



5 Methods of the Research

5.1 Design of the Research

I have previously spent time abroad as an international student. From that experience, I know how hard it is to adjust to new cultures, climates, and traditions despite it being a very interesting personal experience. After arriving in Germany as an international doctoral student, I started to hear negative comments about people of migrant origin in the media, and learned about the educational inequality in Germany. For these reasons I became very interested in studying this field of research. I was wondering how and why migrant origin, ethnicity or religious beliefs influence people's opportunity to live a good life and receive a good school education. According to my values and my world view, people should have equal opportunities to receive a good education and all other primary needs, regardless of what they look like, what they believe in and where they come from. In addition, disadvantaged people should get support from society and social institutions to allow them to live a life with dignity. I have been framing my doctoral research with this mindset.

During the initial phase of the study, I was aware of my own values and world views as both an opportunity and a restriction while I was designing this research. As my background is based in psychology, I wanted to conduct a qualitative study in order to make girls' voices heard via knowledge production. Using a transformative approach, participants of the research assisted in the process of reality construction (ontological stance as nature of reality). Active participation in finding the results (realities), and a consideration of the participants' world views and values during the time of knowledge construction (construction of realities), was essential for this study (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

As a result, the research aimed to investigate what young, socially vulnerable, Turkish women of migrant origin interpreted as a good life and a good school education, and how the girls actively used their agency to approach a good life and a good school education that they valued in Germany.

5.1.1 Pilot Study

A pilot study was necessary in order to decide how suitable the data collection methods and methodology were for addressing the research questions, as well as

figuring out how to implement the concepts of the Capability Approach and contribute to the qualitative knowledge of the Capability Approach.

I planned to conduct a pilot study in order to understand the life, culture and values of young people of immigrant origin to better design the research goals, rationale, questions and data collection methods. I entered the field knowing only Grounded Theory methodology, I had not reviewed the literature relating to the phenomena I was planning to study. Also, I was aware that, in Germany, there had not been much research conducted to investigate good life opportunities, agency, empowerment and the identity of Turkish youths of immigrant origin.

I decided to use focus groups in order to obtain the necessary amount of data in a short time. The interview guidelines had open questions such as: What are your everyday activities? How do you spend your free time? These were designed to facilitate an understanding of youth culture as well as break the ice. I was also interested in how girls defined a good life for themselves and for other girls their age living in Germany or in any part of the world, how they perceived their existing opportunities for having a good life in Germany and what they interpreted as obstacles to gaining these opportunities to live a good life.

The data was collected from schools that had agreed to take part in the data collection. Only girls who had volunteered were interviewed. I collected data from six focus groups in two different schools in Gütersloh. Each focus group constituted of five to eight girls, who were aged between 14 and 17 years old.

The findings of the pilot study revealed that girls believed that a 'good education' is fundamental for a 'good life' in Germany, i.e. in order to be valued and accepted by the German society. As challenges, the girls identified discrimination and stereotypes, both at school and in society, that limited their opportunity to have a good life and a good school education. There was not enough data to analyze the girls' perception of their existing opportunities, interpreted inequalities, or their resources to use agency to overcome these challenges.

Another significant result of the pilot data was that self-awareness of their own identity and identity development was important for the girls. After the pilot study, the research was redesigned to prepare for the main data collection.

5.1.2 Redesigning the Research after the Pilot Study

The research design focused on highlighting ontological, epistemological, and axiological issues. Ontologically, I was interested in the multiple realities surrounding the good life opportunities of girls of Turkish origin living in Germany, for example, how girls of Turkish origin viewed reality and experienced reality. I was also aware that society constructs a reality which influences personal interpretations and experiences. From an epistemological

perspective, I was interested in understanding what knowledge already existed in the field I was studying, in order to identify knowledge gaps, and to maximise my contribution to the knowledge production for literature concerning both the Capability Approach and migrant youth in Germany.

5.1.2.1 Research Questions

Literature on the subject of Germany (OECD 2016) highlighted the fact that children of immigrants were lagging behind in terms of school education, compared to their native peers, and that success in school was dependent upon the socio-economic status of the parents. I built the research questions in order to analyse how the girls interpreted inequality in school education and in society: How do Turkish girls living in Germany develop and cultivate their identity? What are their inspirations and aspirations? How have they overcome challenges to create a meaningful life that they value in Germany?

As a result, the research questions were derived from literature and conceptualized through the lenses of the Capability Approach. I problematized the above-mentioned research results from the 'good life' aspect in order to analyse the inequalities and agency of the potentially marginalized identities of socially vulnerable girls.

1. How do young Turkish women of immigrant origin describe the fundamental aspects of a good life?
2. How do young Turkish women of immigrant origin (such as 2nd, 3rd, and 4th generation) describe their identity in a cultural setting which frames them as 'foreigners'?
3. How do young Turkish women of immigrant origin describe their ideas, aspirations, inspirations, and future plans?
4. How do young Turkish women of immigrant origin describe the challenges/obstacles in their everyday life?

The pilot study results also revealed that focus groups were used for collecting rich data in a short period of time. For the main data collection, in order to control the effect of the socio-economic status of the girls, a homogenous group of girls with Turkish immigrant backgrounds, I developed a socio-economic questionnaire to be administered after each focus group interview. The questions (see Appendix C) were adapted from Shell Deutsche Jugendstudium, 2010 (Shell German Youth Study).

Also, in order to identify individual interpretations of existing opportunities, inequalities, and possible actions (agency) to make changes, individual inter-

views were necessary. In order to analyze the opportunities and inequalities in different life courses and transitions, I decided to conduct life-history interviews. As a result, triangulated data from the focus groups and individual interviews were used to answer the research questions.

5.2 Triangulation

The term ‘triangulation’ is reserved for instances where methods are combined for the purpose of confirmation (Lambert & Loisel, 2007, p. 230). Triangulation is defined as researchers taking different perspectives on an issue being studied or, more generally speaking, to answer research questions (Flick, 2014). The perspectives can be substantiated by using several methods and/or several theoretical approaches. It refers to using a combination of different sorts of data as the background for theoretical perspectives, which are applied to the data. As far as possible, these perspectives should be treated and applied equally.

In this particular research project, data triangulation led to the following results: (1) a productive, iterative process, where an initial model of the phenomenon guided the exploration of individual accounts, and successive individual data further enriched the conceptualization of the phenomenon; (2) identification of the individual and the contextual circumstances surrounding the phenomenon, which added to the interpretation of the structure of the phenomenon; and (3) convergence of the central characteristics of the phenomenon across focus groups and individual interviews, which enhanced the trustworthiness of the findings (Lambert & Loisel, 2007, p. 231).

Triangulation with focus groups and individual life-history interviews supported the analysis. More specifically, how ethnicity and migration background might result in exclusion in the life of the girls. The structure is defined within the context of Grounded Theory analysis as “the circumstances in which problems, issues, happenings, or events pertaining to a phenomenon are situated or arise” (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 127).

Triangulation, of different methods or sorts of data, usually generates knowledge from a wider perspective. For example, triangulation should produce knowledge on different levels, going beyond the knowledge made possible by one approach, and thus contribute to promoting richness in research. This perspective was applied in this research project by combining focus groups and individual interviews. It contributed to an enhanced understanding of the structure of the phenomenon, which allowed the collection of information on the personal and group level.

From the triangulated data, I was able to perform an in-depth analysis of the voices of the girls and ascertain how individual interpretations linked to

aspirations, inspirations, identity, belonging and the inequalities viewed as obstacles to having ‘good life’ and a ‘good school education’ in Germany. After deciding on the methods of data collection, interview guidelines were developed using the lenses of the Capability Approach.

5.2.1 Developing Interview Guidelines for Focus Groups and Individual Interviews using the Lenses of Capability Approach

The operationalization and implementation of the Capabilities Approach for domain selection, especially the question of whether and how to construct a capability list from the perspective of individuals or groups, has been extensively discussed in the literature (Biggeri, 2006; Burchardt, 2011; Martinetti, 2006, 2009). Also, Burchardt and Vizard (2011, p. 95) discussed a key issue, raised in the debates about the ‘operationalization’ of the Capability Approach, of a need for a methodology to develop and agree on a list of countable, substantive freedoms and opportunities for the purpose of measurement.

The implementation of theoretical concepts is defined as a sequence of activities which transforms a theoretical framework into standardized procedures, applicable in practice by users and beneficiaries (Biggeri, M & Libanora, R., 2011, p. 80). The implementation and operationalization of the Capabilities Approach with respect to the well-being of youths, including their functionings and capabilities, has been a concern in the Capability Approach literature (Biggeri *et al.*, 2006, p. 63).

Capability Approach researchers are interested in what youths are effectively able to do and to be. Therefore, capabilities are a youth’s potential functionings. Biggeri has studied the well-being issues of children and youth in the context of various countries through the lenses of the Capability Approach. Studying capabilities starts from an initial set of the youth’s achieved functionings. The process of resource conversion is very much affected by how different institutions, norms, and cultures constrain or empower youth. The child’s capability set, the vector of potential valued and achievable functionings, i.e. opportunity and freedom, is thus given by the resources/constraints, by their limited opportunities and by their own abilities (Biggeri *et al.*, 2006, p. 63). I would argue that there are at least five important issues related to children’s capabilities that are worth considering, although some of these observations are relevant to adults as well.

This research project adhered to the following procedures in order to implement the concepts of the Capability Approach. These concepts and perspectives for implementing the Capability Approach were adopted from Biggeri and Libanora (2011, p. 85), researchers of children and youth, for evaluating capabilities and prioritizing dimensions. The interview guideline for this research

had two sections. The first section had questions about a good life and the second section was about a good school education. The design of the interview guidelines used in focus groups and individual interviews are described below.

1. The first stage was characterized by the following question on the interview guideline: What are the most important opportunities girls should have throughout their life? The objective of this question was to identify which capabilities were relevant without limiting the possible answers with a predefined questionnaire. If the young woman mentioned a capability that had not been identified earlier by the researcher, their answer was added to the list. In this research project, the first question for the focus group was an introductory question to break the ice in the group. I asked, "What are your everyday activities and what kinds of hobbies do you have?" After the introductory question, the focus questions began with, "What are the most important opportunities for girls of your age all over the world to have a good life?"
2. In the second step of the interview guideline, the participants were asked to discuss and make a list of opportunities and rank them from most important to least important. A similar question was posed, "What are the most important opportunities for young, similarly-aged women of Turkish origin living in Germany to have a good life?" This step was also used to analyze group capabilities because the Capability Approach has been criticized for excluding groups due to its very individualistic approach. In this project, the data on group capabilities have been limited to the discussion of the group capabilities of girls of Turkish origin living in Germany.
3. In the third stage of the interview guideline, the girls were asked about the actual functioning achieved, which involved drawing on personal experiences. This step was implemented to ascertain whether they had the opportunity for a good life or a good school education in two different sections. The participants were asked, "Do you have opportunities?" They then listed valuable opportunities in their lives. The same question was repeated for school education in the second part of the interview guideline. In addition, I rephrased the question to allow detailed discussion during the individual life-history methodology.
4. In the fourth stage, the girls were asked about the relevance of each specific capability/dimension for girls in general, i.e. the broader community. An individual capability set, achievable functionings at the personal level, may be limited for children who are vulnerable because it could be influenced by adoptive preferences in which people normalize limitations and deprivation after a certain period of time. The data of this research project has been limited to identify and discuss adoptive preferences. In the interview

guideline, this question was asked: In your opinion, how important/unimportant is it to be able to have opportunities as a member of the group you listed, for example, of your age and background? According to Bigger and Libanora (2011), the aim of this question is to measure the relevance of each capability dimension for the whole group. Also in this research project we asked the question, “What are the opportunities to have a good life and a good school education for girls with a German background?” This was asked to identify the adoptive preferences of each participant. Also, the data on adoptive preferences has been limited for a substantial analysis.

5. In the final stage, the girls were asked if they wished to add any other dimensions of well-being to the study. In order to obtain a partial ordering, the researcher asked the girls about their preferences. This question was posed as, “Among the aspects we have discussed, could you tell me which are the five most important opportunities a young woman should have during her lifetime?” This phase aimed to identify the most relevant capabilities for the group. After finishing the interviews, it was possible to draw a list of relevant capabilities which had been defined by the girls themselves and legitimised by the group (settings specific to prior vote rules). The level of achieved functionings was pointed out, at both the individual and aggregated level, under some assumptions and the first prioritization of the dimensions of well-being was achieved. In this particular research project, participants prepared a list of their functionings and ranked them in order, from the most achievable to the least achievable.

After following the above-mentioned procedures, the following question was presented as the final question in the interview guideline: What are the limitations and obstacles girls experience, and are forced to confront, at school and in society? In addition, to be able to achieve an in-depth analysis of social vulnerability and inequality during the individual life-history interviews, we asked, “What do you think makes you disadvantaged and unequal in the school and society?” To be able to analyze agency participants were asked, “How do you remove these obstacles and limitations in order to have a good life and a good school education in Germany?” Finally, to analyze their aspirations, they were asked, “Imagine your 18th birthday/what are you planning to do in the next 2-3 years?”

5.3 Sampling the Participants

In Germany (Bielefeld, Gütersloh, Dortmund, Duisburg, and Düsseldorf), I sent letters for the attention of the school administration, teachers and parents, to schools which had pupils of immigrant origin. The letters requested the schools

to gather girls who would like to participate in the research project, which was described in the letter. I made an agreement with a contact from each school that each group would consist of five to eight participants of the same age group. Girls who volunteered to participate in the research brought a signed letter from their parents. Girls, who were over 18 years old, registered their names and contact details to be invited for interview. Participation in the research was not an issue because many girls volunteered to participate. The only selection criteria stated in the invitation letter was that the interviews would only be conducted with girls of Turkish origin.

5.3.1 Socio-Economic Background of the Participants

The main goal of the survey was to analyze the socio-economic status of the girls in order to identify external factors of social vulnerability that may differ from those available to a homogeneous group of a sub-community, i.e. Turkish immigrants, in Germany. This was because this study focused only on researching the ‘good life’ opportunities of girls who are part of the Turkish immigrant community in Germany.

Table 1: Survey Results of the Socio-economic Questionnaire

<i>Country of Birth</i>	All participants were born in Germany
<i>Number of Siblings</i>	All participants had at least one sibling and a maximum of three siblings.
<i>Citizenship</i>	70% were dual citizens and 30% of participants had dual citizenships and had to decide which citizenship to obtain when they were 18 to 23 years old. They all wrote they would choose to be solely German citizens.
<i>Birth Place of Parents</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 60% of participants had two Turkish-born parents. ▪ Only 1% of participants had two German-born parents. ▪ 39% of participants had one parent who was born in Germany.
<i>Country of Parents' Education</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 60% of participants answered that their parents were educated in both Germany and Turkey. ▪ 40% had parents that were only educated in Turkey. ▪ The ‘only educated in Turkey’ group was dominated by mothers who were never educated in Germany. Generally, mothers came to Germany through marriage as participants highlighted in their written answers.
<i>Parents' Education Level</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Only 1% of participants had parents who were literate but had not been in formal education. ▪ 99% of parents had a formal school education, ranging from elementary education to obtaining a vocational high school diploma.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ None of the girls had parents who participated in higher education. The questionnaire included labels both from Turkish and German education systems, but many parents were educated in Turkey and later had training in Germany.
<i>Mother Tongue and Home Language</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All participants identified their mother tongue as Turkish. ▪ 70% of the participants spoke Turkish and German at home. Participants generally spoke German with their siblings and friends. Turkish was mostly spoken with parents. ▪ Only 30% of participants spoke Turkish at home with their siblings. ▪ Participants stated that the main reason for speaking only Turkish with parents and siblings at home was to improve their Turkish language skills, as they had no other chance to speak Turkish. The second reason participants gave for only speaking Turkish at home was the lack of German language skills of their mothers.
<i>Parents' Employment Status</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 60% of the participants had a father who had a full-time job with a minimum of 35 hours per week. ▪ 20% of fathers were unemployed. ▪ 20% of fathers were working part-time, less than 15 hours per week. ▪ 60% of participants had mothers working part-time, a minimum of 15 hours or more. ▪ 20% of participants had a full-time working mother, 35 hours or more per week. ▪ 20% of participants had mothers who were housewives.
<i>Materials</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Materially, participants were fairly well equipped. A high number of them had the following, at home or in their rooms: books, games, a CD-player, a TV, a computer, a play-station, and/or a Gameboy. Most frequently, their free time was spent listening to music, joining a sports team, internet surfing, reading books and magazines, meeting with friends and doing activities with their families. ▪ 90% of participants had 25-100 books at home and 10% had 1-24 books at home.
<i>Home Situation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 95% of participants shared a room with their same-sex siblings. ▪ All participants had at least one older or younger sibling. - 90% of participants were one of three children. ▪ 5% of participants had one sibling and the other 5% had more than two siblings. ▪ Families consisted only of children and parents. There were no parents who were divorced or separated.
<i>Free Time</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All participants spent their free time with friends and family. They enjoyed surfing the internet, reading books and magazines, playing computer games, shopping, going to see movies and watching TV.

The questions for the socio-economic questionnaire were selected from Shell Deutsche JugendStudie, 2010. The questions used in this study were selected based on their ability to support and answer the research questions in addition to being complementary to the focus group and individual life-history interviews. I selected questions related to measuring socio-economic background. In order to analyze the questionnaire, I used a frequency measurement on SPSS. The results are presented below and the questionnaire is in the (Appendix C).

5.4 Procedures

The ethical aspects of conducting research with girls were considered from the beginning of the research. At the initial stage, I sent a description of the research project and all the data collection materials (interview guidelines and the socio-demographic questionnaire) to the school to inform the headteacher, teachers, parents, and participants. The researcher's biography and contact details were also attached to the documents to give a detailed explanation to all partners. All of the girls took the documents home and brought a signed approval from their parents to participate in the interviews.

Before each interview started, the researcher explained the aims and goals of the research project, answered the participants' questions and made sure the participants still wanted to participate in the research. It was made clear that they could leave the research project at any time and they did not have to answer any questions if they did not feel comfortable.

The data collection started after the participants' final approval. Also, in some of the meetings, a teacher was present during the interview for a while to comfort the participants. The research assistant, who spoke both Turkish and German, assisted during the whole data collection process. During the different phases of data collection, I kept in mind that some of the participants were under 18 years old and that they were studying in deprived areas of Germany. I tried to eliminate the effects of possible stigmatization. During the preparation for data collection, I was very careful that the data collection process should not reinforce stereotypes and stigmatization, exploit the girls or cause them stress.

I emphasized that privacy and confidentiality was an important aspect of this research. The codes of ethics insist on protecting people's identities and research locations. All personal data ought to be secured or concealed and made public only behind a shield of anonymity (Christians, 2011, p. 66). As a researcher of this study, I took care to protect the identity of the participants and the names of the schools. Also, all participants on the research report were called by another name to protect their identities.

The researcher approached the question of truth in this research with care, as Christians (2011, p. 66) discusses that accurate data is a cardinal principle in social codes as well. Fabrications, fraudulent materials, omissions, and contrivance are both non-scientific and unethical. When finding the truth of the data, I chose the most appropriate data which would discuss the answers to the research questions.

5.4.1 Focus Groups

The focus groups were a suitable method of data collection because the main purpose of focus group research was to draw upon respondents' beliefs, attitudes and feelings by exploiting group processes (Freeman, 2006, p. 494). People with similarities gather to discuss a specific issue with the help of a moderator in a particular setting, where participants feel comfortable enough to engage in a dynamic discussion for one or two hours. Focus groups do not aim to reach a consensus on the discussed issues (Liamputtong, 2011, p.3).

Focus groups can be formed by those who have common biographic experiences or a conjunctive experiential space, to understand each other immediately insofar as these biographical commonalities become relevant in interaction and discourse. These commonalities can be found in different dimensions. They may concern the dimensions of generation, of gender, of milieu or class or the dimension of migration because the young people taking part in the research project have a common history of migration (Bohnsack & Pfaff, 2010). Methodologically, focus groups consist of six to eight people who come from similar social and cultural backgrounds or who have similar experiences or concerns. As a result, I had focus groups formed of girls of a similar age range, all of which were of Turkish immigrant origin.

The advantages of using focus groups also includes the fact that focus groups allow the researcher to interact directly with the respondents. This provides opportunities for the clarification of responses. Also, I decided to use focus groups as the method of data collection because I would be able to observe non-verbal reactions such as gestures, smiles and frowns, which may carry information that supplements, and on occasion even contradicts, the verbal response (Stewart *et al.*, 2007, p. 43).

I used focus groups as a tool in the participatory research, which could help to create an alternative access point for both the retrieval of richer data and greater understanding (McCartan *et al.*, 2012, p. 4). I decided that the participatory process could be a relevant method of selecting domains in the case of young, socially-vulnerable women of Turkish origin living in Germany, since it may lead to true public scrutiny and debate and help to include the voice of socially-vulnerable

girls. I claim that using a participatory approach, such as a focus group, supported the gathering of a large and rich data set in a short period of time.

The focus groups provided data on what it means to belong to a sub-group that is mainly framed negatively in political rhetorics and societal discourse in Germany. The focus groups became tools to highlight the inequalities faced by Turkish immigrants as a sub-group in Germany. In all interviews, the girls highlighted that their Turkish names and appearance made a significant difference to how they were treated. Such interpretations were important in order to analyze inequalities, collective opportunities, challenges and collective agency. The interview guideline is shown below.

Table 2: Focus Group Interview Questions

▪ What do you do in your free time? (Ice-breaking question)
▪ What is a good life (or a good school education) for girls of your age in all parts of the world?
▪ What is a good life (or a good school education) for girls of your age in Germany?
▪ What is a good life (or a good school education) for girls of Turkish migrant origin of your age in Germany?
▪ What are the challenges/obstacles to achieving a good life (or a good school education)? (inequalities)
▪ How do you remove challenges to achieve a good life that you value?
▪ Imagine, today is your 18 th birthday, what do you imagine that you have in your life? (Aspirations). If the girls were over 18 years old, the following question was asked: What do you plan for your 20th birthday or your 21st birthday?

In order to systematize the process of data collection, I operationalized the questions on the interview guideline for interviewing for both a good school education and good life opportunities and challenges. In addition to the focus group data, the table below was used as a visualization material for the participants to follow.

I had interview guidelines written in German and Turkish to support the girls during the interviews. The socio-demographic questionnaire was in German. The qualitative data was analyzed and the results of the socio-economic questionnaire provided clarity on the participants' background.

Table 3: Focus Group Interview Guideline

<p>What is a good life (or a good school education) for all girls of your age in all parts of the world. <i>*Please specify five aspects from most important to least important</i></p>	<p>What is a good life (or a good school education) for girls of your age in Germany? <i>*Please specify five aspects from most important to least important</i></p>	<p>What is a good life (or a good school education) for girls of Turkish migrant origin at your age in Germany? <i>*Please specify five aspects from most important to least important</i></p>	<p>What are the challenges/obstacles in your life to achieving a good life (or a good school education)? <i>*Please specify five aspects from most important to least important</i></p>	<p>How do you remove challenges to achieve a good life that you value?</p>	<p>Imagine, today is your 18th birthday. What do you imagine you have in your life?</p>
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5.4.2 Individual Life-History Interview

As discussed above, the focus groups provided data on the position of Turkish immigrants in German society in order to analyze inequalities. To respond to the research questions, the individual interviews were also necessary to analyze identity development, how opportunities are assessed from a personal perspective and how individuals removed challenges to create a life in Germany for themselves, which would also contribute to the Turkish immigrant sub-group.

From a theoretical point of view, I made the decision to use a life-history methodology. Life-history interviews are based on a belief that the subjects seek to make sense of their own lives by linking life experiences to particular events. Armstrong (1987) says the life-history method assigns significance and value to the person’s own story or to the interpretations that people place on their own experience as an explanation for their behavior. Although they are personal stories, life accounts also provide rich detail to the interface between the personal and the social as individuals describe their encounter with society and their engagement with heritage and culture.

Table 4: The Life History Interview Guideline

<p>*The main purpose of the individual interviews was to have in-depth data for the purpose of analyzing educational engagement and gender and how this is constructed by growing up, life experiences, school experiences, relationships, and identity. How capabilities, for a good life and a good school education, are enhanced/deprived by migration background and ethnicity, as well as how school education should respond to these needs and challenges will be discussed in-depth with recommendations to education policy and school reforms in Germany.</p>
<p>1 Growing-up</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Could you please tell me the most important stories from the time when you were growing up? ▪ What important milestones have affected your whole life, especially your educational engagement?
<p>2 Family and Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Could you please describe your family and the most important characteristics of your family? How are your relationships with your siblings, parents and other family members? ▪ Could you please describe the most important events in your family life? ▪ How have these events, or which aspects of these events have, affected your educational engagement?
<p>3 Interactions at School</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Could you please describe your experience of schooling? What are the most important events from your schooling?
<p>4 Friends and Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Could you please describe your relationships with your friends? What are the most important events that have happened with your friends? ▪ Is there anything you could tell me that has affected your educational engagement?
<p>5 Relations in Society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What are the most important experiences and events that you have experienced with others in society? ▪ Is there anything you could tell me that has affected your educational engagement?
<p>6 Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Who do you feel you are? ▪ Where do you feel you belong to? ▪ How does this belonging limit or promote opportunities for you?

In this research project, the qualitative evidence was presented from interviews with girls with different life experiences, which explored issues around identity development, opportunities, inequalities, social exclusion, marginalization, and agency. The life-history interview data contributed insights into the lived experiences of the girls. These discussions unpacked how girls construed identity building in school and in society while still being considered foreign in German society even after decades of living in Germany. As a result, the data provided

insights into their agency, the development of their identity, and how their identity deprived them or enhanced their opportunities for a good life and a good school education in Germany.

Interviews were scheduled with the girls on a separate day following the focus groups. The individual life-history interviews started with questions related to childhood and continued with school life and relationships with family members, teachers, friends, and society. The unpacking of the girls' experienced opportunities, difficulties, obstacles, and aspirations was performed with the final questions.

As a result, the life-history method was a valuable tool for collecting data on various components of life. These components, which were embedded and interacted with one another, included ethnicity, migration background, socio-demographic background, encountered obstacles, and opportunities for a good life and a good school education. The following table shows the interview guideline.

5.5 The process of Data Collection

The process of data collection started with collecting data for a pilot study. As described in the research design chapter, the pilot study determined how to implement the concepts of the Capability Approach into the interview guidelines, methods for data collection and methodology.

The data was collected from 20 focus groups, with five to six participants in each group, and 25 individual interviews with women of Turkish origin between 13 and 21 years old. The individual life-history interviews were collected from the girls who participated in the focus group interviews.

The focus group interviews took between 1.5 and 3.5 hours. The individual interviews were 1-2 hours long. After each focus group, participants answered a socio-economic questionnaire which took 12-15 minutes. The rationale behind the use of the socio-economic questionnaire was to analyze conversion factors and control the socio-economic differences of the participants because the research focused only on girls of Turkish origin living in Germany.

The data was collected, at school and education-related institutions, from the beginning of October, 2011 to the end of September, 2012. For the saturation procedure of Grounded Theory analysis, three focus groups and four individual interviews were collected in the middle of January, 2013. It is important to emphasize that all data were collected in the *Land* of North Rhine Westphalia (NRW) because each German *Land* has their own procedures, policies, and applications in education. The focus groups were built together with the school teachers. For example, girls aged 14 to 16 participated in the same focus group discussion. Individual interviews were scheduled for another time with the

participants. The data was collected mainly in a room inside the school or the organization. All meeting rooms were comfortable, private, silent and cozy, which made the process of data collection easy.

During the year of data collection, I spent time in the school to make observations. I had talks with other pupils and teachers in the school, who did not participate in the research. My aim was to get as much insight as possible from the school, teachers, and pupils to use for my analytical understanding of the data analysis. I participated in school visits to understand the challenges of the schools, and the German education system, from the perspectives of teachers, principals, and pupils in Hamburg, Bremen, and Berlin. These field visits opened paths for the creation of data interpretation tools to use in my analysis during the advanced stages of the research. As a result, the first year of research was spent on the phase of identifying problems for the project, as well as identifying the contributions to the field of methodology, literature on German education and welfare and also Capability Approach theory. I collected data from 20 focus groups, and the majority of the focus group participants also joined the individual life-history interviews. The data was in both Turkish and German. As a result, I had enough data to analyze for this doctoral research project.