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**Significance of Non-Governmental Sport Organizations during the Integration Process
of Russian-Speaking Immigrants in Finland**

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<p>According to the annual report on immigration published by Statistics Finland in 2012, over a quarter of a million foreign-language speakers lived in Finland, and more than 60,000 of them were Russian speakers. By the end of 2012, foreign-language speakers accounted for 4.9% of the population. Those speaking Russian as their native language formed the largest group (62,554 people).</p> <p>The purpose of this thesis was to identify the role of SPINNISKOLA as a non-governmental sport organization during the integration process of Russian-speaking children in Finland. The main tasks were to study the importance of sport during the integration process and to discover the most interesting activity offered by SPINNISKOLA. The thesis was commissioned by SPINNISKOLA and their aim was to assess children's feedback regarding the possibilities to participate in sport activities. The author's aim was to identify the role of physical activity for children during the integration process. From a social point of view, the aim of the research was to provide information about the impact of physical activity on the integration process.</p> <p>8 persons (two coaches working in SPINNISKOLA, three Russian-speaking children and three parents) were interviewed for this qualitative thesis. The written answers of the interviewees, which was the data of the thesis, were processed using inductive content analysis.</p> <p>The findings show that a non-governmental sport organization has a positive impact on the integration process of 12-15-year-old Russian-speaking immigrants into the Finnish society. The findings also underline the importance of being involved in physical activity on a daily basis. The results of this thesis can be used by SPINNISKOLA in order to improve work in the organization towards a successful integration process of new immigrants.</p>	
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PREFRACE

“Difficult roads often lead to beautiful destinations”

Author unknown

I would like to thank all members of SPINNISKOLA who made this thesis come true. Special thanks go to Olga Liukkonen for letting me work in SPINNISKOLA club and her help, then to Katri Takala for the best teacher’s help during whole thesis process, and also to Jaana Härkönen for support and given consultations for successful work.

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1 INTRODUCTION

According to the statistics issued by Statistics Finland the number of people who moved to Finland in 2012 is 31,280. This is 1,800 more than the previous year and the highest figure since Finland gained its independence in 1917 (Annual report on immigration 2012, 3). By the end of 2012 5% of the Finnish population was foreign-language speakers, and Russian speaking language immigrants formed the largest group that consists from 62,554 people (Annual report on immigration 2012, 5). However, history of immigration in Finland is not so long, and the population of immigrants in 1980's was approximately 20,000 immigrants (Zacheus 2010, 155 - 156).

Statistics made by Statistics Finland demonstrates that there are 11, 200 families in which at least one parent is Russian-speaking. In 1990 only 300 Russian-speaking couples were registered in Finland, but this number has gone up till 7,700 today. (Statistics Finland 2011.)

Research about the role of a family, school, peers and community in the adaptation process of young immigrants demonstrates that children are happy to be involved in physical activity with friends, rather than be alone. Furthermore, parents state that extracurricular activities help immigrant children to find friends, favourite sport and motivation. (Deslandes, Rivard, Trubeau, Lemoyne & Joyal 2012, 5 - 7.)

Sport associations and clubs have a potential for facilitating integration. These organizations offer local people and immigrants activities during leisure time that actively engage people of all ages. One of the most wonderful side of integrating by doing physical activity is that there is no need to know a local language. Sport is a great area for different cultures to meet. The language of sport is understood by all people and by different age groups. (Hertting & Karlefors 2013, 35 - 36.)

The purpose of this thesis was to identify the role of SPINNISKOLA as a non-governmental sport organization during the integration process of Russian-speaking children in Finland. The main tasks were to study the importance of sport during the integration process and to discover the most interesting activity offered by SPINNISKOLA. The thesis was commissioned by SPINNISKOLA and their aim was to assess children's feedback regarding

the possibilities to participate in sport activities. The author's aim was to identify the role of physical activity for children during the integration process. From a social point of view, the aim of the research was to provide information about the impact of physical activity on the integration process.

The author hopes that results gained from this qualitative research for SPINNISKOLA, non-governmental sport organization will benefit towards improving work in the organization. Similarly, the author expects that gathered information will express the way for improving efforts in the direction of helping children to have a successful integration process in the Finnish society. Moreover, the author expects that analysed material will show reasonable motivation for future immigrants to participate in physical activity

2 NON-GOVERNMENTAL SPORT ORGANIZATION

A non-governmental organization (NGO) is any non-profit, voluntary citizens' group which is organized on a local, national or international level. In other words, a non-governmental organization is a voluntary organization. Non-governmental organizations appeared as the third sector to provide stability and equitable development. (Sama & Jarvuela 2008). There is no official data available about the number of volunteers in Finland. Voluntary organizations and problems with unemployment have existed for centuries. (Sama & Jarvuela 2008.)

NGOs activities can play the significant role with unemployment in the country with their flexibility and adaptability (Korten 1987, 145 - 149). The role of NGOs in Finland is mainly focused on the production and delivery of services, provision of voluntary work, experiences and support. NGOs provide the opportunity for people to make reduce unemployment period and receive valuable experiences (Sama & Jarvuela 2008).

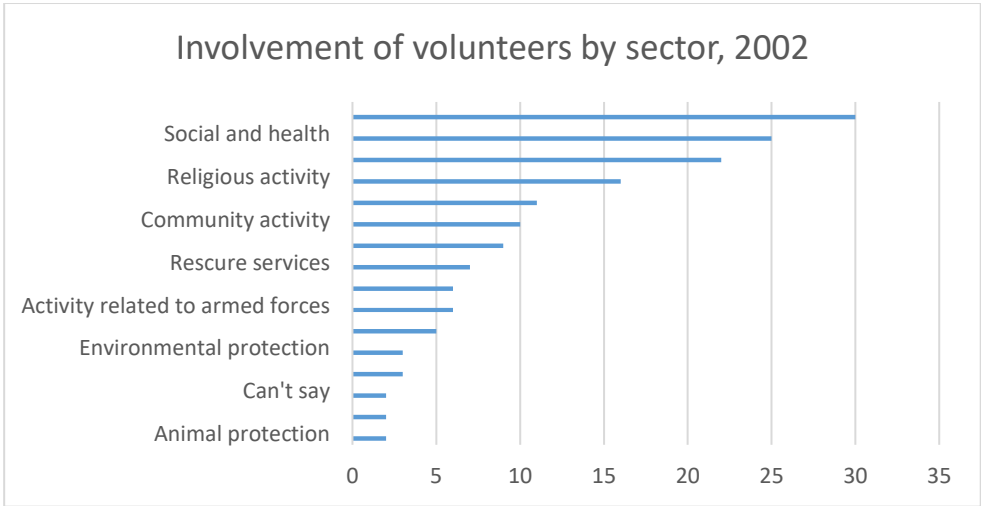
According to the National Report-Finland, Finland has the sixth highest rate of volunteering in Europe following Sweden, Netherlands, Slovakia, United Kingdom and Greece ("Study on Volunteering in the European Union Country Report Finland"). The role of voluntary organizations is seen as supplement services and is directed mainly on culture, leisure and sport (Pattiniemi & Solhagen 1999, 4). Generally, the third sector in Finland employs about 6 to 7 % of the total labour force, even though during research studies about identifying definition of association only 7% identified their organization as a member of the third sector and 37% viewed themselves as voluntary organizations (Pattiniemi & Solhagen 1999, 4 - 5).

As reported by the National Report-Finland, voluntary engagement in community has existed for centuries, but in the late 1800s organized forms started to develop in Finland. In the 1840s the first organized form of voluntary engagement with women from higher classes was established in order to help redistribute social rights and responsibilities. Later, during the 1860s and 1880s, a need to improve social sentiment and opinion was the main goal for the development of engagements. During time of internal and external pressure in the 1900s, the development of voluntary organizations slowed down till the early 1940s and later the attention resumed to begin the development of organization again. In the 1990s voluntary

activities once again became a core element of the Finnish society. (“Study on Volunteering in the European Union Country Report Finland”, 1 - 2.)

Iisakka (2006) states that the most active group of people involved into voluntary activities are the higher educated and young people (Statistics Finland 2006). Participation among people aged 75 and older rising steadily since 1980s (Statistics Finland 2006). According to Yeung (2002) older people at the age between 50 and 74 years old organize the biggest group by amount of hours spent per month volunteering. Young people (15-24 years) spend 20 hours per month compared with young adults (25-34 years) and adults (35-49 years) who spend from 10-15 hours per month volunteering. Volunteer involvement in Finland consists of different sectors ranging from sport to natural and animal protection. The most popular sector is sport (30%), followed by social health (25%), children and young people (22%) and religious activities (16%). The least popular sector is nature and animal protection (2%). (Picture 1.)

Picture 1. Involvement of volunteers by sector (Yeung, 2002, 3)



2.1 Suomen Venäjänkielisten teemaosasto - Maunulan Spinni ry - SPINNISKOLA

Sport clubs provide possibilities for children to express their opinions about everything, to have a debate about wrong and right, to evaluate different kind of situations, to learn decision making, to become familiar with team work, and to learn how to respect team members. Although in general, organized sport activities are open to all, immigrant participants are underrepresented. Involvement of non-governmental sport organizations is potentially important.

In 2009 Olga Liukkonen found the necessity to establish a non-governmental sport organization that can offer physical activities not only for Finnish people, but also for immigrants who come to Finland and want to learn a new culture and adapt to a new social environment. On 1st of December, 2009, SPINNISKOLA was established as a non-governmental sport organization in Helsinki. The whole name of the organization is Suomen Venäjänkielisten teemaosasto — Maunulan Spinni ry – SPINNISKOLA. SPINNISKOLA is available as used as an abbreviation title. First, Olga opened table tennis trainings and later in general trainings and swimming lessons were added.

SPINNISKOLA is a sport organization where everyone can find activities for a child all year round. The organization gives a child a possibility to get every day practicing, competitions, all season camps, new friends, knowledge, and positive emotions. The purpose of the sport club is to support the social health of immigrants and resident population. The club's activities are instructed in Finnish, Russian and English. SPINNISKOLA offers three different activities for people who are interested in active lifestyle and physical activity in general. General trainings, swimming lessons and table tennis lessons are all instructed in the club. General trainings involve different games, competitions and body workout. While swimming and table tennis lessons are instructed 5 days per week, general trainings is taught once a week. The association organizes sport lessons for children and adults and also takes care of parents by organizing activities for them.

The main tasks of the association are the following:

- Promote residents' health and social well-being
- Integration of immigrants into society by providing high quality education for all ages
- Strengthening the health and welfare of migrant children
- Promote well-being of persons with disabilities
- Prevention of health problems
- Integration of immigrants by means of physical exercise.

Generally, this club works towards the well-being of residents and immigrants. This is the list of activities to fulfil the club's work: implement cultural, social health, and other projects like organizing day camps for school children during holidays, instructing exercises and training sessions, and cooperating with other associations, companies, individuals and regional levels.

3 INTEGRATION PROCESS

It is better for immigrants to have contact with local people in order to meet new friends, to become familiar with the new culture, and to start understand a speech of native speakers. Usually two parties play an important role in the integration process; however sometimes they are unequal. Characteristics like efforts and adaption ability are required from the immigrants, while a receiving society shows the cooperation with new immigrants. (Penninx 2003.)

The integration process can be defined as a complex process of becoming an accepted part of a new society that involves different situations. As reported by Penninx (2003), the integration process requires two parties to be involved. The outcome of the integration process results cannot be expected to be identical (Penninx 2003). Baubock demonstrates that this process might be described from different perspectives, such as cultural, social, and political. During the integration process it is possible to become familiar with a new society, to explore new opportunities, to meet new people, to explore the culture, and to change lifestyle. (Bauboch 2001.) Changes in the routine life, need to learn a new language and cultural aspects may affect the integration process (Westermeyer 1989). As soon as the importance of physical activity was noticed by the European Union, 20 countries started to use sport promotion as an opportunity for solving multicultural misunderstanding (European Commission 2004).

Following the idea of Marc Granovetter (1973) integration has two different types of dimensions. First one is an incidence dimension which includes two different characteristics: frequency and intensity. Frequency relates to the number of contacts with environment as well as to the number of contacts with other people. Intensity refers to a feeling of belonging to the society. The second dimension is identification where one identifies with others, thus leading to closer ties between them. (Granovetter 1973, 1360 - 1380.)

Penninx (2003) explains that the integration process takes place at different levels. Firstly, the integration process takes place at the level of an individual immigrant, and this level is measured by education and employment as well as social and cultural adaptation ability. The second level is collective and requires ambitions. The next level is the level of institutions with two types. The first type implies public institutions of a receiving society, such as an education system, laws, regulations and executive organizations. The second type of institution refers to

religious or cultural background. As the result, all levels- individual, group and institutional- are clearly interrelated. (Penninx 2003.)

3.1 Integration into Finnish Society

Finland's immigration history began in the 1990s and since this time the issue of migration from third countries has become significant on the European Union level (Entzinger & Biezeveld 2003, 3). Among many other countries, Finland began to receive refugees later compared with other countries (Forsander & Ekholm 2001, 110). In the 1980s the number of immigrants in Finland was approximately 20,000 people, and in 2012 it was already 143,000 (Annual report on immigration 2012). That kind of rapidly growing in the number of immigrants raised a very important question: "How could the integration process for immigrants be made easier?"

In 2012 the Finnish National Board of Education published The National Core Curriculum for Integration for Adult Immigrants. The curriculum describes the process of integration as a two-way process concentrated on individual progress. Migrants' personal characteristics, needs, abilities, and wishes have an influence on the process of integration. Successful integration requires motivation, goal-oriented, participation and initiative from the immigrant. The key target for the successful integration into new a society is the continuous interaction between migrants and local people on daily basis and in everyday situations. ("National Core Curriculum for Integration for Adult Immigrants 2012", 11.)

The Finnish National Board of Education published the National Core Curriculum for Instruction Preparing for Basic Education in 2009. As stated in the curriculum the education takes into consideration facts about different age groups, learning abilities and language backgrounds of immigrants. The most important support is that children have the possibility to have all information in their native language, which helps them to make progress in their studies, even if Finnish language skills develop more slowly than other skills. There are a diverse learning environment in order to develop a child's ability to act independently as well as to act as members of a group. The learning environment helps a child to become familiar

with the Finnish culture and to motivate integration into both, the local and broader Finnish society. (“National Core Curriculum for Instruction Preparing for Basic Education 2009”).

3.2 Role of Physical Activity

Regular physical activity has a positive effect on social cohesion that helps to develop a sense of belonging, as well as on the learning process of the local language, educational success, self-confidence and health (Hertting & Karlefors 2013, 35 - 36.) Physical activity in general is supposed to be a part of growing process for children and young people and during the early years of development, it is a key part for successful physical, social and mental development. Involvement in physical activities helps children to stay active. Moreover, participation in regular physical activity will be beneficial to their friendships and mental state. (Children and Young People –The importance of physical activity 2001, 5.)

It is very important for immigrants from 12 to 15 years to be involved in sports and physical activities. Sport activities and daily exercises done together by immigrants and local people will enhance social integration and cultural tolerance. That kind of involvement will help immigrants to understand ethical issues and respect the environment. (Children and Young People –The importance of physical activity 2001, 5.)

Sport and physical activity are a good chance for immigrants to integrate into a new society (Hoffman 2011). The American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry reports that sport provides a possibility for a child to improve physical skills, get a daily amount of exercises, enjoy free time, and learn how to play fair in team and make friends (AACAP 2013).

Taylor, Davies, Wells, Gilbertson and Tayleur (2015, 18) reported very significant evidences towards social impact from participating in sport. The most significant evidence is health benefits. Nevertheless, there is a possibility for negative health effects to take place during involvement in sport activities. As an example of negative health effect sport injuries can be taken into consideration. Another evidence states that sport can be named as a ‘social glue’. In other words, sport helps to link together different cultural and social backgrounds of

immigrants and reduce social and ethnic tension. (Taylor, Davies, Wells, Gilbertson & Tayleur 2015, 18.)

Sharing ideas, working in groups and celebrating successful results together is the outcome of child's involvement in organized sport and physical education classes in schools. According to the research made by Andersson (2002), many young immigrants claim that involvement in multicultural sport organizations helped them to realize the importance of being involved in sport activities and to find self-confidence in a new society. Sport involvement helps to break down gender stereotypes and helps children "find themselves". The research shows that sport indeed has a positive impact on the integration process, and it helps to avoid involvement in illegal activities, to discover confidence, and, a way to spend free leisure time with goals and aims. (Andersson 2002, 97 – 98.)

In most of European countries sport and physical activity have been seen as a potential method of easing the integration process for immigrants into a new society. Physical activity has proven to be an ideal way for breaking cultural and social barriers between local people and immigrants. Additionally, sport activities have proven to be a great way for solving a bridging gap between different ethnic backgrounds. Involvement in physical activities can help new immigrants in their new country of residence. Sport has been noticed as the most effective way to learn the language of a host country, make new friends from other cultures and widen one's social network. In addition, physical activities support and help to facilitate homesickness and build confidence in a new society. (Myrén 1999, 33 - 34; Andersson 2002, 97 - 98; Krouwel, Boonstra, Willem Duyvendak & Veldboer 2006, 167.)

It is possible to say that physical activity plays an extremely important role in the integration process and has a great influence on immigrants. Activities that help people to stay active and participate in different activities help them to be more social. A research done by Felfe, Lechner and Stainmayr (2011) declares that the well-being of children who are doing sport is better than the health of children who are not involved in any physical activity. Moreover, the physical activity level of children who are engaged in sports is higher than the physical activity level of inactive children. For this reason, the biggest differences between active and inactive children are observed with respect to children's physical health and development at school as well as relationships with peers and friends. (Felfe, Lechner & Stainmayr 2011, 14 - 15.)

Integration into society after moving into a new country is always individual. Sport, language courses, musical classes and cultural events are all great ways for immigrants to be involved in a new social life environment. Individuals have to explore what is the best way to help and support each other during the integration process into a new society. Sport plays an important role in teaching the Finnish language and culture and in increasing feelings of self-respect and well-being among immigrants and wider immigrant networks (Zacheus 2010, 156-157). The main idea here is that immigrants should at some point engage in sport activities with people from different cultures. In addition, a great way of adaptation into the Finnish society for Russian-speaking immigrants is to participate in activities with local Finnish-speaking people. Sport can ease the socialization process and at the same time can be a reason for conflicts between nationalities (Zacheus 2010, 155).

Eventually, all immigrants start to learn the local language in order to be involved into a new society. While learning and creating networks it is possible to notice changes in the attitude, beliefs and values. Internal and external changes are expected to occur during the adaptation process. There is evidence that successful acculturation is one of the most important prerequisites for integration into a new society (Soilamo 2006, 12). In order to understand which way is the best for immigrants, life values and beliefs have to be taken into consideration.

The Go for Life as a special project that is designed to help bring physical activity into daily life, produces by National Institute on Aging (NIA) working at the National Institute of Health (NIH) states that there are 4 different kinds of physical activity: endurance, strength, balance and flexibility exercises. Endurance or aerobic activities, such as dancing or walking, will help to carry out everyday activities and will help to keep a heart, lungs and circulatory system healthy. Strength exercises will make muscles stronger even while using body weight only. Balance exercises are very simple but at the same time will improve balance and help to avoid falls in older age. Yoga and simple stretching are good examples of flexibility exercises that will help to stay flexible with more freedom of movement for other exercises. Physical activity below the recommended 60 minutes per day will still benefit to a child. (NIH 2016.)

According to the World Health Organization, physical activity involvement is closely connected to psychological benefits. Physical activities help to control symptoms of depression and concern. It helps to build self-confidence and self-expression by expressing high performance at school, social development, social interaction, and integration. In addition, involvement in physical activities helps to prevent alcohol and drug use problems. (WHO 2016.)

4 PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (US) bring out the fact that physical activity might help to reduce the risk of a heart attack, to have lower blood pressure, and to have stronger bones, muscles and joints. Moreover, one of the positive aspects of being active through physical activity is, that it helps to feel happier, to have more energy, and to sleep better. Physical activity, health and quality of life are very closely connected. It is very important in order to achieve a body weight control, have good health, and avoid developing obesity in the future. Physical activity is very important to children's current and future life and to function optimally human body require regular physical activity. (CDC 2015.)

It is important to understand that children in a new country of residence are either active or lacking enough physical activity. According to The Adolescent Health and Lifestyle Survey about trends in physical activity of 12-18 year old in 1999 in Finland, 40 % of boys and 27% of girls were considered to be enough active. These children were receiving the 'hour a day', which is the recommended amount of physical activity and exercises. (Adolescent health and lifestyle survey 1999.)

Parents are concerned about the amount of daily physical activity their children can get from a new environment. Parents can help their children to be more active by participating in these activities together. A family approach towards physical activity and sport exercises is very important during the integration process of children into a new society.

In March, 2010 European Commission published the Special Eurobarometer, Sport and Physical Activity. Special Eurobarometer shows that 40% of EU citizens play sport at least once a week. A majority of EU citizens (65%) state that they receive some form of physical activity at least once a week and in contrast, 34% of respondents report only about seldom physical activity involvement. The statistic shows that at the 15-24 years old age group, men in the EU are engaged in sport activities more than women. The amount of sport equally decrease with age, but at the same time 22% of people in the age 70+ still involved into sport. The most popular reasons for being involved in physical activities is to improve health and fitness. In addition, other popular reasons that EU citizens highlighted are relaxation and having fun. (Special Eurobarometer 2010, 8.)

Physical activity participation is influenced by several aspects, such as personal choice, innate developmental capacity, opportunities, experiences, and social climate (Wiese-Bojorstal, LaVoi & Omli 2009, 111). According to the 2008 EU Physical Activity Guidelines, physical activity can be defined as all bodily movements that increases resting heart rate level and involve muscular constriction. Examples of simple physical activity, which includes dancing, occupation physical activity, and physical activity at home, can be demonstrated during leisure-time. Besides, activities connected with transport can be an example of physical activity. Social and economic factors have the influence on physical activity level, along with personal and environmental factors. (EU Physical Activity Guidelines 2008, 3.)

Balance, coordination, reaction time, agility, power and speed are skill-related benefits of sports and other activities. All these skills can be improved by playing sports or being involved in a physical activity. Skill-related benefits are rating from poor as the lowest rate, following by fair and good, and excellent as the highest rate for evaluation. Swimming gives children the possibility of developing good level of coordination and agility, poor level of balance, reaction time and speed and fair level of power skills. Table tennis gives participants the possibility of developing excellent level of coordination skills, good level of reaction time, agility, power and speed and fair level of balance skills. It is important to assess skill-related fitness abilities in order to help a child to choose a sport for a life-time participation. (Corbin & Lindsey 2007, 135.)

4.1 General Training

Physical activities, such as sport, dance, walking, or general exercises help children to gain valuable experiences in social integration and moral and social development (Children and Young People –The importance of physical activity 2001, 5 – 8.)

It is very important that physical activity is enjoyable for a child. General training or general physical preparation include different fitness activities. For instance, it can include sport games, recreation activities, physical education, and planned exercises among family, school,

and community. The World Health Organization state that in order to improve bone health, muscular fitness and cardiovascular health, physical activity for children aged 5-17 years has to be at least 60 minutes long and done every day. Daily recommended amount of activity is supposed to consist from moderate to vigorous physical activity. (WHO 2016.)

SPINNISKOLA offers great facilities among with professional trainers to help children grow healthy. Physical activities such as running, jumping, and badminton are available for children in the club. General training lessons are not only for beginners, who are not involved to any sport, but also for those who already do some sport. General training will help to achieve better results in already chosen sport, and will help to develop strength, speed and flexibility in general.

4.2 Swimming

According to the Department of Health & Human Services (2016), swimming is a great workout due to the fact that water provides resistance against body movements. There are two types of swimming: the first is recreational swimming, which is an activity for people of all ages and it helps not only to work out, but it also helps to relax and the second is competitive swimming, which is an activity suitable for children and adults who would like to gain health benefits along with having fun from competing. Both of these types are full of health benefits. Children from different age groups are willing to compete with friends, and their parents would like them to receive a recommended daily amount of physical activity. (Department of Health & Human Services 2016.)

Being a good swimmer keeps children safe around the pools, and to prevent from possible injuries. One of the most important positive impacts of swimming for children, is that swimming is a lifelong activity. According to Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), water-based exercise is a good way to receive regular amount of physical activity. Swimming lessons will allow children to build endurance, muscle strength, cardiovascular fitness and maintain healthy weight. Furthermore, swimming helps to improve flexibility and

body posture, and to alleviate stress. (Department of Health & Human Services 2016.) It is an excellent cardiovascular workout that will help to prevent childhood obesity. Moreover, swimming puts less strain on joints, than other exercises. (CDC 2013.)

Swimming as well as all other physical activities include psychological benefits for children. Swimming is also a great way to make friends and to learn how to act among team members during practicing. (Department of Health & Human Services 2016.)

Swimming lessons are offered to all age groups. The main aim of the coach is: to teach how to swim and the best technique to do that. Swimming lessons result in a nice body structure and good health.

4.3 Table Tennis

Table tennis, as all other physical activities, has many health benefits. The most common one is hand-eye and mental acuity coordination. Furthermore, table tennis helps to improve reflexes due to game being fast. Both gross and fine motor skills are also improved after practicing for a longer time. (Health Fitness Revolution, 2015.)

Table tennis is a recreational and fitness activity. Research done by Y.J Wang, W.Q Wang, Liu and Dong (n.d.) shows that table tennis exercises help to improve the heart function. The research also showed that the exercises help teenagers to reduce physical and mental barrier (Wang, Wang, Liu & Dong n.d.).

Table tennis doesn't just help children to improve their physical condition, but it also positively affects their psychological development. That means, it helps them to develop personal characteristics like work ethic, discipline and responsibility. By regular participation, children are improving their social skills, learning to work as a team and having a lot of fun. (International Tennis Federation 2016.)

Table tennis has all the things that children might want from a physical activity: emotions, friends, lot of movement and a chance of being successful. Moreover, children also have the

opportunity to challenge other players during competitions and prove they are better. (Wang, Wang, Liu & Dong n.d.)

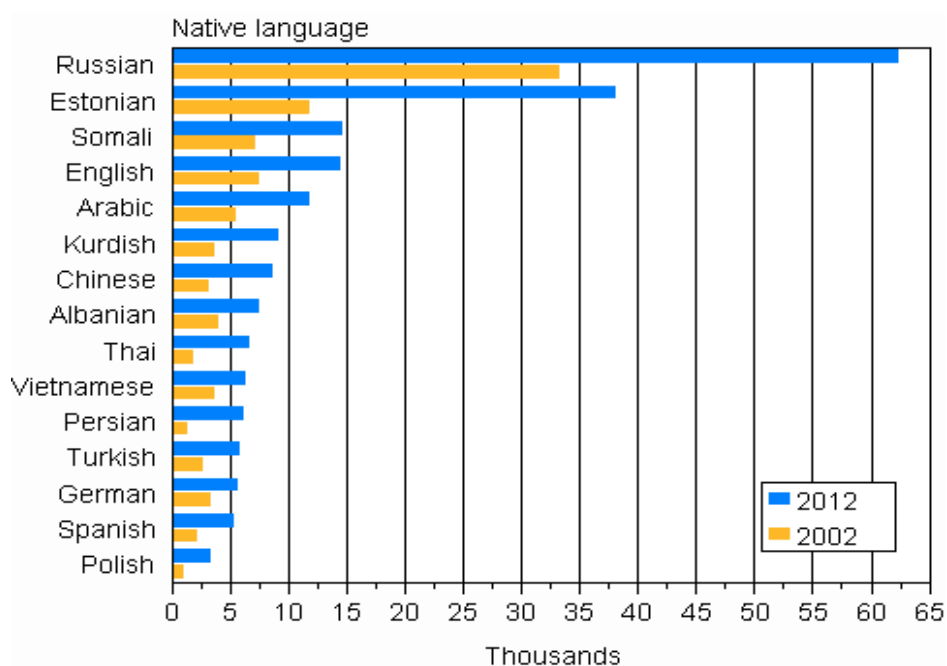
Table tennis, as well as other activities in SPINNISKOLA, is available for beginners and professionals. There are great amount of table tennis players who are ready to practice whole year around. It is a great opportunity to meet new people, to have an interesting topic for discussion, learn new things, and gain more knowledge.

5 RUSSIAN-SPEAKING 12-15 YEARS OLD IMMIGRANTS

According to Crosnoe and Fulligni (2012), immigrant families make up a big part of the population growth. An immigrant family is a family where one or both parents were born outside the country of residence. In both cases child can be classified as a child from immigrant family. (Crosnoe & Fulligni 2012)

Statistics Finland stated that over a quarter of a million foreign-language speakers live in Finland. It is representing 4.9 per cent of the population. Russian-speaking group is up to 60,000 of this amount (Picture 2.)

Picture 2. Population structure (Statistics Finland, 2012)



Helsinki, Vantaa and Espoo regions are the most popular between Russian-speaking immigrants. In the list of less attractive cities for immigrants are Porvo, Kouvola, and Salo. As stated in figures issued by Statistics Finland in 2012, 31,280 people moved to Finland. This

is 1,800 more than with previous year, and the highest number since Finland gained its independence in 1917. (Annual report on immigration 2012, 7.)

Statistics Finland gave notice that at the end of 2012, the number of people holding both Finnish and some other nationality totalled 69,529. The largest group of people with dual nationality is Russian (19,441). Afterwards, Swedish (6,005), US (3,443), Estonian (2,873), Iranian (2,823) and Vietnamese (2,587) citizens are forming the largest groups of people with dual nationality. (Annual report on immigration 2012, 3 - 5.)

There are a lot of Russian-speaking 12-15 years old immigrants in the SPINNISKOLA club. Most of them moved to Finland because of their parents. The most popular reason to move for Russian-speaking immigrants is family ties and employments, and less popular reasons to move from Russian are studying and forming Finnish citizens (Annual report on immigration 2012, 4-7). Essentially, all reasons to move will affect child's adaptation process. Parents have to make sure that their child is enrolled in a school and learning language of a new environment (Deslandes, Rivard, Trubeau, Lemoyne & Joyal 2012, 3). As reported by the internet webpage "This is Finland" there are two schools in Helsinki that offer lessons taught in Russian: they are Suomalais-venäläinen koulu and Myllypuro primary school. Moreover, Suomalais-venäläinen koulu has both Russian and Finnish speaking students from 1-6 grade. ("International Schooling in Finland" 2015.)

Social relationships are the most important aspects in the area of integration process of children into new society. During social relationships, abilities to cooperate, communicate, and solve conflict situations are often developed by children (Rubin, Bukowski, & Parker 1998). Most of the physical activities are meant to be done in groups and that is what helps child to learn how to negotiate and solve different kind of situations. During cooperation in groups, child has an opportunity to gain sense of belonging as well as learn how to achieve similar goals. In order to have the most comfortable and calm way of integration, it is very important to concentrate not only on physical condition of child, but also to take care about mental aspects. Regarding to Ratey (2008), control of thoughts and attention, together with brain areas involved in processing have been presented to be improved after physical activity. Moreover, skills such as focusing and behavioural inhibition have been shown to improve after physical activity (Wigal, Emmerson, Gehricke, & Galassetti 2013).

Child Development

Problems with education, physical, and mental health are connected with adopting into a new place which children are experiencing during immigration process (Tienda & Haskins 2001, 3). Health status and development of immigrant children are extremely important for nation. These children are the fastest-growing segment of the population in the country, and that is why well-being and development success should be taken into consideration (Tienda & Haskins 2001, 3).

Child development is an individual process and it includes 3 stages, such as physical development, cognitive or language development, and psychological development. Physical development related to games and school work, cognitive development linked to the world of adult's ideas, logic, and communication, psychological development related to life outside home. Time between childhood and adolescence is the most exciting time for self-exploring and developmental changes. (McCoy 2015.)

The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2016) describe eight stages of child development:

Infants (0-1 year)

Toddlers (1-2 Years)

Toddlers (2-3 years)

Preschoolers (3-5 years)

Middle Childhood (6-8 years)

Middle Childhood (9-11 years)

Young Teens, middle adolescence (12-14 years)

Teenagers (15-17 years)

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, each stage has different a kind of development changes (CDC 2016). Observation group for this research are Young Teens or middle adolescence from 12 to 15 years old. During developmental time, physical,

emotional, mental, and social changes are taking place. Besides, puberty period starts at the same time as children are in this stage of life. (CDC 2016). Compared with girls who already have reached their adult height and weight, boys at the same age are still in the growing process (McCoy 2015).

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention children are worried now more than before about their body transformation and how they look compared with their peers. At this age (12-15) child is ready to become more independent in making choices about friends, sport activities, hobbies, and studying, but they still do require help from parents' side. (CDC 2016.)

As reported by the MedlinePlus Trusted Health Information for You, during stages of development 12 to 15 years old a child is able to develop the concept of "fair" and "unfair" in relation to peers' and adults' actions and the abstract ideas. Furthermore, child is able to develop a relationship and maintain the satisfaction level of this relationship in the future. During adolescence, children explore their ability to question old values, meanings, and to analyse their personal growth. (Medline Plus 2016.)

5.1 Physical Development

Changes during puberty are the most visible and noticeable transformation signs concerning physical development. Physical changes are closely connected to the hormones changes in the body. During physical development, young teenagers start to worry about their own body changes. Young people have to go through many challenges and changes in order to reach physical maturity.

According to the Suffer Health We Plus You (2015), the physical changes at this age are different between girls and boys, and sometimes it will begin at the same age as their parents had when they experienced it. Girls at the age between 12-15 have changes connected with gaining body fat, height and weight increase, hips and breast growing, along with pubic hair, first acne and first menstrual period. Boys at the same age have changes connected with muscle development, and height and weight increases, the voice cracks and gets deeper, pubic hair grows, as well as testicles and penis grow. (PAMF 2015.)

5.2 Cognitive and Mental Development

Health status about mental development of a child is a significant aspect (Tienda & Haskins 2001, 10). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention states that children at the age from 12-15 years old are able to have more complex thoughts and to express feelings about complicated situations. Moreover, children at this age are ready to develop the sense of right and wrong (CDC 2016). According to PennState Extension (2016), most 12-15-year-olds are still concrete thinkers; some of them are moving from this stage to abstract thinking, and it helps them to enjoy the mental activity.

5.3 Psychological and Emotional Development

Psychological and social development side is very important for this research. For the reason of being involved in the new society, the child is required to be socially prepared or be at the stage of social development. PennState Extension (2016) state that children between 12-15 years old are becoming to feel more comfortable in the community, which is supposed to help immigrant children to adapt in the new society. Young people have the possibility to express their opinions about their chosen activities. Success, as well as comparison with peers are important in this age. (Children and Youth: Their Growth and Development 2016.)

Sociable child spends more free time with friends and begins to have a distant relationship with parents. It is common that during puberty period the conflict time between child and parent might begin, along with impulsiveness, and aggressive, rapidly changing mood (McCoy 2015). All changes connected to the emotional development of a child have to be taken seriously.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention mentions that children at this age are becoming to take care about body image and clothes, focus on themselves and express less interest toward parents, compared to relationship with peers. Despite this, parents have to make sure they have enough discussions about importance of decisions making and being honest during conversations. Parents have to support their child, help the child to make right choices, and solve conflicts or complicated situations. A child becomes to feel more stressed about

challenging school work, and is prone to depressions, which can lead to alcohol or drug use, poor school grades, and other problems. (CDC 2016)

6 RESEARCH TASKS

The purpose of this thesis was to identify the role of SPINNISKOLA as a non-governmental sport organization during the integration process of Russian-speaking children in Finland. The main tasks were to study the importance of sport during the integration process and to discover the most interesting activity offered by SPINNISKOLA. The thesis was commissioned by SPINNISKOLA and their aim was to assess children's feedback regarding the possibilities to participate in sport activities. The author's aim was to identify the role of physical activity for children during the integration process. From a social point of view, the aim of the research was to provide information about the impact of physical activity on the integration process.

The research tasks of the study were to answer the following questions:

- 1) How would specifically selected physical activities organized by SPINNISKOLA (swimming, table tennis and general training) affect the integration process of Russian-speaking 12-15-year-old children, their parents and coaches in Finland?
- 2) What was the most popular sport offered by SPINNISKOLA among Russian-speaking immigrants at the age of 12-15 years?
- 3) How would the children like to change the lessons?
- 4) How could coaches at SPINNISKOLA improve their work in order to have more immigrants participating in active lifestyle after moving to Finland?

7 RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter provides the information about the target group and reason of evaluating group of children at the age of 12–15-years-old as the main interview group. Next, the research methods and process of collecting the data are described, with details about qualitative research and schedule of the research.

7.1 Target Group

The target group for the thesis consists of eight participants in total: three children at the age of 12-15-years-old, three parents and two coaches. Three children 12-15-years-old were the main target group and three parents and two coaches were interviewed in order to gain knowledge about an importance of physical activity from all sides involved. This target group was chosen in order to understand and evaluate the children's point of view as participants and the point of view from adults as the organizers of the activities for children. The chosen target group is meant to underline the similar and different answers after collecting and evaluating the data process.

Generally, there are almost no complications during organizing questions for interviews with adults. They are more experienced than children in expressing ideas and opinions about specifically asked things. They are responsible for their actions and answers. Generally, children are seen as a group that requires a lot of work. Children want to be on the same level as adults and want to be treated by the same rules during interviews. (McCrum & Hughes 1998, 2 - 5.)

The most effective way to have a conversation with a child is to make sure that all questions the interviewer is interested in are open-ended or indirect. Research shows that children feel more comfortable when answering open-ended questions. Indirect questions allows the children to elaborate as much as they like. (Garbarino 1989.)

Children want to speak out. In other words, there are plenty of reasons why to choose children as the main target group for examining and evaluating. Children have interesting ideas to share,

have the right to be listened and make sure that their opinion is taken into consideration. Moreover, children have a different perspective than adults. (McCrum & Hughes 1998, 4 - 6.)

7.2 Research Methods

Qualitative content analysis, also known as a method of evaluating documents, is a method of analysing written responses (Cole 1988). Content analysis is a method of a verbal and visual evaluation process. In the 19th century, this method was used for analysing newspapers, magazine articles, and political speeches. Nowadays, content analysis has shown a steady growth and additionally, has a long history of use in a communication and journalism sphere. Content analysis gives the researcher a possibility to test theoretical issues in order to understand the data. Analysing by content analysis method, all words from the accepted materials for evaluating have to be classified into content related categories and share the same meaning. The main aim of this classification is to achieve a considered and wide description. (Elo & Kyngas 2007, 107 - 108.)

Critics acknowledged that content analysis was not qualitative enough by its nature and the differentiation was limited. Qualitative content analysis method offers several major benefits for expressing results such as flexibility and versatility. To summarize, content analysis helps to develop an understanding of the meaning and to identify critical processes. (Elo & Kyngas 2007, 107 - 108.)

Inductive content analysis or thematic studying of qualitative data is the identification of key themes, concepts, and categories. It does not begin with a hypothesis. Records from participants must be read several times and only then it is possible to categorize them into themes (Elo & Kyngas 2007, 107 - 108). After the answers were separated into the key themes in the context and divided into higher themes, it is possible to start an interpretation of the data. Based on the gained knowledge, the data for evaluation come from qualitative sources such as semi-structured interviews, focus groups, diaries, or narrative interviews. (Thomas 2003.)

In other words, the process of analysing written answers requires step by step work in order to analyse the data. As a result, a few steps can be highlighted as the most important during the qualitative content analysis. The first step is to read the material multiple times. The next step is to evaluate a stage of understanding of the whole material. After going through all text carefully, it is necessary to separate sentences for future topic segmentation. It is necessary to divide data into categories that are related to each other and to make sure that categories do not have the same topic. (Thomas 2003.)

7.3 Collecting and Analysing the Data

The research timetable for this thesis started in the middle of February 2016, when the questions were sent to the interviewees email, and lasted till the middle of April 2016 when the processes of data gathering from all participants and evaluating of the answers were completed. Beforehand, the children were observed in the middle of training sessions during both the author's practical training (orientation) and advanced training completed in SPINNISKOLA.

The contact with children, coaches and parents was maintained by email. Additionally, communication with children was made a few times through social media, for the reason of explaining them the questions in a simpler and clearer way. All emails that were sent to interviews included information about the topic idea, research task, deadline dates, responsibility, anonymity, and further instructions about results. All participants' data was gathered without using their names because of anonymity. Finally, in the data evaluation and conclusion process, eight participants were divided into following groups: children, parents and coaches.

The data gathered for the thesis are based on the written interview. Weber (1990) states that analysing the data for the content analysis method is a very flexible way of evaluating materials. The flexibility aspect of this method is a very challenging process, but at the same time it makes it very interesting to evaluate. Furthermore, a massive amount of work is required to be evaluated from the written text of the answers (Polit & Beck 2004).

After the evaluating process, it was possible to make several large categories of content-related themes from children's, parents' and coaches' point of view, based on their answers. All of the interviewees explained their point of view about the importance of being involved in sport activities, and significance of sport and language during the integration process. In addition, the interviewees described different methods and events organized in SPINNISKOLA and proposed different changes in the structure of the instructed lessons. Five major categories highlighted by the author can be named as: "Benefits from participation", "Importance of language and communication", "Methods used in the club along with organized events, trips and camps", "Possibly necessary changes", and "Adaptation ability".

8 RESULTS

This chapter provides the results of the research tasks. Furthermore, this chapter includes the author's evaluation of the answers gathered from the participants.

The evaluation and interpretation helped the author to answer the research tasks: "How would specifically selected physical activities organized by SPINNISKOLA (swimming, table tennis and general training) affect the integration process of Russian-speaking 12-15-year-old children, their parents and coaches in Finland?", "What was the most popular sport offered by SPINNISKOLA among Russian-speaking immigrants at the age of 12-15 years?", "How would the children like to change the lessons?" and "How could coaches at SPINNISKOLA improve their work in order to have more immigrants participating in active lifestyle after moving to Finland?"

The first research task was "How would specifically selected physical activities organized by SPINNISKOLA (swimming, table tennis and general training) affect the integration process of Russian-speaking 12-15-year-old children, their parents and coaches in Finland?" The author had an opportunity to evaluate all three different kinds of physical activities offered in SPINNISKOLA. Moreover, the answers were received from three involved sides and it gave the author an advantage to evaluate each activity from different points of view. According to the data gathered from the interviewees, table tennis was shown as the one with the biggest participation among swimming and general training sessions. Table tennis, due to the various activities like communication during trainings and competitions with peers and opportunity to travel and exploring new abilities, was shown to be the most affective physical activity during the integration process of Russian-speaking 12-15-year-old children. Parents and coaches stated that it is a positive way for a child to be involved into activity with different kind of situations. Furthermore, children shared their positive opinions about all opportunities that are connected to the table tennis section.

The second research task was: "What was the most popular sport offered by SPINNISKOLA among Russian-speaking immigrants at the age of 12-15 years?" As reported by the participants, table tennis offers the most varying activities. Activities such as trainings, competitions and organized camps along with travelling opportunities were mentioned.

Children are happy to be part of some group where they can feel free to share, relax and communicate. Table tennis compared with swimming and general training offers the biggest amount of hours per week during which you can attend the sessions and to spend leisure time in many different ways. As for general training, it was mentioned that a child can try a great variety of activities along with their parents, but these sessions are taught only once per week.

The third research task was “How would the children like to change the lessons” This question was directed mostly at children. The author wanted to understand what kind of changes in the training process children would like to have. According to the answers from the participants, it was possible to understand that children would like to practice their technique with strong players and some of the parents added that it would be better to have more lessons taught using a local language.

The fourth research task was “How could coaches at SPINNISKOLA improve their work in order to have more immigrants participating in active lifestyle after moving to Finland?” From the beginning, the main aim of the SPINNISKOLA was to help immigrants to adapt into a new society by being involved into some sport or physical activity. After the evaluation process it was visible that parents are concerned about taught language during trainings. Coaches in SPINNISKOLA received the answers and understood that several kind of corrections can be made in order to have a language practice more often.

The thesis was commissioned by SPINNISKOLA, and the aim of the commissioner side was to assess children’s feedback regarding the possibilities to participate in sport activities. At the end of the research process, SPINNISKOLA received the feedback and based on the answers and evaluated materials, coaches might be able to implement some kind of changes into the training processes.

8.1 Benefits from Participation.

Children's point of view. Children said that spending free time with peers and friends was much more interesting, compared with spending time at home.

I like to do sport because I keep in touch with my friends (Child 1).

Participation in organized activities helps children to manage their time in a proper way. It is necessary to learn how to divide free time between school, home, friends and sport. Organized training sessions were acknowledged as a good way for teaching children how to manage their free time.

I like that I can spend a lot of my time on training sessions. I do not have so much free time, but I am able to handle all my duties for home and school anyway. (Child 2).

The benefit about the possibility to be not only involved in favourite sport but also to practice some new games every time was mentioned.

In table tennis we not only play table tennis between each other, but also we travel and play other sports (Child 3).

Parents' point of view. Parents take care of their children as good as they can. They want them to try new things, to find good friends, to be active and successful, and to grow up healthy and honest. Parents noticed that it is better to try different sports and physical activities at early age, rather than later participate in sport only for health reasons. In that case, they try to offer their child different possibilities to try. One of the interviewees wrote that sport activities help child to become familiar with their own capabilities.

After moving we tried to play football in the Finnish school but in the process we figured out that our child is not a team player (Parent 1).

Coaches' point of view. Sport and physical activities were confirmed to be a great way for integration. Coaches who work in the SPINNIKOLA state that sport activities are proved to be the best way for the process of socialization in a new environment due to the involvement in social life during participation in a different kind of sport.

Sport, together with other common children's interests, helps to accelerate the adaptation process (Coach 1).

8.2 Importance of language and Communication.

Children's point of view. From the beginning it is always quite hard understand a new language. Luckily, children are capable of learning fast. Physical activity can be done without speaking. On the other hand, it is a great time to start practicing communication skills among peers.

I play table tennis and we take part in a lot of competitions between Finnish local clubs, where we have a possibility to communicate with peers, thus improving communication skills, and also to gain some practical skills from playing the game (Child 3).

Parent's point of view. From parent's point of view it is extremely dangerous to let child stay in the native language environment. Parents shared examples of less positive consequences.

My oldest child's friends are all Russian-speaking. Finnish is used mostly during studying. It negatively affects the willingness to learn cultural and social aspects. (Parent 2).

In the club, the majority of children are Russian-speaking immigrants, and a lot of training sessions are taught in Russian, and only a few times Finnish is used. That puts children in the comfortable situation of being under a roof of a native language and unwilling to practice local language. (Parent 3).

Parents noticed that as soon as there is a possibility for a child to be part of a community organized in the native language of a host country it is necessary to take that chance into consideration.

We tried to visit physical activity lessons in Finnish sport school with only Finnish participants and Finnish coaches. It was a massive impulse for learning the language. (Parent 1).

Even though the communication of my child divided into 50-50 for Finnish in school and Russian at home and in sport, I do not think it has a negative effect on the integration process (Parent 3).

Coach's point of view. As children grow up, coaches notice the tendency of children's self-realization growth. Children have the need to prove that they are important. Professional trainers from SPINNISKOLA agreed that the successful realization in a society is closely connected to the successful recognition during sport activities. Coaches claimed that to achieve great results in sport is easier and it helps ease and support accelerated integration.

When immigrant children join a Finnish language school, it takes them time to adapt because of the new language and environment (Coach 2).

8.3 Methods Used in the Club along with Organized Events, Trips and Camps.

Children's point of view. Travelling and opportunities to meet new friends from different clubs in Finland were recognized by children as an excellent part of SPINNISKOLA's activities.

This year I took part not only in table tennis competitions between local Finnish clubs, but also competed with new opponents from Tallinn (Child 1).

There are groups of children who are willing to do more than one specific sport. Those are the members of table tennis and general training activities, or members of swimming lessons and general training activities. They claimed to be happy about summer trips and camps organized by the SPINNISKOLA. Children are happy to be part of more than one activity and that is why they are considered to be part of some specific sport like table tennis or swimming and also be part of the general training activities.

Every summer camps are being organized for the members of the club and also the children from Russia (Child 3).

Parent's point of view. The opportunity to travel for playing and learning was praised the most by parents in connection with organized events in SPINNISKOLA.

One of the considerable advantages of the club is that children always participate in competitions in Helsinki and in Tallinn. They have enough time for sharing skills, gaining new knowledges and becoming familiar new languages and cultures. (Parent 3).

Travelling for the purpose of observing professionals is also available for children. There are several possibilities during all year to have organized trips in order to observe professional players for improving technics in the future.

My boy plays tennis, and this year his group had a trip to Berlin to experience exchange between clubs and to watch the top level leagues. He returned from this trip with courage to play more and to improve techniques. (Parent 2).

Coach's point of view. Coaches of SPINNISKOLA identified three different methods that are used by the organization for improving the integration process of immigrants. The first method is closely related to games.

Introducing Sport to a child through games (Coach 1).

This method has main aims such as actively spend free time, to play different games, and to learn systematic participation. After some time, it is up to a child to decide to either stay just for spending free time actively or to start real practicing and participating in competitions. The second method is about making sure that everyone has a friend in a group in order to stay in pairs during competitions, camps, and trainings.

We divide children into small teams of 2-3 people, and this way we can avoid the discrimination and loneliness (Coach 2).

Finally, the third method concentrated on organizing different events that are very important for children. SPINNISKOLA creates family events where children can spend their time together with parents and siblings.

During family events children can play with parents, teach them, and demonstrate their new technique and success (Coach 2).

Additionally, a lot of daily camps, summer camps and trips for the competitions are organized in SPINNISKOLA all year around.

All organized events promote children cohesion, and as a result these events help to positively affect the integration process (Coach 1).

8.4 Possibly Necessary Changes.

Children's point of view. Children at the age of 12-15 years are ready and willing to express their opinions and feelings. Despite the fact that they may not understand what kind of work is made by a non-governmental sport organization in order to help their integration process, they certainly know what kind of changes they would like to see during training process

I want to play more with stronger players, rather than to play with players on my level. I want to improve my technique and play better. (Child 3).

Parent's point of view. Parents were mostly concerned about a language used among peers. Because of the involvement in activities with mostly Russian-speaking children, parents are worried about the time that will be left for learning language of a new society.

In my opinion, it will be better to add practicing with Finnish coaches from time to time, in order to compare the instructed language and improve understanding (Parent 1).

Coach's point of view. SPINNISKOLA was established for immigrant's beneficial adaptation process into a social life of the host country. It is a place where all children regardless the language and cultural backgrounds can come and join activities without having to fear of being a stranger.

Improvement concerning the taught languages can be made (Coach 2).

Coaches explained that organized camps, events and trips are going to be scheduled for the future in order to plan activities for immigrants and local people.

8.5 Adaptation Ability.

Children's point of view. Children state that it is important to be active and not wait to be told what to do and how to do it.

I think it is quite important that I lead an active life and I am willing to learn new things in a new country. I have to be open and ready to communicate. (Child 1).

Parent's point of view. Significantly important for the successful integration process is the ability of a child to make adjustments. Parents described that the most comfortable place to adapt can be the group of children with the same interests. As a result, it is easier for a child to adapt among children with same hobbies, such as games or sport activities.

I think it is important that children have an adaptation process not only in school, where all children have different interests and hobbies, but also in sport or another group of interests (Parent 1).

Coach's point of view. Despite the fact that integration is a two-way process, children's motivation is highly important for a successful adaptation in the environment. It is important to give a child a choice to do what he or she really likes to do and to gain positive emotions from. No one should be pressed to attend lessons.

Club's doors are open to everyone to try and decide later whether to stay or to go (Coach 1).

9 DISCUSSION

This chapter demonstrates the outcomes of the research after the whole study was evaluated by the author. After that reliability and ethical issues of this study are described. Moreover, this chapter provides the information about author's personal development during this study process.

9.1 Research Evaluation

The author used previous published research papers on the topics that were focused on integration process in general and the significance of sport and physical activity during the integration process.

One of the research papers connected to the integration process of immigrants in Finland was written by Godfred Obeng Adduow in 2012. This research was focused on an international organization that offers different kind of activities for immigrants as well as helps them to manage their basic needs. The finding of this research shows a very positive impact of the organization. Activities offered for immigrants in this organization were focused on helping and supporting immigrants during their integration process into a new society.

Another research that was used by the author for this research was aimed to evaluate the significance of sport and physical activity during the integration process. This research was written by Zacheus Toumas in 2010. The results of this study show that the integration into society after moving into a new country is always individual and sport is one of the best ways to help children be involved in a new social life environment. Sport helps to learn a language and culture of a new country of residence.

The findings from the present research show a positive impact of SPINNISKOLA, as a non-governmental organization, during the integration process of Russian-speaking 12-15-year-old immigrants in Finland. This non-governmental organization organizes various amount of physical activities and season camps with different kind of sports and other activities for immigrants. Table tennis and general training are the most popular choices among immigrants in this organization.

All results indicate that involvement in sport and physical activities clearly has a positive impact on the integration process of immigrants, thus proving its significance. During the integration progress, children express their opinions about being happy to participate in sport and physical activities along with immigrants and local children. The findings from all three studies show the importance of different types of activities organized by organizations in order to help new immigrants to go through the adaptation process and to support them in learning the local language and culture.

9.2 Reliability

In total, the author received 8 pages of written text in the format of A4 from all participants in the interview. Some of the interviewees wrote more compared with others. Children's answers were a bit shorter compared with adults' answers. In the beginning of the research process all participants were informed about the author's desirable amount of written text on one paper. Participants were asked to write at least one paper.

The author collected information back via email. All participants received email in the beginning of the research period and were asked to send it back to the same address as soon as the answer are ready. Analysing all answers and results from interviewing groups was a time- consuming process. The author got enough amount of data from the participants in order to have a successful evaluation of answers. Received written data from the participants allowed the author to differentiate and highlight the most important themes for further evaluation and discussion.

According to Marriam (1995), accuracy is needed in all kinds of research like presentations or thesis defences in order to make sure that findings of qualitative research are to be trusted and believed. The most common demands in qualitative research are closely connected with a validity and reliability of research findings. These demands concentrated on the questions that have to be answered in order to be sure about the validity and reliability aspects of research results: "How do we know that the researcher did not use the conclusion of the findings as it was expected by researcher's expectation?". Among validity, accuracy and reliability, qualitative research is proceeding the trustworthiness discipline. Trustworthiness of qualitative

research is a challenge for the author. (Merriam 1995, 51.) Criteria for trustworthiness are meant to be closely connected with particular research (Morrow 2005).

It is extremely important to understand what kind of questions qualitative research is aimed to address. Qualitative research uses a naturalistic access that leads to understanding the phenomena in context-specific settings. The researcher does not try to manipulate the phenomenon of interest (Patton 2001, 39). With qualitative research it is possible to find creative and fresh approaches to review over-familiar problems and to determinate the history of previous findings. Moreover, to compare quantitative and qualitative research, quantitative research describes the prediction of findings, but qualitative highlights similar situations with previous studies in the same area. (Merriam 1995, 51). While the reliability in quantitative research depends on instrument construction, in qualitative research "the researcher is the instrument" (Patton 2001, 14). In other words, after observing the findings of qualitative research, the trustworthiness of the results depends on the effort of the researcher, while the quantitative researcher already refers to the credible data (Patton 2001, 14).

Analysing qualitative data cannot be a quick and hurried task. The conclusion of a research has to be done properly, even though it takes a lot of time and concentration to analyse the data. If the author evaluates human performance, it is necessary to remember that human behaviour is never static day after day. (Merriam 1995, 55). The goal of qualitative research is to understand the findings in details rather than to understand the general information (Merriam 1995, 57). A good qualitative study can help us "to understand a situation that would otherwise be enigmatic or confusing" (Eisner 1991, 58).

Qualitative study has the purpose of generating understanding. Each of the following paradigms in the research has to be judged by its own paradigm's term. The main difference of evaluating the quality of quantitative research are the reasons which express that the concept of reliability is irrelevant and unstained in qualitative research. The concept of reliability is misleading even in a qualitative research, and if a qualitative study is discussed with reliability as a criterion, the consequence is that the study is no good (Stenbacka 2001, 552).

9.3 Ethical Issues

In this thesis on the evaluation of the significance of non-governmental organization during the integration process of 12-15-year-old immigrants in Finland, all interviewees were informed about the way of collecting the data and process of evaluating the answers after receiving the data. The research questions were not changed from the informative point of view, but a few corrections regarding vocabulary were made in order to help the children to understand the questions better. Furthermore, all research questions were translated into Russian in order to make the interview process clear, comfortable, and understandable for Russian-speaking interviewees. The interviewees who did not have the required level of English to answer the research questions had an opportunity to answer in Russian. The author translated this answers later with the help from the commissioner.

The interviewing process was recorded by the interviewees on paper. They were informed about anonymity during process of collecting and evaluating answers. Moreover, the interviewees were informed that all results and discussions can be found in the final version of the thesis. The anonymity of all respondents was remained throughout this study, as requested. In the evaluation and conclusion part, all participants were divided into following groups: child (1-3), parent (1-3) and coach (1-2).

The author had two practical placements, orientation and advanced, in SPINNISKOLA. Experiences in working among different groups helped the author to make limitations and give the preferences to the target group 12-15-years-old Russian-speaking immigrants for the thesis. The research was focused on 12-15-years-old Russian-speaking children due to the fact that this group is the most popular group among all customers. By this time, selected group of children for interviews had already participated in sport activities offered by SPINNISKOLA for at least a few months. The target group of children is at the age of self-expression, and they are ready to express and share their ideas and feelings. To get the whole picture of the importance of physical activity in the process of adaptation, coaches were interviewed on the same questions as the main target group.

9.4 Personal Development

Working life experience in the sphere of organizing physical activity for immigrants has lead the author to become interested in the research about importance of physical activities during the integration process among Russian-speaking children in Finland.

During the process of writing this thesis, the author explored the importance and meaning of qualitative analysis method. Process of using the right way of evaluation and analysing showed to be time-consuming. The author improved searching and organizing skills in order to put all data from various amount of sources into a comprehensive form.

This thesis helped the author to improve competence in physical activity, health promoting physical activity, coaching, pedagogy, and didactics (Description of Competences n.d.).

The competence in physical activity was improves during the thesis process. The author improved and increased an ability to manage the fundamental knowledge and skills required in the most common physical activities and to apply them when instructing different target groups. This thesis supported the author's understanding of the value of various physical activities as a tool for developing motor skills, physical qualities, and self-expression. Moreover, this thesis improved the author's the fundamental knowledge required in special needs education.

Furthermore, this thesis supported the author's health promoting physical activity and coaching. This thesis helped the author to improve the ability to demonstrate the fundamental knowledge of anatomy and physiology, and use this knowledge to teach different groups of people as well as to enhance the competence in the mechanisms of physical activity, the fundamentals of testing and training planning or coaching programs. During this thesis the author improved knowledge of the factors affecting human growth, development, and social behaviour as well as the ability to take them into consideration during physical activity. Moreover, this thesis helped the author to develop the abilities to plan and instruct health promoting physical activities.

Additionally, this thesis supported the competence in pedagogy and didactics. The author's skills and abilities to use different instruction and teaching methods as well as goal setting with

different target groups were improved. This thesis helps to promote and enhance author's skills to plan and evaluate model of teaching, to demonstrate the ability to use physical education for the benefit of supporting and proving education in human growth and development, as well as to instruct learning concept based in personal values and level of knowledge in physical activity.

New skills improved the author's professional development in the sphere of sport and its important part during integration process of children. The author hopes that gained information and new knowledge will benefit the SPINNISKOLA in future work.

New gained knowledge and skills of evaluating the outcome of the thesis improved author's professional area in organizing physical activities for children at the age of 12-15-year-old. The practical training and later the evaluation process of the results helped author to perfect coaching skills.

10 CONCLUSIONS

At the end of the research, the author expected to identify the most popular sport activity from swimming, table tennis and general training among Russian-speaking children. Moreover, the research was also aimed to understand which sport can be named as the most effective in helping children to integrate into a new society and to become familiar with local people and culture. The final results might give an overall picture about how physical activity (sport) for immigrants can positively influence the integration process.

At the end of the process of gathering and evaluating the data from interviewees who are participants in different sports organized by SPINNISKOLA, it is impossible to highlight the one that could be the most significant for the question: Which sport will help the integration process the most? Sport involvement plays a significant role in children's life, but table tennis players seem to be more active in terms of travelling. Opportunity to travel might be the reason why an active sport such as table tennis is so popular, along with a possibility for children to practice not only by themselves, but also with their friends.

Eight people were interviewed in order to highlight the significance of SPINNISKOLA as a non-governmental organization during the integration process of Russian-speaking 12-15-year-old immigrants in Finland. SPINNISKOLA helps immigrant children to adapt into the Finnish society. Furthermore, physical activities make the process of finding friends easier. It leads to communication with peers and learning a new local language. Physical activities also teach children to spend their free time in a way that is also beneficial to their health, and helps them to get familiar with a new culture much faster, thus avoiding the fear of being alone in a new country of residence.

Among all benefits from participation in physical activities, SPINNISKOLA also offers a possibility to travel and to explore the world around. Travelling helps to increase willingness to play and to behave well at school with friends and teachers and at home with parents and siblings. A child can learn the systematic attitude to attend training sessions, and to do home tasks in time.

Based on the research tasks presented in this thesis it is possible to make the following conclusions. First of all, physical activities have a positive impact on successful integration into the Finnish society of 12-15-years-old Russian-speaking immigrants. From all activities introduced in the SPINNISKOLA (table tennis, swimming and general trainings) table tennis is shown as the sport where children are the most active. Even though daily and summer camps, and competitions are organized in all three previously mentioned activities, trips for the sole reason of attending different levels of competitions are only organized for table tennis players.

The second conclusion is about that physical activity involvement is proven to be a comfortable way for children to learn a new language. Participation among Finnish children helps immigrants to adapt easier and faster. Moreover, children state that it is an enjoyable process to spend free time with friends during training sessions, rather than to stay at home.

The third conclusion demonstrates that problems about language that is used during trainings in SPINNISKOLA is highlighted from parents' side. Parents concerns that children do not have enough taught training sessions taught in Finnish. They mention only about weekly trainings are taught using the local language. However, children mention a lot of possibilities to communicate during travelling for the purpose of competing.

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APPENDICES

Questions for children

1. How would specifically selected physical activity organized by SPINNISKOLA (swimming, table tennis and general training) help to have a better integration process?
- 2 What kind of changes would you like to see during trainings?

Questions for parents

1. How would specifically selected physical activity organized by SPINNISKOLA (swimming, table tennis and general training) affect the integration process?
2. What was the most popular sport offered by SPINNISKOLA among children at the age of 12-15 years?

Questions for coaches

1. How would specifically selected physical activity organized by SPINNISKOLA (swimming, table tennis and general training) affect the integration process of Russian-speaking 12-15 years old immigrants?
- 2 What have to be improved in coaches' work in the non-governmental sport organization in order to attract more immigrants to participate in active lifestyle?