

Summary

The Relationship between the Nanny and the Family

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Starting with birth, infants are in constant interaction with the people surrounding them. Especially in urban settlements, an increasing number of families employ nannies for child-care, and the nannies become one of the main actors on a child's life (Hitt, 2016). Unlike most of the other occupations, nannies are actively involved in the daily lives of their employer families as well (Akay, 2013; Barnhart, Huff, & Cotte, 2014). Since the child's interactions and their subsequent attachment patterns in the first years of life are known to affect life adjustment in later years (Sroufe & Rutter, 1984), it is important to investigate the nanny care and their effects on the cared child's development. However, to the best of our knowledge, there are not any publications which have evaluated the literature on the matter. In accordance with the aim of filling this gap, this review has been organized around two goals: First, defining *nannying* and summarizing the working conditions of the nannies in Turkey, to better understand the nanny-family relationship dynamics; second, presenting the literature pertaining to the nannies and the employer families.

Method

For the present review, Metuniqu search engine (Middle East Technical University's library search engine) was used to scan the databases listed in Tablo 1 [Table 1], for the terms listed in Tablo 2 [Table 2]. Database scan was performed between the dates of October 2017 and May 2018. Articles, books, e-books, theses and reviews published in the fields of psychology, anthropology, applied sciences, communication, international relations, economics, education, ethnic and cultural studies, history, law, nursing, political science, politics, religion and philosophy, social sciences, social work, sociology and women's studies were included. Scanning for each keyword / phrase was carried out in two stages. In the first stage, publications dated between 2015-2018 were searched for each keyword in order to

reach the contemporary information in the literature. In the second stage, a literature review was carried out by providing access to the pre-2015 publications and other publications from all the relevant articles, and resulted in 7241 publications. Duplicates of the same publication, publications addressing a different subject, publications about professionals working with more than one child in more structured environments (such as nursery and day-care teachers and caregivers), publications the full text of which were not available, and were prepared in languages other than Turkish or English were excluded. Finally, 39 publications were included in this review. In addition, other relevant publications which did not appear among the scan results, and supplementary publications were included in this review. Given the scarcity of literature, the results were presented in a narrative review format instead of systematic review.

Results and Discussion

The results were organized in two sections: the first section was on the definition of nannying and the working conditions of nannies in Turkey, and the second on the nannies' role over the family dynamics and the parent-child relationships.

Nannies and Nannying

The definition of the nanny. The nanny is counted as one of the domestic workers (Brown, 2011; Yıldırım, 2014). Some factors distinguish nannies from the other child-care givers: First, nannies are usually not a member of the employers' biological family (Desrosiers, 2008, in Weingarten, 2012; Kaylin, 2007, in Weingarten, 2012). Second, nannies still share the main responsibilities attributed to the mother and thus, act as a surrogate of the mother (Macdonald, 1998; Wood & Repetti, 2004). In that sense, nannying is similar to mothering, which could be defined as being responsible for the child's needs (Logsdon, Wisner, & Pinto-Foltz, 2006).

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Nannying in Turkey. In Turkey, nannying is done by either locally employed Turkish women, or by women who temporarily migrated to Turkey from abroad. These two groups of workers have similarities, as well as a few key differences.

Turkish nannies. Unfortunately, the publications having aimed to understand Turkish nannies are very scarce. Usually these workers are mentioned in general research about domestic workers. For instance, Suğur, Suğur and Göncü-Şavran (2008) found that this group of workers had low education levels, limited vocational capabilities and usually had migrated from rural to urban areas. They usually worked off-the-record and were advantageous for employment because of their cheap labor and the employer's ability to control the nanny through the control of her community. According to Yıldırım (2014), Turkish domestic workers faced a fixed amount of pay despite long work hours, work exhaustion, no career opportunities, and the risk of abuse. Akalın (2007) mentioned that the first nannies in Turkey were Turkish rural migrants. But due to their husbands' high control over these women's work status and the women's unwillingness to comply with the demands of the employers, foreigners were usually hired instead of the Turks.

Foreign nannies. These nannies are also mostly illegal workers (Erdem & Şahin, 2009), usually from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet countries (Gülçür & İlkkaracan, 2002; İçduygu & Aksel, 2012). Some of the problems that these women face are the uncertainties related to the work hours and job definitions, the employer- and state-initiated barriers and the risk of abuse (Demirdizen, 2013). The main goals of these nannies are to raise money and return to their homeland (Akalın, 2015; Akay, 2013; Toksöz & Ünlütürk Ulutaş, 2012). Being migrants is the key similarity between the Turkish and the foreign nannies (Erdem and Şahin, 2009). The differences are that foreigners are mostly live-in and work mostly as nannies, whereas the Turks usually work on daily shifts and can do all domestic jobs. Moreover, foreigners seem to provide cheaper labor, and have more flexible work hours because they live in their workplace (Yıldırım, 2014). This flexibility leads to boundary blurrings in the work hours, in job definitions, and in the employer-employee relationships (Akay, 2013; Akalın, 2015). In addition, the transnational migration experience is emotionally derailling for these nannies (Akay, 2013; Chung, 2010; Grinberg & Grinberg; 1984; Heckert, 2012; Lijtmaer, 2001; Toksöz & Ünlütürk Ulutaş, 2012; Yax-Fraser, 2008). Finally, foreign nannies are discredited both in their homelands and in Turkey (Akay, 2013; Gülçür & İlkkaracan, 2002; Keough, 2006; Wu, 2016). To cope with their problems, they tend to form communities (Akay, 2013; Brown, 2012; Straiton, Ledesma, & Donnelly, 2017).

The employers' expectations. The employers in Turkey seem to have two main expectations from the nannies: child-care and help with the housework (Akalın, 2007). The first of these expectations is explicit, whereas the second expectation is implicitly demanded. The implicit demand could be connected to the understanding of the nanny as *one of the family*. This understanding is beneficial both for the nanny and for the employers (Akalın, 2007; Akay, 2013). However, the employers are confused in defining the family role of the nannies (Barnhart et al., 2014). In addition, the employers have expectations related to the personalities of the nannies, including being submissive (Arat-Koç, 1990; in Akalın, 2007), loving and caring (İnan ve Doğan-Temur, 2010; Leach ve ark., 2008), defining their relationship with the cared child as secondary to the mother-child relationship (Kaya, 2008), and working as if she is the *mother* and as if the workplace is *her own house* (Akalın, 2015).

Nannies' Role in the Parent-Child Interactions

The importance of the family in child development. According to the Family Systems Theory, individuals cannot be evaluated separately from their interactions with their social environments (Dallos & Draper, 2015; Smith-Acuna, 2010). Quite the contrary, they are embedded in a dynamic system. Focusing on the family as a system, one could argue that employing nannies could alter not only the child's, but also the whole of the family dynamics. A similar theory is developed by Bronfenbrenner, who argued that there was continuous interaction between the individual, the people and situations surrounding that individual, and time (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 2006). With these two theories in mind, it becomes important to understand a child's psychosocial development and mental health through understanding her/his past and present relationships with all the actors in her/his life, and these actors' relationships with each other. However, most of the literature is focused on dyadic mother-infant and mother-child relationships. Some researchers are also interested in understanding triadic mother-father-infant and mother-father-child relationships (e.g. Lindsey & Caldera, 2006) but more efforts are needed.

Nannies can be counted as a part of the family system as well. In addition to a lack of research on the relationship dynamics between the nannies and the cared children, research concerning the nannies' relationships with the other family members and the reflections of these relationships on the nanny-child relationship is also lacking. Therefore, in the following section, research findings which could indirectly inform the aforementioned dynamics are included as well.

Mother, infant/child and nanny interaction.

With the infant's birth, a new process begins for the mother, involving the efforts to sustain and facilitate the infant's survival and to provide a loving relationship (Stern, Bruschiweiler-Stern, & Freeland, 1988). Nannies could be related twofold to this new process: First is the possibility that the mother-child relationship dynamics reappear in the nanny-child relationship, since nannying is considered *shadow mothering*. Second is the possibility for the nannies to affect the mother-child relationship as a third person, whose duty is also raising the child. This second effect could be positive, negative, or undefinable in terms of valence. On one side of the coin, nannies might be helpful in terms of sharing the mother's load and compensating for her absence. On the other side, the mothers' demand for a motherlike-but-not-too-close nanny (Macdonald, 1998) might impact the nanny-child relationship negatively. Moreover, the nannies' migration experiences and past cultural practices might lead to negative consequences in terms of the emotional availability and strength of the nanny-child and mother-nanny connection (Akay, 2013; Greenfield, Flores, Davis ve Salimkhan, 2008). It might be better for future researchers to further examine these phenomena.

Father, infant/child and nanny interaction. Men and women tend to go through different experiences in becoming a parent (Cowan & Cowan, 2000). Some of the literature examining fathering is focused on the dyadic father-child relationship, whereas some other researchers try to understand fathering through examining the mother-father romantic involvement as a contributor to the father-child relationship. One connection between these two relationships is the way that the romantic relationship of the parents is affected by the challenges of having a child, and the other is the way that the parents' romantic relationship affects their co-parenting dynamics and subsequently their child's development (Öngider, 2013).

The scarcity of research concerning fathering and the father-child relationship is accompanied by the scarcity of research on the fathers' interaction with the other family members and the impact of these interactions on child development. In addition, to the best of our knowledge, there is no research which has examined the dynamics of the father-nanny relationship. Therefore, more research is needed to draw conclusions.

Nannies' impact over the family dynamics. One could argue that there are a few ways that the nannies impact the cared child: a) The direct impact, which is based on the nanny-child relationship, b) The indirect impact, based on the nanny's interaction with the other factors in the child's life. This relationship may be triadic, as in the mother-nanny-child relationship, or quadratic and

more, as in the mother-father-nanny-child relationship. Especially the live-in nannies start getting involved in the family affairs, starting with their employment (Zdravomyslova, 2010). From this point of view, it may be possible to estimate that the quality of the roles that the nannies assume at home and the relationships they have with family members will also affect the quality of the relationships that family members establish between each other. However, there seems to be a gap in the literature concerning these more complicated relationships. More research is needed in this area to see the bigger picture.

Conclusion and Suggestions

In the present narrative review, the literature pertaining to the nannies and their direct and indirect impact on the cared child's psychological development and the employer families' relationship dynamics were reported. The review pointed out to the lack of research to properly understand the complicated interaction dynamics which take place within the nanny-employing families. Therefore, some of the theoretical connections were based on the literature with similar terms and relationships. Having stated that, the findings are sufficient to argue that this area is worth exploring and more research is needed.

In light of the findings, a few suggestions are made. First, future family researchers could benefit from breaking free from the focus on dyadic relationships and focusing on interaction dynamics involving multiple agents, like mother-nanny-child, father-nanny-child and mother-father-nanny-child relationships. Second, the dynamic match/mismatch patterns of the family members and the nannies are worth consideration in the future. Third, in understanding the relationship dynamics, other factors like the personality characteristics, the past relationships, the attachment styles and the mental health of the nannies and the family members might be taken into account. Finally, training and intervention programs might be developed to nullify the aforementioned negative factors in the nanny interactions of the employer families.