

FSD2461 SUOMALAISTEN NAISOPISKELIJOIDEN HAASTATTELUT 2008-2009

FSD2461 FINNISH FEMALE STUDENT INTERVIEWS 2008-2009

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INTERVIEWS: PROCESS & QUESTIONS

Study conducted in Tampere, Finland – autumn-winter 2008-09

INTRODUCTORY PHASE

- Personal intro and hospitality
- The purpose of the interview:

“This interview is conducted for the purpose of a PhD research in sociology. I'm doing a comparative analysis on young adults' social and economic situation in Finland and in France. The research concentrates on young people in their twenties, experiencing transition from university to working life. I also study the social and economic changes that occurred in the last 10-20 years, in comparison to the conditions that existed in the 1960s-1970s, and I analyse how these changes influence young adults' living arrangements.

Since this study concerns young people, it seemed important to allow some young people to express their opinion on the current socio-economic situation. Statistics offer useful information on young people's living conditions, but they don't explain why some issues are occurring. The main goal of my research is to explain the youth's situation from young people's own points of view. That's why I decided to do interviews.

This interview should last for about 1h30.

- Explanations about the recording and the research ethics (inform & consent):

“The interview should be recorded so that we can transcribe it later on. I hope this is Ok with you? The data will only be used for scientific purposes. I will use some quotes when writing my PhD thesis, in papers for conferences, articles written to journals, and also in a common book on youth transition to adulthood that we plan to write with some colleagues from the department of sociology. The same material will be used again later when the PhD thesis will be rewritten in a publishable form. Of course, I won't reveal the name of any participant, nor very personal information: I will use fictitious names so as to keep your anonymity. Also, all the information given will be kept confidentially and no one else than me and Jenni will be able to access it.”

“If you wish to get more information about my research or the results of the study, please, don't hesitate to contact me!”

- Explanations on the interview plan:

“The interview will go as such:

The 1st part will concern your own views on your social and economic situation. The 2nd part will focus on your opinions on young adults' situation around you; young adults that you know, about your age. And the 3rd part will be about your perspectives on your parents' situation when they were about your age, and when they started professional life.”

I – PRESENT AND FUTURE: PERSONAL SITUATION

a) Education

1 – “To start with, can I ask you what you are studying? I know you mentioned it in the email, but just to get a bit more precisions?”

- “So now you are writing your master thesis?”

2 – “Why did you choose to study this subject?”

- “Are you satisfied with your choice?”

3 – “And *why* did you choose to go to university? [Motivations]

- “Is there someone in your family who studied at university?” [Who?]

- “By the way, how old are you?”

4 – “And what do you think about the Finnish university system in general?”

[Efficient? Disappointed? Lack of guidance and advising?]

- “Do you think you’ll find a job related to your level of study? And related to the subject you studied?”

b) The labour market

1 – “Do you have ideas about the job you’d like to do? Why this job?”

2 – “Do you have some working experiences already? Could you talk about that a bit?”

3 – “How do you view the world of work?”

[labour market; working life in general]

4 – “How do you view the beginning of your working life?” [easy? Difficult? Why?] (chances evaluation on the labour market)

- [“How do you feel about entering working life?”] [How do you feel about the situation?] [afraid? Confident? Feelings of insecurity?]

5 – “Are you in a hurry to finish your studies and to enter working life?”

6 – “Do you feel pressure to develop and lead a successful professional career? [and where does the pressure come from?]

c) Living arrangements

1 – “Can I ask you where do you live at the moment?”

[→ Student accommodation?

- At parents’ place?**
- With your partner?**
- Shared accommodation with friends?**
- On your own? → is this your own flat?]**

2 – “How do you finance your rent and other living expenses?”

[“Where do you get most of your money from?”]

[→ parents?

- grant/study allowances?**
- student loan?**
- housing allowances?**
- Part-time or full-time job?]**

3 – “Later on, would you like to buy your own flat, or house?” [if no, reasons?]

d) Family

1 – “What is your priority between finding a job and starting a family?” Why?

[“Does your professional career seem more important at the present time, rather than starting a family?”]

2 – “Would you like to get married later? Or just live with your partner?”

Why?” [Against marriage institution?]

3 – “And would you like to have children?”

[If no, why?]

4 – “Do you think you’ll be able to develop a professional career and have a family and children at the same time? How?” [perheenäiti]

(Women’s dual-role)

[State’s aid? Maternity leaves? Child care services ? Day-care centres?]

e) Hobbies and personal interests

1 – “Do you have any personal interest or hobbies that are important to you? Or are you involved in associations? Like what?”

(Social capital)

[Leisure activities (music, theatre...)? Sports? Travelling? Going out with friends? Social or political activism? Voluntary work? Charity associations? etc...]

2 – “Do you dedicate a lot of time to these?”

[“How do you organise you time, between your studies, work, private life and personal activities?”]

3 – “And how do you think you’ll manage to combine your personal activities with your future working life, and family life?”

f) Transition

**1 – “According to you, what is “being an adult”?
[What does “being an adult” mean?”]**

2 – “And do you feel ‘adult’?” *Why?*

3 – “What do you think will be the most difficult in your transition from university to working life?”

4 – “And in general, are you satisfied with your life at the moment?”

(Emotional well-being)

[Happy or not? Why?]

II – YOUTHS’ CURRENT SITUATION

“Now I’m going to ask you questions concerning your views on young people’s situation in general”.

a) Education

1 – “According to the statistics, the number of students has largely increased in the last 20 years. In your opinion, what makes young people go to university? Or the young people that you know, like your friends?”

[motivations for studying]

2 – “Do you know young people around you who went directly to work?”

[- What type of education or training did they get?]

[- Did they find a job quickly after finishing school?]

[- How was their integration on the labour market? And how is it going for them now?]

b) The labour market

1 – “How do you view your peers’ integration on the labour market?”

[“And how do you perceive their chances and possibilities of finding a job?”]

[Easy? Difficult?]

2 – “Do you think that they feel pressured to lead a successful professional career?”

[from their family, peers, or society?]

c) Living arrangements

1 – “Where do most of the young people that you know live at the moment?”

[→ Student accommodation?

- At parents’ place?

- With their partner?

- Shared accommodation with friends?

- On their own? → is this your own flat?]

2 – “How do they finance their rent and other living expenses?”

[“Where do they get most of their money from?”]

[→ parents?

- **grant/study allowances?**
- **student loan?**
- **housing allowances?**
- **Part-time or full-time job?]**

d) Family

1 – “What is the relationship status of the young people that you know?”

[Single? Married? Cohabiting ?]

2 – “Do you have many friends that are living together with a partner (married or cohabiting)? And do they have children, or will they get some soon?”

3 – “Does that have an effect on you?”

- **“Does it put pressure on you to start a family?”**

e) Hobbies and personal interests

1 – “Do your peers or friends have any personal interests or hobbies that are important to them? Or are they involved in associations? Like what?”

(Social capital)

[Leisure activities (music, theatre...)? Sports? Travelling? Going out with friends? Social or political activism? Voluntary work? Charity associations? etc...]

- **“How do they organise their time, between studies, work, private life and personal activities?”**

[“Do they dedicate a lot of time to personal activities?”]

f) Transition

1- “Do you consider your friends as adults?”

2 – “What do you consider as the most difficult issue when university students enter working life?”

- “Do you think that those who went to vocational school experience the same difficulties, or are better off?”

- “And what is the hardest thing for the young people that you know, who entered working life recently?” [for both university and vocational students]

[finding a job? Lodging? To become independent? start a family and develop their career at the same time?...]

4 – “And are the young people that you know, or your friends, satisfied with their life in general?”

[Are they happy or not? Why?]

III – PAST

“Now I would like to talk about your points of view on the social and economical situation of your parents when they finished school and entered working life, and when they were about your age”.

“To start with, can I ask you how old are your parents?”

a) Education

1 – “Have your parents been studying?”

2 – “What did they study?”

[“What kind of professional or specialized training, or qualifications did they get?”]

b) The labour market

1 – “Did your parents managed to follow or develop a professional career?”

2 – “How do you think it was for your parents to find work once they finished their studies? *Why?*”

[easier or more difficult than now? More stable and certain than now?]

3 – “Do you think that they had more possibilities and chances to succeed than you have? *Why?* »

4 – “Do you think it was better 30 years ago? *For what reasons?*”

5 – “Have you talked about all that with your parents?”

c) Living arrangements

1 – “Were your parents independent at an early age? How old were they?”

[What was their age when they left home?]

2 – “What did they do when they finished school?”

[Did they work immediately? Did your father do its military service? Travelling?
Start a family?]

3 – “Do you know if they started working early but would have rather continue studying, or doing something else?”

- “Did they have the choice and the possibility to study rather than go immediately to work when they were about your age?”

d) Family

1 – “Are your parents married? At what age did they get married, or moved in together?”

2 – “Before getting married, did they live some time on their own, or with friends, or did they cohabitate together?”

3 – “How old were they when they got their 1st child? And how many children do they have?”

4 – “Do you think that there was more pressure to leave the parental home, find a job and get married at that time?”

e) Hobbies and personal interests

1 – “Did your parents have a lot of hobbies or leisure activities when they were young? Or were they involved in associations? Like what?”

[leisure, travels, sports, political activism...]

- “Did they have lots of time to dedicate to those?”

2 – “In your opinion, do young people nowadays have more personal interests and leisure activities than young people before?”

3 – “Do you think that young people now dedicate a bigger part of their life to leisure activities, in comparison to their parents when they were young?”

[more free time than before? Change in values? Cultural trends? Consumer society and leisure society? Technological evolution (items, transport...)]

f) Transition

1 – “Do you think that your parents became ‘adults’ at an earlier age than young people today? *For which reasons?*”

2 – “Do they put pressure on you sometimes to find a job (and finish studying) or to lead a successful career? Or to start a family?”

- “Or do you get lots of support and understanding from your parents?”

3 – “In general, do you think that life for young people was easier or more difficult when your parents were young? *Why?*”

- “*Have you talked about that with them?*”

(“In your opinion, what is the main difference, or the main differences, between you and your parents, if you think about entering working life?”)

4 – “Do you think that young people were happier 30 years ago? *Why?*”

CONCLUSION

1 – “For the last part of this interview, I’d like to ask you if **you have an idea about what you’ll be doing or how will your life be in 5 or 10 years?**”

[“How do you perceive yourself and your future life?”]

2 – “Also, do you feel that being a woman can facilitate or complicate your entry into working life or life in general?”

→ With regards to: - finding a job and developing a professional career
- living independently
- starting a family (biological pressure)
- dual-role/dual-career (professional career & family/mother)
- stop or continue personal activities”

3 – “Do you consider your generation as unique, or standing apart? *For which reasons?*”

CLOSURE

- Thank people for their help; hospitality.
- Summary of what I think I’ve learnt from the interview, give feedback and extra comments.
- Ask if they would like more info concerning my work in the future, mainly concerning the results of the study.
- State again how the data will be processed (confidentiality).
- Send an extra email to express gratitude.