is, however, reasonable to assume that had there been more cases to collect data, the researcher would have followed the same basic data analysis process laid out above. However, the codes and themes could have been different to some extent.

8 Results of the Research

This chapter presents the main findings of this research. The findings are derived from the researcher's observations, field notes, interviews, and focus group discussions; and they are based on the following research questions:

1. How significant are CFS practices in promoting well-being and psychological support for children and their families?
 - a) What are the conditions to increase safety?
 - b) What are the conditions to increase well-being and happiness?
2. How could CFSs be developed and progressed to better serve their goals?

8.1 Conditions to Increase Well-being at the CFS

The findings of the research are divided into two sub-chapters in parallel with the research questions. The first sub-chapter, *8.1 Conditions to increase well-being* [at the CFS], derived from the first research question (and its sub-questions). The second subchapter, *8.2 Suggestions to further development of CFS*, answers the second research question. Therefore, the following subsections will examine (1) Safety in CFS context. The subsequent sub-chapters will consecutively explore (2) Happiness and well-being, and (3) Factors outside of CFS affecting well-being. Finally, the chapter 8 will be concluded with the second subchapter, “*8.2 Suggestions to further development of CFS*,” which answers to the second research question, that is, how could CFSs be developed and progressed to better serve their goals.

8.1.1 Safety and CFS

Before embarking on a discussion about more precise results concerning safety, it is important to talk about the different elements of safety that emerged throughout this research. As depicted in the Table 11 in data analysis section, safety, as a prominent concept in this study, was defined by merging codes into themes. The emanated themes; accompanying the children, equal treatment, professional personnel, freedom of choice and inclusion represent the different elements of the concept of safety in this study.

The analysis of the data showed that the guardians regard safety as an important aspect of CFS as a space inside of the Reception Centre reserved for their children. Although the parents

consider the role of CFS significant in improving the conditions of children's safety, that impact was expected to be even bigger in relation to the efforts devoted to providing and ensuring the protection and safety measures. For example, some of the practices such as accompanying the children to CFS space and back home were not considered vitally important by some parents, at least when compared to the conceptions of the staff members. It has been said that the notion of safety itself is culture-bound. In the study of child development, culture has increasingly been recognized as a central factor. The cultural context of child development should not be neglected in the research about safety (Baumrind, 1995; Levine, 1977).

Different Conceptions About Safety

It has been observed that the perceptions and aspects of safety to some extent differ between the Save the Children staff, the Reception Centre staff, and the guardians of the children. While *Save the Children Finland's* staff assesses safety at CFS by putting the children at a centred position, the *Reception Centre* emphasizes maintaining and securing the safety of all the inhabitants of the Centre.

The Reception Centre hosts hundreds of asylum seekers who are under investigation for the right to a residence permit and where backgrounds, such as criminal records, are unknown; thus, it is suggested to keep the children highly supervised. Despite the rules, the children living at the Reception Centre often spend free time wandering in the buildings, running in the corridors, and jumping up and down the stairs. The staff responsible at the Reception Centre assure that parents and guardians are constantly reminded of the safety rules and made aware of the danger of leaving their children unattended in the Reception Centre buildings.

Before arriving in Finland, most of the families living at the Reception Centre have gone through long trips with minimum security and been exposed to all sorts of danger. Also, most of them have an experience of living in ill-equipped settings for asylum seekers that are often referred to as *camps*. In these camps, children rarely attended school and most of their learning took place during play time and the adventures they created around the tents they lived in. A majority of the guardians expressed that being indoors itself is perceived as an element that already ensures safety for their children.

It is amusing to hear you [the Reception Centre staff] say that children are unsafe wandering alone inside the Reception Centre! I told my husband the other day: what would they [staff] have done if they [staff] had seen our living conditions in Greece? [Laughter] We slept cuddling, squeezed

into each other, almost on the ground inside tents in freezing temperatures. Our children spend time outside hanging out with unhealthy stray dogs and played in construction material dumps! That was unsafe! This [the Reception Centre] is not! There are workers around and cameras around. This is Finland!

In many cases, asylum seekers are trapped along a path of despair: fleeing terrible circumstances at home, undertaking a deadly journey, and then ultimately being met with resistance and exclusion in the resettlement process. The rules of the *Dublin Regulation*, which apply to EU member states and cosignatories such as Switzerland, demand that asylum seekers be temporarily housed somewhere in the responsible country of arrival while they wait for a decision on their asylum claim (Dublin Convention, 1990). During this waiting period, the asylum seekers find themselves in a legal and social limbo in which their lives are essentially put on hold, and they operate under the threat of deportation in case that their asylum claim is denied. The stress engendered from that waiting process and the fear of the unknown future turn safety into a concept that summarises in a positive decision in relation to their asylum seeking claims. In other words, safety symbolizes to them a positive answer to their application, and the big threat on safety for them is deportation. Considering these big threats, most of the asylum seeker families at the Reception Centre do not consider the fact of children running around unattended a safety issue.

Accompanying the Children

CFS settings are highly regulated in terms of security for the children participating and their guardians as mentioned in the sections before. Therefore, some participation rules such as the requirement of a guardian (adult) accompanying the participating child to the CFS door and picking him/her up at the end of every session is emphasized but poorly followed by the guardians. Accompanying the children to the space and back home is a procedure to ensure that children are under continuous supervision from home (which in this case is a room in the upper floors of the building where CSF is located or an apartment in the neighbouring building) to home while attending CFS.

While talking about safety, a parent confessed that most of the parents do not agree with the fact that the children would be put in an unsafe position while left playing inside the Reception Centre area. He added that accompanying the children is only a bother that often discourages the parents to see their children regularly take part in CFS sessions.

I understand you guys mean good but... see... my children play all day in these stairs. It is absurd that when it is time to come here [CFS] I need to get all dressed to walk them a few stairs down! Do you understand my point? Even outside, there are cameras!

Supported by the responsible staff of the Reception Centre, the volunteers and coordinators running CFS do not condone the specific rule of having the children accompanied by their guardians while arriving and leaving CFS. Children with uncooperative parents are refused access to the CFS when they show up on doorstep without a guardian. The parents are often forced to comply with the rules of attendance when their children insist on attending the CFS.

The majority of the participants expressed how safety risks have decreased after they arrived at the Reception Centre. CFS in Oulu has successfully secured increased protection for children owing to factors highly dependent upon the characteristics of the CFS setting. For example, one parent, a father whose child has regularly attended CFS, stated that:

When we compare the conditions of places our children frequented in the countries we are from ... those we passed through until we arrived here, safety is at its utmost levels here in Finland. They are safe here in Finland and they are safe while enjoying being who they are as children. We are in peace when our children come here behind safely locked doors [at the CFS].

He further elaborated that “The space is not only colourful and beautiful; it is also arranged to be safe for the children. They can play freely without jeopardizing their safety.” The characteristics of CFS ensured gaining the trust of participants (notably the parents or guardians) which encouraged the children to attend CFS sessions. The guardians who now could run errands or spend children-free time repeatedly expressed their gratitude for the serenity in which they could spend time away knowing their children were well taken care of in a safe place.

When my children are here, I can really do housekeeping tasks in my room in peace without having the constant voice in the back of my mind telling me that they’ll come running with a broken arm or that someone from the Reception Centre’s staff or child protection agents would come to scold us for letting the children unattended outside. (A mother whose two children regularly attended the CFS.)

Equal Treatment

Evidently, safety is not only an issue of physical well-being but also a psychological well-being. Accordingly, the equal opportunity to take part in CFS regardless of one's country, identity, and

differences is often praised by the guardians whose children attended CFS. Children at CFS benefit from equal attention. One parent noted that: *“It’s good to know that our children are safe from racism and treated equally like any other [local] child. It’s good that the children have an opportunity to meet Finnish people, learn Finnish as well.”*

Despite the language barrier which often hinders the ability to supervise the content of all that is said during the different practices in the CFS sessions, all participants are encouraged to show mutual respect for each other. Children are addressed in their first names (names are written on name tag stickers at the beginning of every session which allows a quick familiarization and building trust). Parents assured that their children rarely complain of being left out during play time. Parents were grateful that all children are invited to join.

Freedom to Choose

Being child-centred, the CFS provides children with the freedom of deciding on the games and activities in which they wish to take part during the sessions. Children are never forced to join a structured activity if they wish to abstain. Although the idea of a child making decision is a foreign concept to most of the guardians whose children take part in the CFS sessions, it has been a big motivation for attendance. It has been observed that children often react in a surprised way when allowed to play other than what the other children at the session play. Gradually, through attendance, guardians grew an understanding of the rules of the game at CFS and a bridge of trust is formed between the children, the guardians, and the CFS volunteers. This freedom convinces the parents that their children practice free will, will not be victims of manipulation or exploited for financial and other benefits. One parent stated that:

When you are forced into migration and you have children, your fears are multiple. When all the tangible danger is silenced, you have in mind this poisonous voice telling you that your children are always going to be vulnerable. They would always be subject to manipulation. I had doubts at first when my children attended this club. I asked my wife to always accompany them to watch. You know? We lost everything when we left, and we are not ready to venture to lose our children. We heard horrible things on our way until here. We have heard of ill-intentioned agencies that target asylum seekers’ children for adoption. We live with the fear of being at the mercy of agencies that might approach us at first with as a caring hand to later find a reason to take our children for adoption. I know I might be making a fool of myself confessing fears of this sort, and I mean to offend no one, but after everything we have experienced... it is hard to have faith in people being good to us. There has always been a “catch” ... after attending regularly for this long,

we saw change... change in our children and the joy and excitement they get from coming here. We also learned to feel safe sending them here.

By attending CFS, children and their guardians witness different approaches to being around children and giving them attention. Giving the children a voice to decide has not only been subject to appreciation from children and guardians but also from volunteers. Because the children could choose and suggest what they want to do while participating has reduced the stress of having a rigid pre-planned set of activities.

Professional Personnel

In CFS Oulu, participating children have the advantage of being supervised by professional and highly trained volunteers who often are graduate students in related fields such as special education, speech therapy, and other social sciences. The educational background of the volunteers is strengthened by a two-day training provided by *Save the Children* and periodic feedback meetings. The training covers the rules and terms of CFS and determines the role of the volunteers in ensuring children's safety, well-being, and equal treatment. The periodic meetings with CFS coordinators and managers ensure that volunteers are given an opportunity to share feedback and exchange ideas about the sessions which gives them more confidence while supervising the children. The guardians have several times enquired about the position of the volunteers at CFS who outstand in the space wearing the Child Friendly Spaces vests and name tags. "Is this your profession? Are you all teachers?" asked a mother who attended CFS with her two boys and later on joined the team as a volunteer after receiving a proper training.

8.1.2 Happiness and Well-being

This subsection will explore the happiness and well-being in CFS context based on the analysis of the data that was collected throughout the research.

Enjoying CFS sessions

A typical session at the CFS includes greetings, singing, crafting, and traditional playing with toys, all of which are designed to keep the children busy in a safe, joyful environment, and keep their minds off of the horrible hardships most of them have experienced. Depending on a budget and volunteers' capacity, among other factors, CFS in Oulu runs two to three times a week.

Across this study, most children who attended CFS practices started to communicate the wish of running the sessions more frequently during the week. A child, before leaving at the end of one of the CFS sessions, asked: *“How many days do we have to sleep until next time? Can we come back tomorrow?”* This is an example of many repetitive requests of staying longer at the space or coming earlier to the next session. A father, whose children attended CFS regularly, described the places as *“To most of us? It [CFS] is a glimpse of a more stable life.”*

Guardians have highly praised the effects of CFS attendance for bringing joy to their children’s life and its impact on their general mood during their stay at the Reception Centre. One of the children said that *“The first thing I do in the morning is to ask mom what day is today? I don’t tell her why I ask but it is to know if I can start being happy to come here or not.”* The parents, unanimously, expressed a wish to run the CFS sessions more frequently than two or three times a week. When informed about the budget and volunteer force limitations, many of the guardians assured of being ready to volunteer to provide a helping hand. One couple jointly noted about their children the following:

We can very clearly see the change in the children’s mood coming here and leaving. They come back to the room always happier as if they went on an excursion. They are very eager to talk about what they have done here [CFS]. We would really like to help you if you told us what to do.

Adults’ Presence and Supervision

Adults’ presence and participation in the sessions were sources of tremendous joy to the children but also the guardians. At the CFS, children benefit from volunteers’ constant attention; they are regularly reminded of behavioural rules that maintain a friendly atmosphere. In addition, they are supported by the guardians who chose to attend with their children. Volunteers, under the supervision of the CFS coordinator, keep a close eye on different playgroups and act as an example tutoring the guardians on how to intervene with issues that occur at the CFS between children.

Across this study, comparisons were drawn between children of regular attendance and children who had just joined. It has been observed that many children showed improved social behaviour after several months of attendance. Children who were observed to behave differently were quickly noticed and followed in the reporting process, and the help of a specialist was solicited in the severe cases. For example, when strong withdrawal and aggressive reactions were noticed in a child during CFS sessions, and when his father shared the same concern, CFS staff informed

the staff of the Reception Centre and made aware of the worry. The father of the child later shared that the child was examined by doctors and experts to assess the need for any post-traumatic therapies and other available support. The father confided saying:

I am aware of the damage that the conflicts we fled and the traumatizing experiences we lived had on my son. I was expecting him to react... it is reassuring to see that my worry is not only naturally generated from being a parent. I am grateful I was directed to people who might know better in understanding what is going on in his little head.

Escape Gate

Living in reception centres keeps the children in contact and close exposure with their parents' challenges and other adults' distresses and negative influences (Paardekooper, De Jong & Hermanns, 1999). By taking part in CFS sessions, the children benefit from an opportunity to escape the reality of living in the Reception Centre. It also helps the parents who want to ensure their and their children's sustainable future to make integration efforts. These parents usually maintain a regular presence and active attendance, often participate in the activities with the children and take good example of the volunteers' code of behaviour. *"When I come here, I feel like escaping for a couple of hours the atrocity of waiting [for the residence permit decision to be made] and the stress of living in these conditions,"* confessed a parent who accompanied his son regularly to the CFS.

The uncertainty to which the asylum seekers, notably the families, are submerged while waiting for their residence permit decisions to be made by the Immigration Office drives many of the guardians and parents into a passive mode of life. In that depressive sort of existing, the guardians rarely make cultural adaptation efforts that would allow them to socially and psychologically integrate and thus promote their socio-cultural well-being. A parent affirmed during a focus group discussion that training their children into the Finnish ways of living, especially when these are radically different from what they were born into, is useless if the family's settlement in Finland is not for sure. *"There is little motivation for integration efforts in a society in which we are not sure to stay. Everything is uncertain here. Everything we would start is threatened by the decision of the residence permit."*

The child-friendliness of the space has a big influence on parents' motivation to attend CFS sessions with the children and step out of the stressful nature of their daily life at the Reception

Centre since CFS activities have been established by Save the Children in Finland to provide the asylum seeking children with many opportunities to develop, learn, play, and build resilience. *“These children do not have much to do except run through the corridors. We are so stressed during the day, stressed from waiting for that mail delivery rounds hoping it would carry our decision [residence permit decision from the immigration office], the verdict.”*

8.1.3 Factors Outside the CFS Affecting Well-being

This subsection will present the findings of the research with respect to factors that are not directly related to CFS in increasing well-being in CFS settings.

Inclusion and Interactions

Asylum seeking families are temporarily placed at reception centres during the process of residence permit application and investigation. A time often referred to as “the waiting” by the asylum seekers. Although it is uncommon, these families could be transferred from one reception centre to another even during that time. Thus, participants of the CFS change periodically.

Gathering data from different participants during different seasons of the year allowed a better analysis and interpretation of the findings. In Oulu, as mentioned in previous chapters, the Reception Centre in which the main data collection took place is situated in a relatively remote place surrounded by forest, a setting that worsens in the dark season of autumn and early winter. When asked about their opinion, one parent described the quietness around the Reception Centre as scary. He said:

I really appreciate how safe are the children in this place [...] We live in faraway here [in the Reception Centre], almost in the woods. The idea of ‘emptiness being peaceful’ is new to us. In my home country, we ask people to avoid deserted streets and we ban our children to go through the forest to reach school. Even when it’s a shortcut to school... Here when our wives are depressed, the nurse asks them to go walk in the forest with the children... and the wives come back to the room more depressed... [laughter]

Asylum seekers, especially families with under school aged children, experience a strong feeling of isolation during the first months after their arrival. Children who have the opportunity to attend school upon their arrival in Finland often become a good motive for their parents and guardians to leave the Reception Centre. Isolation often aggravates stress in which families live

and, in many cases, as observed in this study, isolation manifests itself as depression and a tendency to antisocial behaviour. A parent described the situation in the following way:

I wish the place was a bit bigger and somewhere else. Weather conditions make it hard for us to go out as often as a child would want. We feel so isolated here. We want our children to be part of the Finnish society. It brings a feeling of settlement and home to be familiar with life here. We are very grateful for our children having this chance and being well taken care of, but it still feels like a nice living room inside a prison.

The issue of space has been the subject of criticism in many occasions during the data collection, in which guardians first praised the space for being child friendly, colourful, well equipped, and very safe; then, they complained of the space being too small to comfortably accommodate the children and their guardians and the volunteers at the same time. During their stay at the Reception Centre, the families are compelled to share washrooms and kitchens which often creates tension between them.

Being of different nationalities, religions, and ethnic groups that are often in conflictual positions back in their home countries is another reason for discomfort for the guardians when put together at CFS with their children. When Save the Children Finland trained some parents to support supervising the children as volunteers, many of the other guardians expressed discomfort leaving their children at the space. One of the parents noted that:

To be honest, we are not very comfortable with the idea of X being a volunteer... They have the language of manipulating our children and the power of unfairly treating our children because of their nationality! At “home” [home country] we are not friends, you know?

Despite the effort devoted to reassuring the guardians about the terms and rules that ensure equal treatment and behaviour towards all the participants, it is difficult to ignore the effect of background experiences on the guardians’ opinion about intercultural interactions and fair behaviour.

For many children staying at the Reception Centre, especially those who are not of school age, attending CFS is considered as one of the rare occasions for integration in the Finnish society. The children who go to school after their arrival in Finland are gathered in preparatory classrooms usually with pupils from the same background. In these classrooms, they are taught the basics of the Finnish language and introduced to Finnish learning methods. CFS provides to the children and families a relaxed environment for learning while playing. For example,

CFS volunteers use communication methods that enhance language learning such as speech therapy communication picture cards. After a few times of attendance, the children start showing signs of learning the Finnish language by calling toys and objects in their Finnish names, repeating nursery rhymes, lyrics, or expressing themselves by telling using the words for the activities they want to do.

It is a very nice opportunity for our children to socialize with people other than the Reception Centre's staff and the people we live with, especially that the environment is less formal than school's... do you see? The children get to be part of a place that does not remind them constantly that they are in "a waiting hall..." They have access to toys and see colourful walls and get to interact with international and Finnish people.

On the other hand, the guardians who were part of CFS during the cold seasons in Finland, late autumn and winter, expressed a strong need for outdoor activities. In spring and summer time, CFS sessions often take place outdoors; picnicking or enjoying the playground of the Reception Centre. Contrarily, in autumn and during the long Finnish winter, the CFS sessions happen mainly indoors because of the children's lack of winter clothes and the inexperience of guardians in proper dressing that is adequate for cold weather. A parent who joined CFS with his children in autumn expressed his opinion about CFS activities that took place during winter as follows:

It would have been great to teach the children Finnish outdoor activities. I have heard that in Finland families pick berries and mushrooms, for example. Don't they? I wish our children could be taught how to pick berries, and where to pick them, and what to wear and what to take along. I, personally, do not know how to play in the snow. I was trying to have my son use this thing we pull in the snow... You know, the sledge kind of thing [pulkka]? But then, a Finn, an old friendly guy stopped me and showed me how to do it right.

Self-reliance and Achievement

UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) states that:

Protracted refugee situations occur from political impasses. A protracted refugee situation is one in which refugees find themselves in a long-lasting and intractable state of limbo. Their lives may not be at risk, but their basic rights and essential economic, social and psychological needs remain unfulfilled after years in exile. (UNHCR, 2005, p. 1)

The present framework of UNHCR responses to refugee situation makes self-reliance impossible. Self-reliance is the social and economic ability of an individual, a household or a

community to meet essential needs (including but not limited to: protection, food, water, shelter, personal safety, and health) in a sustainable manner and with dignity (Hunter, 2009). Self-reliance, as a programme approach, refers to developing and strengthening livelihoods of persons of concern, and reducing their vulnerability and long-term reliance on humanitarian/external assistance (UNHCR, 2005, p. 1).

One problematic aspect of current humanitarian perception to refugee's self-reliance is the tendency to individualised self-reliance. It focuses on supporting every working-age adult into employment – often viewing individual jobs as an 'end goal' marker of self-reliance. This approach fails to capture the diversity of personal circumstances and to consider refugee interdependencies – which are highly gendered – as well as the endless non-economic ways that refugees seek to make meaningful lives (Barbelet & Wake, 2017). Aid organisations programming for 'self-reliance' should take a broader look at refugees' well-being and the non-economic and non-individualistic components of living a fulfilling and meaningful life. These include aspects of life such as family caregiving, leisure opportunities, and voluntary work. It is only through understanding livelihoods as constituent parts of refugee well-being, rather than end goals, that humanitarian organisations can more effectively support refugees to convert places, services and opportunities into aspects of life they have reason to value.

Interviews with parents who attended CFS showed that their expectations of the CFS meetings were related to their social status in Finland and for many, it was a place to meet other people, to socialize and avoid staying trapped into their rooms, and to find new ways to occupy themselves.

8.2 Suggestions to Further Development of CFS

In this subchapter, recommendations to increase the efficiency and value of CFS in relation to the asylum seekers are presented.

8.2.1 Space and Frequency of the CFS Meetings

For many participants, CFS is not only a space for play time. It is more of a space wherein children learn and develop. Children face obstacles related to their education, in refugee camps (Mace, Mulheron, Jones, & Cherion, 2014) This is a common experience in the lives of refugee children, who additionally rank lower than average on diverse measures of development,

observing motor, social, and language development in particular (Muennig, Boulmier-Darden, Khouzam, Zhu, & Hancock, 2015). In CFS Oulu, the professional supervision and activities provided by highly educated and trained volunteers offer a learning opportunity to both; the children and the adults. However, parents wish for more frequent CFS sessions as a means for effective educational development. Parents also believe that running CFS more frequently would be an efficient, positive way of addressing the boredom about which their children continuously complain during their stay at the Reception Centre.

In addition to the frequency of the CFS sessions, it has been shown that parents' and guardians' participation and attendance with the children is considerably affected by the size of the space. They suggest that providing a bigger space would allow them to attend with their children without bearing the obligation of interacting with other parents in the case of tension between the families living at the Reception Centre. Suitable space would also encourage the parents to actively participate in the sessions instead of just a shy presence.

8.2.2 More Interaction with Finnish Children

In terms of socio-psychological support at the CFS, the children and their guardians unanimously confess that what is expected is more contact with Finnish people. Several parents affirm that having Finnish children join at CFS would not only make the space more diverse, but it would also lessen the isolation in which they live at the Reception Centre.

Furthermore, mixing the children at CFS with Finnish children would provide a great opportunity to practice the Finnish language. The children and participating parents interact with the volunteers who speak mainly Finnish during the CFS sessions. However, the most significant part of the interactions happens between the children themselves during play time. Finnish children's presence would enhance and speed Finnish language learning among the children.

8.2.3 More Outdoor Activities

The families and children who happen to be at the Reception Centre during the late spring and summer seasons have the opportunity to spend lengthy periods of time outdoors playing together and with the volunteers. Moreover, the children ride their bikes around the Centre, play football games, and even throw barbeque parties. In addition to their free time, during summer,

the CFS sessions are often held outside in a form of a picnics where children enjoy playing in the playground around the centre. However, the children are also pleased with the indoor activities such as drawing, painting or simply playing with toys. Therefore, there has rarely been complaints about the fact that the CFS activities are held indoors.

On the other hand, the families who were transferred or brought to the Reception Centre during the seasons of autumn and winter confessed feeling trapped indoors. For many of them, cold weather is a new experience to which they struggle to adapt. The guardians believe that arranging activities outside of the Reception Centre would be a source of great joy for both the children, who fight boredom and abundance of free time, and for the adults.

The challenge in realizing this suggestion, especially during winter season, summarises in two factors: volunteers' availability and the capacity to ensure proper supervision and keeping the children safely warm in various weather conditions. Children's behaviours, while the CFS is held outdoor, are more demanding in terms of supervision. Moreover, the majority of the participating families have limited knowledge on how to dress properly for the cold winter, or they simply have limited resources for purchasing decent winter clothes.

8.2.4 More Cultural Activities

According to Algan, Bisin and Verdier (2012, pp. 5-6), in the social sciences, the three main approaches to cultural integration are (1) assimilation theory, (2) multiculturalism, and (3) structuralism. The assimilation theory builds upon features in which diverse ethnic groups come to share a common culture through a process that consists of the gradual vanishing of original cultural and behavioural patterns in favour of new ones. In this theory, diverse immigrant groups are expected to 'melt' into the mainstream culture (ibid.).

The authors further explain that one alternative approach is multiculturalism. They (ibid.) elaborate that in this perspective, multicultural societies are considered as societies composed of a heterogeneous collection of ethnic and racial minority groups, as well as of a dominant majority group. The multicultural perspective offers an alternative way of seeing the host society. It presents members of ethnic minority groups as active integral parts of the whole society rather than just foreigners or outsiders.

Instead of focusing on the processes of assimilation or integration as such, in the structuralist approach, the emphasis is put on how differences in socio-economic opportunities relate to

differences in the social integration of ethnic minority groups. They argue that unequal access to wealth, jobs, housing, education, power, and privilege are structural limitations that affect the ability of immigrants and ethnic minorities to socially integrate.

In addition to the stress factor that affects the motivation of asylum seekers to invest in integration activities, many of them are discouraged by the threat of losing their original culture and their identity. If they or their children are exposed to the influences of the mainstream culture, fear of assimilation is prevailing among a few parents (ibid.). However, in this study of CFSs, the vast majority of the participants suggested adding cultural activities to the practices of the CFS to introduce the Finnish culture. They believe that learning with the children about cultural aspects of the Finnish society instead of through an imposed official integration program would provide the comfort of preserving aspects of one's original culture.

Volunteers' Training

To become a volunteer at CFS, the interested candidate attends basic training which consists of an introduction to Save the Children and the CFSs concept, as well as to Save the Children's Child Safeguarding Policies and Procedures. The training includes a presentation given by a staff member of the Reception Centre which provides an overview of the everyday life, families, and children living at the centre. The candidates are also familiarized with the concept of Psychological First Aid (PFA) for children, which allows them to learn about the common reactions of children in crisis situations and helps them to respond in the most adequate manner in children's times of distress (Häikiö et al., 2017, pp. 30-31).

After having their criminal background checked, the candidates are interviewed (by phone) by the project staff of Save the Children Finland in order to be granted the permission to start their volunteering at the CFS sessions. Most of the volunteers at CFS (in Oulu) have experience of working with children and are motivated in joining the project of voluntary work with refugee children.

In addition to the attitudes and ability to work with children, as well as the ability to work in a team, it is highly beneficial that a candidate is prepared with at least minimum awareness of the cultural impact on the meaning of the main principals guiding the CFS. For example, as previously mentioned, safety as a concept is interpreted differently by different stakeholders (e.g., Save the Children Finland staff, the Reception Centre staff, parents) at the CFS. Therefore, understanding that some concepts such as safety might be perceived differently in various

cultures would strengthen the ability of the volunteers to cope under stressful situations that might arise at CFS sessions.

9 Validity and Reliability

All research strives toward producing reliable and credible knowledge. Whether a qualitative or a quantitative study, a research can be evaluated in respect of its validity and reliability based on the study's conceptualizations, the means of data collection, analysis, and interpretation, and the way the research findings are introduced. Creswell and Miller (2000, p. 124) note that the criteria to determine the validity of a qualitative study are different from that of a quantitative study.

The differences between qualitative and quantitative research stem from the different research goals of the two methods. While qualitative studies aim at acquiring new knowledge through an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon and people related to it, quantitative studies aim at verifying a hypothesis. Creswell and Miller (2000, p. 124) state that qualitative research is often validated by "member checking, triangulation, thick description, peer reviews, and external audits." Although there is no requirement for researchers to choose a specific procedure to validate their research, they generally engage in one or more of the aforementioned procedures.

Validating a qualitative study starts with the internal validity, that is, the research-related decisions taken by the researcher throughout the research. Creswell and Miller (2000, p. 124) explain this as "researchers determine how long to remain in the field, whether the data are saturated to establish good themes or categories, and how the analysis of the data evolves into a persuasive narrative." Similarly, as cited in Creswell and Miller (2000), Patton (1980, p. 339) states that qualitative researcher returns to his or her data "over and over again to see if the constructs, categories, explanations, and interpretations make sense." With respect to the *internal validity* of this research, the replication of the interview protocol with five individuals in interviews and eighteen individuals (nine parents, seven children, one responsible staff member of the Reception Centre, and one volunteer) in focus groups allowed the researcher to feel confident of the internal validity of the data. Moreover, by using different data collection techniques (e.g., interviewing, fieldnotes, participant observation, focus groups) the researcher was able to apply the triangulation method (i.e., the application and combination of several research methods in the study of the same phenomenon) to her study to ensure the internal validity of this ethnographic case study.

Creswell and Miller (2000, pp. 125-126) state that the constructivist (interpretive) researcher believes in "pluralistic, interpretive, open-ended, and contextualized (e.g., sensitive to place and situation) perspectives toward reality." Because the qualitative paradigm assumes that reality is socially constructed and that it is based on participants' perceptions (ibid, p. 125), checking how accurately participants' realities have been represented in the study can be crucial in validating the research. Therefore, for *internal validity*, a qualitative researcher can also use the participants to validate his or her study. This method involves communicating with the participants to see whether the researcher's interpretations accurately represent them. During the focus group interviews in this study, which took after the individual interviews, the researcher brought up some of her findings to discuss them with the participants to validate whether their reality has been correctly reflected.

External validity of a research focuses on the generalizability of the findings, that is, whether the findings of a particular study can be applied to other similar situations (Merriam, 2009). This is a specific limitation of all qualitative research; however, by providing enough details of the research context, methods, and results, the researcher provides her readers with enough data so that they can compare to other research and see if there are any similarities between the researches.

Internal reliability, on the other hand, relates to the quality of the utilization of the methods applied in the research (Creswell, 2007). For example, a good interview process not only includes good questions but also includes information about how these questions were asked. The quality of the interview depends on whether enough time is given to participants to answer fully or whether he or she is informed about the topic. Moreover, the ways in which the researcher approaches the data collection process is a part of the internal reliability in qualitative research. How good are the researcher's observations? To what extent, if any, she has been influenced by her own beliefs during the data collection process? How articulated was she in her fieldnotes? Answers of all these questions have a significant impact on the reliability of the research. In this research, the researcher believes that she was able to interview all critical people with the exception of participants who were transferred from or moved out from the Reception Centre without a prior notice.

External reliability relates to whether the findings of the research can be replicated (Creswell, 2007). That is, if the research is repeated, will the same findings be produced? In this qualitative case study, if another researcher would copy the research, he or she would likely come up with

the fairly similar results. However, his or her findings would not be a duplication of this study because the context would have changed. This is based on the assumption that there are many realities which are constantly in flow, and that each individual researcher would view the reality through his or her own perspective (ibid., 2007).

As in each qualitative study, this ethnographic case study has its strengths and limitations at the same time. Its external validity is not as strong as that of a quantitative study would have been because the results of this study are not directly generalizable to the larger populations. However, the researcher put utmost emphasis on the internal validity when interacted with the participants. As Creswell (2007) notes, the reality of a situation is best discovered by personal interaction with the context and the subjects. Moreover, the internal reliability of this study is another strength of this research. The researcher did her very best to distinguish the subjective and objective observations, and to record the interviews accurately. Moreover, by adding focus groups to the data collection process, she was able to provide triangulation. Apart from “in field” data collection (i.e., fieldnotes, interviews, focus groups), the researcher reviewed multiple written resources to compare her findings with them.

Her careful approach in choosing and applying the methodology and methods provided internal reliability to this research. However, as strong as the internal validity and reliability of this research are, as a qualitative study, it cannot rely on external reliability. That is, this research cannot be replicated completely because every interpretive researcher has their own realities in different contexts. For instance, if another researcher works with the same participants and applies the same protocols and methods, he or she will not come up with precisely the same results.

Finally, a possible limitation of both quantitative and qualitative studies surfaces in this research as well: the comprehensiveness of the data sample. Although this research collected data from as many key participants as possible, the question remains the same: what would those who have not been interviewed say? Would additional interviews change the findings of this research? This kind of questions are an unavoidable issue in every qualitative research and quantitative research.

It is also imperative to talk about the “Hawthorne effect” because the researcher believes that it might have affected the contents of the data during the interviews and focus group discussions in this study. The “Hawthorne effect” draws its name from a landmark set of studies conducted at the Hawthorne plant in the 1920s (Levitt & List, 2011, p. 224). It can emerge as a result of

“experimenter demand effects,” that is, experimental subjects (participants) attempt to act in ways that they think will please the experimenter (researcher) (ibid., p. 228). This effect might be the explanation behind participants’ answers that were sometimes in contradiction with their behaviours as observed during the CFS sessions by the researcher.

Last but not least, one of the most important limitations of this study stems from the special feature of the CFS in Oulu. That is, the Reception Centre is a transit centre in which most of the families only stay for a short time. Therefore, the group of children is constantly changing as they move to other reception centres. Moreover, the ages, nationalities, languages and cultural backgrounds of the children vary. Until the beginning of 2017, the activities were mainly provided for children under school age (0 to 6). Children aged under 2 were required a parent’s attendance. As it was noted, there were also school-aged children (7-14) who joined because of the lack of activities designed for them at the Reception Centre. To respond to that, the CFS in Oulu started planning a club for school-aged children with a specific focus on non-formal education. The club has now started and there is a coordinator and volunteers implementing the activities in the group.

10 Ethical issues

As Birman (2006, p. 155) notes, “Defining ethical responsibilities for the researcher is complex when working with vulnerable populations and diverse cultures with distinctive and sometimes conflicting definitions of what is ethical.” To strengthen her ethical approach in conducting research, the researcher followed the *Belmont Report* guidelines in this study. The Belmont Report (1979), which is created by the National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioural Research, is a report that aims at aiding the evaluation of standards in research. In order to achieve its goals, the report relies on three distinct categories of ethical concerns (Vollmer & Howard, 2010, p. 676). Those three categories are (1) respect for persons, (2) beneficence, and (3) justice (ibid.).

First and foremost, a permission to conduct the study was officially applied for and granted by all the parties involved in the project: Save the Children Finland, Oulu University, and the Heikinharju Reception Centre. Then, the families and children attending CFS were clearly informed about the research, its process and its objectives that serve the best interest of the child in accordance with the rights set forth in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) (The United Nations, 1989, art. 15). The CFS attendants were also assured that participating in the research was voluntary and that abstaining would not affect their right to attend CFS sessions in any way. Moreover, the volunteers and the CFS coordinator of Save the Children Finland who were involved in CFS sessions during data collection were informed about the study and its aim.

Ethical dilemma concerning the issue of “consent” while doing research with children was less complicated in this study because the children that took part in this research were accompanied by their legal guardians (parents, uncles, grandparents, etc.), hence the consent was first requested from the guardians before the children. The guardians who agreed to be part of the interviews and focus group discussions were given further information about the study and they were clearly informed about the confidentiality of all the data collected and the information they provided. They were ensured that the collected data would be used for the purpose of elaborating the significance of CFS in promoting their well-being and also to suggest practices that could help the development of these spaces to better serve the interests of the children. The researcher made sure that all the participants understood that they were anonymously cited and referred to throughout the research.

Doing research with refugees and immigrants involves balancing potential divergences in the ways ethical behaviour is defined by the culture of the researcher and the research community in contrast with the culture of the research participants (Birman, 2006, p. 156). For example, expressing negative opinions about a non-profit activity might be considered offensive within the boundaries of different cultural norms. During the discussions, while collecting the data, it has been noticed that most participants (guardians) often struggle to address the question of what could be done differently to develop the CFS. Whilst the researcher seeks sincere responses for the reliability of the results, to most of the participants, expressing a criticizing opinion about an aspect of the CFS while benefiting from the activities is considered an act of ingratitude. It is also plausible to think that the participants were afraid of consequences as well because of their asylum seeking position.

The existing ethical code does not provide adequate instructions to help the researcher establish how to arbitrate such opposing perspectives. Birman (2006, p. 164) states that the “lack of familiarity with participant cultures poses particular challenges with respect to assessing research risks/benefits, procedures to obtain informed consent, determining appropriate incentives in research and avoiding coercion, and maintaining confidentiality.” In this study, the researcher’s intercultural knowledge, her involvement and participation in the CFS activities, and her linguistic skills helped her negotiate creative solutions to encourage straightforward exchange of opinions and conciliate conflicting perspectives.

Aware of the background of the participants and their vulnerable position, the researcher was able to evaluate the sensitivity of the questions during the interviews and the topics during the FGDs to avoid negatively stirring the participants’ emotions or triggering unpleasant feelings. Tremendous efforts were made in choosing the words, body language, and the environment during data collection to preserve the political correctness throughout the research process, and to maintain the respect of the different cultures and subcultures of the participants as well as to minimize the possible harms.

In accordance to the third article of the CRC, special attention was devoted to ensuring that the children involved in the interviews and focus group discussion were supervised, kept safe, and protected from any exposure to the sensitive topics that might arise throughout the conversations (The United Nations, 1989, art. 15). For example, colouring images were printed prior to the interviews and were offered to the younger children who accompanied their

guardians to the interview meetings in order to ensure they were entertained and kept distracted from the adult conversation.

Children's participation at CFS in Oulu is praised for the special interest given to the children's voice and opinion while running the CFS sessions. Finding the balance between the different roles of the researcher during the CFS sessions (e.g. instructor, observer, supervisor, facilitator, etc.) was challenging. The CRC's elaborated definition of children's participation is as follows:

Ongoing processes, which include information-sharing and dialogue between children and adults based on mutual respect, and in which children can learn how their views and those of adults are taken into account and shape the outcome of such processes. (UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC), 2009, p. 3)

In accordance with this CRC's definition of participation, Save the Children guidelines for participation and supervision emphasizes the importance of listening to the child's voice while structuring the CFS sessions instead of dictating their role.

Save the Children promotes child participation, according to which the children should be heard and their views taken into consideration in decisions affecting children. In our project, the children have been heard in various ways during the project. After each CFS session, the children had the possibility to give feedback and they were also able to influence which activities are carried out in the CFS. (Häikiö, Viitanen & Tervonen-Arnkil, 2017, p. 26)

Following the aforementioned guidelines helped the researcher address the ethical issue of finding the balance between her positions during the different stages of the research project while working with minors and asylum seeking families.

11 Discussion

This study took place at the Heikinharju Reception Centre in Oulu, Finland, between 2015 and 2018. The main goal of the study was to evaluate the role of CFSs with respect to their contribution to the well-being of children and asylum seeking families. The data was collected in two years through observation and active participation in weekly gatherings with children and their families (guardians) as well as with other qualitative data collection methods (e.g., field notes, interviews, and focus group discussions) that took place mainly between October 2016 to May 2017.

The following research questions have been used as the foundational base in seeking answers regarding the research aim.

1. How significant are CFS practices in promoting well-being and psychological support for children and their families?
 - a) What are the conditions to increase safety?
 - b) What are the conditions to increase well-being and happiness?
2. How could CFSs be developed and progressed to better serve their goals?

Based on the research questions, it was decided that the most beneficial way to elicit data was to utilize qualitative research methods. *Ethnographic case study* particularly stood out in gathering data because of its ability to provide an in-depth picture of the phenomena explored. Being able to observe the children and families as part of their daily lives and interact with them provided useful data to the researcher. The analysis of data took place throughout the research. This allowed the researcher to go back to her notes and focus on different aspects of the research each week. After the data collection phase ended, the researcher gathered everything she had collected for a final data analysis of the research. The researcher applied interpretive ontology and social constructivist epistemology throughout the data analysis process.

The data analysis of this research yielded several findings. In relation to the first research question, the key finding was that according to participants and researcher's observations, this particular CFS seems to have a positive effect on children's and families' well-being. One unexpected finding was the apparent different perceptions of safety among key stakeholders (asylum seeking families, staffs of Save the Children Finland and the Reception Centre) of the

study. Nevertheless, the CFS's positive impact on the feeling of safety and everything associated with it became clear through the analysis of data.

Because safety is considered as one of the most important aspects of well-being and happiness, several findings concerning conditions of safety and CFS emerged. *Accompanying the children* when they are on their way to (and from) CFS, providing *equal treatment* to the children, giving them *freedom to choose*, and having *professional personnel* in the CFS have all been deemed highly important in providing a safe environment for children's development (and to some extent to the comfort of their families) based on the data analysis. In regard to happiness and well-being, the data analysis revealed that *enjoying CFS sessions, adults' presence and supervision*, and having CFS as an *escape gate* for families are the most prominent conditions for children's and families' well-being in the CFS at Heikinharju Reception Centre.

The findings on happiness and well-being showed similarities to the extensive research of Diener (1984, 2009, 2011), the pioneering researcher on subjective well-being. This theory emphasizes that safety and well-being include outside factors but also feelings of safety and happiness. Furthermore, Diener and Suh (2000) assert that there is a strong bond between well-being and culture, values, and norms. Thus, investigating children's well-being requires to include cultural and socioeconomic aspects of children's lives. A number of key findings that are not directly related to the research questions about CFS have also emerged during data analysis. They were clustered under "factors outside CFS affecting well-being" and divided into *inclusion and interactions* and *self-reliance and achievement*. The reason they were separated from the other results is that they were considered important for well-being but were not factors that CFS personnel could directly influence.

With regard to the second research question, several recommendations have been made by the researcher to further develop CFSs. Providing a larger space for the activities and increasing the frequency of the sessions were the first ones that came forward. Additionally, implementing different methods to increase the interactions between asylum seeking children and the local (Finnish) children has been strongly recommended. Last but not least, introducing more outdoor activities as well as more cultural activities to the children of the CFS have been suggested as a means of increasing the positive impacts of CFS on the asylum seeking children and families.

The rest of the chapter explores the findings of this research with respect to the theoretical framework laid out in Chapter 4. The chapter comprises three sub-chapters: (1) The CFS's role in the safety of the asylum seeking families, (2) The CFS's role in well-being and happiness,

(3) Further development of CFSs. Each of these sub-chapters combines the theoretical foundations with the findings of the research in order to levitate the discussion to a more theoretical (and hopefully practical as well) level in which the key findings of the study are harmonized with and related to previous research.

11.1 The CFS's Role in Safety of the Asylum Seeking Families

Safety, happiness, and well-being are the three pillars that hold the theoretical foundations of this study together. Fleeing their war-torn countries in order to find safe havens, asylum seekers go through extreme conditions and hardship before they arrive in Finland. During that journey, the majority of children face tremendous predicaments. Not only do they lack proper education and even basic health-care, but many of them also face life-threatening situations, sometimes more than once. During those tumultuous times, the parents or guardians have mainly one goal in their mind: lead their family to safety. Thus, various needs of children, including education and playing, come to a standstill until they are safe. As noted by Bromfield, Lamont, Parker, and Horsfall (2010, p. 16) "It is only when parents are able to meet the survival and safety and security needs of their family... they will be ready to attend any form of parenting intervention." Drawing on this, research shows that safety is one of the most important conditions for the well-being of children and families.

Due to the importance of safety in children's (and adults') lives, this study paid particular attention to discovering the impact of CFS on children's safety and feelings of safety. Furthermore, a particular interest is devoted to the differences in conceptualising well-being, safety, and happiness between adults and children because of the lack of research on the topic. Although the parents (or the guardians) think that safety is very important for children's well-being, the results turned out to be a little different than what was expected: the parents' perceptions of safety are different from that of staffs of Save the Children Finland and the Reception Centre. One important reason for this is the variety of very difficult experiences the families had gone through when coming to Finland. Compared to those dangers, the ones in Finland were small. Besides, as mentioned before, cultures can have its effect on conceptions.

Lopez-Perez et al. (2015), Diener (2009), Giacomoni et al. (2014) and many other researchers state that until recently more time and resources have been allocated to explore happiness and well-being among adults compared to children. They also note the importance of researching happiness and well-being among children. Therefore, this study aimed at exploring these the

phenomena among children and more precisely among asylum seeking children in a CFS. For this purpose, it is the researcher's hope that her study would serve as a pathway for a future study on the different perceptions of safety, particularly among children in different settings.

11.2 The CFS's Role in Well-being and Happiness

As explained in detail in Chapter 8, according to the findings of the research, CFS has a considerable effect on the well-being and happiness of children. In accordance with Diener's (1984, 2009, 2011) pioneering research on subjective well-being, the findings of the research at CFS indicate a very promising increase in children's subjective well-being.

Throughout the data collection and analysis processes, the main challenge in assessing the value of the CFS on happiness had been what Diener (2009, para 18) describes as limited focus; that is, theories that focus on some aspects of SWB (e.g., social comparison, adaptation etc.) can only explain the data from that particular perspective. In order to overcome this limitation, different data collection methods have been employed and the researcher tried to be open to what the participants said instead of theory. Eventually, the researcher was able to present a fairly multi-layered picture of the phenomena in a special context.

One of the important findings of this research was the eagerness of the children to stay longer during the CFS sessions or to come back as soon as possible. The children's constant interest in staying longer in the space or coming earlier to the next session was also observed by their parents/guardians. The way the parents defined CFS as an "escape gate" for children and themselves is closely related to Bradburn's (1969) definition of well-being; that is, well-being is the superiority of positive affect over negative affect. Living in reception centres as a family after tremendous hardships they had gone through does not erase asylum seekers' past which still has a haunting effect. Therefore, parents' evaluation of CFS as a very positive thing in their lives despite the fact that they have to live in the far and secluded Reception Centre is an indicator of the at least temporary superiority of positive effects. Diener's (2009, para. 6) definition of SWB (i.e., "how a person evaluates his or her own life") resonates with how the asylum seekers define their lives in the Reception Centre being isolated (e.g., remote, isolated, dull, stressful) while they define the CFS with extreme positivism. Most of the families who attended CFS confessed that in Finland and at the Reception Centre they feel better than anywhere else on their asylum seeking journey. However, the experience of being kept waiting

for a crucial decision far from their relatives, isolated in “camps” and in a totally foreign society affects the good feelings negatively.

On the one hand, it is promising to see that parents enjoy CFS almost as much as their children. On the other hand, it was frustrating to have to explain to them that CFS cannot be run more frequently due to the lack of financial resources and a shortage of labour and volunteers. The findings indicate that it is of extreme importance to increase the number of CFSs throughout the country and run the sessions more frequently for the benefit of asylum seeking families.

The CFS in which this research has been conducted proved valuable for future research as well. Holder (2012) states that more research is warranted on children’s happiness and well-being. The findings of this research underline that CFSs are excellent to observe (and increase) children’s happiness and well-being, provided the researchers are culturally and ethically sensitive and want to improve the practice and children’s well-being, not just collect data for research. Therefore, increasing the number of CFSs and allocating more resources would be beneficial for the asylum seekers as well as the scientific community.

11.3 Further Development of CFSs

The CFS was first developed by UNICEF and used in many places since the 1999 Kosovo crisis (UNICEF, 2009, para 9). As cited in Ager et al. (2013), the benefits of the CFSs have been discussed in the literature by various scholars (2013; Kytta, 2004; Horelli, 1998; Wessells, 2013). However, there is limited research on the effectiveness of CFSs in reception centres. This study, which started right after the 2015 “European migrant crisis,” is one of the first academic studies in Finland that focuses on refugee children in CFS. Although the scope of this research is limited to only one reception centre in Finland, the findings would be beneficial for those who want to further the scientific research on CFSs.

Muennig et al. (2015) note that refugee children are ranked below average development in motor, social, and language development. The main reason for this is that these children are often deprived of basic education, both formal and informal, due to the arduous lives they endure. In this research, the analysis of data indicates that children who participated in CFS sessions improved their language abilities as well as social skills such as playing peacefully, participating in group activities, making friends and following the common code of conduct despite the fact that the CFS sessions are only held a couple of times a week. In order to expand

the positive impact of the CFS on children (and their families), it is vital to provide a larger space for meetings as well as more frequent meeting times. Berto (2005) underlines the importance of the space in overcoming psychological problems such as mental tiredness which the parents who attend the CFS generally show. It is possible to design urban and indoor environments as well as rural and outdoor spaces to be more 'comfortable' from cognitive and effective point of views and to manage natural environments in ways to encourage recovery from mental fatigue (Berto, 2005, p. 258).

In addition to wishes concerning the space and the frequency of sessions, parents constantly expressed the importance of their children interacting with local (Finnish) children. Most children that attend CFS do not attend schools which leaves them with very little contact with Finnish children. Most of the children and guardians who attended CFS also expressed on many occasions that they would love to have Finnish children in their "school." Cruickshank, Chen, and Warren (2012, p. 797) note that increased class interaction between domestic and international students results in higher satisfaction ratings as well as better learning outcomes. Moreover, it would also be valuable for the children at the CFS because they would learn the Finnish language at a faster pace. Cultural activities and cultural awareness were emphasised particularly in natural settings in co-operation with Finns and among children.

At the moment, the work in CFSs in Finland continues despite the instability of the number of children and families attending due to the tendency to accelerate the procedures of asylum seeking applications of the families residing at the Reception Centre. On the basis of this research, the work in CFS has been valuable and the experience of the staff and the volunteers has considerably increased during the process. It is important to gather all this know-how both in research and practical knowledge to be used in the development of similar or different settings where work is done with children or guardians with traumatic experiences and in vulnerable positions.

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