

Technical report parent structured interview study

PROCEDURES, INSTRUMENT
DEVELOPMENT, SAMPLES, AND
SHOWCASES

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Work Package

WP2 Resources, experiences, aspirations and support needs of families in
disadvantaged communities

Lead Beneficiary

UU

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Developers interview instrument

The questionnaire was developed by Martine Broekhuizen (NL, UU) and Katharine-Ereky Stevens (EN, OU). In this endeavour, they received valuable input and suggestions from Hannah Ulferts (DE), Hande Erdem (DE), Rita Guerra (PT), Jacqueline Barnes (EN), and Konstantinos Petrogiannis (EL), who were strongly involved in the development of specific sections of the questionnaire.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The overall purpose of the ISOTIS (Inclusive Education and Social Support to Tackle Inequalities in Society) project, is to contribute to effective policy and practice development at different system levels to effectively combat early arising and persisting educational inequalities across Europe. A key contribution of work package 2 (WP2) is to give voice to parents through an interview study in ten European countries. The findings will be related to practices in early and primary education, social support services, and local and national policies. Furthermore, knowledge gained through WP2 will be applied by other work packages (WPs) to support their research questions and development.

The aim of WP2 is to create new knowledge about:

- cultural and linguistic resources in families,
- acculturation-participation orientation and identity construction,
- experiences with (early) education provisions and other services,
- aspirations and expectations, and
- wellbeing of parents and children.

To achieve these goals, WP2 collected empirical data with structured and in-depth interviews with parents from four specific disadvantaged groups across ten European countries with different education systems, welfare regimes and integration policies. These interviews involved parents with children in the 3- to 6-years and 9- to 12-years age range to capture the pre-primary phase and the phase before the transition to secondary school, including the experiences and decisions of parents relating to these phases. The current technical report (D2.2) focuses solely on the structured parental interviews.

The theoretical platform for ISOTIS is informed by Bronfenbrenner's bio-ecological approach to human development (Bronfenbrenner, 1986, 2005; Bronfenbrenner & Ceci, 1994; Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006), addressing aspects particularly relevant on both the micro- and meso-level of families. To analyse institutional, cultural and ideological mechanisms underlying inequality and discrimination, three potentially disadvantaged groups are included in the study, an immigrant group (Maghrebian and Turkish), a Romani group and a low-SES native-born group. These groups were recruited from at least two sites in each country. The choice of these groups is based on considerations of relevance and methodology: (a) These immigrant groups are among the largest across Europe, associated with persistent educational disadvantages, and increased risk of social exclusion. (b) These groups have settled in several European countries (and, within countries, in several localities), allowing for comparisons between countries (and localities) that can reveal relations of inequality and experiences of discrimination with national (and local) governance strategies, education policies and models of family support service provision. (c) These groups are especially relevant for current intercultural and interethnic tensions, increasing polarization and segregation in many European countries that is as a major threat to inclusion and equity.

The study is designed to allow for several comparisons; e.g., within groups-between countries, within countries-between groups, within countries-between sites. These comparative analyses will contribute to insights into how characteristics of national (and local) education and support policies interact with group characteristics to create educational inequalities. In total, 3938 parents have been interviewed.

The current report informs about the study design, the data collection procedures, describes the development of the questionnaire, and provides extensive sample descriptions. In addition, a detailed description of the constructs, variables and scales in the questionnaire is provided. In chapter 7, four showcases with first preliminary findings are presented, which will inspire future analytical work within WP2 and as such will provide input for the analytical work in other WP's. The first showcase describes the life situations of Roma families. On the one hand, these findings confirm the socio-economic disadvantages of

Roma families (high women unemployment rate, high material deprivation). On the other hand, they also demonstrate a high level of perceived social support and a relatively low level of perceived discrimination. Data also show that there is not “one Roma” group in Europe. Substantial variations across countries are found, which might indicate potential effects of country-specific systems and regulations.

The second showcase reports on the children’s participation in extracurricular activities, which has shown to relate to academic achievement in prior research. Participation in extracurricular activities also indicates families’ investments in their children’s education, which are associated with children’s outcomes. The findings reveal some striking differences between target groups and countries in the children’s participation in extracurricular activities, as well as some indications that the most educationally disadvantaged children, who would benefit most from such activities, seem to participate less. Analyses to confirm and explain these differences will be subject of future work.

The third showcase focuses on the perceptions of parents with a Turkish and Maghrebian immigrant background on their relationship with preschool teachers and their participation at the preschool across four countries (England, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands). In general, although mothers with an immigrant background might have a disadvantaged position in establishing educational partnerships, they experience a very positive parent-teacher relationship in preschools. In comparison, parental participation levels in preschool are lower. Further explanatory analyses revealed that socio-psychological factors, such as the perceived discrimination in the (pre)school, parental self-agency, and national identity feelings, are more strongly related to the experienced relationship between parents- and teachers, than structural factors such as educational level or migration background. If these preliminary findings prove to be robust in further analyses, it might have significant implications for policy making.

Finally, the fourth and last showcase demonstrates that it is possible to establish measurement equivalence between countries for an extensive interview instrument to assess adult-child activities in the home. This means that comparative analyses using this instrument are valid and reliable. For the younger children (3-6 years) we constructed the five scales “conversation activities”, “reading activities”, “storytelling activities”, “mathematical activities”, and “practical/creative activities”, and for the older children the four scales “everyday activities”, “informal learning activities”, “mathematical activities”, and “socialising activities”. In general, we found a relatively high level of stimulating adult-child-activities. However, some interesting and considerable between group and country differences were found. This showcase also demonstrates that it is possible to establish measurement equivalence between countries with the applied interview instrument.

ISOTIS

**INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SUPPORT
TO TACKLE INEQUALITIES IN SOCIETY**



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