Social Capital, Acculturation and Mothering Kiwisitos:

Young Colombian Mothers Navigating Motherhood as Refugees in New Zealand

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ABSTRACT

This thesis investigated the factors that supported young Colombian women to navigate the resettlement process when they came to New Zealand as pregnant refugees. Several theoretical frameworks, including Putnam's (2000) social capital theory (bonding, bridging, and linking), Berry's (1990) acculturation approaches (assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalisation) and Ager and Strang's (2008) domains of integration were used to frame the study and undertake initial analysis. The purpose of the study was to learn from the young Colombian mothers in order to inform and improve the resettlement experiences of future young mothers from refugee backgrounds. Included in the thesis is a reflexive analysis that situates my Colombian identity and the fact that I was also pregnant during my own settlement journey and the course of this thesis.

Using a case study methodology and a social constructivist approach, I conducted semi-structured interviews with eight young Colombian women who resettled in Hamilton as part of New Zealand's refugee resettlement quota programme. Through thematic content analysis, I found two emergent themes. The first theme draws on a Colombian cultural concept of 'crossing the pond' (facing challenges) and highlights how the young mothers navigate two cultural worlds in order to raise their Kiwisitos (little Kiwis). The second theme introduces three tasks that they undertake as they navigate their resettlement journey. The three tasks are orienting, surveying-orienting and navigating. These themes highlighted an awareness of how the participants managed social interactions within their community, the wider society, and various institutions. These three tasks provide a nuanced appreciation of how social capital relates to broader understandings of integration through the interstitial, relational and contextual spaces they navigate as they and their children transition into new settlement contexts.

Following the initial analysis, I chose to further examine underlying discourses that impacted on the young mother's experiences. An analysis of the influence of the "good mother' discourse and the "good migrant discourse, then led me to propose my own original typology of four of motherhood representations that encapsulated the young women's experiences. This framework distinguishes four forms of experiencing motherhood: motherhood as protection;

motherhood as cultural rupture; motherhood as cultural transmission; and motherhood as personal development.

I argue that these four typologies provide an understanding of how the young mothers move through different acculturation strategies which influence their experience of integration providing a more dynamic and relational appreciation beyond normative integration and acculturation models. Overall, this study offers a valuable opportunity to advance insights that can help organisations, policymakers and practitioners, among others, to work more effectively with young mothers from refugee backgrounds and understand the various acculturation strategies that they may embrace. In doing so, this research seeks to illuminate the stories, support factors and integration experiences of this unique population and its associated policy and practice implications.

DEDICATION

To my beloved son Emmanuel, who inspired my journey. Thank you for showing me the challenge and the beauty of motherhood. And Carlos Dario, the brave man who crossed the ocean with me. I love you dearly.

Jesus replied, "What is impossible with man is possible with God." **Luke 18:27**

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Ehara koe i a ia!

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GLOSSARY

Aotearoa – North Island, now used as the Māori name for New Zealand.

La Kiwi – An oftentimes derogatory and dismissive term used by fellow nationals to refer to a Colombian trying to 'get ahead'.

Kiwisitos – 'ito' (little in English) is a diminutive form that refers to a small object or person in Spanish. When the young Colombian mothers call their children Kiwisitos, they are defining them as 'young' Kiwis.

First-time mothers – A mother who has given birth to her first child.

Voluntary immigrant – A person who has chosen to leave their home country.

Newcomers – The term "newcomers" can be used to describe both refugees and immigrants who are within the first few years of their arrival in a new country.

Scarce – Deficient in quantity; not plentiful.

Kapa haka – The Māori action of chanting and dancing in groups as an expression of cultural identity.

Latin American – Regarding the American countries south of the U.S. where people speak Spanish and Portuguese.

Spanglish – Term used as a combination of speaking Spanish and English

Day of the Candles – A cultural practice in the Colombian community. Colombians have given this day a meaning in which they celebrate not only the Catholic Immaculate Conception, but it also marks the unofficial start of the Colombian Christmas.

CHAPTER 1: Forging motherhood as a refugee in New Zealand

1.1   Introduction

Lucia was born in a small town in Colombia where increasing violence and unrest had disrupted her community's sense of calm and peace. She was forced to flee the country after her father was arrested by the Colombian police. She was fourteen.

After fleeing to Ecuador, she sought help and asylum in Esmeralda[1], where non-governmental entities assisted her while they sought refuge for her in another country. Scared and not knowing what would happen in her life, she received a call confirming that she had been offered an opportunity to emigrate to New Zealand. Three days before embarking on the plane, she discovered she was pregnant. Terrified that she would not be allowed to travel, she told no one about the news. Seven and a half months into her pregnancy, she stepped onto a plane to begin a new life in New Zealand, a country she barely even knew existed.

On the very last day of her six week settlement at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre, she decided to let someone from the centre know that she needed help with her pregnancy. It was at this stage that she started thinking about her life ahead: "How will I support my baby? How will I honour my parents' life lessons in New Zealand? Can I speak Spanish to my baby? What if he only wants to speak English? How will I communicate with people? Who is going to help me when I deliver the baby? How am I going to work and study? How can I make new friends?"

Lucia's baby was born with the help of a nurse at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre. A month later, she was resettled in Hamilton with her newborn child. A new story and journey had begun.

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[1] Esmeralda is a coastal city in north-western Ecuador and along the border with Colombia.

Lucia's story illustrates a young Colombian mother's experience of navigating motherhood as a refugee in New Zealand. When analysing the experiences of Colombian mothers', it becomes evident that early motherhood in the context of forced migration is impacted and influenced by the original and host culture, as well as their attendant values and beliefs. This study brings to life the stories, voices, and memories of young Colombian mothers in New Zealand. For the young mothers who participated in this study, their unique circumstances as Colombian refugees in New Zealand gave rise to unique phenomena that at times affected their ability to feel supported in their new homes. In other ways, their situation placed them in an in-between space in which they could not feel a sense of belonging in either New Zealand or Colombian spaces. A deeper appreciation for these complexities can help educators and policymakers support and meet the needs of communities with refugee backgrounds. With this understanding in mind, I first discuss the important focus of the study before outlining the research objectives and structure of this thesis.

1.2 Using the term "young Colombian mothers"

In this thesis, I use the term 'young Colombian mothers' to denote my participants' demographic characteristics as well as their particular experiences as first-time mothers in New Zealand. I have chosen to refer to my participants in this way rather than first using refugee as a dominant identifier. Of course, being a refugee is something critically important to their experience, but it is also important to me that I do not define them absolutely through that experience. For this reason, I am concentrating on their young motherhood status. I will, at times, return to considerations of the experiences of forced migration and the related trauma and dislocation that impacted their experience. However, I have chosen to present them in this way to avoid labelling and totalising tendencies sometimes associated with the refugee label. This lens on their motherhood contributes to a foundational understanding of them young mothers engaged in a resettlement process in New Zealand. I now move the following section to outline the research objectives.

1.3 Aim and scope of the study

As mentioned, young Colombian mothers with refugee status face unique challenges resettling in New Zealand and rely on specific strategies to feel at home in their new environs. In order to identify these challenges and theorise their broader significance, this study examines the

factors involved in facilitating eight young Colombian mothers' experiences of resettlement and the development of their identities as young mothers in a foreign country. The analysis of these young women's resettlement experiences is guided by one overarching question and two subsidiary research questions. The main research question is:

What factors aided in facilitating young Colombian mothers' experiences of integration and acculturation in New Zealand?

The subsidiary research questions are:

1. *How did the mothering experiences of young Colombian mothers in New Zealand affect their identities as first-time mothers and their perceptions of their children's identities?*

2. *How did young Colombian mothers navigate the resettlement process in New Zealand for their children?*

At the time of data collection, this study's participants consisted of Colombian mothers between the ages of 18 to 24. All participants were Colombian nationals with legal refugee status in New Zealand, who had experienced the refugee resettlement process.

My interest in the resettlement experiences of young Colombian mothers, such as Lucia, arose from my own experience as a migrant and first-time mother in New Zealand. This interest was further intensified by my work as a refugee support volunteer for the New Zealand Red Cross. I arrived in New Zealand in January 2016 to pursue a Foundation Certificate in Academic English, followed by a PhD in Education, at the University of Auckland. In 2017, at the age of 25, I gave birth to my first-born in New Zealand, via an emergency caesarean section, after two days of induced labour. While my husband accompanied me throughout the pregnancy and delivery, I still found that the experience of being a first-time mother in a foreign country to be scary, confusing and lonely. My participants' mothering experiences resonated with my own as a young Colombian mother, except for the fact that I was a voluntary migrant. Refugees confront greater hardships when resettling in a foreign country and often experience conflicting emotions as they struggle to build new lives. Many young Colombian mothers came to New Zealand without partners or family members and I wondered how they navigated their way in this foreign country. I also wondered how I could support them and contribute towards their successful resettlement more generally in New Zealand.

The term 'refugee' applies to any person who:

> Owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence… is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it." (United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, 1951).

Refugees frequently escape without preparation, belongings, or the chance to say goodbye to loved ones, as was the case with Lucia. As of mid-2020, there were 26.3 million refugees worldwide, around half of whom were under 18 (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2020). Pertinent to this study, roughly half the number of refugees are women and girls (UN General Assembly, 2020).

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) proposed three sustainable solutions for refugees forced to live outside of their home countries for prolonged periods: voluntary repatriation to the home country; local integration in the first asylum country; and integration into a third resettlement country. Each of these options requires careful cultural, economic, legal, civil, and political considerations (Marlowe, 2017). Voluntary repatriation represents the most common choice, but the number of refugees that have been able to return home has been limited due to protracted conflicts. For this study, I refer to the third option as resettlement.[2] Resettlement is the least common pathway and accessible to less than 1% of refugees. However, it is usually chosen in circumstances where it is impossible for a person to return home or remain in the initial host country. It involves the "transfer of refugees from a state in which they have initially sought protection to a third state that has agreed to admit them— as refugees—with permanent-residence status" (UNHCR 2011, p. 3).

Despite the fact that resettlement is the least common pathway, New Zealand has provided many refugees the opportunity to resettle between 2004 and 2020 (UNHCR 2020). New Zealand has resettled over 35,000 refugees from more than 50 countries under the Refugee

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[2] I distinguish settlement as the state of being settled and resettlement as the settlement of a group of people in a new context.

Quota Programme (Immigration New Zealand, 2020). More than 2,200 of the female refugees who have been resettled in New Zealand since December 2007 are from Colombia (Refugee and Protection Unit Statistics Pack Current to June 2020, August 2020).

1.4 Colombia's history and forced migration context

While Colombia has experienced significant forced migration movements from Latin America since the 1980s (Schmeidl, 2001), the Colombian conflict actually began in the 1960s. It started with the rise of guerrilla groups, notably the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), that appeared in response to political and social exclusion, social injustice, and unequal land distribution. Since then, Colombia has had one of the most extended internal armed conflicts in the world, wherein different paramilitary groups, criminal gangs, guerrilla groups, and governmental forces struggle for territorial control (Centro de Memoria Histórica, 2013). The Colombian armed forces and various levels of local and national governmental institutions supported and empowered the activities of the paramilitary groups in various districts of the country (UNHCR, 2013). Paramilitary groups[3] or "self-defence groups" emerged in Colombia as a mechanism for the private defence of property against extreme leftist guerrillas. Over time, these groups established client relationships with local elites and the armed forces. They also developed drug trafficking networks that gave rise to the excessive use of violence in defence of their political and economic interests (Romero, 2003).

For 50 years, "left and right-wing paramilitaries continued to threaten the nation, coercively displacing regular citizens and executing denials of basic rights like torture, kidnapping, mass killings, prisoner taking, utilisation of child soldiers, extrajudicial killings, and abuse of captured combatants" (UNHCR, 2013, p. 29). After 50 years of armed conflict, the FARC signed a peace agreement between the Colombian government and the country's largest guerrilla group on November 24, 2016. However, this agreement left the country with the massive task of post-conflict reconstruction and reconciliation, and peace and stability are still in their early stages. Numerous other armed groups that remain active across the country (Phelan, 2019).

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[3] Paramilitary groups have been one of the main illegal armed actors in the history of the Colombian conflict.

According to the report *Basta ya!* (Enough) from Centro Histórico de Memoria Nacional-CHMN (the National Center for Historical Memory), from 1958 to 2012, more than 220,000 people lost their lives during the conflict, and almost 82 per cent were Colombian nationals. Additionally, 27,000 people disappeared (Reyes, 2013). Colombian citizens have been the conflict's primary victims (Centro de Memoria Histórica, 2013:19f). The European Commission (2019) estimates that more than 9 million people have been internally displaced between 1985 to 2019, and more than 500,000 Colombians are currently refugees (UNHCR, 2020). Due to the lack of long-standing peace agreements and political vulnerability, the number of Colombian asylum seekers and refugees have increased. The impacts of this protracted conflict continue to reverberate today.

Internationally, more than 7 million relocated Colombian people have left their homelands due to these conflicts (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2020). The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) confirms that people from Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) represent at least 50.4% of all forced migrants. In 2017 there were 6.3 million LAC forced migrants under the age of 18. These forced movements are also affected by socio-political conflicts stemming from failed land reforms, impoverishment, repression, and the marginalisation of Indigenous people and peasant populations. The illegal drug trade and the expansion and creation of guerrilla movements have further exacerbated the situation. As of 2015, Colombia was Latin America's largest source of refugees, with more than 340,000 refugees and 6.5 million internally displaced people (UNHCR, 2015b).

1.5 The New Zealand context

While countries like the United States, Ecuador, and Venezuela continue to host the vast majority of Colombian refugees, New Zealand is currently home to a small group of Colombian refugees affected by the extended civil war. Most Colombian refugees arrived in New Zealand at the end of the 1990s. According to Immigration New Zealand [INZ] (2020), 2,224 Colombians were accepted as refugees in New Zealand under the quota programme from 2007 to 2020. Former refugees from Colombia have settled in several New Zealand communities, including Waikato (Hamilton), Wellington, Nelson, and most recently Invercargill.

New Zealand established their formal refugee resettlement programme in 1987. The New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy is designed to help refugees once they are accepted to live in New Zealand (Immigration New Zealand, 2012). Its main goal is to integrate refugees into society and help them participate economically as soon as possible, so that each person can live independently. Resettled refugees are entitled to the same rights as other New Zealanders, and thus develop a sense of belonging to their communities and to New Zealand (Immigration New Zealand, 2012). The strategy has five aims:

1. **Participation:** refugees dynamically take part in New Zealand life and have a determined sense of belonging in the country. It is all about connecting, utilising, and belonging.

2. **Health and well-being:** refugees and their families enjoy independent, healthy, and safe lives. This aim relates to refugees' access and confidence.

3. **Education:** English language skills help refugees engage in education and development in daily life.

4. **Self-sufficiency:** for their independence, all working-age refugees are in paid work or supported by a family member in paid work. This creates financial stability and independence.

5. **Housing:** refugees live in secure, healthy, affordable, and safe homes, without needing government housing assistance (Immigration New Zealand 2012, p. 3).

As the strategy's overarching goal is to integrate refugees into society and make them independent, its deployment will provide opportunities to build social assets, such as social capital (Putnam, 2000). Refugees need access to services and to engage in New Zealand society as refugees. Although New Zealand represents an opportunity to enhance refugees' lives, Pittaway (2004) notes that:

[O]ver time reality slowly sets in, and refugees realise that it is going to be more difficult that they thought to achieve all that they hoped for. On top of the complicated set of difficulties refugees encountered, they still come to countries of resettlement with the "emotional baggage" they bring from their homeland experiences. (p. 26)

Pittaway indicates that, in this circumstance, refugee individuals often experience isolation, cultural displacement, and guilt. High-quality resettlement services, however, can address some of the effects of these challenges (Pittaway, 2004).

Under the refugee resettlement programme, the UNHCR, in conjunction with Immigration New Zealand, selects refugees from the country of first settlement and places them in a six-week orientation program at Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre, located in Auckland (INZ, 2020). The programme provides orientation, English language classes, health screening, and mental health support to help refugees settle. After the programme, once former refugees arrive in their settlement locations, they are supported by New Zealand Red Cross. New Zealand Red Cross plays an essential role in the process of refugee resettlement. As the world´s largest humanitarian network, it offers protection and assistance to people affected by disasters and conflicts (New Zealand Red Cross, 2018). Its mission focuses on improving the lives of vulnerable people by mobilising the power of humanity and enhancing community resilience. Among the humanitarian services it provides are refugee resettlement programmes, such as 'Pathways to Settlement' and 'Pathways to Employment'. The Pathway to Settlement helps them build on their individual strengths and develop their independence to make their transition to New Zealand as smooth as possible. The Pathway to Employment assists former refugees to find meaningful and sustainable employment and become financially independent (INZ, 2012). The ultimate goal of these programmes is for resettled refugees to become independent in their new lives (INZ, 2012).

Nevertheless, the integration and resettlement of refugees in New Zealand depends on many aspects, such as support services, the dynamics of refugee communities, government policies, and individuals' abilities to manage the stress of resettlement (Marete, 2011). Research shows that single refugee women go through particularly unique challenges (Goodkind & Deacon, 2004). Those difficulties occur not only because their needs and experiences differ from refugee men, but because a mother's role as primary caregiver means that their wellbeing is critical to the adjustment and safety of their children. Refugees often come to New Zealand with limited or disrupted education and must adapt to learning the English language. Language challenges can make it hard to find a job and communicate with people from other backgrounds. Gender issues have been highlighted in language acquisition (New Zealand Immigration Service, 2004), as lack of childcare or differing cultural customs might prevent

women from accessing English language classes. Pittaway (2004) discusses how this inaccessibility leads to barriers to navigating the social systems, acquiring well-paid jobs, and thriving in the education system, which are necessary for acculturation (p.29). Other refugees arrive with academic qualifications that are often not recognised in New Zealand (Gray & Elliot, 2001). Many of them do not have the capacity to pursue meaningful employment. Refugees also point to racism and discrimination by New Zealand employers who do not understand refugees´ cultures (Gray & Elliot, 2001).

Central to a positive settlement experience is having a range of social connections (Elliot and Yusuf, 2014; Zetter et al. 2006). Resettlement is a life-changing experience as refugees are frequently relocated to countries where the people, culture, and language are quite different from their own (New Zealand Red Cross, 2014). During resettlement, refugees often experience varying cultural challenges, such as a lack of knowledge of the local language, and educational and economic barriers, such as a lack of access to higher education and issues of educational equivalence. All these barriers can affect their family relations and ability to cope and offer mutual support.

Conversely, successful resettlement can give refugees an opportunity to pursue hopes and aspirations, living a life with relative security and protection. Many refugees who live in camps, for example, are not self-sufficient and lack basic rights, such as access to quality education and protection (Gerver, 2021). In contrast, permanent residence "ensures protection against refoulement and provides a resettled refugee and his/her family or dependents with access to rights similar to those enjoyed by nationals" (UNHCR, 2021). In other words, the legal status and opportunity for eventual citizenship that resettlement afford to these forced migrants gives them access to more socio-economic opportunities, stable settlement, and ongoing protection (Department of Labour, New Zealand, 2008). Resettlement thus presents both challenges and opportunities.

1.6 Framing the study

The literature provides many useful frameworks to draw on when explaining the way in which refugees and other forced migrants navigate their way into and through new contexts. To frame the study and assist with the data gathering focus and design, I have chosen three theories to draw concepts from – Putnam's (2000) social capital theory, Berry's (1990) acculturation

theory and Ager and Strang (2008)'s domains of integration, in order to understand eight young Colombian mothers' experiences of resettlement in New Zealand. In the nature of open-ended qualitative research, further theories may be drawn upon to assist in analysing the data and explaining the findings.

Putnam (2000) explains social capital as the relationships between people and their social connections. In the context of resettlement, those social contacts may affect people's degree of acculturation, which has two key dimensions: cultural maintenance and contact and participation with the host society (Berry, 1990). In this thesis acculturation during resettlement is viewed as a process of "meaning-making", where refugees build their own socio-cultural identities and understandings in distinctive and new social contexts (Bhatia, 2012; Hermans and Gieser, 2013). Forced to live in multiple countries, young refugees must negotiate their past and present cultural identities, including the customs/traditions that they wish to keep (Bhatia, 2012).

Integration signals adaptation to the host society. It is a two-way process, which means that integrating does not only rest on the efforts, achievements, and responsibilities of refugees and their children but on the openness and structure of the host society (Ager & Strang 2008; Phillimore 2012; Waters & Pineau 2015; Korteweg, 2017). By comparison, separation occurs when individuals maintain the heritage culture and reject new relationships. Assimilation occurs when individuals acquire the receiving culture and discard the heritage culture. Marginalisation happens when individuals reject the receiving culture and discard the heritage culture (Berry, 1990).

1.7 Significance of the study

The distinguishing features of the present study include its focus on young Colombian mothers in the context of New Zealand and the examination of the factors that support their acculturation and integration into New Zealand society.

There are several features that distinguish this thesis from the work of other scholars researching mothers' integration into host societies. The participants' status as young mothers is this study's first distinguishing feature. Research suggests that providing mothers with refugee backgrounds with resources and social support can facilitate their transition to motherhood (Bloomfield et al., 2005); however, extant research on refugee mothers has tended

to focus on mothers who are older, typically between 25-30 years of age. Being a young mother can complicate motherhood and make their experiences different from that of older mothers. When caring for an infant, young mothers are at greater risk for stress and depression in late pregnancy and during the postpartum period than adult older mothers (Torres, Goyal, Burke-Aaronson, Gay, & Lee, 2017). For example, a new-born frequently presents new stressors and demands during a tumultuous developmental stage for a first-time young mother, which hinders adaptation to motherhood (DeVito, 2010). In DeVito's (2010) qualitative study of 126 young mothers, aged 13 to 19, participants relied heavily on their own mothers for baby care needs because of their lack of knowledge, such as what to do when the baby cried. Similarly, Reis (1989) found that young mothers differed from older mothers in terms of knowledge of infant development, punishing posture toward childrearing, and high level of depression. Generally, young mothers are often not as prepared for parenting responsibilities as older mothers (Lewin, Mitchell, & Ronzio, 2013). Furthermore, as Lipman, Georgiades, & Boyle (2011) noted, being born to a young mother, as opposed to an older mother, is related to lower personal income and poorer educational achievement. We need to pay more attention to young mothers because of these risks.

Young first-time mothers have to cope with increased responsibilities following the birth of their babies and juggle competing demands from study, work, and caring for a new-born, all while trying to adapt to a new country. In Australia, Lewig, Arney, and Salveron, (2010) demonstrated that the variations in expectations for being a parent in a new country and the challenges of integration and acculturation made refugee parents contemplate the idea of returning back to their home country. This suggests that facilitating young mothers' transition to motherhood is likely to support their integration and acculturation into the host society.

This thesis' emphasis on mothers' social adaptation and motherhood also departs from much of the other research within the field that focuses on the wellbeing of their children (e.g., Ajdukovic & Ajdukovic, 1993, 1998; Druzic et al.,1997; Berman, 2001; Correa-Velez, Gifford, & McMichael, 2015; Shallow & Whitington, 2014; Tozer, Khawaja, & Schweitzer, 2018; Sahin et al., 2021). While the wellbeing of their children is an important consideration, more attention needs to be paid to mothers and their practices. Existing studies indicate that refugee mothers' trauma, posttraumatic stress, and depression can affect their children's adjustment (East, Gahagan, & Al-Delaimy, 2018). Other scholars contend that there is a need to consider family well-being from a holistic standpoint, and not simply the mothers by themselves (e.g.,

Deng, & Marlowe, 2013; Smit, 2015; Lazarevic, 2017). Although some researchers have attempted to identify significant variables for parenting as immigrants in a new country (Ochocka & Janzen, 2008), there is still insufficient research with refugee mothers themselves, such as the strategies they deploy to parent their children while managing the interconnected challenges of resettlement in a new country (Grant & Guerin, 2014).

Understanding the unique needs of refugee mothers is important, as they are prioritised for resettlement by the UNHCR. Young refugees and their families are often forced to leave their home countries because they were confronted with life-threatening conditions, such as persecution, armed conflict, and war (UNHCR, 2018). The forced migration experience is typically characterised by challenges and adversity before, during, and after escaping their home country, which place extraordinary demands on the integration and overall functioning of young refugees (UNHCR, 2010). A range of studies have demonstrated rising rates of integration concerns and acculturative stressors among young refugees, who are an especially vulnerable subgroup among the displaced people population (Bean, Derluyn, Eurelings Bontekoe, Broekaert, & Spinhoven, 2007; Bean, Eurelings-Bontekoe, & Spinhoven, 2007; Derluyn & Broekaert, 2007; Ellis, MacDonald, Lincoln, & Cabral, 2008; Lustig et al., 2004).

A third defining feature of this study is the conceptual aim of this investigation. This study aims to draw on, but not be limited to, significant concepts and theories from the literature, such as the role of social capital in facilitating young Colombian mothers' experiences of resettlement and their identities as young mothers in a foreign country. The outcome is intended to provide an integrated and contextual explanation of their unique experiences. The existing body of literature on young Colombian mothers is scarce, despite the increase in literature focused on women and migration (e.g., Donato et al., 2006; Purkayastha, 2005). Existing research that examines refugee mothers' resettlement is more prevalent within the field of mental health and wellbeing (Milkie, Maghbouleh, & Peng, 2018; Bruno, Tringale, & Al-Delaimy, 2020; Abi Zeid Daou, 2021; East, Gahagan, & Al-Delaimy, 2018). Research on refugee mental health and wellbeing indicated poor levels of connection with friends, family or services and challenges establishing trust; however there were opportunities for reciprocal connections (Ilyas et al., 2021). Liamputtong and Kurban, (2018) noted that young refugees are affected by different cultural and structural inequalities that influenced their health and wellbeing. In their findings, mental wellbeing was young refugees' greatest concern; however, the existence of positive social support in their new context had a great impact on their health

and wellbeing. The lens of social capital, with its focus on social connection, can help us understand the social processes that facilitate integration and acculturation of refugees. In turn, this can help governments/agencies devise programmes to better support resettlement.

The New Zealand context of the study is a fourth defining feature. Every year since 1989, up to 750 new refugees have resettled in New Zealand under the United Nations Convention (1951). This quota increased to 1,500 places from July 2020 (New Zealand Immigration, 2019). Unfortunately, this quota was not met in 2020/21 due to the global impacts of COVID-19. Although the settlement process in New Zealand is well-researched, the literature on refugee resettlement is scarce. When resettled in society, many refugees face difficulties affecting their initial integration into the community (Department of Labour, 2004; Ministry of Social Development, 2008; Chile, 2007). This study on the resettlement of young Colombian mothers can contribute to better understanding of the challenges of resettlement, which can inform service provision for refugees.

No New Zealand scholar has engaged in research that has explored young refugee mothers' experiences of integration and acculturation. This poses a problem for New Zealand agencies providing services to refugees because it limits their ability to tailor their services to support this group's needs. The fact that no study has focused on this group also means that their collective needs and voices have not been heard. Yet there is a story to be told and heard; a story of the constraints and opportunities of being a young mother and a refugee in New Zealand.

Few empirical studies have been conducted on refugee mothers in New Zealand. This study contributes to the limited research on refugee mothers in New Zealand and young Colombian mothers' experiences of integration and acculturation worldwide. Limited research has also been conducted about Colombian refugees in Canada, Ecuador, the United States of America and the United Kingdom (Arsenault, 2010; Jaramillo, 2008; Bermudez, 2013; Collier, et al., 2003; Osorio & Orjuela, 2009). Only Sanchez (2016) and Lopez (2018) have conducted research on Latino refugees in New Zealand. Sanchez's (2016) study included five Colombian refugees, three Chilean refugees, and one Salvadorian refugee, while Lopez (2018) conducted research solely with Colombian refugees in New Zealand. Much of the literature related to young refugee mothers' experiences of integration and acculturation was conducted in

Australia and British contexts. In Australia, Watts, Liamputtong, and McMichael (2015) examined the experiences of integration among sixteen young female African refugees who experienced teenage pregnancy and early motherhood. The authors indicated that, despite the positive factors of motherhood, young mothers still faced difficulties that impact their lives. Some of the challenges included managing the competing demands of schooling, coping with many responsibilities following the birth of the baby, work and looking after the baby in settlement contexts. Young mothers also noted that they received support from their close friends, mothers, and siblings, but rarely from the baby's father or the wider community. Watts, Liamputtong, and McMichael (2015) proposed that policy makers and service providers support the role of the young mothers' own sisters, grandmothers, mothers and aunts after early motherhood, as the study suggested that this would help ease young mothers' re-engagement with work, education, health, and other aspects of life. Similarly, McMichael (2013) examined the ways young female refugees negotiate pregnancy and early motherhood while also coping with the challenges of resettlement in Australia. The study suggested that early motherhood is associated with complexities and difficulties related to education, social support, and housing. McMichael (2013) noted that policy responses needed to embody an understanding of young refugee women's choice to become a mother, and offer support for teenagers mothers to assist settlement. In the United Kingdom, Cook and Cameron (2015) examined social issues surrounding teen pregnancy. Their study indicated that some of the social outcomes of early motherhood include unemployment, lower salaries and educational achievements, and poverty. In addition, children of young mothers are more likely to become young parents themselves. McMichael (2013) who research in Australia proposed that strategies to address these issues should include interventions, such as school attendance, building teenagers' skills, and receiving professional contraception services.

1.8 Overview of the thesis

Chapter 1 set out the motivation, aims, context and focus of the study. It highlighted the key theoretical concepts that will be employed throughout the thesis and discussed the original contributions this thesis will make to the field. The next five chapters are as follows.

Chapter 2 describes the three theoretical perspectives that underpin the design of the study, including Berry's (1990) acculturation model, Putnam's (2000) theory of social capital, and Ager and Strang's (2008) conceptualisation of integration, offering a greater understanding of

acculturation and social capital, and how they might support young Colombian mothers' integration. Chapter 2 articulates why Putnam's (2000) different typologies of social capital (bonding, bridging and linking) and Berry's (1990) acculturation approaches (assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalisation) are instrumental to understand refugee resettlement. Next, this chapter will also present an international literature review on young refugees and refugee mothers, examining various issues and debates related to the social connections and acculturation of refugees to their new society, which are key to successful resettlement. I also discuss how the different types of social connections work in the context of refugee resettlement. The literature illustrates the universal virtue of expanding social connections and acculturation across international contexts. Finally, the chapter explores various global responses to the growing need to prepare young mothers for integration and acculturation in different resettlement contexts.

Chapter three outlines the research design and methodological approach. It presents and justifies the case study and fieldwork design, which provided the basis for data collection and analysis. It also discusses how concepts of social capital, acculturation, and integration are fundamental to the design. The remaining sections describe the data analysis methods. I also discuss the language used in the fieldwork with young mothers, which shaped my constructivist approach to the data.

Chapter four presents the first set of empirical findings. It describes and analyses the young women's stories using the *in vivo* concept of "crossing the pond". It focuses on how the study's participants negotiate identity between mothering and their own intrapersonal journey. "Crossing the pond" is a Colombian self-improvement proverb with two meanings. The first meaning is related to giving up on everything to fit in a new context and build on new relationships. The second meaning is about overcoming challenges and foregoing one's previous lifestyle to adjust to the new environment. Three conceptual topics, devised by the researcher, are described in this chapter. First, the opportunities and constraints while "crossing the pond"; second, mothers' identity and the stigma of "La Kiwi"; and third, the experiences of mothering Kiwisitos, issues of identity, coping, and acculturation, which provide the means to understand and explain the outcomes, origins, and implications of the experiences of acculturation that influence young Colombian mothers' integration in New Zealand.

Chapter five explores how young Colombian mothers negotiate identity and mothering through social capital. This chapter analyses the eight participants' creation and maintenance of this social capital, and their engagement in new relationships. It draws on the idea of navigating three interpersonal tasks of *encountering, surveying-orienting*, and *navigating,* which occur in a contextual, relational dynamic between people, institutions, and throughout the journey. Two themes are developed by the researcher: *the creation and maintenance of relationships* between the young Colombian mothers and the different communities and organisations they are involved with; and *the consequences of these relationships*. The chapter concludes with a description of the overall findings, considering the third layer of Ager and Strang's (2008) framework—social connections.

Chapter six brings the findings together in a deeper discussion of the tensions and possibilities the young mothers faced. It begins by drawing on a further theoretical framework, that of discourses of representation (Hall, 1997) to illuminate two discourses that influenced the young mothers' resettlement experiences. One is the discourse of the 'good mother' and the other is the discourse of the 'good migrant'. The chapter then proposes an original conceptual framework for theorising motherhood based on locating when and how these various discourses emerge. The framework distinguishes four representations or typologies of motherhood as it was experienced by these young mothers in their resettlement journey: (a) motherhood as protection; (b) motherhood as cultural rupture; (c) motherhood as cultural transmission; and (d) motherhood as personal development. I argue that these four typologies provide a more nuanced approach to understanding of how mothers used social capital to navigate their way across different acculturation strategies and, in turn, this influenced their experiences of integration. This framework provides a more dynamic and relational approach that expands on normative integration (e.g., Ager and Strang, 2008) and acculturation (e.g., Berry, 1990) models.

This final chapter then returns to the key themes in the findings chapters (Chapters 4 & 5). It examines how the understandings of identity (Chapter 4) and different forms of social capital (Chapter 5) relate to the broader integration experience. It explores how these women negotiate being a mother (as a form of identity), practise mothering (behaviour/as actions), and navigate various competing (dominant and subjugated) discourses of motherhood. The young mothers' experiences, perspectives, and acculturation led to a consideration of how they engage in

relationships through the three key tasks (encountering, surveying-orienting, and navigating; Chapter 5). I conclude with the study's theoretical contributions, limitations and recommendations before ending on a note of hope by discussing possibilities for the young mothers by looking to the horizon once they have 'crossed the pond'.

CHAPTER 2 Understandings of acculturation, social capital and integration for the unique status of refugee mothers

2.1 Introduction

Adapting to a new country is a challenging process of transforming and learning for any migrant, but it can be especially difficult for young mothers. Mothers with refugee backgrounds face the twofold challenge of adjusting to a new culture and context in addition to the struggle linked to the support and care of their children. Indeed, research on mothers details the significantly greater challenges they experience compared to other refugee groups (e.g., Collins et al., 2011; Ahmed et al., 2017). I begin by addressing the conceptual development of *acculturation* – a central construct in this study – and detail how it is differentiated from assimilation. Thereafter, I address recent literature around acculturation and parenting and then, more specifically, the concept of mothering. Penultimately, I outline Berry's model of acculturation, before delineating the concepts of social capital and integration that are critical to the thesis.

2.2 Acculturation

This section addresses the historical development of acculturation: how acculturation emerged as a concept, its seminal theorists, and how it has developed over time. Acculturation has been defined in several ways and remains highly contested despite its extensive use (Celano & Tyler, 1990; Duan & Vu, 2000; Nguyen & von Eye, 2002). Furthermore, acculturation is often a topic of critique because it is often conflated with assimilation (e.g., Vasquez, 1984). Originally coined by Park and Burgess (1921), assimilation is "the process of interpretation and fusion in which individuals and communities develop the feelings, memories and attitudes of other persons and groups and, by sharing their experience and history, are combined with them in a common cultural life" (p. 735, cited in Alba & Nee, 1999); however, this meaning has shifted over time. For example, Berry (1990) contends that assimilation conveys the need for new immigrants to become members of the host society by adopting "local" practices, values and norms. Acculturation is a broader concept that encompasses assimilation as one of several possible strategies for migrants to adapt as they form relations with local society. For the purposes of this study, acculturation is defined as the continuous contact between cultures that affects the individual in various ways, including changes in identity, behaviour, values and

languages (Berry, 1990). This study employs the term acculturation to discuss the overall cultural outcomes and processes of diverse cultural connections that young Colombian mothers experience when they come into contact with the New Zealand culture.

This reduction of acculturation to assimilation is often the outcome of acculturation models put forth by researchers. For instance, Parks (1914, as cited in Persons,1987) developed the concept of the "melting pot", based on a three-stage model that included accommodation, contact, and assimilation (Persons, 1987). Parks (1914) suggests that as individuals accommodate one another, they assimilate into the primary culture, bringing about intermarriages and blending connections. In 1954, the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) incorporated value systems, personality factors, roles, and development sequences into their definition of acculturation. They deduced that acculturation was selective and occurred when the individual was ready for the experience. This process of acculturation was seen as ongoing, contended, and irrevocable. Graves (1967) added the concept of psychological acculturation, which was later expanded in by Teske and Nelson (1974). These theorists suggest that acculturation does not always involve an adjustment of values in the person, although it does impact the person's behaviour, such as language and participation in the activities of the host culture. If assimilation consists of adjusting the individual's behaviours and values, then acculturation may not always lead to or involve assimilation.

2.2.1 Unidimensional or bidimensional models of acculturation

Acculturation has been understood as a *linear* and *assimilated* pattern, operating on a continuum between individuals only taking part in their own culture and complete assimilation, whereby they only participate in the host culture (Berry, 1997; Pham & Harris, 2001; Trimble, 2003). This acculturation along a continuum has been conceptualised as the *unidimensional model* and *bidimensional model* (Berry, 1997). The main difference between these two approaches is inherent in how they consider the relationship between the culture of birth and the host culture. A unidimensional continuum means that the individual travels along the continuum in one direction (Buriel & De Ment, 1997). More explicitly, acculturating individuals are viewed as being in the process of giving up traditions, behaviours, and attitudes of their original culture while simultaneously embracing those of the new culture (Gans, 1979). Whereas the bidimensional model understands that the individual can move in either direction.

In this perspective, acculturation can be understood when heritage and mainstream cultural identities are viewed as being independent of one another (e.g., Berry, 1997; Ramirez, 1984).

2.2.2 The unidimensional perspective

The measurement of acculturation goes beyond the common practice of categorising people into different ethnocultural levels (Tweed, Conway, and Ryder, 1999). Studies that draw on a unidimensional model of acculturation tend to measure the acculturation of a migrant by assessing the level of assimilation into the host culture and retention of the origin culture (Sodowsky, Lai, & Plake, 1991). These assessments assume that an acculturated person is minimally interested in maintaining their culture of origin and must be completely assimilated into the culture of the receiving country.

This notion of acculturation as assimilation has enlightened much of the examination on cultural change. Most such studies used demographic variables, including years lived in the country, age at immigration or generational status, as alternative measures of acculturation, with the primary idea being that people have more contact and, subsequently, better adaptation to the mainstream culture over the years (Ryder et al., 2000). Dominant social expectations expect assimilation of the migrant, suggesting that an individual is expected to adjust to the host society over time. If this does not happen, it is expected that the person would face anxiety, alienation and stress (Gordon, 1978). Furthermore, a study of Indian parents in the United States, which employed the unidimensional model, showed that those parents who adjusted to the U.S. western culture were more likely to retain North American socialisation practices, including the utilisation of persuasion and reasoning (Patel, Power, & Bhavnagri, 1996). However, by only examining parental socialisation practices, this study neglects that Indian parents also wanted to maintain continuity with the Indian culture and protect the children from North American influences, and therefore did not simply or completely assimilate. An individual "might adopt refusal in terms of religion and marriage partner inclination, an adjustment in dress practices and incorporation in a new society in commemorating important holidays" (Sodowsky et al., 1991, p.195). Subsequently, this suggests that acculturation cannot be measured using a single dimension.

2.2.3 The bidimensional perspective

By comparison, the bidimensional model explores majority and ethnic cultures separately, rather than as a unidimensional process (Berry, 1980; Mendoza & Martinez, 1981). This perspective has tended to foster a more complex understanding of acculturation (Pawliuk et al., 1996; Rueschenberg & Buriel, 1989; Bond & Yang, 1982; Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989). In the bidimensional model, both the heritage culture (e.g., Colombian) and majority culture (e.g., New Zealand) can coexist. Consequently, increasing association with one culture does not necessitate reducing association with the other.

The most widely examined bidimensional model for acculturation has been Berry's (1990) acculturation framework, which will be explained further. Kim et al.'s (2007) investigation of the role of maternal acculturation in maternal acceptance-rejection and children's social competence among Korean refugee mothers and their children in the United States suggested that the utilisation of the bidimensional approach to evaluate maternal acculturation was appropriated as it provided four categorical typologies (assimilation, integration, separation and marginalisation; see Berry's (1990) acculturation model, Section 2.4) for analysing individuals' acculturation in new settings.

The bidimensional model considers several dimensions of acculturation simultaneously. Berry identified at least five areas that could be adjusted as an outcome of the acculturation process: personality, cognitive styles, attitudes, identity and language. It acknowledges that both the wider community and minority groups can decide to what level they choose to advance in their acculturation process and in which areas (Berry, 1980; Padilla & Perez, 2003). For the purposes of this study, acculturation is understood as a bidimensional process that engages with the emotional, cognitive and behavioural functions of life (Cuellar, Arnold, & Maldonado, 1995; Mendoza & Martinez, 1981; Mendoza, 1984). According to Kim and Abreu (2001), the emotional domain refers to affects related to cultural identities, such as how an individual feels about significant attributes of representations, an identity that is loved or disliked, and the meaning one connects to life itself. The cognitive domain incorporates beliefs about women and men's roles, fundamental values, and ideas about the nature of incapacity/illness. The behavioural domain comprises various kinds of behaviour, such as traditions, the music one chooses to dance or listen to, foods, and language. To reiterate, Teske and Nelson (1974)

recognise that acculturation does not necessarily entail a change of values in the person, although the person's behaviour may change. For example, while migrants may adjust their behavioural aspects, such as language and mothering practices, their values, such as beliefs about the mother-child relationship, may not change. On the basis that assimilation entails adjusting the individual's behaviours and values, then acculturation may not always lead to or involve assimilation. Using a bidimensional model for my investigation, I aimed to capture how Colombian mothers' practice outcomes were related to their acculturation styles.

2.3 Motherhood and migration

To foreground this thesis's discussion of the topic-specific acculturation aspect of motherhood, it is necessary to understand international literature on the intersections of migration and motherhood. There are many studies on the consequences of migration on migrant children and mothers. Research on motherhood and migration mainly relates to women and family trajectories, typically focusing on either transnational motherhood as a result of a universal care chain or in a family migration setting (Gilmartin and Migee, 2016). Aspects of particular interest in anthropology, sociology, psychology, and medicine are the health of the migrant mother and baby (Khanlou et al., 2017; Kingston et al., 2011; Nielsson et al., 2019; Phillimore, 2016), social support networks (Brandão and Craveirinha, 2011), motherhood practices in a new country (Barona-Vilar et al., 2013; Erel et al.. 2018; Urwin et al., 2013; Vesely, 2013), the changing migratory path after becoming a mother (Berrocal, 2020; Constable, 2014), the transformation in identity (Challinor, 2010; Hollway, 2010) and transactional practices (Åkesson et al., 2012; Carpenedo and Nardi, 2017; Madianou, 2012).

Regarding pregnancy, research frequently highlights the migrant population's greater risk of poor prenatal care and infant health, and links women's ethnicity and origin to higher rates of unplanned pregnancies (Hernandez et al. 2020). Constable (2014), for example, focuses on Filipino women workers who were mothers in Hong Kong. Constable (2014) illustrates how national practices and policies influence life choices and indicates the challenges these women face daily, such as in legal matters like documentation, exploitation in the workplace, and maternal childbirth-related discrimination. In these cases, births can be considered mediators of structural issues, migration policies, and social implications, and bring up questions in relation to belonging, citizenship and the representative meanings of migration. From this

perspective, Reynolds et al. (2018), investigate how migrant mothering kin work confronts public and private boundaries, giving rise to new practices and conceptions of citizenship. They argue that in the United Kingdom, minority migrant mothers are often seen as marginalised in the political and theoretical debates about citizenship and are often considered barriers to the integration of their children (Reynolds et al., 2018).

The idea of change is prevalent in motherhood research, and maternity-related changes are referred to as the "transition to motherhood" (Darvill et al. 2010; Nelson 2003). Lupton, however, (2000) complicates this framing by noting that the transition involves "an inevitable process of reaching a point and then ending" (Lupton 2000, p. 53). Similar analyses have been directed at the theory of "maternal role performance" (Rubin 1967), with Mercer (2004) arguing that it fails to incorporate the 'continuous growth of maternal identity' beyond the early stages of early motherhood (Mercer 2004, p. 231).

As this study encapsulates young mothers' experiences of navigating motherhood in New Zealand, I am struck by the lack of studies focusing on motherhood as a practice and process of change beyond the initial 'difficult' transition. As Mercer (2004, p. 231) indicates, understanding new transitions like becoming the mother of a school-aged child or teenager, may also require new knowledge, adaptations, and skills. In this study, young mothers' migration due to forced displacement might be seen as one such transition in the lives of women from refugee backgrounds, who not only need common knowledge and adaptation skills but also information and assistance specific to their roles as post-migration mothers.

Qualitative research shows that becoming a mother is experienced as a major life change, often involving changes in social infrastructures, partner relations, and self-identity. Additionally, the new responsibility of looking after a baby entails the quick acquisition of new skills and knowledge (Kokanović and Michaels, 2018; Brunton et al., 2011; Fox, 2009). During this time of intense change, new mothers can feel overwhelmed, isolated, or inadequate, if their new knowledge is not utilised correctly or if their social support is lacking (Fox 2009). Studies on migrant mothers indicate that these needs and changes are amplified during migration (Liamputtong, 2014; Meiyappen and Lohfeld, 2013). In heterosexual relationships, parents describe "different parental obligations" (Lupton 2000, p. 58), with males remaining away from home in paid work and females having the responsibility for the "minute-by-minute care that

accompanies caring for a newborn" (Williams, 2018), even though parents planned to divide the obligations more equally (Fox 2009; Miller, 2011).

Becoming a mother in a migration circumstance constitutes a dynamic process of identity creation that raises questions about belonging, migration policies, and citizenship. As Hollway (2010) argues, it is a process that entails identity transitions that generate meanings in a specific cultural, relational, and social context. In a narrative study of Cape Verdean women who had children in Portugal, Neves (2022) suggested that the process of being a mother also involves a new set of maternal practices and positions that are constituted through possibly contradictory cultural principles. Neves (2022) brought to light concerns that overlap and make motherhood more difficult in the context of migration, such as the difficulties of creating new social networks, access to health services, experiences of discrimination and racism and paternal absent. These issues limit the possibilities of actions for mothers who frequently need to submit to precarious job to reach a guarantee of their livelihood with their children. For migrant mothers, the difficulty of factors involved in their lives might eventually intensify the inequalities stemming from the birth of their children, which emphasises the need to research motherhood in a situated manner that considers how social groups might be under-represented in research.

The present study examined the factors involved in facilitating Colombian mothers' experiences of resettlement and the development of their identities as young mothers in a foreign country. While a large body of scholarship approaches the difficulties of motherhood, only a small number of studies addresses institutional responses to these difficulties, such as the maternal mental health programme supported by the Child and Youth Wellbeing Strategy in New Zealand (Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet [DPMC], 2019). Such programmes make a significant contribution to communities, families, and the nation. They help parents find support alongside their children and mediate access to that support when needed. Similar research suggests that mothers value the social support of other fellow mothers, alongside help from existing family and friends' connections (Arnold, 2011). Nevertheless, scholarship addressing the formation of new networks for the mothers, social support, gender, age, migration policies and family construction continue marginal compared to studies involving the political economy of migration.

Despite a surge in research on migration and gender since the 1970s, feminist migration researchers have voiced frustration at the lack of integration of gender frameworks into established migration research (Donato et al. 2017; Hondagneu-Sotelo 2013). Donato et al. argue that in 2017, "the gendered content of migration research in sociology continues, stalled and frozen". Hondagneu-Sotelo (2013) attributes the remaining lack of gender content in sociology to "feminist issues and androcentric blindness to gender" (Hondagneu-Sotelo 2013, p. 180). Despite these concerns about marginalisation, feminist migration researchers recognise the need for thorough and extensive cross-study in this area. A recent special issue on migration and gender includes research demonstrating "the power of gender ideology to impact the dynamics of migration and how it is embedded in institutions, families, immigration policy or politics" (Donato et al. 2017, p. 1082).

Consistent with the tendency of scholars to address the "transition to motherhood" mentioned earlier, research has been conducted in Australia with migrant mothers experiencing the gestation, childbirth and postpartum period through a public health or nursing lens (Renzaho & Oldroyd 2014; Yeland et al. 2015; Bandyopadhyay et al. 2010; Benza & Liamputtong 2014; Carolan & Cassar 2010; Hennegan et al. 2015; Hennegan et al. 2014; Hoban & Liangputong 2012; Ngum Chi Watts et al. 2015). Research emphasises the inability of birthing services to meet the individual needs of migrant mothers due to language barriers, a lack of cultural competence, and racial discrimination. The studies also mention that migration often causes women to move away from their usual sources of support and information, which may cause a feeling of demotivation when facing an unfamiliar healthcare system and cultural norms alongside feelings of social isolation when they need assistance (DeSouza, 2005). However, DeSouza (2005) also states that migration is sometimes perceived as liberating because it allows people to seek information and care. Nevertheless, Benza and Liamputtong's (2014) qualitative research of 15 studies involving migrant mothers' experiences determined that postpartum isolation and lack of support were detrimental to maternal mental health. A smaller research group looked at the experiences of Australian migrant mothers beyond their first months as parents. This study emphasises the lasting effects of childrearing without social support (Liamputtong 2006; Ward 2004), the challenges of rearing children who have some bearing on Australian cultural rules that differ from the mother's own values (Liamputtong 2006; McMichael & Manderson 2004; Ziaian 2000), economic constraints and barriers to raising children and access to health care (Silva & Dawson 2004). Much of the research relates

to persistent experiences of isolation and associated problems such as emotional distress, depression, or low self-esteem.

As the literature suggests, research has drawn on scholarship analysing the multiple challenges mothers face during migration. In fact, many studies on the challenges of migrant motherhood end up recommending increased social support, yet researchers hardly make recommendations how this increased support might be achieved or what it might look like. For instance, Benza and Liamputtong (2014) indicate that "social support connections for migrant women who do not have extended families are needed to reduce the risk of depression in postpartum and stress" (2014, p. 8). For her part, Ziaian (2000, p. 284) conducted her doctoral research on the psychological well-being of Persian migrant mothers to Australia, with a request for "immigration policy […] to support the creation of cultural support organisations and groups, as their manifestation can provide new migrants guidance, emotional support and alleviate the pain of the diaspora process". In an example of research-driven community support, Silva & Dawson (2004) found isolation and loneliness as the main cause of poor mental health among Brazilian migrant women receiving care in Melbourne. That cause led to the creation of the Brazilian association to support Brazilian migrants and residents in Australia (ABRISA n.d.). This finding suggests that, for migrant mothers, social support systems and opportunities to build on new connections are important for their and their children's acculturation into a new and unknown society. It also opens ideas about what motherhood means in migration contexts. In the next section, I will be exploring that acculturation aspect of motherhood.

2.4 Parenting – Motherhood and acculturation

To recap, this study understands acculturation as the continuous contact between cultures that affects the individual, such as changes in identity, behaviour, values and languages (Berry, 1990). In this section, I will talk about Bornstein's (2015) writings on parenting, which guided my thinking around motherhood as a particular parenting. According to Bornstein (2015), ideas about parenting are impacted by many aspects, including experiences in mothering, social comparison, mothers' personality, and cultural principles. The mothering process involves perceptions, expectations, goals, acknowledgements, thoughts, and understanding of child-rearing and development (Goodnow, 2002; Holden & Buck, 2002; Sigel & McGillicuddy-De

Lisi, 2002). In a theoretical review of 14 immigrant parenting studies, Gallardo (2019) suggested that not all parenting ideas can be modified simultaneously, especially those related to cultural beliefs and values specific to the country of origin. For example, the role attributed to caregivers in each country and perceptions of gratification when exercising this role is usually stable even after many years of migration have passed. This suggests that, for migrant mothers, even if they get used to the new context, there will still be practices and roles related to their country of origin that endure, and they appear to be an ongoing process of adjusting to their new setting. This situation can be understood through acculturation.

Bornstein and Cote (2004) highlight two important dimensions of parenting ideas: mothers' attributions and mothers' self-perceptions. According to Bornstein et al. (1998), attributions are causal interpretations individuals make to describe why events occur in specific ways. Self-perceptions of nurturing entail mothers' sense of investment in their children, enjoyment achieved from parenting, sense of capability in the parenting role, and perceived competence to balance parenting with their other social roles. Bornstein et al. (1998) focus on how mothers ascribe the causes behind the success of nurturing and failures and their self-perceptions of parenting.

Bornstein (1995) suggested that parents from all ethnicities must engage in parenting practices to succeed in early child-rearing. He listed six domains of parenting practices related to mother-child relations. Physical relations refer to mothers encouraging their young children's locomotor development by vocally or physically stimulating infants to roll, crawl, step, sit or stand (e.g. Emde, 1992; Hopkins, 1991). Nurturant relations refer to mothers assisting with their infants' physical, biological, health contact demands, such as bathing, dressing, burping, feeding, holding, and grooming (e.g., Bornstein, 1995; Maccoby & Martin, 1983; Hinde, 1987; Papousek, Papousek, & Bornstein, 1985). Social relations entail vocal and physical strategies mothers utilise to connect their infants in social exchanges (e.g., Emde, 1992; Stern, 1985). Language relations involve mothers' communication with their children (e.g., Bloom, 1993; Papousek et al., 1985). Didactic relations refer to mothers encouraging their children's attention to objects, events or properties in the environment (e.g., Bornstein, 1985; Papousek & Bornstein, 1992). Mothers also provide their children with material requirements, including books, toys and household items for children to explore and play with (e.g., LeVine, 1991; Bornstein, 1995).

Studies confirm Bornstein and Lansford's (2010) claim that parenting practices vary across cultural societies. Culture plays a large part in how parents exercise caregiving and which caregiving practices they accentuate. For example, Bornstein and Cote (2001) investigated how Japanese and South American mothers' practices and roles are linked to mothers' acculturation status and beliefs. The study suggested mothers' culture of origin influenced their parenting practices in acculturating communities. In addition, young children's behaviours might be constrained or encouraged by the parenting practices and customs of the host society they are raised (Bornstein, 1980, 1995; Levine, 1991; Super & Harkness, 1986). For example, a study with mothers from different cultural backgrounds found that European mothers in the United States tended to stimulate children's interpersonal independence. In contrast, Japanese and Argentinian parenting fostered greater interdependence between mother and child, and these mothers tended to participate in more social connections with their children (Bornstein, 2017).

Young mothers' acculturation experiences are more challenging when resettling in a new country. Young mothers face additional life challenges in the new country of residence due to new gender role expectations and the loss of support systems (Bellinger, 2013). Young mothers may be unaware of permissible parental strategies in the new country due to limited resources, poor language skills, unfamiliarity with services in the community, discrimination, low economic status, employment, and educational barriers (Stewart et al., 2015). Some academics emphasise that differences in interpretations of family values, expectations of child behaviour and parenting goals across cultures can lead to significant challenges (Tingvold et al., 2012). For African mothers in Canada, for example, the distance from family and friends is a strain on mothering, which can lead to gender role conflicts as an extended family cannot help (Stewart et al., 2015). Renzaho and Vignjevic's (2011) study of acculturation challenges of African mothers in Australia also analyses the mothering difficulties of raising children by themselves in a new country. The challenge of raising their children increases and re-adjusts their objectives and values as mothers to suit children's needs. Renzaho and Vignjevic (2011) assert that children tend to acculturate faster because they are often engaged in the new society and learn the new language more quickly, but this might lead to a poor child-mother relationship (Renzaho & Vignjevic, 2011). The parent-child relationship figures resettlement as a continuous process of change in parents. In this resettlement process, both parents and children need to manage the language, extended family, and cultural progression (Tingvold et al., 2012).

2.4.1 Mothers' acculturation – a multi-layered process

Empirical studies found that the acculturation of migrant mothers hinges on their mothering roles, such as mothers' understandings of having a job and roles in the family, which are all connected. Yet few studies have examined how acculturation is a multi-layered process linked to mothering roles and practices (Ballard, Wieling & Dwanyen, 2020). How acculturation is a layered process related to mothering roles and practices is explained here. For instance, studies on gender and migration recognised that gender relationships in immigrant families are expected to be reconfigured through settlement and migration processes (Hondagneu-Sotelo, 1994). Various changes happen to mothers' migrant life experiences as a consequence of this process. The problems frequently discussed in immigration examinations are whether migration brings beneficial changes to women or intensifies their oppression. The scholarship somewhat diverged in a study (Grasmuck & Pessar, 1991) describing women's intensified power concerning their husbands as a result of working, and those who emphasise on immigrant women's continuing patriarchal idea within immigrant communities (Ehrenreich & Hochschild, 2003; Espiritu, 1997; Kibria, 1993). Therefore, Park (2008) suggests the need for studies to approach forces of empowerment and disempowerment as an important experience of women in migration contexts and with different systems of inequality.

Barlow and Chapin (2010) suggest that motherhood can be a task undertaken in various ways and places by multiple individuals. Some of the characteristics are related to the responsibility for advancing children's well-being and advancement through physical care and nurturing. The authors also proposed that motherhood may be indistinguishable from or overlap with different tasks, such as nurturing, instructing, training, giving or being a spouse, child, friend, or worker (Barlow & Chapin, 2010). O'Reilly (2019) explains that motherhood is "generally a cultural practice that is constantly upgraded in light of changing financial and cultural aspects" (p. 45). She claims that motherhood is "the unfinished business of feminism," as motherhood concerns are frequently understood as antagonistic to the (liberal) feminist beliefs of equality and freedom for women, primarily as a consequence of its association with biological existentialism (i.e., exclusively biological women can give birth to children) and to ideas of family life (Rojas Gaviria et al., 2019).

Over time, more cultural and social constructions about motherhood have appeared in the literature (Thompson, 1996; Prothero, 2002), even though there are diverse expectations around motherhood across cultural groups and communities (Rojas Gaviria et al., 2019). Hays (1996) noted that mothers should offer their children the best, and children should be a mother's primary concern. However, in cultures where gender equality is accentuated, some mothers challenge social norms in daily life and reject patriarchal (Clarke, 2007; Banister & Hogg, 2008) or conventional (O'Reilly, 2016) motherhood roles. To a certain extent, all women perform the role of motherhood in directions that resist or contradict these models (Prothero, 2002; Hogg, Curasi, & Maclaran, 2004; Layne, 2000). However, the ongoing practice of being a mother is complex. It requires connections with many others (e.g., children, other members of the family, fathers, and a broader social network) who enforce various pressures on women. Notably, vulnerabilities related to motherhood are ongoing, as motherhood is a lasting experience that extends beyond the years of childhood dependence (Mansvelt, Breheny, & Stephens, 2017) and exposes mothers to different challenges. Therefore, motherhood entails continuous identity reconstruction (Ritch & Brownlie, 2016); a "task" that remains at the intersection of various other roles, involving "practices, discourses, investments or prevention of desirable or undesirable main points of identity" (Castilhos & Fonseca, 2016, p. 6).

Identities related to motherhood and family life gradually change (Hogg, Maclaran, & Curasi, 2003; Maclaran, Hogg, & Curasi, 2012). As identities are challenged, individuals must adjust to new or diverse roles that are context-dependent and complex. Integrally, changes across cultures, such as those caused by forced migration, are upsetting and impact on how a person and their family members perform their identities.

Ruedinger and Cox (2012) note that motherhood is often important to a woman's identity. The authors explain that there are many consequences of childbearing, which significantly affect mothers' acculturation and their children throughout their lifetime, which are often linked to environmental and social factors, such as maternal stress, depression, and education programmes, rather than simply to becoming a mother (Ruedinger & Cox, 2012). Literature has analysed the various layers of mothers' acculturation experiences, though the primary layer consists of mothers' acculturation themselves (Tsai, Barr & Welch, 2017). The study highlighted that mothers experience difficulties with competing values, beliefs, norms of the heritage culture and the mainstream society. Therefore, for example, positive adaptation

involves an individual learning the new context's lifestyle and language (Saechao et al., 2012). Moreover, another strategy leading to positive acculturation is to create cultural and social networks in a new foreign country (Hynie et al., 2011). This is crucial, especially for those mothers who incorporate the upbringing of children with the support of extended families and communities. Saechao et al. (2012) suggest that, in general, migrants experience difficulties with customs, beliefs, and norms of the country of origin as well as the host country. Mothering practices are also affected by factors related to acculturation, such as length of stay in a new environment, the mother's accomplishment and her maternal identity (Parra et al., 2009). Moorhouse and Cunningham (2012) explain that, as mothers advance in the acculturation process, it is easier for them to support their children's learning; however, as Shen and Takeuchi (2001) note, acculturation and how much an individual can adjust and adapt to the host culture have been found to have psychological and social consequences on refugees, such as anxiety and depression. In the following section, I introduce Berry's model of acculturation, which provides an understanding of the specific ways in which acculturation is understood and employed in this study

2.5 Berry's model of acculturation

Having discussed the relationship between motherhood and acculturation, this section presents Berry's (1990) bidimensional model of acculturation that this study adopts. Berry's (1990) model entails four acculturation strategies that describe the attitudes and behaviours of an acculturating individual. Although he initially incorporated assimilation and integration as part of the acculturation process, it was not until 1990 that he included the separation and marginalisation approach into his model. Of particular relevance to this study, it examines how these strategies arise from the beliefs and perceptions of refugees towards the value of cultural maintenance and participation in the host society. Berry argues that refugees' means of coping with acculturation during resettlement can be identified via two questions: "Is it significant to maintain cultural identity and characteristics?" (i.e., *cultural maintenance*) and "Is it believed to be of value to maintain a relationship with larger society?" (i.e., *contact and participation*; Berry, 1990, p. 216). These questions characterise the general degree of adherence to the culture of origin concerning the host country and give rise to four possible acculturative strategies or attitudes: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalisation (see Figure 1).

Is it significant to maintain cultural identity and characteristics?

		Yes	No
	Yes	**Integration** mutual adaptation	**Assimilation** one-sided adaptation
Is it believed to be of value to maintain a relationship with a larger society?	Yes	**Separation** enforced or chosen by a group	**Marginalisation** can develop from discrimination or exclusion

Figure 1. Berry's model of acculturation (1990, 2003)

Assimilation occurs when individuals see little value in maintaining the identities and characteristics associated with their culture and believe that contact and participation in the host culture are more beneficial. They adopt the host culture and do not wish to maintain their cultural identity. By contrast, *separation* occurs when individuals express no interest or are denied the opportunities to participate in or interact with the host culture. Instead, they favour embracing and maintaining their original culture, identity, and characteristics or are compelled to do so. These individuals present the least amount of change (Berry, 2003).

Integration occurs when individuals are interested in maintaining their original culture while also adopting cultural values and norms, and participating in the host culture. According to Berry (2003), when one is willing to integrate, a person may have better chances to experience healthy adaptation. Integration leads to biculturalism, with individuals elaborating a combination of identity and principles from both societies (Berry, 2003). The integration strategy tends to produce the most satisfactory psychological results for people adapting to a dominant culture (Nguyen et al., 2007; Okasaki et al., 2009)

Marginalisation occurs when people are neither willing to preserve their original culture nor obtain proficiency in the dominant culture (Kim & Abreau, 2001). When individuals are marginalised, they become de-cultured (Buriel & De Ment, 1997), and cultural heritage is lost (Berry, 2003). Berry (2003) asserts that marginalisation is related to individual-level anxiety

and uncertainty in both societies. Marginalised individuals are characterised by firm reactions against other groups, a sense of friction or conflict, and loss of identity. Marginalisation is believed to be the most challenging coping strategy (Kunst et al., 2013), as social and psychological interaction with the original and the dominant culture are reduced, and individuals who adopt this strategy do not typically behave nor interact well with others (Berry, 2003; Kim & Abreau, 2001). Moreover, marginalisation typically produces the least satisfactory psychological outcomes (Berry et al., 2006).

Scholars, such as Kunst et al. (2013) and Schwartz et al. (2010), have critiqued Berry's (1990) model of acculturation for having low analytical purchase because individuals do not always fit neatly into the four categories. Moreover, a range of factors impact individuals' capacity to participate in new connections and preserve cultural customs, including their community experiences prior to acculturation, such as understanding the language, migrating with family, and environmental aspects, which can influence the perceived (dis)advantages, selection, and feasibility of the different acculturation strategies (Zhou, 1997). Political settings and social, cultural, and economic situations can also affect acculturation strategies, including hosts' attitudes toward newcomers and the degree of support they obtain from their cultural group and broader society. Individuals' attitudes toward acculturation are also influenced by individual differences associated with circumstances occurring before resettlement and upon arrivals, such as gender, age, status, and cultural distance. Other factors that can moderate acculturation include discrimination, prejudice, resources, social support received, and people's available coping strategies (Berry, 1997).

Regardless of these criticisms, Berry's (1990) work on acculturation has been valuable to this study, as his model provides a fruitful way of understanding different strategies that migrants adopt when adapting to a host society. Berry's (1980, 1984a,b, 1990) categorisations of acculturation pose the questions: is it of value or is it considered to be of value? Berry's earlier writing included evaluations of self-reported behaviours and attitudes (Berry et al., 1989; Dona & Berry, 1994), which operationalised integration, separation, assimilation, and marginalisation. Through this research, the idea of crossing the pond "Cruzar el charco" is a Colombian proverb with two meanings. One meaning is related to giving up on everything to fit into a new phase of life. The other is about overcoming difficulties and foregoing one's previous lifestyle to become a different human being. It means that there is not just one way

across the pond. Berry's acculturation model similarly does not theorise the whole society adequately. Two significant points in Berry's theory can explain that. First, Berry's two dimensions emphasize cultural *maintenance* and cultural *contact*. Second, the acculturation dimensions are mainly placed in the dominion of the strategies (Berry, 2009, p. 366). Relatedly, social capital seems to impact the acculturation of refugees. Aspects such as language competence and length of stay have been recognised in previous studies (Berry & Sabatier, 2010; Margolies, 2008; Shelley et al., 2004). These aspects reveal new constraints for refugees, which may prevent them from better adjusting to their new context (Hung, Xiao, & Yang 2013). Another way to discuss these mothers' integration experiences is through existing literature that shows that mothers and their children play a significant role in the calculation of the family. That is because mother's networks and the connections she establishes during her resettlement. These connections highlight the importance of understanding the relationships and the social capital that mothers might bring in childbearing and practices with their children. Therefore, in this thesis, I also draw on the concept of social capital.

2.6 Putnam's social capital

This study draws on Putnam's (2000) concept of *social capital* to address critiques of Berry's (1990) acculturation model by demonstrating how acculturation strategies can also be influenced by political settings and social, cultural, and economic dynamics. Researchers have widely used the concept of capital to conceptualise how human activity is linked to securing and gaining some type of social power, including social capital, monetary capital, and cultural capital (e.g. Bourdieu, 1987; Coleman, 1988; Bassani, 2008).

Social capital encompasses the "resources" and "assets" from the connections between individuals and groups of individuals. As McGonigal et al. (2007, p. 80) contends,

> Social capital is a form of force, an asset, a currency: it tends to be used, exchanged, traded or drawn upon. Social capital is a method of energy, a power; it is a limit, an office that can be sent and actuated towards some ideal objective.

Social capital has provided useful insights across a wide range of fields, including refugee integration (Im & Rosenberg, 2016; Alencar, 2018). For example, a study with Bhutanese refugee community in the United States examined the impact of a peer-led community health workshop (Im & Rosenberg, 2016). The study adopted a social capital framework which

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showed the enhancement in health practice, health outcomes and, perceived emotional health. The study also revealed that the workshop offered a platform of community building and participation while simultaneously increasing a sense of unity and belonging. The study suggests that intervention model offers effective and culturally responsive tools for advancing community health in the refugee community (Im & Rosenberg, 2016). Social capital theory explores how an individual's social ties can produce additional resources (Putnam, 2000; Coleman, 1988). Putnam (2000) utilised the term social capital to highlight how social networks are valuable to people. The connections between people create social networks, reciprocity rules, and trustworthiness (Putnam, 2000). These features of social life are social capital, which permits members of networks to cooperate more effectively to reach collective goals (Putnam, 1995, 1996). Putnam (2000) argues that "associations create social capital among people – interpersonal organisations and the standards of correspondence and reliability that emerge from them" (p. 19). Social capital depends on relationships between individuals and is located in the relations of human society (Putnam, 1995). However, not all relationships reap the same kinds of capital. There is a scale of bonding, bridging, and linking social capital within relationships.

Putnam's (2000) distinction between *bonding* and *bridging* social capital further differentiates social capital theory. **Bonding social capital** is focused on the relations between people with similar characteristics, such as shared family and co-national, co-ethnic, co-religious or other groups. Bonding social capital enables individuals to share cultural practices and preserve familiar patterns of connections (Ager & Strang, 2008). It is also characterised by durable relations (Marlowe, 2011), family relationships, and relationships with individuals from a similar cultural society, so that ethnic practices and settlement experiences might be shared, and familiar connections supported (Pittaway et al., 2009). Bonding capital is "achieved from involvement in local social groups that are most frequently supportive and homogenous and offer a sense of belonging" (Santoro, 2013, p. 962). As Terrion (2006, p. 157) suggests,

> Bonding social capital offers a sense of belonging and is significant to individuals and family members' well-being, and satisfies high priority needs for belonging, emotional support, solidarity, and love.

Many studies on bonding social capital in the field of refugee studies concentrate on migrants' relations within their ethnic society. Aguilera and Massey (2003) found that the social networks

refugees often use to get informational, material, and emotional support are their extended or immediate friends, families, and community leaders from the same culture. Refugees maintained continuous interactions to conserve their family ties, particularly when they remained in refugee camps (Lee, 2012). A study with young adult refugees in Sweden and Karen refugees in the Thailand-Burma borderland noted that refugees maintained close ties with their relatives, peers and family members in resettlement countries, their countries of origin or refugee camps (Lee, 2012; Simich, Beiser & Mawani, 2003; Wallin & Ahlström, 2005). The ethnic community also plays a vital role as the "key to solid social capital for resettling groups" (Pittaway, Bartolomei & Doney, 2016). For example, ethnic community leaders worked on bringing activities to join refugees' communities together for the resettlement of refugees in Australia. Overall, the literature indicates that bonding capital offers support, self-esteem, and confidence, particularly during resettlement times, and helps refugees deal with challenges adapting to and resettling in a different context (Strang & Ager, 2010).

Bridging social capital describes connections between refugees and host communities. It is built through friendly neighbourhood meetings that contribute to refugees feeling secure at home (Ager & Strang, 2008) and can also offer social support (Live, 2008). Bridging social capital is gained from participation in outward-looking, diverse, albeit less 'solid' social connections that produce "reciprocity and wider identities" (Putnam, 2000, p 20). It is more comprehensive and allows the crossing of social networks and operates as "a social lubricant […] for enabling several kinds of individuals to socialise together without restrictions" (Brough et al., 2006, p. 407). There is a connection between bonding and bridging capital. Strang and Ager (2010) indicate that substantial bonding capital within a refugee group offers confidence, self-esteem, and emotional assistance, which foster the development of bridging capital. Bridging capital is significant to the influential support that assists refugees in "better navigating their new environment" (Murray, 2010).

Refugees in resettlement countries frequently extend their social connections beyond their ethnic societies through friends, neighbours, and service providers from different cultures (Stewart et al., 2008; Allen, 2010; Elliott & Yusuf, 2014; Lamba & Krahn, 2003). These connections enable refugees to build new relationships, receive information, and develop trust and mutual understanding (Willems, 2005; Naidoo et al., 2018; Smyth, MacBride, Paton, & Sheridan, 2010; Keel & Drew, 2004). These links are significant resources through which social bridge outcomes may be improved among refugees from different cultural backgrounds.

Improving social capital, especially for young mothers with few socioeconomic resources, may enhance the quality of life for this population. Strang and Ager (2010) highlight the need for refugees to create bridging social capital to evade isolation. Refugees' participation in social, familial, and community networks adds to the creation of different forms of social capital, which is crucial to their resettlement (Santoro & Wilkinson, 2016). In Australia, an intervention offers young migrant mothers support through a network of young mothers' sisters, mothers, aunts, and grandmothers after delivering the baby. This particular form of support from significant females facilitated young mothers' re-engagement with life, work, education, well-being, and other aspects of life (Watts, Liamputtong, & Mcmichael, 2015), cultivating bridging capital as relationships between family members and the community were fostered.

This suggests that social capital can be used as a mediator between acculturation and motherhood. Putnam (2000) referred to social capital as the social glue that holds communities together and claimed that communities, countries, and regions with greater social capital are better positioned to provide social and economic opportunities.

Keel and Drew's (2004) study on Yugoslavian refugees in Australia noted that participants described themselves as being linked with their Australian neighbours. These connections happened when attending sporting activities, schools, on the bus, and at work. Despite English barriers, the participants expressed that developing those social networks provided a buffer against their stress and provided them the necessary information required to understand the host community. This means that those connections may facilitate adaptation, as Berry, Kim, Minde, and Mok (1987) suggested. In Tanzania, Burundian, Rwandan, and Congolese refugees stated that they established relationships with the host society through a friend in common or relative (Willems, 2005). In New Zealand, Somali refugees reported how meaningful it was to have pleasant neighbourhood encounters in constructing bridging capital (Elliott & Yusuf, 2014). Research has further indicated that, while building bridging capital, refugees also make relationships at their schools, workplaces, churches, and human resource centres (Lamba, 2003; Lamba & Krahn, 2003). Religious practices can also contribute to the building of bridging capital. For instance, local worshipers offered refugees numerous recommendations, employment training, education, housing, transportation, healthcare, financial and legal assistance, and translation, which facilitated bridging capital through greater access to social involvement (Ives, Sinha, & Cnaan, 2010).

Overall, the literature indicates that bonding and bridging social capital are related. Social connections within cultures may offer refugees and immigrants essential support and resources (Putnam, 2004; Ryabov, 2009; Larsen, 2011a; Jørgensen, 2017). However, as Morrice (2007, p 168) argues, refugees frequently end up trapped in a "circle of disadvantage" from a social capital point of view. New refugees need bridging and linking social capital to gain access to essential abilities and information that may assist them in escaping culturally isolated and marginalised situations. **Linking social capital** refers to the relationships between people and structures of the state, such as government services (Ager & Strang, 2008). These are vertical relationships. In the context of refugee resettlement, linking social capital relates to the relationships refugees and refugee groups have with governmental and non-governmental organisations (Pittaway et al., 2009). Through participation in organisations, relationships may be strengthened between refugees and the government, giving refugees access to better opportunities and resources (Elliott & Yusuf, 2014). An example of linking social capital is when NGOs and governmental institutions give work to refugees and employ them as volunteers in authority roles (Skyrme, 2008).

Another example of linking capital is the Strengthening Refugee Voices (SRV) programme in New Zealand. According to Immigration New Zealand (2020), this initiative allows refugees to have their voice heard in resettlement policies. This programme has been established in some of the leading resettlement towns in New Zealand, such as Auckland, Hamilton, Wellington, Nelson, and Invercargill. Based on the concept of social capital, the programme's purpose is to reinforce the connections between refugee groups at a regional level (Elliott & Yusuf, 2014). The SRV initiative is designed to develop linking social capital that can support refugee groups' contribution to the annual National Refugee Resettlement Forum (NRRF). The NRRF is an event between NGOs, refugee groups, and authority organisations aimed at decision making on refugee resettlement in New Zealand (New Zealand Human Rights Commission [NZHRC], 2012). Through the development of linking social capital, refugee communities can get involved in the policy decisions of their host society (Refugee Sector Strategic Alliance, 2013).

Numerous studies highlight the role of governmental and non-governmental organisations in supporting the development of linking capital during refugees' resettlement process (McLellan, 2004; Lee, 2010; Steward et al., 2008; Boateng, 2010; Barnes & Aguilar, 2007; Elliott & Yusuf, 2014). For example, operating from Mae La camp in the Thailand-Burma borderland, Karen refugees' networked with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the

Ministry of the Interior of the Thai government, and non-government organisations (Lee, 2012). For these organisations, Mae La camp is central to planning and implementing refugee-related programmes and policies. Refugees from other camps turn up at the camp as it provides health services and education programmes. Children are also enrolled in bible studies in the camp. Those connections help refugees link to the outside world, including access to health, informal educational programmes, such as English courses by foreign volunteers, and medical training programmes for young refugees. These interactions with organisations indicate that refugees can cultivate relationships among themselves and the rest of the world. These approaches also recognise the agency of refugees (Lee, 2012). Similarly, in Australia, the government established a Centrelink and job network to assist refugees from various regions, including Somalia, former Yugoslavia, the Middle East, and Africa, to develop their social connections and find \ employment opportunities (Torezani, Colic-Peisker, & Fozdar, 2008). The Australian authority also supported refugees to register with healthcare services, open a bank account, enrol in English courses, look for long-term housing, acquire clothing, social security and information, and secure employment benefits, as part of the resettlement programme (Keel & Drew, 2004; McMichael & Manderson, 2004). Notably, organisations helped them develop job search skills through job search training and assistance with job applications, access to a variety of professional programmes, counselling, and work preparation. These programmes illustrate a range of possibilities for developing linking social capital; however, refugees might still experience disadvantages in the Australian labour market because they are seen as outsiders due to cultural differences. This exclusion of cultural differences may hinder the development of weak ties in the broader society and limit refugee connections to the strong ties of their cultural community, limiting employment opportunities to those that exist in those groups (Torezani, Colic-Peisker, & Fozdar, 2008).

Social capital theorists argue that bridging capital and linking capital are more contextual than bonding capital (Woolcock & Narayan, 2000, cited in Brough et al., 2006). These capitals are considered horizontal and vertical, respectively. For bridging capital, connections expand outwards and horizontally, whereas linking capital networks expand upward (Woolcock, 1998, cited in Terrion, 2006). In the case of bonding capital, networks play a large part in individuals feeling "settled". Bonding connections are powerful and it does not mean that these capitals are present or not. It means that people's relationships to these forms of capital can shift, change, emerge, disappear, etc. It is dynamic. However, some forms may be very stable. Bonding social capital may assist people to move from familial and close social organisations into new social

milieus.

Putnam's (2000) notion of social capital has been criticised for various reasons, including the difficulty of measuring it and its neglect of the harmful components of social connections, such as the development of anti-social attitudes and behaviours in some individuals (Tzanakis, 2013). Regardless of these criticisms, Putnam's (2000) work on the idea of social capital has been valuable to this study as social connectedness is associated with feelings of belonging for refugees and, consequently, adds to their fruitful resettlement (Murray, 2010). Assessing social capital depends not only on the presence of connections but on the quality of those connections, which may only be evaluated in context (Spellerberg, 2001).

Social capital can be helpful when investigating resettlement experiences and contribute to the development of national resettlement strategies. According to previous research, refugees' experiences after resettlement are complex. In addition to having to establish new networks, feelings of social isolation can develop after separating from friends and family. Indeed, those experiences may be unfavourable to refugees' psychological well-being (Montgomery, 2008; Vervliet et al., 2014; Pastoor, 2015). Language difficulties are also associated with poorer well-being (Montgomery, 2008; Hebbani et al., 2018). New, unfamiliar practices, loaded with implicit assumptions, can prompt feelings of inferiority, social exclusion, and self-uncertainty (Larsen, 2011a, 2011b; Oppedal & Idse, 2012). Moreover, if confidence in others becomes impaired by negative experiences, this might prompt social confinement, relational hardships, and solitude (Ní Raghallaigh, 2014). Poppitt and Frey (2007) conducted a study with young Sudanese refugees in Australia, demonstrating that a lack of competence in the host country's language was the most distressing part of resettlement. Not being able to communicate adequately may restrict an individual's participation in social, cultural or even political issues, affecting their social adjustment and ability to develop relationships and a helpful community within the host setting (Berry et al., 2006).

Bridging and bonding social capital can be useful for exploring the challenges of resettlement for refugees and how they strategise to achieve an equilibrium between familiarising themselves with life in a new location while respecting one's motherland (Marlowe, 2011). Additionally, Morrice (2007) claimed that social capital is helpful for examining practices, programmes, and processes that may support and strengthen the integration and voice of displaced people. Subsequently, this study employs social capital to investigate the influence

New Zealand's resettlement practices, programmes, and processes have had on the integration of young Colombian mothers.

Research suggests that religious participation can contribute to building all three forms of social capital (Lee, 2010; McLellan, 2004; Boateng, 2010; Major, Wilkinson, Langat, & Santoro, 2013; Canda & Phaobtong, 1992; Lacroix, Baffoe, & Liguori, 2015; Allen, 2007; Goodson & Phillimore, 2008; Willems, 2005; Allen, 2007; Ives, Sinha, & Cnaan, 2010). Religious practices can assist refugees to make stronger connections with friends, family, and community and enable information exchange (Lacroix, Baffoe, & Liguori, 2015; Canda & Phaobtong, 1992; Boateng, 2010; Lee, 2012). For example, Canda and Phaobtong (1992) describe a group of Southeast Asian refugees who resettled in the U.S. who constructed a local Buddhist sanctuary where Buddhist monks lived. A group of Lao refugees accomplished sufficient financial and geographic stability to rebuild their conventional support systems. Cultural community leaders organised the Buddhist organisation to set up a temple and invite Buddhist monks to live there. The monks aided the national network of Thai and Lao Buddhist monks with connections to Southeast Asia. Donations from the cultural society were used to sustain the monks and the temple. This study suggested that organisations may provide services that strengthen the cultural community and support networking (Canda & Phaobtong, 1992). Similarly, Lacroix, Baffoe, and Liguori (2015) describe Congolese refugees in Canada who attended masses organised by a Roman Catholic church dedicated to Congolese refugees, which assisted with their community bonding. These masses included music and singing, and allowed refugees to feel at home as Catholic celebrations played a significant role in their lives. Each of these spaces were created to address significant gaps in resettlement services and allow the transition from being a refugee to becoming a familiar member of the host community. In these ways, religious practices offer refugees in resettlement countries the means to build bonding capital by supporting community networking and offering social benefits, such as reciprocity and a sense of belonging in new resettlement contexts (Boateng, 2010; Lee, 2012). At the same time, religious practices can also bridge the distance between refugees and different ethnic groups (Lee, 2012; McLellan, 2004; Major, Wilkinson, Langat, & Santoro, 2013; Allen, 2010).

Participation in work, school, leisure activities, and events can also help refugees build bonding and bridging social capital in their resettlement contexts (Lamba, 2003; Block et al., 2014; Smyth, MacBride, Paton, & Sheridan, 2010; Dimitriadou, 2006; Naidoo, 2009; Goodson &

Phillimore, 2008). Block et al. (2014) illustrate how schools and tertiary institutions can work as a vehicle for integration, supporting the integration of young refugees. Schools fostered refuge's' contact with individuals from different social strata (Dimitriadou, 2006; Smyth, MacBride, Paton, & Sheridan, 2010). In a study conducted in Canada with young African refugees, Naidoo (2009) found that school activities, assignments, after school tutoring, and homework, offered young refugee students with opportunities to network with other school children, learn new values, cultures, norms, and create new connections in the host country. Similarly, Smyth et al.'s (2003) study on refugee children in Scotland indicated that schools with student activities and committees developed solidarity and trust between students. Additionally, English as a Second or Other Language (ESOL) courses also supported connections among refugees from different cultural backgrounds and improved refugees' bridging capital (Dimitriadou, 2006; Goodson & Phillimore, 2008). Institutions that provided ESOL had recognised networks with information exchange and access to resources, which refugees could be linked to (Dimitriadou, 2006). For instance, in the United Kingdom, English teachers assist their students to connect with financial services, such as opening a bank account (Smyth, MacBride, Paton, & Sheridan, 2010).

Leisure activities can also facilitate new networks via different sources, such as friends, family, ethnic communities, organisations, cultural groups and other social events, schools, and workplaces (McLellan, 2004; Lee, 2012; Stewart et al., 2008; Simich, Beiser, & Mawani, 2003; Khawaja, White, Schweitzer, & Greenslade, 2008). Using these resources, refugees improve their community engagement, build long-term and trustworthy partnerships, and strengthen their community cohesion (Pecora & Fraser, 1985; Wallin & Ahlström, 2005; Lamba, 2003; Boateng, 2010). At the same time, these networks may also expose obstacles that refugees encounter during social capital and connection building (Stewart et al., 2008; Barnes & Aguilar, 2007; Pittaway, Bartolomei & Doney, 2016; Elliot and Yusuf, 2014; Spaaij, 2012). Spaaij (2012) both found that Somalis in Australia described how participating in sports, like soccer, enabled them to interact with other Somali people, helped them to make friends with similar cultural backgrounds, and generated a sense of respect. The sports clubs encouraged various culturally-based soccer teams to join the teams of other cultural groups (Spaaij, 2012). The way Somalian participants were involved with other cultures cultivated diverse connections and encouraged multicultural awareness among various cultural groups. The Somali football team even went to Canada and Sweden to play in international football events

(Spaaij, 2015). In this way, well-trained refugees can help link governmental, non-governmental institutions, and refugee groups through sports (Spaaij, 2012).

Comparably, Boateng (2010) found that teenage mothers, disabled people, and other refugee women in Canada organised ethnic and peer groups around sewing, bible reading, and cooking. Furthermore, Im and Rosenberg (2016) described how Bhutanese groups in the U.S. attended health workshops that became a platform to socialise and learn health-related skills and knowledge and develop "a sense of connectedness". These networks provide opportunities to acquire access to sources of information, ideas, and skills. The trust and ability to nurture and cultivate this form of social capital are fostered by access to these social connections in the first place.

In sum, examining bonding, bridging, and linking social capital in refugee resettlement contexts may offer a valuable framework for supporting the integration of refugees (Zetter et al., 2006). Refugees have commonly built their social connections through a variety of sources, including friends, family, religious practice, community members, ethnic groups and organisations, workplaces, sports and other social events, and schools in their resettlement countries (McLellan, 2004). Utilising these resources may assist them in increasing their community engagement, strengthen their community cohesion, and enhance their integration (Ives, Sinha, & Cnaan, 2010).

2.7 Integration

Although integration is a controversial concept, it continues to be a critical policy goal of resettlement and an important subject for refugee studies (Ager & Strang, 2008). Favell (1998) understands integration as an umbrella term for a complex and multifaceted range of processes and domains that connect a person who has just arrived with the host communities. These processes and domains include "achievement and access across the sectors of employment, housing, education and health; assumptions and practice regarding citizenship and rights; processes of social connection within and between groups within the community; and structural barriers to such connection related to language, culture and the local environment" (Ager & Strang, 2008, p. 166).

Research has also acknowledged integration as a multidimensional process (Atfield et al., 2007; Zetter et al., 2002; Valtonen, 2004). For example, in research about the interface between refugee integration and legal status, Da Lomba (2010) affirms that integration has both public and private dimensions. The public dimension connects to the official framework related to non-nationals, while the private dimension connects to the social (domains, in particular, housing, education, employment and health) where refugees are positioned. Similarly, Sole et al. (2002) developed the notion of "socio-cultural integration", which revolves around developing solidarity and overcoming conflict. The theorists consider integration as "the interpenetration of the associates and the cultural components of two populations into a distinctive and new social and cultural construction" (p. 21). Hence, integration implicates an ongoing negotiation process between communities, emphasising the existence of refugees in public areas and allowing reciprocal acknowledgement of the normative (place and value) structures of each community. Following this, Sole et al. (2002) emphasise two dimensions of integration. The first entails socio-structural integration, linked to labour and social integration by incorporating into a particular social group. The second is associated with cultural integration, defined by migrants' eagerness to ask for their own space in which they can experience life as citizens with rights and agents of a political project. The latter dimension is significant because it places refugees in an agentic role among various other actors, implicated in the integration process (Vera, 2015).

For this study, I draw on Ager and Strang's (2008) conceptual framework, which highlights the different dimensions involved in refugee integration. The framework was chosen because Ager and Strang (2008) theorised social capital's role in integration. Ager and Strang (2008) also provide a mechanism for testing the efficacy of policy initiatives (Cheung & Phillimore, 2013). In addition to the strong theoretical links between integration and social capital (Ager & Strang, 2008), refugee resettlement scholars have demonstrated the associations between social capital development and successful integration outcomes (Elliot & Yusuf, 2014; Lamba & Krahn, 2003; Pittaway et al., 2016; Xin, 2018). In this framework, indicators of social relations (social bonds, social bridges, and social links) are referred to as the "connective tissue" (Ager & Strang, 2008) of integration. These encapsulate the key aspects that inform the integration process, such as employment, housing, education, health, language, and rights. It also acknowledges and accommodates the fact that these aspects unavoidably connect, overlap, and can be organised differently according to circumstance and setting (Platts-Fowler & Robinson,

2015). More importantly, the framework demonstrates an understanding of the association between the features of the environment in which refugees settle and the specifics of the integration processes. For these reasons, this framework was used in the present study as it afforded an possible examination of how social capital mediated young mothers' integration experiences.

A conceptual framework defining core domains of integration

Markers and Means	Employment	Housing	Education	Health
Social Connection	Social Bridges	Social Bonds	Social Links	
Facilitators	Language and Cultural Knowledge	Safety and Stability		
Foundation	Rights and Citizenships			
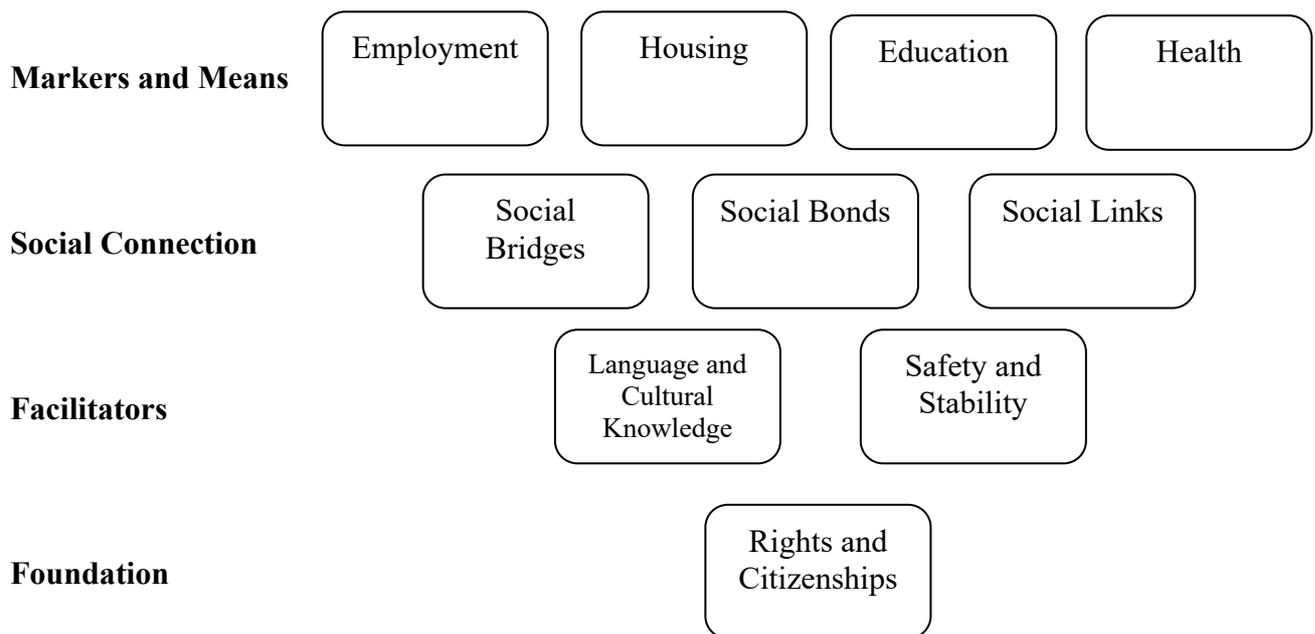
Figure 2. Source: Ager and Strang (2008)

Figure 2 illustrates the framework, consisting of ten domains that reflect normative understandings of integration. For Ager and Strang (2008), the four *Markers and Means* domains of employment, housing, education, and health provide useful integration indicators but may also serve as means to support integration. The *Social Connections* layer includes three dimensions of social capital: bonds within a refugee's society, bridges with other groups and links to institutions of power and influence. Elliot and Yusuf (2014) argue that all forms of social capital facilitate integration, not just connections between refugees and the host society. The third area, *Facilitators,* comprises language and cultural knowledge, which are the principal barriers limiting refugees to engage confidently with the host communities. Safety

and stability are also included as indicators of integration. Ager and Strang (2008) contend that the rights and responsibilities of other people, the state, and refugees themselves are the *Foundation* for integration.

Social capital has also facilitated the integration of Colombian refugees. Vera (2015) examined the integration processes of Colombian and Palestinian in Brazil and Chile, contending that integration of resettled refugees implicated a continuous (re)negotiation of identities, access, and agency within an environment of structural and social constraints. Wieb (2013) evaluated Colombian refugees' stories of integration in Canada, demonstrating the contributions of community resources (bridging social capital) to navigate integration and settlement, and develop agency. These studies primarily focus on rights and citizenship as integration indicators; however, there is room to include other integration indicators, such as bonding, bridging and linking social capital, and others within Ager & Strang's (2008) framework. Studies have suggested that it can be helpful to initially form a concept of integration as a broad measure of all these indicators. For instance, Lichtenstein et al. (2019) did this with a sample of Bhutanese refugees in the United States. The study showed Bhutanese refugees' ability to integrate over time without taking out the role of social capital as a predictor. This longitudinal research notes the significance of continuous research among different types of social capital and overall integration for refugees.

2.8 Why examine young refugee mothers' experiences of integration?

Integration is a process that enables social inclusion and economic mobility for both young mothers and their children. Institutions around the world, work on programmes that enable refugees to develop and reach their full potential, to avoid their marginalisation, protect their humans rights and nurture social cohesion and well-balanced living (UNHRC, 2018). These goals are also important to achieve for these young mothers and their children. This thesis integrates Berry's (1990) acculturation model, Putnam's (2000) social capital theory, and Ager and Strang's (2008) integration framework to explore, describe, and analyse, the resources and strategies that young Colombian mothers use to achieve integration.

Extant research suggest that acculturation may critically affect integration. Moreover, there are indications that young people may more easily acculturate, as they tend to be more skilled at positive change than older generations. For instance, a study conducted with displaced Serbian

young people living in the United States showed that they acculturated quicker to the host culture, relative to their parents (Lazarevic et al., 2006). Young people are more likely to become familiar with the host culture's language and might be better prepared to adapt to new social practices. Similarly, Berry et al.'s (2006) research about young immigrants and their caregivers found that young people coordinated the expectation and principles of the host culture while simultaneously maintaining social standards and beliefs. Young individuals who can accept the host culture while maintaining a solid feeling of their ethnic foundation can be related to their identity in adulthood (Qin et al., 2015).

However, in the context of motherhood, being younger can prove to be a significant barrier to acculturation and negatively influence mothers' integration experiences. Adolescence is a complex developmental stage for negotiating various aspects of the social self, including identity construction that serve as the basis for establishing acculturation orientations (Berry et al., 2006). Young refugees are trying to navigate between their home culture and the new culture, but also between childhood and adulthood (Nam & Ward, 2006). Those transitions incorporate socialisation through the acquisition of norms, abilities, and knowledge related to being an adult in the host community; the socio-cultural transformation to life in the new society; and the progression of psychological recuperation in the face of associated refugee stressors (Pastoor, 2015). How young individuals deal with conflicting social values can have crucial implications for them and their relationships. Although young refugees may retain numerous strengths (Eide et al., 2018), their life circumstances are frequently characterised by conflict, social segregation, and lacking a sense of belonging (Correa-Velez et al., 2010). Early motherhood diminishes the chances of continued studies, getting a paid job, and may contribute to a negative pattern of social well-being and financial results (United Nations Population Fund-UNFPA, 2015). Young refugees may also find it challenging to make new connections, re-establish, and continue with their cultural traditions (Berry et al., 2006). This would suggest that refugee mothers' health and wellbeing would be negatively affected by poor integration; however, there is little research at this intersection. When this study was conducted, the author was aware of no literature that addressed young Colombian refugees who came to New Zealand as single mothers. In addition, to my knowledge, studies have not yet examined the role of social capital in facilitating young mothers' integration experiences in a new setting. Subsequently, the exploration of social capital's role in young Colombian refugee mother's integration presents a novel contribution to the field. Moreover, it offers the opportunity to

explore how access to valuable resources, such as opportunities to participate in broader community activities for mothers and social connections, facilitates their integration into New Zealand society.

In New Zealand, quota refugees experience six weeks at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre. Children and adolescents are offered to attend a school that attempts to reproduce New Zealand institutions' habits, methods, and organisations. The focus of going to school is to ease the transition of young refugees into host country schools (Strauss & Smedley, 2009); however, young refugees often experience isolation, discrimination, and/or alienation in educational systems (Gibson, 2002). Although creating new relationships and performing well in school is important, learning the local language is one of the vital characteristics of good integration (Qin et al., 2015).

There is a need to understand and work with processes that address the difficulties young people face as refugees. Strang and Ager (2010) indicated that solid bonding capital, particularly during resettlement times, offers support, self-esteem, and confidence and helps refugees deal with their challenges in adapting and resettling to a different context. There is evidence that school and tertiary institutions can provide as a vehicle for integration, supporting the integration of young refugees (Block et al., 2014). Those connections can also foster bridging capital as they enable relationships between family members and the community. Strang and Ager (2010) highlight the need for refugees to create bridging capital to evade isolation. Refugees, in general, participate in social, family, and community networks that facilitate different forms of social capital, crucial to their resettlement (Santoro & Wilkinson, 2016). However, to my knowledge, studies have not yet examined the role of social capital in facilitating young mothers' integration experiences in a new setting. Subsequently, I explore the role of social capital in integrating young mothers, particularly in relation to facilitating their access to valuable resources, such as opportunities to participate in broader community activities for mothers and social connections.

Summary

This thesis draws on Berry's (1990) acculturation model, parenting-motherhood acculturation, Putnam's (2000) social capital theory, and Ager and Strang's (2008) integration framework to describe, explore, and understand the resources and strategies that young Colombian mothers

use to overcome the challenges of resettlement. Berry (1990) model provides a framework of four strategies – assimilation, integration, separation and marginalisation – to interpret young mothers' acculturation. These strategies are complemented by notions of social capital, which contextualise individuals' acculturation strategies. Putnam's (2000) social capital is defined as the "features of social organisation, such as norms, connections, and social trust, that facilitate cooperation and coordination for mutual benefit" (p. 2). Putnam (2008) distinguishes between three forms of social capital: bonding social capital or strong ties (the connection between their community and family members), bridging social capital or weak ties (with different communities), and linking social capital (with organisations). Integrating Ager and Strang's (2008) framework, Putnam's (2000) social capital serves as the connective tissue (Ager & Strang, 2008) that supports the integration of refugees into the new society. In the next chapter, I present the methodology used in this study.

CHAPTER 3: Research design – methodological approaches to engaging with the Colombian community

3.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces and justifies the research design that guided the collection and analysis of data. I have selected a constructivist approach to underpin my methodology that serves as the theoretical and methodological foundation for this research. I organise this chapter into three parts. The first part presents research design using Crotty's (1998) four elements: epistemology, theoretical perspective, methodology and, methods. In the second part, I discuss the importance of building trust and rapport in community recruitment. In part three, I discuss the ethical implications of this approach. I then explain the ways in which I analysed the rich data that came from these mothers' reflections on their experiences.

By examining young mothers' refugee experiences of integration in New Zealand, I gained a greater understanding of how to work with young mothers with refugee backgrounds in settings that they might experience as new and foreign. To guide my study, I used the following research questions:

What factors aided in facilitating young Colombian refugee mothers' experiences of integration and acculturation in New Zealand?

1. How did the mothering experiences of young Colombian refugee mothers in New Zealand affect their identities as first-time mothers and their perceptions of their children's identities?

2. How did young Colombian refugee mothers navigate the resettlement process in New Zealand for themselves and their children?

To answer to these questions, I outline the epistemic, theoretical, methodological, and methods-based aspects of my design.

3.2 Epistemology

3.2.1 Constructivism

Constructivism supposes that individuals interpret, engage and make sense of the world through their construction of it (Crotty, 1998). An important characteristic of constructivism is the notion that knowledge is co-produced by the researcher (Ashworth, 2008). In this study, the experiences of the young women participating were the key focus, and I paid attention to how the particularities of their individual contexts shaped their accounts of being a young mother in resettlement. As Creswell (2014) and Crotty (1998) contend, the task of constructivists is to uncover the meaning people attribute to their world. An understanding of how young mothers negotiate motherhood in a new setting and how these experiences impact their capacity to navigate and learn in the world, was a significant concern of the present study. As Burr (2003) indicates, "it is through daily connections between individuals in the development of social life that our forms of knowledge turn out to be fabricated" (p. 4).

In the constructivist tradition, meaning is not only discovered but constructed (Crotty, 1998). From a constructivist perspective, meaning cannot be explained as simply 'objective' or 'subjective' because meaning-making is contingent upon our experiences of (and relationships to) people, objects, and phenomena in the world (Crotty, 1998). My rationale for choosing constructivism as an epistemology stem from my observation that throughout these young mothers' forced migration journeys, the different meaning systems they brought with them to contested environments impacted the ways in which they navigated society and constructed their own identities as mothers.

3.3 Theoretical perspective

3.3.1 Constructivism – Underpinning Philosophy

For social constructivists, the social world is mentally constructed individually through cognitive processes (Young & Colin, 2004). Social constructivists grant analytical purchase to the "processes" of communication among individuals. These processes facilitate everyday social phenomena and the profound structural contacts that establish the community under research. In social science, *explanation*, *description*, and *exploration* are strategies for investigating phenomena. The purpose of explanation is to clarify the "why" of things;

description enables the researcher to articulate what is detected from the study; and exploration provides the researcher with a sense of what the topic of research involves (Babbie, 2013; Yin, 2009; Zainal, 2007). Implementing a case study design offers the researcher the opportunity to "study the complexity of life and the effect on decisions and convictions of the complicated network of social contact" (Orum et al., 1991, p. 9). Along these lines, a case study research design considers the idea of the natural world and invites many levels of examination to understand a phenomenon.

This study is positioned within the social constructivist paradigm. Social constructivism theorizes that 'each person mentally constructs the world of experience through cognitive processes' (Charmaz, 2006). From an epistemological viewpoint, I found it important to consider how my research participants observed their world and how their worldviews were products of Colombian society, further prioritizing how these meanings were collectively constructed and reproduced in their interviews. As Hatch and Cunliffe (2013) note, individuals' socially constructed worldviews contribute to their "interpretation of actions, events, objects and words" (pp. 33-34).

When considering how societies construct themselves through the interactions of individuals, Babbie (2013) argues that "social study search for ways that constructivism (from connection patterns to whole societies), impact the circumstances and practices of individuals" (p. 24). My study engaged young mothers, a population emerges out of from community actions (such as forced displacement and their country's internal war). These collective acts further elucidate the social dimensions of the refugee emergency. In other words, displaced individuals are constructed by a world in which man-made disasters, violence, conflicts, wars, and the other political, environmental, and socio-economic factors contribute to the displacement of refugees worldwide (Miliband, 2018). The large number of pregnant young refugees that are forced to flee their countries due to civil war is a reminder of the effect of social structures evidenced in the living conditions, poor maternal experiences, poor nutritional position, premature births, and laws that marginalise them in society (Turkay et al., 2020). The norms, laws, and practices of refugee organisations further determine how many of these forced migrants connect with society and vice versa (Bauman et al., 2016).

Constructivism also allowed me to consider participants' individual meaning-making experiences whilst locating the wider social context in which these understandings arise. I was

uniquely placed to engage with these young mothers to gain a deep understanding of their experiences and their broader social significance.

3.4 Methodology

3.4.1 An intrinsic case study research design and rationale

This study adopts an intrinsic case study research design. Case study research design is "an in-depth examination from multiple viewpoints of the uniqueness and complexity of a specific project, institution, policy, system or programme in a 'real life' context." (Simons, 2009, p. 21). Case study should not be understood as a method in and of itself but as Stake (2005) indicates, it is a design structure that may include many methods and analytical structures – hermeneutic or cultural. According to Thomas and Myers (2015), case study refers to the analysis and exploration of a phenomenon, such as a group, an individual, a country, an institution, a period in time, or an event. Bryman (2008) suggests that "a case study comprises the intensive and detailed analysis of a single case" (p. 28). These descriptions describe how a case study can offer in-depth information and a complete picture of real-life actions of individuals in a social activity and in a specific natural context (Punch, 2009), thus supporting the constructivist approach advocated in this study (Stake, 2005).

Case study research design retains the meaningful and holistic characteristics of real-life events (Orum et al., 1991). It describes individuals as they experience natural, everyday situations, which can provide the researcher "theoretical and empirical achievements in understanding larger social developments of actions, motives and actors" (Orum et al., 1991). Because social constructivists research the variety-communal creation of meaning and reality, it is incumbent upon them to understand how actions facilitate everyday social phenomena and the deeper structural relations that establish the society under research.

Social phenomena also have material dimensions. A social scientist is called upon to interpret daily occurrences and to examine their relationships with different kinds of social practices. Social practices are "defined as everyday practices and the ways these are usually accomplished in (much of) a society" (Holtz, 2014, p.1), such as cooking. In the representation of these daily actions, individual ideas frequently overlap with the material nature of the world. For example, the notion that women are homemakers and men's work limits women's life to spaces associated with the home. Through a case study research design, a researcher can "explore not only the difficulties of life in which individuals are involved, but also the influence on decisions

and principles of the difficult network of social connection" (Orum et al., 1991, p. 9). A case study research design thus considers the nature of reality and takes into consideration various levels of analysis to understand a phenomenon.

3.4.2 The case study of young Colombian refugee mothers

This study's participant population of young Colombian mothers with refugee backgrounds provide an intrinsic case, in which analytical attention is devoted to their lived experiences and social contexts (Stake, 1995). An intrinsic case study research design prioritizes analysis of the significant attributes of real-life events, decisions, and individuals (Thomas and Myers, 2015, p 7). This design allowed me to observe the social characteristics of integration as they occur in a natural context. I used this kind of case study to understand the unique experiences of integration of eight young Colombian mothers with refugee backgrounds in New Zealand. There are few plans established by researchers, organisations, and other institutions to create insights into integration of Colombian women. Zainal (2007) states that "case studies not only aid to define or explore the data in a real-life environment but also aid to describe the difficulties of real-life circumstances which might not be described through experimental or survey research" (p. 4). As my thesis demonstrates, many of the experiences of young Colombian mothers would not have been sufficiently described in a quantitative design. Young mothers have unique needs. They also represent a highly disadvantaged group. Furthermore, their mothering responsibilities may be especially difficult to perform during resettlement, which represents a unique challenge to the construction of identity (Cadena-Camargo, Krumeich, Duque-Páramo, & Horstman, 2021), as youth is a critical stage for identity development (Tanti et al. 2011; Topolewska-siedzik 2018) and the experience of pregnancy during youth represents an even bigger challenge. These circumstances and considerations led me to case study research because it is allowed me to conjointly study the social construction of motherhood discourses, the reality of being a mother, and the meaning of motherhood identities (Schwandt, 1994 p. 125).

Reflecting constructivist contentions, this thesis holds that there is no distinctive "real world" prior to symbolic language and mental activities of human beings. The world is an outcome of historically and socially mediated exchanges between individuals and social formations. Social construction is the bridge to reality, including shared cultural meaning and language: "the meaning-making actions themselves are important to constructivists, because it is the meaning-

making that shape activities or (inaction)" (Guba and Lincoln 2005, p. 197). Bornstein (2015) conducted qualitative research that found several different parenting challenges. These included environmental challenges and housing. Child-specific challenges included emotional regulation, behaviour change, signs of trauma and change in communication. Lastly, parenting challenges included feeling stalled in one's development as a parental figure (Bornstein, 2015). As this is an intrinsic case study, the case itself is of my interest and the intention is not a construction of a theory but curiosity in the experiences of young mothers with refugee backgrounds from Colombia (Ridder, 2017). As a social constructivist, I sought to research the particular experiences of motherhood in the context of resettlement. Because of this, I tried to understand the shared meaning and construction (Schwandt, 1994) of these young mothers' experiences.

3.4.3 Locating myself as an important component of this methodological approach

This case is inherently interesting to me as a researcher because it relates to my own experience as a young, first-time Colombian migrant mother in New Zealand. Although I do not have a refugee background, I share cultural similarities with Colombian refugees. After the first year of my studies, I became pregnant with a baby boy. Like the Colombian mothers in my study, I became a first-time mom and experienced motherhood in a foreign country. This motherhood experience in New Zealand made me curious about young Colombian mothers with refugee backgrounds in New Zealand but I realised that there was no existing study of this group of people with unique needs. I wanted to hear their stories and explore their resettlement experiences. Given that refugees from Colombia are becoming more prominent in New Zealand, this study marks an important beginning and may provide a significant opportunity to develop theoretical insights and policy implications for this relatively new but growing population. Stake (1995) encouraged researchers "to select cases which are easy to get to and kind to our inquiry, possibly for which a potential informant can be recognised" (p. 4). My personal background and experiences offered a real opportunity to connect with young Colombian mothers in New Zealand.

According to Stake (2005), the case study research method is 'holistic' (distinct attention is paid to mutual relations between the phenomenon and its contexts), 'empirical' (built on observation), 'interpretive' (researchers' view the process of meaning-making as a researcher-subject interaction), 'empathic' (insider perspectives are consulted to reflect on how

individuals think) and integrated approach that values the various viewpoints and interpretations researcher and participants have. This was a holistic case study design because the data from all eight participants was examined together as the central element of analysis (Stake, 2005). It is empirical because the study is built on interviews and observations. I drew from my instincts and understandings as a young Colombian mother to study the case from insider, outsider, and even an in-between perspective that balances the varying ways in which I was similar to and different from my participants. Asselin (2003) points out that even when the researcher belongs to the culture under study, they might not understand the group to which the participants belong, which attests to the need for bracketing assumptions. Dam and Lunn (2014) who conduct research in India, claim that individuals' first impressions of, and assumptions about the researchers, centred on evident characteristics of their identities, such as language, skin colour, and dress. These impressions furthermore influence their actions to informants. They further observed that even though the British colonization of India ended long ago, participants' perceptions of the researchers' "foreigner" and "native" identities considerably affected the research (Dam & Lunn, 2014).

In this study with young Colombian mothers with refugee backgrounds, I developed knowledge that helped me better understand what being a mother in a foreign country meant. However, when I was conducting my data analysis, I found that I did not always share perspectives, opinions, and experiences with the participants. I realised my individual experiences and position as a researcher gave me a status that was in-between that of outsider and insider. This happens because not all cultures are homogeneous, hence differences are to be expected (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). I also experienced feelings of being an outsider because even when I became a mother in a foreign country, I have not experienced being a refugee. I did not claim to personally understand the experience of being a refugee. However, it was my hope to learn from the young mothers' experiences so that I gained insight into their journeys and their impacts. As Dwyer and Buckle (2009) note, "as qualitative researchers we are not unconnected from the investigation, with restricted interaction with the participants. Instead, we are firmly in all aspects of the study process and important to it". Conducting this qualitative research did not compel me to remain an outsider to the phenomena and experiences under research. However, my role as researcher made it so that I did not qualify as a complete insider. I occupied the space between, with the benefits and costs this status afforded (Dwyer & Buckle, 2009). In the next section, I will explain the techniques I used and how I engaged with the young mothers, which allowed me to gather and analyse the information collected.

3.5 Methods

3.5.1 Semi-structured interviews

Qualitative interviews were determined to be the most appropriate method of data collection for this investigation. They support the examination of the emotional and intellectual experiences from the refugee´s perspectives, obtaining information about their experiences and opportunities. Qualitative research interviews attempt to recognise the world from the participants' points of view and theorize the meaning of their experiences (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). I used qualitative interviews to get to know interviewees better, keeping in mind the purpose of my study and my constructivist perspective as a researcher. The purpose of using qualitative interview was to contribute to a body of knowledge that was theoretical and conceptual and was based on the meanings that motherhood experiences of resettlement held for the interviewees.

For this research, I used individual semi-structured interviews with each participant because there is evidence that interviewing requires the cultivation of conversational skills beyond the simple asking of questions prepared in advance. Byrne (2012) explains that qualitative interviewing allows researchers to gain the participants' views in their own words, which helps obtain a deeper and more complex analysis. Semi-structured interviews are a "particularly suitable method for accessing complex issues such as values … [and are] fascinating to researchers who want to study voices and experiences which they believe have been ignored, misrepresented or suppressed in the past" (Byrne, 2012, p. 209).

The content of the interviews was based on dialogue as a two-way conversation—the method allowed for knowledge to be constructed between the researcher and the interviewee. Interviews are used as a tool to obtain a description of the lifeworld of the interviewee, which can then be drawn upon to theorize and understand the meaning of the various phenomena and relationships that comprise that world (Kvale and Brinkmann, 2009). The interviews were semi-structured, so participants could elaborate on the answers spontaneously and share their thoughts and experiences. The purpose of the interviews was to collect and analyse the experiences of young mothers with refugee backgrounds (18-24 years) who were in their early years of resettlement in New Zealand as this helped to capture what factors, including how different forms of social capital, facilitated the integration of refugees at different stages.

Data were collected over nine months and consisted of 16 research trips (Why 16 trips will be explained below). These trips included one 60 to 90-minute semi-structured interview with each participant, at the frequency of one interview per month. Interviews were conducted in Hamilton, mainly in participants' homes. Participants chose the location and time for the interview. Because of the preferences of Colombian participants, I conducted most of the interviews in Spanish and just one in English. When the conversation was in Spanish, I translated the interviews into English. All the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim within 48 hours. The interview included questions regarding participants' acculturation and integration experiences in Hamilton, New Zealand.

Translation is a social process that involves the imprecise mediation of cultures; therefore, I was attentive to the social dynamics between researcher and participants (Burja et., 2006). Serving as researcher and translator necessitated that I consider the translation processes as an examination of the rationality of interpretations (e.g. Young & Ackerman, 2001). This research thus benefitted from my knowledge of Colombian customs and culture, the fact that Spanish is my native language, and my sufficient command of the English language. In light of this, I did my best to maintain the meaning of my participants' reflections. I began with verbatim transcription, or "the process of converting any kind of recorded speech into text format and deleting any redundant phrases and words" (Miller, 2012, p. 1). Verbatim transcription made the written participants' quotes more "readable" (McMullin, 2021), by omitting all 'ums', 'oms', laughter and pauses throughout the dialogue. I also performed some light editing to correct the grammar and sentences. I deleted irrelevant words or sentences, and redundant expressions and repetitions. I had to edit some words and phrases that are not part of formal Spanish but are colloquial words and slang not found or approved by the Spanish Royal Academy (RAE). Those words could not always be translated into English, but I included notes on their meaning in my transcriptions. Once I finished transcribing the interviews, I sent the transcripts to the participants for their feedback.

3.5.2 Participant observation

The purpose of participant observation as a qualitative research method is to construct familiarity with a community, their practices, and activities. This construction occurs through direct participation with the community over time. Kawulich (2005) states that this method is

"a process allowing researchers to learn about the activities of the individuals under examination in the natural context through involving and observing in those activities. Observations allow the researcher to define current circumstances using the five senses, offering a written photograph of the situation under research" (p.466).

As mentioned earlier, I made 16 research trips to Hamilton and participated in several community events to recruit participants. The first time I visited Hamilton for fieldwork, I went to the Association of Colombian refugees to introduce myself to the president, who immediately invited me to an event the next day where all the Colombian community would gather to celebrate Colombian Independence Day. I attended the event and engaged with many young people. The president also introduced me to others during the event. Interactions continued for months as there were many events to celebrate. During my visits, I gained much insight into my participants by seeing them in settings outside of the interview context. Observation then became part of my methods and once the opportunity arises, I considered critical factors in observing, including what was going on and how they interacted.

After attending this first event, I was also invited to attend "candles' day" to celebrate the Virgin Mary. I offered to help with decoration, so I had the opportunity to talk more with the group and get to know them. Kawulich (2005) argues that participant observation may serve as a method to capture nonverbal actions, manifestations of feelings and reactions, and a general understanding of characteristics of the community that cannot be obtained through interviews. It is essential to mention that after attending events, I took handwritten field notes, which then organised using two main foci: informal conversation and the interview (Florio-Ruane, 1990). The same day as each observation and after taking notes, I reread my field notes and added details as I remembered them. I typed all data into a word processing document. Fieldnotes from observations, interactions with the participants, and formal interview transcripts triangulated the data collection.

My research observations provided insight into interactions between different individuals and groups within the Hamilton Colombian community. For instance, in one of the events I attended, I noticed that many young Colombians, including some participants from this study, preferred to talk with non-Colombian visitors. They tried to speak in English and shared food with visitors at the events. Observing the whole context helped me to consider the influence of the physical environment and people involved in young mothers' interactions with others. Many Colombian community events were festivals where music and dance were involved. I

noticed that many of the young Colombians preferred to dance instead of sitting down. However, at another event where only Colombian citizens attended, the atmosphere felt much quieter. I realised that observations at these events provided me with ways to check for nonverbal expression of feelings from the community and more deeply understand how participants might have interacted and communicated with Colombians and non-Colombians alike. These observations allowed me to estimate how much time participants might have spent on various activities and events. This method is known in the literature as an unstructured observational technique. This technique is used in cases where a researcher considers all elements of the circumstances, events, phenomena or subjects and record information relevant to the issue under research without any predetermined specifications (Ameyaw et al., 2018).

As I was actively involved in that community, they also got to know more about me. This participant observation approach thus gave me a richer understanding that went beyond what a semi-structured interview would have made possible.

3.6 Specifics of recruitment

3.6.1 Participant recruitment

I recruited participants based on three criteria: first, they are from Colombia; second, they are young people between 18-24 years of age; third, participants must be granted refugee status to upon resettlement in New Zealand. A straightforward meaning of youth has been contested and is grounded on social situations, cultural position, or chronological age, depending on the social circumstances (Bucholtz, 2002). Regardless of the meaning of youth, the separation among young and old is strategic. Those divisions construct order and enforce restrictions that everyone must maintain, hence influencing the limits of a person's agency. In New Zealand, "youth" or "young people" are defined as people between 12 to 24 years (Ministry of Youth Development, 2010) (MYD). This is the age scale implemented by the MYD and within the Youth Development Strategy Aotearoa. For this research, young people are defined as individuals between 18-24 years old because, in the social settings of New Zealand, those above 18 years old are no longer children.

I chose Hamilton, New Zealand mainly because it has welcomed the Colombian refugees since 2007 (Immigration New Zealand, 2013). I also chose it because of its proximity to Auckland, where I am based. Hamilton is New Zealand's largest inland city with 169,500 people, per

estimates from June 2019. Half of those residents are younger than 30 years old, giving the city the most youthful population in New Zealand. Hamilton is also New Zealand's most multicultural city, with roughly 80 ethnic groups represented in its census, including Colombians (Hamilton Information Centre, 2021).

To recruit my participants, I went to community events and invited prospective participants to express their interest. I used volunteer sampling and recruited participants through the Association of Colombian Refugees in Hamilton (ACRH). Volunteer sampling allows the recruitment of people with a desire to participate in research (Seale, 2012). Initially, I had wanted to recruit participants through the association staff. After a month of waiting for my first participant, I went back to talk to the association staff. I found out that the association was unsure of helping me out with the recruitment because they saw me as a spy from the Colombian government. I explained my work and showed all the documents to prove that it was a genuine research, but the staff member was still reluctant to connect me with the young Colombian community. To build trust, I attended over six Colombian events where the community celebrated national festivities such as Independence Day and Candles' Day. The ACRH president introduced me at one of the events, so people knew me and allowed me to participate in Hamilton's Colombian community. At every event, I had permission to put up posters throughout the venue, and they invited me to join a private Facebook page of young refugees in Hamilton. Interested participants sent me a message or called me to show their interest in my research. I then contacted these interested participants and invited them to a one-on-one interview session. People who wanted to participate initiated contact with me through a message or a call to the dedicated research mobile number. They enquired about the study and indicated their intention to be part of it. The focus of researching young mothers in this study emerged once I started recruiting/interviewing.

I met each participant at their home. At the information session, I communicated information about the research verbally in English and Spanish. I notified participants of the overall purpose of the research and their rights to withdraw entirely at any time. I also issued a Spanish version of the Participant Information Sheet (PIS) (See Appendix B for the English and Spanish version) and a Consent Form (CF) (See Appendix C for the English and Spanish version of the consent form). Then I read examples of interview questions for the participants to consider and clarified their doubts. I allowed participants several days to think about their participation. To show gratitude to participants for their time and participation in the interview session and, I

offered each participant an NZD 30 Prezzy card for their time, which involved around one and a half hour per interview. I recruited a total of eight participants for this research.

3.6.2 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations appropriate to social research tackle the issue of reliability. Many authors who examine qualitative study design address the significance of ethical considerations (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2016; Connelly, 2014; Creswell, 2014; Frawley and Finney-Brown, 2013; Morrell & Carroll, 2010). Hugman, Pittaway and Bartolomei (2011) state that various ethical issues related to studies focused on refugees, including pressure to participate in research and the susceptibility of refugees. The study has ethical approval (reference number 021393) from The University of Auckland's Human Ethics Committee (see **Appendix A** for the Ethics Approval Form). In this section, I discuss the ethics of my fieldwork.

To ensure that I had voluntary and informed consent from the participants, I organised, circulated, explained, and collected Participant Information Sheets (PIS) and a Consent Form (CF) in Spanish and English from my participants. The PIS described the nature of the study project, the sample of questions that I would ask, and the scope of participants' engagement in the research. It explained in clear terms that the young participants would create data that I would later analyse and publish as part of my PhD and possibly other work. I clarified explicitly that I would interview participants, use an audio recorder to record our conversation, and notify them when the recorder is 'on' or 'off'. In the event they felt uncomfortable with the recording, participants could choose to have the recorder turned off at any time. I would manually take notes using a pen and paper in such cases. I also transcribed and translated what they said. The CF summed up the critical points of the PIS into short statements. It offered participants the opportunity to consent to these statements if they desired. Both the PIS and CF for the young mothers were written in Spanish and English to ensure they understood the scope and nature of their consent. Participants were offered the opportunity to have a written transcript interview to edit and had up to four weeks to make any changes or withdraw their participation and data from the research once it was sent to them. After those four weeks, I clarified that the information could not be removed from the study. I explained that my data analysis would be used and published in my thesis and possibly in future journal publications and conference presentations.

In my PIS and CF, I also explained that I would keep the anonymity and confidentiality of my research participants and data obtained from them by not disclosing their identities as I understood the need of the women to feel safe when talking about their experiences of integration in New Zealand. I anonymised the participants by using pseudonyms and codes for digital transcripts of interviews. I also clarified that participants had the right to withdraw their participation and data from the study for any reason, or without providing a reason at all.

A representative of the refugee Colombian association in Hamilton supported me in recruiting participants. He invited young people to participate in the research. I gave him documents which outlined the interview questions, the study research and participants' respective roles. All the participants signed a Confidentiality Agreement (CA). The CA stated that participants will not disclose or discuss with anyone other than the researcher. The contents of all PISs, CFs and CAs were agreed upon prior to any data generation taking place. I provide more detail regarding the considerations underlying these documents below to answer to possible ethical issues that arise from my research project.

The interviews (See **Appendix D** for Interview schedule) did raise sensitive issues. Early in the recruitment process, prospective participants often did not want to talk to me as they could not identify me as a fellow Colombian. My coming from the Northern part of the country and interviewing participants from the South contributed to initial barriers in building familiarity and trust. Additionally, participating in the research could have been unfavourable to the participants, as they expressed difficult experiences and sentiments that could have exposed them to psychological harm. To avoid instances of deception and to be alert to sensitive data that could harm the participants, I was attentive during the data collection, analysis, and informing stages of the investigation process. As a result, accessing the community and fieldwork took me more time than the six months expected. Obstacles included my own challenges in gaining entry to the community while, at the same time young Colombians received advice from close relatives and friends not to participate in the study. This was the case for three participants who rescheduled or changed their minds when I arrived at their houses for interviews because their relatives, partners or friends had reservations about the research. One participant told me: "My partner told me not to do the interview." She requested to meet me again and to explain the process to her partner so that she could participate in the study. In response to her request, I met her twice and only began the interview when they felt comfortable. These women's actions can also be understood through the lens of patriarchy.

Women, especially in rural areas in Colombia, can be voiceless when making decisions. Many rural Colombian women and girls are confronted by gender violence, characteristic of the armed conflict, and are often objects of gender-based discrimination. Violence against women is controlled (Pagnol, 2015) and often turned into a "fact of life".

My fieldwork could have also put the participants at risk of harm since young people might have been distressed by participating in the study and remembering their refugee stories. My study might also have forced participants to experience sentiments usually perceived as harmful or detrimental, such as sadness or anger. Therefore, I created and offered a pamphlet to each participant containing the contact number for the helpline, Red Cross, HMS Trust (Hamilton Multicultural Services), and English Language Support, and Youthline. I clarified the intention of the pamphlet accordingly after the interviews. These represent the ethical issues that emerged as the research proceeded and were outside of my expectations. I did not anticipate several ethical issues in my design, such as when participants told me that recounting their mothering experiences made them feel sad. Each participant, however, confided in me that they wanted to finish the interviews.

3.6.3 Trustworthiness

This section illustrates the qualitative methods used to assess the rigour of qualitative research. To establish trustworthiness, Lincoln and Guba (1985) developed rigorous criteria for qualitative research known as credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. In the case of this study, I adapted the criteria point by point by choosing the strategies applied in my study while conducting thematic analysis (See **section 3.6.6**). Table 1 describes which strategies were applied in my study to establish trustworthiness during each step of thematic analysis.

Table 1. Strategies applied in my study to establish trustworthiness during each step of thematic analysis. Adapted from Lincoln and Guba (1985)

Steps of Thematic Analysis (See section 3.6.5)	Rigour Citeria	Purpose	Strategies applied in my research to achieve rigour
Step 1: Becoming familiar with the data. Step 2: Generating initial codes. Step 3: Involves searching for themes. Step 4: Reviewing themes. Step 5: Defining themes. Step 6: The writing up of the information	Credibility	To create confidence that the findings (from participants) are reliable, true and believable.	- I had a varied and prolonged engagement with data. I spent and visited Hamilton over nine months to engage with participants. – I Kept records of all transcripts and data field notes. - I Stored raw data in well-organised archives. – I applied several triangulation techniques.
	Dependability	To ensure that the results of this qualitative study are reproducible when the study is conducted within the same cohort of coders, participants and context.	-I documented reflective and theoretical thoughts. - I documented thoughts about potential codes/themes.
	Confirmability	To increase confidence that the findings are or have been corroborated by other investigators.	-I created diagrams to make sense of theme connections. - I kept detailed notes about hierarchies and development of themes and concepts. - I reported on reasons for analytical, methodological, and theoretical choices throughout the entire study.
	Transferability	To extend the generalisability or transferability of results to other contexts or settings.	-I explained the process of analysis and coding in sufficient detail. - I described thick explanations of context.

3.6.4 Data Collection

Implementing a case study design includes using various data sources to gather relevant evidence. Such data can include interviews with and observations of participants (Stake, 1995). Case studies emphasise an in-depth exploration from multiple viewpoints, surfacing the uniqueness and complexity of a specific study design, programme, institution, policy, or system in a "real-life" context (Simons, 2009 p. 21). As Simons suggests, case studies should not be seen as a method in and of itself. Instead, Stake (2005, p. 443) advises that it is a "design frame that can integrate multiple methods and analytical frames – cultural, organic, or hermeneutic". More significantly, the multiple views build an understanding of the world in which individuals

live and work and the cultural and historical settings of the participants, supporting the constructivist approach advocated in this study (Creswell and Poth, 2018).

For this study, I collected detailed, in-depth data through two primary sources of information: semi-structured interviews and observations. These various data sources allowed converging lines of analysis to develop as data was triangulated. The approach of using multiple sources of information that were embedded in real-life conditions has been illustrated as a unique attribute of case study methodology (Stake, 1995). As Stake (1995) suggests, diverse data sources are collected and analysed to obtain several viewpoints and perspectives to gain a holistic understanding of the phenomenon being examined. Data triangulation is then used to describe the use of multiple data sources and distinguish divergence (Stake, 1995; Hentz, 2012). I relied on the concept of "progressive focusing" for data collection (Stake, 1995). Progressive focusing allowed me to progressively hone in on key themes and issues as they developed under direct observation. In the next section, I outline the main methods of data collection employed to support the attention on everyday life in this research. First, I explain how I undertook my semi-structured interviews to elicit refugee young mothers' experiences of integration. Then, I substantiate my observations and immerse myself in the field.

3.6.5 Social constructivism and data analysis

Data analysis from interviews, observations and documents become a process of making sense of the evidence collected in a research project (Creswell, 2014; Stake, 1995). As Babbie (2013) argues, qualitative analysis is a nonnumerical investigation and understanding of observations for the rationale of finding underlying patterns and meanings of relations (p. 390). In this section, I focus my interest on the process of data analysis. First, it is useful to reiterate here that the main research question of this study is: What factors aided in facilitating young Colombian mothers' experiences of integration and acculturation in New Zealand? In social constructivist terms, I am interested in how different conceptual typologies, such as social capital, inform the resettlement experiences of young Colombian women who came to New Zealand as refugees when they were pregnant.

3.6.6 Analytical strategies: Direct interpretation and thematic analysis

This section describes the research procedure and the data analysis process. Data analysis is "a matter of giving meaning to first impressions and final compilations" (Stake, 1995, p. 71). It is

also a consistent exercise (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995), where "data collection, examination, and theory are all connected" (Babbie, 2013, p. 390). Bernard et al. (2017) explain the analysis of data as "the exploration for patterns in data and for ideas that help describe why those patterns are there in the first place" (p. 161). Data analysis advances from descriptive analysis to the creation of categories, leading to the development of theory or models (Merriam, 1998). Stake (1995) does not suggest a particular starting point for data collection and analysis but he agrees on employing an open design to collect and analyse data.

Thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p.57) is a flexible approach to qualitative study that I combined it with data analysis for the purposes of this project. Thematic analysis is "a method for analytically categorising, classifying and providing insight into patterns of meaning (themes) across a data set", to make sense of participants' settlement experiences in combination with the process described by Stake (1995, 2005). These include direct interpretation (or the process of intuiting new meaning about cases), categorical aggregation (gathering rich data about categories or classes to facilitate the exploration for meaning), establishing patterns, and naturalistic generalisations[4]. This approach was combined with the six steps provided below. I approached the data using inductive and thematic coding as the primary forms of analysis. Conducting data analysis using this method enables my interpretations to go from the specific to the general by coding unsystematized information into significant themes (Hatch, 2002). After I observed the diversity of statements and their meanings, I sought to connect the data to broader social phenomena and generate categories of meaning (Conway & Borst, 2001).

I outline the steps of this analytical research below, informed by Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-step guide to thematic analysis. Braun and Clarke's (2006) 6-step framework is a process that identifies patterns or themes within the data. This method was used in my study as it is not tied to a specific theoretical or epistemological perspective (Clarke and Braun, 2013):

1. Becoming familiar with the data
2. Generating initial codes
3. Involves searching for themes
4. Reviewing themes

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[4] Naturalistic generalisation is a process where readers gain insight by reflecting on the details and descriptions presented in case studies (Melrose 2009).

5. Defining themes and finally

6. The writing up of the information (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

Following Braun and Clark's framework *(Step 1)*, I started first at the point of data collection, where I familiarised myself with the data and made use of reflexive monthly notes after finishing each interview. In line with the social constructivist emphasis on theorising, Stake's (1995) constructivist case study approach allows me to participate in the co-creation and construction of meaning. As Harrison et al. (2017) argue, the researcher's role is critical when producing knowledge in a case study, whereby a constructivist lens accentuates the researcher's interpretive role as needed. While I collected data, I noted assertions about what was being explained and what I observed occurring (Stake, 1995). These assertions reflected my understanding and interpretation of how social capital might facilitate young women's integration. I also noted my feelings and thoughts regarding the procedures and results of the interviews. This strategy helped me optimize my interview questions **(see Appendix D)** by identifying which questions were generating fruitful responses. Then, I continued with the transcription of the data. Once the transcriptions were ready, I read them at least three times and changed the sequence to confirm my notions were not "primed" (Stake, 1995). For example, questions related to Education and Self-sufficiency were worded as such: how would you describe support from the government in helping you and your family have sufficient funds to settle in New Zealand? I would also ask open-ended questions like "tell me about how you engage with people in the institutions you come across." Questions like this were very subjective, so I made sure I was transcribing exactly what was expressed.

In Step 2, I started generating initial codes by searching for characteristics in the data which hinted at thematic meanings and patterns. In case study research, meaning can be found by "through direct interpretation of the individual instance and aggregation of instances until something can be said about them as a class" (Stake, 1995, p. 74). I created a list of codes to keep track of these prospective meanings (See, Table 2 below). I then revisited the data and distinguished excerpts to apply the appropriate codes. I ensured that selections representing same meaning had the relevant code applied. The next step comprised grouping the codes. To make these groupings clearer, I made posters and cut and paste data points to group the codes and create a bigger unit of analysis. These groups then informed my identification of themes.

Table 2*. Examples of data extracts and Initial Codes*

Initial Codes
Building relationships with Colombian community
Parental responsibilities and commitment
Difficulties of bridging relationships with other community
Language barriers for bridging relationships
Challenges of resettlement
Childrearing by themselves
Family integration and separation
Resettlement process in New Zealand while pregnant

In Step 3, I grouped codes into themes. Once I obtained a set of initial codes, I chose codes with similar meanings and combined them into themes. This process captures "something significant about the data regarding the research question" and symbolise "some degree of meaning or patterned within the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 63). When I started analysing the young women's answers to questions on integration, I identified 14 themes using inductive coding: 1) building relationships with other communities; 2) bridging relationships with NZ community; 3) relationships with Colombian community; 4) language barriers; 5) challenges of language; 6) cultural safety; 7) support from community institutions; 8) support from family; 9) parental responsibilities and commitment; 10) family integration and relationships; 11) rupture of family relationships; 12) the resettlement process; 12) integration; 13) challenges of resettlement and 14) experiences of integration in New Zealand. These themes capture "something critical about the data regarding the research question" and indicate "some level of meaning or patterned within the data set" (Braun & Clarke, 2012, p. 63).

Step 4 involved going back to the data and checking that the codes matched what the participants said. I also linked the pertinent literature to support the analysis during this step.

For example, keeping in mind the relevant literature that relates to the literature regarding experiences of young mothers' experiences of integration, I noted how many of these "motherhood discourses" were being explicitly drawn upon by the young participants in their accounts. In this step, I consulted literature on integration and acculturation theories to further contextualize participants' accounts.

Step 5 involved refining the generated themes. I mapped out how each theme was related and started working to bring these together into a coherent story. I merged related themes and removed those with insufficient data to support them. While this process was challenging as the themes overlapped in many ways, I was able to identify two main themes with six sub-themes, which I present in Table 3. This process involved going through each theme and distinguishing what made them different from the other themes. It also allowed me to organise my thinking about how to interpret significant aspects of the participants' experiences. This required revisiting and reviewing the codes and their related extracts and successively creating numerous sub-themes within the main themes. Revising them ensured that each theme had enough data to support their inclusion as loci of analysis.

In Step 6, I continued the process of analysing and identifying various themes that I felt captured the essential points of participants' experiences. This required returning to the excerpts, writing down what I believed was represented in the theme, and constructing a story of how all the themes and subthemes were linked to support the corresponding analysis. I continued to connect participant narratives and my own reflections with pertinent literature. Finally, I identified the following two finding chapters:

Table 3. *The two main analysis themes and sub-themes*

Themes	Sub-themes
Chapter 4 Crossing the pond: Identity and Mothering Kiwisitos	Young Colombian refugee mothers' possibilities and challenges while living in New Zealand
	Feeling at home: opportunities and constraints to create a new identity in New Zealand and be called "La Kiwi."
	Identity and acculturation
Chapter 5. Three tasks and the role social capital	Encountering
	Surveying-Orienting
	Navigating

Braun and Clarke (2006) indicate that thematic analysis can speak for the whole data corpus or concentrate on specific aspects. Groupings that represent the entirety of the data offer readers "a sense of significant themes" but lose "some complexity and depth", whereas themes that identify specifications show nuanced details of a phenomenon, which can answer particular research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 83). In my revision of themes, I did not view these two categories of themes as contradictory. I tried to produce themes that could outline an entire impression of the young Colombian mothers' experiences through the 14 themes mentioned before. Hence, I generated overarching themes to show participants' many expressions of acculturation, integration, and social capital. When I reported the findings, I organised themes and subthemes into a table related integration and acculturation and social capital experiences. Hence chapters five and six focus on introducing the findings of young Colombian refugee mothers' experiences of integration in New Zealand.

3.7 Participant demographics

3.7.1 Portraits

In this section, I briefly introduce and describe my participants. The purpose of this section is to recognise and honour the fact that each participant let me into their homes and lives and was therefore more than just a source of data for my study. To do this I constructed vignettes, described by Ely et al. (1997) as "portraits" to create narratives of their experiences. I consulted my participants in sketching these portraits and assured their informed consent throughout the writing process. To protect their identities, I have changed their names as well as other identifying information, such as the amount of time they have been settled in the New Zealand, the number of their children, and children's ages and genders. Furthermore, I carefully constructed these portraits so they would not impact the conclusions that a reader would make from the data.

Maria

Maria was the first participant I met. When I arrived at an event, she was there. She asked me why I was attending the celebration and wanted to know everything about me. I explained to her why I was there and then after a week she invited me to her house where I started interviewing her. Maria, a senior student and a solo young mother, fled Colombia to Ecuador when a guerrilla group invaded her family farm because her father did not pay them "the vaccine"[5]. With only a couple of hours to pack up, Maria managed to buy a bus ticket before the guerrillas took her and would not let her leave the country. She had to leave her house and other assets behind. She then arrived in Ecuador and stayed there for two years. After fleeing violence in her home country and enduring years of uncertainty in Ecuador, she finally gained a refugee status and an opportunity to come to New Zealand. Before coming, she realised she was pregnant. Her child was born in this country.

Maria and her baby regained some stability in her new home in New Zealand. "At the beginning I received a flat close to the picturesque centre. I can say we have grown very attached to the place. I love the city; New Zealand is very beautiful. It is totally different from where I come

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[5] "Vaccines" or extortion payments are an important source of financing for criminal groups in Colombia (BBC news, 2013).

from, here, everything is clean and organised". Luckily for her, her mother along with her father and three siblings have also been resettled in Hamilton.

However, many other things in her life had also changed. She did not have a plan to continue studying or to pursue a career because she thought it was a waste of time. "I finished high school in Colombia and I am only studying English here. I cannot access university because of my English level and also because I want to look after my child. However, even if I get to that level, I would not go to the University. It is like a waste of time. I am 23 now and if I start studying, I am going to finish too late". Although she was not planning to attend university, Maria noted that she is eager to complete a short-term course in food handling once her child has grown up: "I like to cook and sell what I cook, but I need to be certificated here and wait until my child is five, so he can go to school. I want to study to be a chef and open my own business." Her son will be attending school soon so she will have some time off to start her project.

In terms of how she has been integrating into the community, she says: "We have been exploring our new surroundings with day trips to nearby towns and mingling with some members of the Colombian community, who have been very welcoming. At the moment, I am the secretariat of the Colombian refugees' association because members of the association want me to integrate with the community. So, we have been celebrating some of the Colombian festivities in New Zealand." She has also been participating with other communities in the country: "I have also started modelling and participating in cultural events in Auckland with few other young Colombians." However, she had some challenges from the beginning: "When I first arrived in New Zealand, I must say that I struggled with the resettlement process and it was hard for me to raise my baby and communicate as I did not speak English. The first time I arrived, I felt lost, I did not know where I was and what was happening. I did not understand anything. However, I started getting off the ground and integrating into the New Zealand society. For example, this year has been a year of changes; last year was so stressful. I have joined some parenting groups and teaching others how to dance because if you do not do something, nothing extraordinary happens."

As he was born in New Zealand, English has been much easier for her young son to learn. She says: "My child learnt this new culture. He speaks English very well and he is attending childcare and also boxing classes. He is so energetic, that's why I feel he has to practice a sport."

With regard to how she sees herself in the future, she says: "I bought a car and I hope one day I can move to Auckland for job offers. [I plan to] learn English perfectly and have fun. I want to start breaking the routine, in New Zealand, you have to do that." She continued: "and in order for that to happen, I have to try to integrate, learn English and learn about the culture and values of this country".

Juana

When I received a call from Juana telling me about her interest in participating in my research, she told me: " I want to participate because you can be our voice." When I arrived at her place she was sitting in the living room with her youngest child in her arms. In the background, the sound of her other child could be heard playing. At first glance and at 20 years old, Juana's life in this modest family home seems content. However, this could not be further from the truth. Juana had to escape the conflict tearing apart her home country. One member of her family did business with a criminal group and because he did not respond, the group threatened her. She had to flee Colombia to Ecuador where after one year, she could gain refugee status: " I was in the early stages of my pregnancy when I received the news that I could come to New Zealand. I arrived here pregnant" she said. She finished high school in Colombia and a diploma in nursing.

Motherhood influenced Juana's integration in New Zealand. She says: "Being a young mother has been a big challenge for me, I have to look after my child, however, now that my child is settled into childcare, I am determined to start studying English." She continued: "I need to learn English very well so I can make new friends, validate my knowledge in nursing and live good in this country. That is why I started studying full time English, once I have the level, I will start the career I want at university." But resettlement has not been straightforward for her: "I am missing my home country, I found this city too tranquil. I want to listen to the noise outdoor. I'm not used to the silence, to the loneliness." she says. "I miss the noise back home. Here everything is quiet, and if you make noise, the neighbours complain." She has also enjoyed attending cultural activities without her child, "I enjoy when I go outside without my child, I feel free and beautiful, I think it is time for myself."

The Red Cross and the local community have also supported her family's resettlement. "Living here has been good so far. People help you a lot, and they worry about you," she says. "Everything has been totally different where I come from". "There is nothing to worry about of fear." However, meeting new people from the Colombian community has not been easy for

her: "I have been experiencing some issues with the Colombian community, I do not want those people to tell me what to do with my child", she says. "We come from the same country, and there are bad and good people. They behave like they are in Colombia."

The first year of resettlement was enough for her to realise she prefers to interact with people from other cultures. "I have a good friend from Pakistan, I speak English with him, and he can help me. He doesn't laugh at me when I speak, so I prefer to go out with other people different from Colombians."

On how she sees herself in the near future, she says: "Once I finish all my English levels, I would like to continue studying nursing or medicine or maybe business to fulfil my career aspirations".

Carmen

Carmen, a single mother, escaped guerrilla threats and was forced to flee Colombia with her mother, father, brother, sister, and uncle, when the war broke out in the countryside. She hired a driver in Colombia who drove her and her family to safety in neighbouring Ecuador. Once there, they applied for refugee status, and put their names on a waiting list to be relocated to another country. She felt "at home" in Ecuador. "In Ecuador, we had a lot of friends, my parents and uncle were talking all the time with the neighbours, they made friends every day, we really had fun. It was like being at home", recalled Carmen.

Carmen came to New Zealand pregnant. After six weeks, she was relocated to a big house in Hamilton. Now, sitting on her couch, cluttered with heaps of freshly washed clothes, she reflected on the past two years. "I came to this country from Ecuador and I was totally lost in time, I remember I used to call my family back in Colombia and they were sleeping, I didn't understand, how come you are sleeping if it is day time? I haven't gotten used to this time change yet", Carmen says.

In terms of her education, she only finished primary school. "I could not finish secondary school or go to school because my parents needed my help on the farm, however, nowadays I regret not finishing my education". "I started studying English. I need to learn it very well so I can talk with everyone in this country."

Her resettlement process has been tumultuous. Coming to New Zealand meant a new beginning for her and her child but "the biggest difficulty has been not being able to speak English. I feel

lost. Here everyone is very kind, so they greet us often, but I cannot understand them. I arrived in New Zealand without any knowledge of the language, so it has been very hard for me." Carmen continues, "In fact, one day when my baby was sick, she was referred to the hospital but it was so stressful for me to go to the hospital in Auckland. She needed to be admitted for a risky surgery, Oh, My God, how am I going to talk?" Carmen started studying English so she could understand her child: "My baby can speak and understand the language perfectly and she doesn't speak too much Spanish now and I can understand English more, I am in level 3," said Carmen about her progress in the language. She also helps the Colombian community, especially at Christmas. "The Colombian community in Hamilton is so big. When it is Christmas time, I like to help organise the events, especially for the children. It happens every year, everyone attends, including refugees and immigrants, we enjoyed it a lot, they played Colombian music and everybody starts dancing."

Carmen notes that the New Zealand community has been so kind and friendly: "I have some neighbours who we love and share a lot of moments with them, especially for birthday's celebrations, for example when is my daughter's birthday they come to celebrate and bring some gifts for her and I cook for them, I cook Colombian food and they love it."

Carmen now hopes she will be able to pursue a nursing career or start a degree in Sciences so that she can help people. She says, "I want to continue studying, so in the future I can be a scientist, but I have to learn English first."

Pepa

I first met Pepa at one of the Colombian events in Hamilton. After I posted my research advertisement, she called me and invited me to her house. Pepa was forced to flee internal war in Colombia. She was working as a health assistant in a public hospital in the countryside when guerrillas entered the clinic and started threatening everyone there. Scared and without any belongings, she called a friend in Ecuador, who told her to go there and seek refuge as it was not safe for her to stay in her home country. Some weeks before getting refugee status, she felt sick and realised she was pregnant.

Scared, without a partner, and in the early stage of her pregnancy, she arrived in New Zealand hoping her life would change. Pepa only finished primary school in Colombia. She did not have the opportunity to continue studying as her family were all living in the countryside where schools are not easy to access and everyday chores on the farm occupied her time.

In terms of her integration experiences, she mentioned how challenging it had been for her to find a job while pregnant and studying English. She says, "since I arrived in this country, I had to stay for 6 months at home while all the paperwork to enrol me was ready." She continued, "I struggled finding a job while I was pregnant as well. It was like nobody wanted a pregnant woman to work. However, at least after a long period of time, I could start my English course. I studied part time though, and worked as a kitchen hand in a bakery."

While Pepa was waiting for her enrolment, she had the opportunity to attend some events from the Colombian community in Hamilton and she also volunteered to be the secretariat of the Colombian refugee Association: "I joined the Colombian association here because I found help in this community, people there was very welcoming and offered me first aid courses, and socialising opportunities such as the parenting group for young mothers and Colombian festivities."

Resettling then was an opportunity for her to meet new people, learn the language, and mitigate her isolation. "It is hard! The first time I came I could only say: Hello and Yes. Only two words. Nowadays I can talk in a conversation." As the secretariat of the Colombian association, she has been gaining experience and helping other refugees to resettle. "I have enjoyed a lot doing this because I love helping people, I love to communicate and have a social life," she says. Although everything looked strange for her at first sight, she recognised she found calm and safety in Hamilton. "When I first arrived, everything was so strange for me because we start missing many things, but the good thing is that we are safe in here." When mentioning her relationship with local people she says: "I have some Kiwi friends who are my neighbours, I cannot talk because I am still learning English but they play with my baby and we share food".

In the near future, Pepa see herself finishing school, going to the University to study business and speaking English. "I think the most important thing is to learn English first, especially because I want to understand my child, and then continue with my studies, I want to study business."

Lucia

Lucia was breastfeeding her baby in a chair in her kitchen when I met her for the first time. I remember she looked very shy and only said: "Hola"[6]. I smiled to her and told her "Que mas

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[6] Hola: Spanish greeting that means: Hi

pues"[7] a common greeting of people from the south of Colombia. Immediately she gained confidence and started smiling back and talking to me.

Lucia was born and raised in a small city in Colombia. She and her family were forced to flee the country after her father got in trouble. "My father was arrested by the Colombian police; he remains in their custody." She continues: "we had to leave the country because we were in danger. My father was captured, and it was a problem for the criminal groups, so we practically ran away." Once in Ecuador, she sought help and somebody told her to ask for refuge. She was in her 14th year in Ecuador and when she was finally granted refugee status, she realised she was pregnant. She arrived in Auckland on Christmas day. "I arrived on the 25th December, it was only me and my baby in my belly, I was scared, feeling lonely and worried about what it was going to happen." Because the baby was born at Mangere, she had to stay for more than the 6 weeks expected: "my baby was born in Mangere with the help of a nurse. We lived there for two months"

As a way to integrate, Lucia has joined maternity groups within the Colombian community while at the refugee centre. "Many people say Mangere refugee centre is boring, but for me it was the opposite, I enjoyed having lot of friends there. The staff was very lovely, so when we had to leave the centre, I started crying." Learning English has been challenging for her, so she enjoys meeting Colombian people. "When I still could not speak English, I used to meet the Colombian community in events such as dances; I danced to any kind of music" She continues, "I could not even participate in events with the Kiwi community as I did not manage the language, I could not understand what they were saying. Fortunately, I had one volunteer who could speak Spanish. He was a Kiwi. He was so kind to us. I did really enjoy that moment," she says.

In the future, she sees herself becoming very motivated, learning English, studying business and owning her own company; "I realised how important it was that I learn English. I started studying English at Waikato Institute of Technology (WINTEC) for four years. I can now speak the language perfectly and I am studying to be a hairdresser. I want my own business", she says.

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[7] Informal greeting used to break the ice in Spanish which means: How is everything going?

Julieta

I rescheduled the interview with Julieta more than three times. When we finally met, Julieta was waiting for me at the entrance of her house and carrying her 2 year old child. Because we had met earlier at one of the events I attended, she was ready to participate in this study. Julieta was born and raised in a small city in Colombia. Some years ago, the war forced her family to flee to Ecuador. Julieta had a tranquil life on the farm when guerrillas invaded. She had a partner who disappeared once he knew she was pregnant.

By the time I interviewed Julieta, she had been in New Zealand for over a year. Her parents and brothers could not get refugee status at the same time, so she came to the country first. "I arrived in New Zealand at the beginning of last year, It was only me. My parents and brothers cannot come yet."

When Julieta arrived in the country, she realised she was two months pregnant. She told me how scared she felt when she received the test: "I was shaking when I received a test telling me I was pregnant, I was in shock, like, how am I going to raise a baby here, without knowing the culture, people…and no family members."

Julieta finished high school but could not continue a career because she was helping her parents on the farm. "You know it is hard to get an income in Colombia, like, if we don't work, we cannot live."

After seven months in New Zealand, Julieta delivered a baby. "I cried a lot, especially because I had C-section and had nobody there to help me" she said. Still, she loves Hamilton and its surroundings and enjoys the tranquillity and the opportunities they have to get ahead. "Hamilton is very calm, I have not had any problems. This is a totally different life. I am here because of the calm and because my baby can be safe. In Colombia we had to live day by day, here you have an income", she says. In terms of how well she has engaged with the host community she said: "It is hard to make contact with them. Even harder if you do not speak English. I prefer to stay home with my baby. Although there are nice people out there, there are others who don't like to talk." She has also been participating in the parenting group with other Colombian mothers. "This group is great because we are facing same experience. The experience of being a mom in another country."

In the future, Julieta is planning to become a teacher. "You know, this is my dream, I want to be an early childhood teacher. Although it has been difficult, I realise I like children and I want

to work with little ones." By the time I interviewed Julieta she already had two children born in New Zealand.

Tomasa

"Discúlpame el desorden!"[8] said Tomasa when we met each other the first time at her home in Hamilton. I totally understood "the mess" because it consisted of children's clothing and toys. Then she told me to "take a sit " in English. I was not expecting her to speak to me in English. Before starting the conversation, she asked many questions about me, about the research, and why I wanted to do this. We first spent quite a long time speaking before she felt confident and I started the interview.

Tomasa was born and raised in Colombia, her family fled to Ecuador when a guerrilla group kidnapped one of her family members. "I remember my mom yelling because my uncle was kidnapped by those criminal groups, she was crying and I felt so scared. Later that day, at night, she received a call and after that she told me we had to leave the house. We walked a lot until we found a place to be safe on the border with Ecuador. I was 15 by then and could not totally understand the situation and why we had to leave home- my home, my things, my life. I felt so sad." Tomasa arrived in Ecuador and was advised by a friend to seek refugee status. She lived in Ecuador with her mother for a year before coming to New Zealand. During that time, Tomasa got pregnant and did not know how to report this to her mother. "I was very concerned about telling my mom I was pregnant, she was going to feel so disappointed but I had no choice. I told her and she started crying because she said I messed up my life with a baby, but it was what it was."

Tomasa was pregnant when she arrived in New Zealand and a new story started. "When I arrived here, it was like arriving to a new world, everything was clean and organised. I met a lady at the Mangere Refugee Centre and I told her about my situation, she immediately sought help." Tomasa was the youngest mother who participated in my interviews. She completed high school the year before and she was the only one of my participants who fluently spoke and understood English. As she arrived to the country at the age of 16, she learned English at school and also attended English courses. "I love speaking English, for me it is like speaking Spanish. I feel very comfortable speaking this language."

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[8] Sorry for the mess!

On her relationships with the rest of the community she said: "Well, I don't like to see Colombians but other people from other countries, people who can speak English." She also mentioned how she avoids Colombians and does not like to attend any of the events: "I know we are from the same country but because I am Colombian, I know how Colombians are. So, it is better for me to be away from them, there is too much trouble, envy, and gossip, so it is better not to be there."

In the near future, Tomasa is planning to study business. She said she needs to know how to manage her own money and secure a future for her child: "My goal is to be a business woman, that is why I want to study business. The language is not a problem for me, so I am planning to enrol next year."

Mercedes

Mercedes was cooking when I arrived at her home. Her little child was next to her crying as he wanted to breastfeed. She asked me to wait and the child showed me a toy. I started playing with him and Mercedes was smiling. I told her I was also a mom of a little one and that I know how it is to be a busy mother. She sat down and we started our conversation.

Mercedes was living on a farm in Colombia when a flood happened. She and her family had to flee and because of the damage, they could not come back any time soon. By the time they returned home, they realised somebody was in their house. "This is very traumatic because I remember that we had to leave because there was water everywhere. When we returned to the farm, it was like some people were living in there. After some hours, we realised the guerrilla group took our place. They told us to leave and they threatened our lives. We tried to go to the police but somehow they knew about it and we had to leave the country. We had no choice." Mercedes fled to Esmeralda, Ecuador where she sought help. She had to wait two years until she was granted refugee status. While in Ecuador, Mercedes got pregnant. Her partner could not get refugee status, so she had to come to New Zealand by herself.

Mercedes arrived in the country when she was 4 months pregnant. She was feeling worried, anxious and sad. Only her baby was with her: "I arrived here alone, my partner could not come. I felt sad and concerned about how to deliver my baby here. Once I finished my 6 weeks in Mangere, I was relocated to Wellington and some volunteers enrolled me in the health system. I could then visit a doctor and I let him know about my situation. He advised me, and after

some months I had my baby in this country." Mercedes started studying English after sometime she could enrol her baby in childcare.

When talking about her relationship with the general community she said: "I have not met many people here in Hamilton because I was settled in Wellington. However, because of more job opportunities, I moved to Hamilton after a year. I like Hamilton more. I found many kind Colombians here." She also started attending events for her child and for herself: "When I arrived in Hamilton, I began looking for support groups. I realised there was a Colombian refugee group on Facebook and I joined the group. I could know about all the programmes and events during the year." She encountered many barriers with the host community, including the language and culture: "I am studying English but still I am not very fluent, so it is hard to keep a conversation. My neighbour has also invited me to her child's birthday and I could not eat because the food was so plain compared to what I eat. In the school for example, I tried to make friends, but because there are many people from everywhere, all of them speak English but I can't."

In the near future, Mercedes is planning to move to Auckland. She wants to study to become a chef and her desire is to have her own restaurant: "I can't wait to be a chef. I am working on that and I know I will do it."

3.8 Summary

Inspired by the social constructivist paradigm and recognising my unique position as a migrant Colombian, mother, former refugee support volunteer, and PhD candidate in Education, I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews with 8 young Colombian mothers in Hamilton, New Zealand. I conducted a social constructivist thematic analysis to identify how these young mothers experienced integration. I then conducted an intrinsic case study documenting my approach to understanding this integrated analysis of young Colombian mothers in the new resettlement context. This chapter also explained how I validated my findings and interpreted interviews, observations, and conversations with participants. I also explained this thesis's analytical process, which began with reading each individual interview and the field notes taken, which allowed me to gradually develop a coding frame. Inspired by Braun and Clark's (2006) six-step approach to thematic analysis, the codes were then grouped into themes that represented the broader meaning of my study. Connecting the themes led to the formation of my two findings chapters, 1) Crossing the pond: Identity and Mothering Kiwisitos; and 2)

Three tasks and the role of social capital. The overall findings unified the analysis, and the more detailed collected themes came to constitute the sub-headings which structure the presentation of findings in Chapters 4 and 5.

CHAPTER 4: Crossing the pond – Identity and mothering Kiwisitos

"I fled my home country. I ran away because of my dad's troubles with armed groups. I went to Esmeralda, Ecuador and looked for help. Lucky me, while I was there, I found out I had been offered a place in New Zealand. And just months before boarding the plane, I found out I was pregnant. I arrived in Mangere, Auckland, on Christmas day. I was tired and scared. Many people were waiting for us with many gifts. My baby girl was born after some weeks when I arrived in Mangere. I was fourteen years old and without an idea of mothering." (Lucia)

4.1 Introduction

Lucia's quote illustrates how young Colombian mothers navigate two different sociocultural worlds. One world represents the stories of war and despair, whereas the other world represents security, albeit with its own set of challenges. The previous chapter presented the research methodology, revealing how the concepts of social capital, acculturation, and integration inform the design. This chapter describes and analyses eight young Colombian mothers' narratives in relation to their experiences of motherhood and acculturation. This directly addresses the primary aim of this PhD research: to explore how the mothering experiences of young Colombian mothers in New Zealand affect their identities as first-time mothers and their perceptions of their children's identities. I identify how participants construct identities around their experiences of mothering within the social and cultural environments they encounter in New Zealand. This chapter explores how my research found that the experience of being a mother in another country provides possibilities, challenges, and issues around being identified as "La Kiwi"; an oftentimes derogatory and dismissive term used by fellow nationals to refer to a Colombian trying to 'get ahead'. As mothers, they forego their hopes, dreams, aspirations, social networks, and language to provide what they think will be the best future for their children. The chapter concludes with an account of their perspectives around identity and acculturation, which leads into Chapter 5's discussion of how they engage in relationships.

The chapter is organised into two main sections which each tie into identity and mothering. The first focuses on the experience of 'crossing the pond,' which addresses young Colombian mothers' possibilities and challenges while living in New Zealand. The second involves

'feeling at home,' explores the discourse of "La Kiwi" and the opportunities and constraints young mothers experience while constructing new identities in New Zealand. These two sections led me to conceptualise how acculturation informs our understating of these young women's opportunities and possibilities for integration in the country. The data analysis shed light on how these women negotiate being a mother as a form of identity. Taylor's (2007) notion of identity work is beneficial in understanding the mothers' identity position as being related to their past, present, and future. In other words, young mothers' experiences influence their perceptions of motherhood and this identity is often reflected in how their compatriots perceive them, how they perceive their children, and how they perceive themselves. This chapter suggests that this identity construction process poses distinct challenges in the New Zealand resettlement context.

4.2 Crossing the pond – young Colombian refugee mothers' possibilities and challenges while living in New Zealand.

This section examines the challenges young mothers encounter navigating friendships, studying English, and mothering, which formed integral aspects of their lives and all tied into the notion of *crossing the pond*. "Cruzar el charco" (or crossing the pond) is a Colombian proverb with two meanings. One meaning is related to giving up on everything to fit into a new phase of life. The other is about overcoming difficulties and foregoing one's previous lifestyle to be a different human being. Participants talked about how these experiences of crossing the pond shaped their identities and influenced their mothering. To fit into a new environment, young mothers build new friendships. At the same time, participants were often critical of the relationships they developed, particularly with fellow Colombians among other groups, during their experiences of being a new mother in this country. The following section will focus on how young mothers build and avoid new relationships, with the understanding that the circumstances around their decision are informed by their needs as mothers.

4.2.1 Motherhood and Friendships

Crossing the pond relates to the process of cultural change that occurs due to contact between different cultural groups and individuals. Crossing the pond thus serves as a metaphor for acculturation (see Chapter 2), and is a useful concept for theorizing resettlement in socially diverse communities among ethnocultural societies (Berry, 2006). In this study, the participants

were willing to engage with intercultural contact and even forgo or reconsider culturally-informed positions. Once the young mothers became more familiar with the new context and the education, housing, and health systems in New Zealand, they felt more confident about their journey and began to build new networks with other groups. This journey of acculturation and creating a new identity forms the foundation for future decisions about which connections these young mothers prefer to maintain and which ones to put aside to navigate their own experience of mothering.

Crossing the pond facilitated integration into the new socio-cultural context for both themselves and their children. Nannestad et al. (2008) suggests trusting other communities is a sign of important social networks that may facilitate support. Participants who attended parenting groups with mothers from other nationalities could learn about other cultures, which presented opportunities from building connections.

> *One of my friends from the parental group is from Thailand, so I have learned a lot about Thai culture. I have been to her house, and we have had lunch together. They are very kind… she sometimes has different ideas than me. However, in general, we have the same ethics and values. I have also been invited to another friend's house. She is from Ethiopia. I saw her national costume, traditions, food etc., so that is lovely, we learn many things from each other. (Maria)*

Maria's experience of new friendships offered opportunities for her mothering practices. The process of getting to know individuals who might be different from oneself (e.g., individuals belonging to other ethnic groups) entail social connections (Putnam, 2000), which might go on to facilitate social integration. The act of bonding over the new identity of motherhood then becomes significant. For the purposes of this study, identity primarily refers to how participants have identified themselves as new mothers in New Zealand and as Colombian mothers. Participants constructed their identities by negotiating their transnationality, which positioned them as outsiders in New Zealand. At times, these young mothers found that despite their growing familiarity, they continued to experience new and unexpected barriers, which influenced how they could build their new mother identities and acculturation experiences.

Coronado (2014) contends that acculturation occurs when "we transform our identities and cultural practices, and simultaneously keep, to some degree, a sense of cultural control over what we try to adopt, change, and transform". According to Bhabha (1994), there is a space "in-between the designations of identity" and that "this interstitial route between fixed identifications opens up the opportunity of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy" (p.4). Drawing on Bhabha's (1994) framing, living in-between may have beneficial results for crossing the pond as it represents a negotiation of identity. The in-between space comprises the two worlds young mothers have had to live in, framing the practices and discourses that position them as former refugees, new mothers, and outsiders.

Young mothers reported being eager to continue building other relationships without considering different communities' cultural and societal nuances. After the participants became more comfortable through their encounters with Colombians and with other refugee communities, they developed an interest in reaching out to non-refugee communities that they got to know through their English classes.

> *I found it really interesting attending my English classes because I was learning English and meeting people from other cultural backgrounds. I was very excited to make new friends, so I just decided to cross a new line, you know, like no matter the challenges, I am keen to experience new things, make friends and face what life has to offer when new things are all about. (Carmen)*

Carmen's quote suggests that the young mothers are ready to try and 'cross a new line'. This insight demonstrates some of the difficulties young mothers encounter when navigating two different social and cultural worlds. Crossing a new line does not only refer to the journeys these women have taken but also to the acculturation process and friendships they have to navigate. They have networks with those they met before arriving in New Zealand and current connections in a range of community spaces. These networks alternately provide and constrain their opportunities for acculturation. For example, when participants tried to reach out to their classmates, they often found it challenging to engage with them and perceived themselves as being rejected because of their refugee status. This sentiment may reflect the participants' self-stigmatisation and cultural misunderstanding:

*I was keen, you know, on **cruzar el charco** (crossing the pond) and talking with Chinese people, but every time I said hello, they did not reply, did not smile, and did not want to be my friend. However, after a long time, almost at the end of the semester, we started knowing each other, and I realised that they were good people. I learnt to know them. I have had many experiences with them so far. We have been getting out to restaurants; they are amicable and respectful. I have always studied with Chinese. I like them. (Juana)*

After a more extended period of contact, Juana realised that she had misunderstood her Asian classmates' shyness as a rejection of her friendship. Juana's account captures a glimpse of her attempt to build relationships. It is notable that by the time the participants begin to meet non-refugees, they were already experiencing psychological and emotional consequences of trauma. Those difficulties motivated them to meet more people. Despite their initial discomfort, they tried to learn about and respect other cultures. This is not meant to suggest that young mothers only need time to acculturate and shape their identities. Rather, a combination of time, support, and the development of personal agency is important for helping young refugee mothers integrate into their new environments.

When asking Juana about what *cruzar el charco* means for her, she sighed and said:

*Well, we use this expression a lot in my city. We use it to say that we need to start doing things we were not doing before. That is what I use it for. Because you know, I am tired of living without friends. I need to have friends, I want friends from everywhere, I want to meet people at school. **I just want to forget where I come from and all those bad memories**. I want a happy life, a new happy life. (Juana)*

In my interviews with young mothers, they often reported that they needed to forget their bad memories. When I asked questions like "what kind of activities have you participated in with friends and neighbours?", "What did you do with them?", and "What did you enjoy?", sometimes an answer or explanation was simply replaced by a sigh or a deep breath. In Juana's case, her sigh communicated a feeling that she needs to pursue her interests, enjoy her life, and is seeking positive communion with supportive people. These revelations emerge out of the changes participants were experiencing in their lives. Those changes were related to their new

lifestyle and surroundings in New Zealand, as well as the experience of raising their children here but simultaneously having sentiments of isolation and missing home. Others were reluctant about those changes. The way Juana said, "*I just want to forget where I come from, and all those bad memories*" highlights that the process of forgetting where one comes from sets a path for forgetting one's Colombian identity and becoming a Kiwi.

Building relationships with people who were not from New Zealand allowed these mothers to learn about crucial institutions and systems in New Zealand. For example, the health and education system gave them further opportunities to participate in cultural events and festivities, such as Ramadan and Chinese New Year. Participation in these activities emerged from the friendships young mothers made during their educational stages. Some forms of civic participation, such as work, education, and organized recreational events, have also helped the young mothers cross the pond. During the first six weeks in Mangere, Auckland, programmes were offered to give them tools to continue or start their lives in New Zealand. Attending any subsequent programming, however, was their own responsibility. For the young mothers, this was a challenge, though some managed to overcome it when they started studying, attending community events, and working. Learning English, visiting the Latin markets, or working informally allowed them to cross lines and, little by little, to better understand the new society's culture. This learning made them feel capable of moving to another stage of their lives, allowing them to cross the pond. For example, Julieta talked about when she was invited to celebrate other communities' national festivities:

> *I study at Waikato Institute of Technology. I am learning English there, and I have some Saudi Arabia and China friends. We are now friends, and they invited me to celebrate Chinese New Year and Ramadan with them. They eat a lot, like us. Hehe. (Julieta)*

Participants often found connecting with non-refugee communities to be beneficial. Reaching out to these non-refugee communities allowed participants to develop better intercultural understanding and improve their language skills. These interactions then facilitated their integration and acculturation while establishing their social networks. Carmen talked about how making friends from other countries has pushed her to learn and improve her English:

My husband does not want me to speak with Colombians because I do not practice my English, so we have now decided to learn and talk in English. That is why we have tried to make friends from other nationalities, to push us to speak English. (Carmen)

Carmen's experience illustrates three different factors that have impacted her acculturation process: her efforts to build new networks, her experience of loss and isolation, and her distinctly gendered experiences as a woman. Her approach to building on connections is to talk with non-Spanish speaking people and to limit building friendships with fellow Colombians. Her husband's influence to not speak or socialise with Colombians, to learn English faster, is an example of her husband's inordinate influence. The outsize influence of her husband's opinion is something that can be interpreted as a constraint on her autonomy. This can furthermore be construed as a challenge to her eventual acculturation

Finding friends with whom to practice and learn English often worked as a strategy for young mothers and their families. It also enabled them obtain helpful information about job opportunities:

My best friend's boss is from Saudi Arabia, and he was the one who got a job for me as a kitchen hand. My friend is also working there as a baker. We both found this job because of my friend. (Pepa)

Pepa's statement reinforces the importance of creating friendships that develop into networks that assist these young mothers with acculturation. To summarise, there are both positive and challenging aspects of developing, maintaining and navigating networks and a new identity, including involvement in the local community. While these new networks and identities may be significant for facilitating long-term social and economic outcomes, the young mothers experienced challenges reformulating their identities as new citizens and young mothers, such as cultural barriers that prevented the women communicating with others.

4.2.2 Motherhood and Study – English Language

English proficiency was the second-most frequently mentioned concern of the young mothers interviewed for this project. After becoming familiar with their new socio-cultural contexts,

these young mothers were interested in building relationships outside of the Colombian community, with the tacit understanding that such relationships would help them learn English. At the beginning of the resettlement journeys, the participants did not find it easy to make friends. They often attributed this to their limited proficiency in English, which hindered their ability to confidently interact with other people. Some of the young mothers were pregnant or caring for a new-born at the time of the relocation and subsequently, could not attend English classes. In the beginning, their preference to stay home because of their limited language skills limited their ability to integrate into their new surroundings. Participants reported that they would stay home to avoid speaking English. Julieta shared that she preferred staying at home to look after her baby rather than going out and meeting new people. Carmen shared her memory of being fearful to communicate in English:

> *I arrived in this country pregnant; I was scared and worried about how things worked. I had to attend English classes, but I preferred to stay home looking after my baby. I trusted nobody to look after my child. Nobody will protect him like the way I do. I did not know how to speak English, so you see, many things happened that made me feel anxious, scared, worried and shy. (Julieta)*

> *My baby was only 11 months when I had to send him to childcare. But then I started having issues with teachers because I felt they did not look after him very well. His nappy was dirty when I used to pick him up and if he did not want to eat, they did not do anything. This makes me feel anxious because I could not express my frustration because of the language. (Carmen)*

Experiences like these can impede young mothers' (and their children's) prospects for acculturation. Language barriers and a desire to protect their children represented some of the reasons that participants cited for their reticence to integrate into their new communities.

One exception to this was Lucia, who despite her initial inability to speak English decided to go out and explore. Lucia described how people from Somalia helped her and took her to the supermarket to get groceries. She spoke no English but liked to go out and explore the condominium building where she was living:

*I have good neighbours in this condominium. They are from Somalia; they are also refugees. We started knowing each other because of my pregnancy. **They assist me**. For example, one day, I felt tired and needed some food. They saw me and offered to do the shopping for me or accompany me to do it. **I was unsure about accepting the offer because I thought about what to give them in return.** However, I decided to go to the supermarket together, but we could not talk on the way because we did not understand each other. None of us spoke English. (Lucia)*

Going to the supermarket with her neighbours to get food her family can be seen as a relatively remarkable feat for a young Colombian refugee woman. In Colombian culture, it is not common to witness a person socialising with people they do not know very well because doing so can threaten an individual's security. While these mothers initially faced challenges around building social connections, they gained confidence after finding reliable friends who made them feel secure, thus enabling them to settle more assuredly into a different life. Participants built upon their old networks to construct new ones, and these expanding networks provided them more opportunities to find help and support. When Lucia says "they assist me," she suggests that accepting companionship led to further friendship networks. However, she states, "I was unsure of accepting the offer," highlighting the prevalent cultural mores that discourage Colombian women from accepting assistance. Lucia specified that she felt strange when accepting the offer, even though she needed help, and states that she was not sure about accepting the favour because she did not feel she could reciprocate.

This sentiment is commonly expressed among Colombians. When most people ask for or receive a favour in Colombia, a favour is expected in return. Colombians often perceive that nothing is free unless they are close friends or relatives. Otherwise, there is an expectation of reciprocity, either through financial compensation or by helping that person the next time they need assistance. In many cases, people prefer to wait for a family member or friend to assist them and do not accept the acquaintance's offers of help (Obando, 2022).

In Lucia's case, she likely accepted her neighbour's help because she urgently needed food. To her surprise, the acquaintance did not ask for repayment. This event empowered her to learn about other cultures and about people from other refugee backgrounds, despite the language barrier:

So, I needed to go to the supermarket, but I did not have a car, so it was an excellent opportunity to go with them and get some groceries. However, I started thinking about what to give them in return, maybe money or help them with something they may need. None of us could speak the language. However, I was expecting to give something in return to thank them, but lucky me, they did not ask me for a payment. They did not need any help either. You know, in Colombia, we do that. I thought it was like that everywhere. (Lucia)

We can see this example as relating to the metaphor "another square peg in a round hole" of society. The participants realise how difficult it is to fit into another culture when carrying many practices and beliefs from their homeland and without speaking English. Moreover, they encounter challenges interacting with other refugees, as they represent different societies, cultures while trying to be part of wider New Zealand society. They might also face challenges passing on those cultural practices to their children. These tensions contribute to mothers' reluctance to request assistance from those outside their networks. These young mothers maintain and create connections related to mothering discourses and reject those that run counter to their beliefs and values. Here is what Carmen had to say about the help received from neighbours when arriving for the first time at her house with her new-born and without speaking English:

*I have some friends from Pakistan; we always share food **even when we cannot speak English.** It is a kind of talking. I made gestures and some words, and we could understand each other. If I cook, I take a plate for them, and they also do the same. They bring me a speciality dish from Pakistan. In fact, they started doing that and then I just wanted to be thankful, so I did the same. (Carmen)*

Participants often had positive recollections about New Zealand's multicultural society, as their experiences of creating new networks helped them transition from one social world to another. This is reflected in the acts of generosity Lucia and Carmen experienced: *even when we cannot speak in English yet, we always share food*. These experiences also facilitated the participants' integration into their adoptive culture, positively contributing to the young mothers' new way of life. While they were sometimes able to forge social connections without

English language proficiency, young Colombian mothers eventually realised the necessity of learning English to interface with people from other cultures and nationalities. This initial lack of English language proficiency also adds complexity to their resettlement process. Even though the actions from their neighbours were kind; some participants reported difficulty connecting with others:

> *I was happy in the car with them, but when we were trying to talk, it was impossible, None of us could speak English or our native language, so I just smiled and used a kind of body language (laughs). That was the way we could connect. (Lucia)*

Participants reported that limited English language proficiency was a significant limitation in acculturating with prospective friends and even their own children, particularly when their English abilities started to outpace their own. For example, Lucia felt that could not she could not express her gratitude for favours received, thereby limiting her ability to sustain friendships. Because Lucia could not converse with people as she was accustomed to doing in Colombia, she relied on smiling and nonverbal communication. While trying to maintain a conversation in Spanish with her English-speaking child, Lucia again makes extensive use of physical gestures. This body language can be analysed as a specific communication strategy when dealing with other people from a refugee background primary language is not English. This finding suggests that these participants' facial expressions, gestures, and movements could convey thankfulness and respect for the new people they met. This finding also has policy implications, as it demonstrate the need for governmental institutions and nongovernmental organization to understand why young Colombian mothers' integration experiences tend to be challenging despite the various programmes and resources available to them.

Learning English by building friendships with people from other communities may be crucial to ensuring that young refugee mothers access social benefits and find economic security. Half of the participants confirmed that they held a casual job at the time of their interviews, mostly as cleaners in schools or restaurants. Although they expressed that their money enabled them to afford things like toys and clothes for their children, they were not satisfied with entry-level wages. However, they also reported that their lack of English language fluency is a barrier in finding better paying jobs:

If I study, I can get a good job. I do not want to clean places all the time. You get paid for that, but it is not what I want. I am also waiting for my baby to be older, and then I will study at Uni. That is why I am learning English now; I will need it to get entrance to Uni, and then once I am ready, I will have a great job. (Julieta)

Julieta's quote shows how participants view language proficiency as essential for gainful employment. Most of the young mothers in this study recognised that English language skills are required for entry into tertiary institutions. However, there are individual and practical issues that impede their acquisition of these skills. A common concern is the difficulty involved in ensuring that New Zealand institutions and employers recognize educational certifications completed overseas. Other participants did not finish high school and never attended any English courses before arriving in New Zealand. Their lack of high school completion makes it all the more difficult for these young mothers to find jobs beyond the casual positions commonly available to them. Participants' reasons for not finishing high school primarily centred the lack of opportunity and problems associated with Colombia's various internal conflicts. The lack of recognized education compounded participants' lack of English proficiency, making the prospect of gaining initial entry into the job market a fraught proposition. Participants demonstrated a keen awareness of this situation, which is why they recognised the necessity of solid networks, bridging capital, and new friends. As stated by one participant:

*I think I have a Kiwi friend who also works for the Red Cross. She helped me to find a job. **I met her through one of my Saudi friends from the English course,** and I gave her my CV, and she sent it to some cleaning companies, which is good because I do not need English to clean, hehe. (Juana)*

Here, *I met her through one of my Saudi friends from the English course* illustrates how English courses encourage young mothers to get to know people and build networks for work or cultural activities. English courses help to reduce differences between communities and ease social mobility. Half of the young mothers in the study met new people through other connections made while studying English. Attending English courses also facilitated their relationships with other individuals from different nationalities. These English language courses often enhanced

the participants' ability to build social capital and expand their support systems at a critical time in their resettlement.

Other participants, however, had little desire to work. Some of them said they did not work because of their lack of English, personal aspirations, or mothering responsibilities. Others reported that Work and Income New Zealand support was enough for their daily needs. In Colombia, there is a widespread stereotype about social and economic gaps, which holds those who work in a full-time position deemed more socially desirable than those who work in informal employment. Educational inequity fuels this stereotype, as stable full time work is largely inaccessible to those who lack educational qualifications, which are themselves inaccessible to low-income communities. To avoid this stereotype, many people in Colombia chose to study short courses, as they perceive that formal education the only way to avoid working as cleaners, hospitality staff, or in other informal jobs undertaken by underprivileged people who have not completed primary, secondary, and tertiary education. The participants in this study who chose not to work as cleaners in New Zealand expressed that they do not do so because they had aspirations of secondary and/or tertiary education. These young mothers often ordered their aspirations in a linear fashion as follows: they hoped to learn English, finish their high school studies, then go on to university to actualize, in New Zealand, an economic dream that began in Colombia:

> *To be honest, I do not want to work as a cleaner. I aim to do something else; I want to study. Being a cleaner or working in a restaurant is not well seen by our families. So, I do not want to work. Because I have not gone to university yet, the only choice I have right now is to live with the government's money and study English. (Maria)*

When I arrived in Hamilton for my exploratory visit, I met the president of the local Colombian Association, who introduced me to Maria. She was happy to speak with me, and I remember she told me: *I want to speak with someone else who can understand my position.* At the time, I did not understand what she meant. Over the next few days, I came to realize that speaking with me represented an opportunity for her to vocalize her aspirations without translating their cultural particularities. I interviewed her the next day, and I also talked with the association's president for a second time. Many Colombians from refugee backgrounds were in attendance when I visited his office. Many asked for help finding a good job, one in which they can be

respected and valued. Observing repeated interactions, I realized that these two aspects were refugees' top priorities with regard to their employment. They wanted employers to treat them nicely and as professional workers. They wanted to study and gain experience in New Zealand so that they may ascend to have a different socioeconomic status and be treated well.

Another participant also explained how family members would not let them work as cleaners and they preferred to stay home and help rather than being mistreated or exploited. One of the young mothers explained to me how some relatives told her to study so she would be respected:

> *I would like to have a job someday, to see how it feels, because I have been working with my mom all the time, helping her sell Colombian food in the markets. This is our business and it is a way to earn money and go ahead with my child. She does not want me to work as a cleaner; she says I have to study and be someone in life. However, I would like to have a boss and get paid for what I do; it would be great. (Mercedes)*

In Colombia, most people who work in the informal sector have a reasonably low level of education, which does not exceed primary, or secondary education. In this study, there are few choices for young mothers to find a well-paying job in New Zealand if they do not manage the language and acquire a qualification. Most of this study's participants needed a significant amount of time to understand this aspect of their new and resettled lives. But while acculturating into a new society and securing educational opportunities and gainful employment are difficult tasks for any refugee, this study's data suggests that the experience is even more challenging for those who are mothers.

4.2.3 Mothering during resettlement

Mothering is the third most common theme that emerged during the interviews. Caring practices and beliefs are essential elements in understanding the acculturation experiences of young Colombian mothers. Per Tomasa:

> *My life totally changed when I had my baby. Each decision I make is around my child. My personality as a new mother is also something I have had to deal with. The way I react to problems is the way I feel when my child is around. Everything is important for*

me because of this little person. That is why I feel more Kiwi than Colombian because my child was born here, and he has been here since then. (Tomasa)

Like Tomasa, many participants reported that becoming a mother was a challenging experience. They were generally concerned about the broad social, economic, psychological, and even physical difficulties associated with having a baby of their own and felt that their lives had changed significantly since becoming mothers. Participants perceived that becoming a mother was similar to gaining a new personality. According to Juana:

I thought people here would help me with my baby like people in Colombia. But, it was not like that. I had to do everything on my own. I could not continue studying or working. It took me more than a year until I could put my baby in childcare so I could continue working. I feel that those situations made me change my way of thinking, the way I am and even my personality. (Juana)

Motherhood and childbirth create unexpected challenges that affected different aspects of the young mothers' lives. Most frequently, these difficulties stemmed from coping with new and multiple responsibilities, like the need balance mothering, self-care, employment and attending school. Here is what Lucia had to say:

My goodness, it is very challenging to look after my baby and still work or go to school. I don't have someone to look after my baby and me here. I have to do everything. It is tough. (Lucia)

Some mothers expressed regret about having a baby while they were still in school, particularly when they could not finish their education. Participants perceived that this led to additional challenges in learning English and finding a good job. This impediment was noted by most of the participants who had limited social support networks, as they had nobody to assist with their mothering duties at home while resettling:

It is tough to have a baby. I think it is better to finish school, a career and then find a good job. Because once you have the baby, you cannot do anything. The baby absorbs all your time and energy. And nobody to help you. That's very hard. (Pepa)

Pepa's quote illustrates a young mother's challenges while integrating into a new society with an infant. Being a young mother from refugee background in this new country narrowed the women's opportunities to study or work because they needed to look after their children. Insights about the acculturation and resettlement experiences of young Colombian mothers would therefore help communities and people who work with refugees understand their decisions and mothering actions. This argument is developed and explained further in the discussion section in Chapter 6.

Participants reported that they preferred to wait for their children to turn five, so they could dedicate more time to their studies. They further mentioned that receiving financial help from the New Zealand government assisted them during their children's early years and until they went to school. According to Maria:

> *It is a huge relief to have the government's financial help. You know, I can look after my baby and have the basics to live until I can take him to school when he turns five and then I can come back to study and find any job. (Maria)*

Participants often reported a willingness to look after their children until they turn five while receiving financial help. This contrasts with standard practice in Colombia, where, childcare is not often an option for low-income mothers due to its prohibitive costs. In Colombia, many people from low-income sectors opt to teach their children at home until they turn five to go to school. There is also a tendency for women to stay home performing the household chores, whereas men pursue paid employment outside of the home. This practice is most common in low socio-economic status communities, where women primarily stay home to look after their children.

The guarantee of support from the New Zealand government, community members, and charity organizations may also be crucial for the participants' ability to secure long-term social benefits. Participants reported that their motherhood experiences had been associated with a lack of social support before and after the baby was born. Among these Colombian women, the lack of social support in a resettlement context emerged as a common problem that had an impact upon their experiences of life, plans for their future, and early motherhood.

However, some of the young mothers also reported that they preferred help from people not from Colombia. They expressed that some Colombians helped them when they arrived in the country. However, during these encounters, they were asked about their life back home, which made them feel uncomfortable. Here is what Tomasa had to say:

> *A family visited us in Mangere, and they were asking things like: why are you here? What were you doing in Colombia? Do you have a partner? You know, they should not ask that. It is not their business to know. This is my private life. So, I don't want to talk to them again. (Tomasa)*

In Colombia, young mothers are perceived to set a bad example for other adolescents and create a bad reputation for their families and community. Hence, during Colombian encounters here in New Zealand, people may be approaching these young mothers to know more about their pregnancy and might be prone to lecturing them about the importance of having a husband when pregnant. Tomasa's rejection of help from the Colombian community reflected a fear of this kind of judgment. In response, the participants in this research often reported that they preferred to receive support for themselves and their babies from non-Colombian communities, because these uncomfortable encounters and attitudes left them with feelings of embarrassment. Mercedes noted:

> *I felt embarrassed with those Colombians questioning my pregnancy and being a young mother. My family back home was also angry with me when I told them I was pregnant. Because they said, I could not finish school. My mom also felt bad because I am unmarried, and in Colombia, it is a problem in society (Mercedes)*

According to the participants, a Colombian family is situated within (and a reflection of) the wider community. Feelings of embarrassment usually emerge through the community's disapproval. A teenage out-of-wedlock pregnancy is perceived as reflecting badly on the mother's parents, which calls their competency and ability to carry out parental duties into question. Participants without dependable support systems often expressed feelings of rejection and exclusion. Carmen, who arrived in the country in the early stages of her pregnancy and did not share her pregnancy status with the Colombian community, recounted:

Because I did not know anyone when I arrived, so I did not talk with anyone from the Colombian community about my pregnancy (Carmen)

Juana shared similar feelings of lack of ties with the Colombian community:

If I go and tell someone from the Colombian community, they will communicate with other people. I was better keeping the news to myself. (Juana)

Friendships were limited for many young mothers due to their pregnancies and interrupted lives. Along with other barriers, acculturation into the wider society was challenging for them; negative Colombian community perceptions of adolescent mothers further increased the risk of isolation.

To conclude, this section used the Colombian expression of "crossing the pond" to analyze essential aspects of young Colombian refugee mothers' acculturation experiences. These considerations include access to and recognition of education, proficiency in the English language, and cultural perceptions on the role of mothering. Each of these themes affects the how young Colombian experience their individualized acculturation and integration experiences. The preceding analyses show how these women move across the different acculturation outcomes Berry (2005) posits. As Berry (2005) noted, refugees, adjust to a new context using various strategies. Assimilation supposes that refugees leave behind their original customs and adapt to a dominant culture. In contrast, integration indicates reciprocal accommodation between the refugee's home culture and the host society; this integration process stresses cultural awareness and language acquisition among refugees (Berry, 2001).

"Crossing the pond" suggests that for young mothers, pregnancy and childrearing may have negative consequences that last through the lifetime for the young women and their children alike. Those consequences are often due to social, educational, and economic factors that are compounded by negative stereotypes and judgements about the nature of mothering as a young person. These derogatory views tend to be held by community members and young mothers alike, causing what are oftentimes intense feelings of isolation and distress. Increasing educational attainment, learning English, fostering positive mother-child interactions, maternal workshops, and the prevention of repeat pregnancy can therefore all be theorized as initiatives

that can improve social and economic outcomes for young Colombian refugee mothers and their children. Furthermore, programmes that are interdisciplinary, culturally sensitive, and comprehensive can lessen the negative consequences of young mothers who are contending with traumatic pasts and uncertain futures as they navigate resettlement as refugees. It must be noted, however, that this study's participating young mothers exercised agency and autonomy in using constructing networks and identities geared toward providing a safe home environment and initiating positive acculturation.

4.3 Feeling at home – "La Kiwi", opportunities and constraints to create a new identity in New Zealand

The article "la" in Spanish ("the" in English) is used to name feminine nouns (e.g., la casa/the house). Grammatically, it is not correct to use "la" to refer to women or people, but it is often used colloquially (e.g., la Maria, la Kiwi) as a derogative way to name someone. Many of this study's participants, are called "La Kiwi" by Colombian friends in New Zealand and family members back home, as an indicator that their relatives and compatriots now see these mothers more as New Zealanders than as Colombians.

For most of this study's participants, coming to New Zealand represents many "firsts". It was their first time boarding an aeroplane, seeing foreign people, and listening to others speaking foreign languages. It was their first time experiencing solitude, of being lost in a new world, having a child, and raising that baby alone. Coming to New Zealand also represented the first time they did not have to look only after themselves. However, their babies, and this part, especially this part, makes them feel like and call themselves "La Kiwi". The readiness with which this study's participants embraced the persona of "La Kiwi" suggests that there might be some elements that these young mothers developed and created for this new identity. The young mothers reported that relationships and situations happening around them made them feel "La Kiwi". For example, Juana said:

> *When I started interacting with peers at the English Institute, I could make friends. I then started attending a basketball games and started meeting people from various cultures. Some Colombian peers had a soccer group, but they did not invite me to play with them, even knowing I am from Colombia. (Juana)*

Juana's quote about her relationship with her peers includes experiences of both acceptance and rejection. Attending English classes made meeting people easier for her. Meeting people in a basketball game was also a way to initiate face-to-face interactions. But even though all the participants said they had friends from different cultures, some reported feeling rejected by their Colombian peers. According to Maria, being friends with an individual from another cultural background was the reason for that rejection:

> *I have a friend who is from Vietnam. She also has a son who was born here, so we usually meet to have fun. One day I invited her to a Colombian food market and some Colombian friends did not want to talk to me because I was with her. In fact, some peers from Colombia said that I was too Kiwi and couldn't trust me. My son was born here, he is a New Zealander, he plays with my friend's son as well. For me it is good to have her as a friend. (Maria)*

This trauma of rejection is compounded by the fact that the young mothers feel more accepted by peers from different cultural backgrounds than their own ethnocultural group.

Once in New Zealand, young mothers have to learn the system. They have to learn to be independent in an unknown country; they need to go to a general practitioner alone. They need to see a midwife, but this makes them feel uncomfortable, because midwives are not frequently required during childbirth in Colombia. They need to attend English classes and learn the essential words needed to be independent and self-sufficient. Despite these obstacles, participants often expressed an eagerness to adapt to new social worlds, where the social constructions of gender, motherhood, community and parenting have slightly different meanings. All these experiences show the process of acculturation and how this can involve loss and potentially even be labelled "La Kiwi".

In addition to navigating New Zealand society, participants reported difficulties dealing with their own community. The Colombian community starts judging any "La Kiwi" once they start speaking English or a kind of Spanglish[9]. Because they can now pronounce more words and speak more fluently, those in the community who do not yet speak the language well and do not care about the New Zealand culture start calling them "La Kiwi". Women are called "La

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[10] Term used as a combination of speaking Spanish and English.

Kiwi" when they speak in hybridized English and Spanish. They are called "La Kiwi" because their children do not speak fluent Spanish, which is perceived to be their fault. They are called "La Kiwi" because they no longer "look" Colombian and because they prefer to listen to Stan Walker or Taylor Swift instead of famous Colombian singers Shakira or Juanes. According to the young mothers interviewed, learning new cultural customs and the language might facilitate the development of their identity, these same acts can also impede creating solid relationships with their fellow Colombians. Here is what Julieta had to say about this:

> *I don't care if they call me "La Kiwi". I should take it as a compliment because it has helped me feel the need to learn English very well. My child already speaks English like a native, and I feel good about that. For example, in my case, I do not listen anymore to Shakira (a singer from Colombia), but I like to listen to Stan Walker (a Kiwi singer). This journey is hard to explain; nobody knows what you have to deal with in life. So I don't think they can judge me because I respect and like this new culture. That is selfish. (Julieta)*

Julieta suggests that her acculturation efforts have created a rift between her and the Colombian community. Participants often express that they do not want to deal with their Colombian compatriots and instead have a deeper interest in becoming even more like the perceptions of New Zealanders, a status that they perceive allows them to have a better quality of life for themselves and their children. This experience means that the process of acculturation can also have adverse effects on these young mothers' own identities and their relationships with their Colombian relatives and friends. Feelings of rejection from the local Colombian community sometimes triggers the mothers' desire to adopt the new culture and disengage from their own. Participants noted that they felt the Colombian society was "selfish," and thus they were reluctant to maintain strong ties with people from their place of birth.

For the young mothers in this study, it is significant to acknowledge that coming to this country while pregnant has impacted each of them differently. Some continue to behave in ways similar to those in Colombia and Ecuador. Others attempt to take on the mannerisms and traits of New Zealanders, while others prefer a kind of an in-betweenness that incorporates aspects of both Colombian and New Zealand culture. This in-betweenness appears to be the most common in the participants' life as mothers as this provides both modifications in patterns and stability.

The notion of "La Kiwi" also presents the opportunity for young mothers to create their own identities, one that can emerge out of their tastes and preferences. In most cases embracing "La Kiwi" allowed these young mothers to reap more opportunities for their children. Although the language is vital for them due to the prospect of better communication with their children, Spanish is not necessary, nor it is a priority for young mothers since they believe their children will live their entire lives in a foreign country.

Many of the participants reported that their friends, family, and acquaintances often believed that it is "wrong" to allow the children of Colombian mothers to speak English instead of Spanish. Participants thus found it pertinent to disconnect from those individuals, on the grounds that their judgments were perceived to be unnecessary and even harmful. This intentional choice to disconnect from negative individuals reflects the agency of young refugee mothers, many of whom came to New Zealand with an identity shapted by pervasive violence in Colombia. Once they found support and refuge in this their adopted home, their identities were rebuilt, especially after realising that they would be mothers for the first time. To protect themselves and their children, many abandoned their ways of being, customs, and their relatives. Little by little, they have been adjusting to and actively constructing a new life in a new world by embracing the variegated challenges they believe have made them better mothers and people. Here is what Mercedes had to say:

> *I am not the same teenager I was in Colombia; I am a mother now. I have to talk, behave and dress accordingly. My family back home keep telling me that I am different now, and sure I am. I have struggled and thrived at the same time here in New Zealand. It is not easy, but also it is not impossible. (Mercedes)*

Overall, the participants wanted to offer a different world to their children. To achieve this, they undertook tasks like studying, working, and developing new skills (such as practising a sport for the first time). Many young mothers' credit their children for their personal growth.. Their children ultimately remind the young mothers of where they come from, who they are, where they are going, what they do, and why they do it.

In spite of the initiative they often display in achieving their goals, young mothers also report inadequate support from their family members and close friends. These situations were much even more tense after the birth of their children. "La Kiwi" and the "Kiwisitos" together have

faced a lack of social support. This lack exacerbates a problematic situation that has impacted their experiences as young mothers with multiple responsibilities. However, it is essential to clarify that despite the lack of support from family and friends, mothers were often able to access social support programmes in New Zealand that at least covered part of the demands associated with being a young mother. As I mentioned in the "mothering" section, many mothers continued studying in a school while their children were enrolled in childcare. The young mothers who had the opportunity to do so had the opportunity to reconsider pursuing their own dreams of higher education and employment.

This study suggests that their embrace of the name "La Kiwi" brought changes in young mothers' lives. Despite the difficulties associated with being a young mother. Almost all mothers developed a personal sense of identity and responsibility that helped them grow into women capable of being "independent" in the developed world, despite coming from a underprivileged and conflict-ridden homeland.

These analyses demonstrate how resettlement and becoming young mothers were two big events that forced participants to pass from childhood to adulthood. The changes did not only apply to them but also their children and the community surrounding them. With this last assumption I make as the writer, it is also possible to believe that the challenges were not only for them but also for the host society and their community, who seemed to try to endure them in one way or another. The idea of crossing the pond gives us insight that there is not just one way across the pond. Young mothers have gone beyond the challenges associated with motherhood, migration, employment, schooling, and parenting. The participants in this study were moreover eager to do so for the benefit of their children, garnering further opportunities for their "Kiwisitos".

4.3.1 Kiwisitos: The action of mothering

Kiwisitos— 'ito' (Little in English) is a diminutive form that refers to a small object or person in Spanish. When the young Colombian mothers call their children kiwisitos, they are defining them as 'young' Kiwis. As a combination of English and Spanish, the term also suggests that the children are, in fact, bridges between the New Zealand and Colombian cultures for their mothers.

From the mothering experiences of these young mothers, I recognised conflict with how they wanted their children to be more akin New Zealanders than they perceived themselves to be. At the same time, they also desired the children to be Colombian. At times, these seemingly opposing desires presented a source of tension. At other times, this multiplicity of identities is something the mothers leverage to their advantage. Here is what Pepa had to say:

> *My child was born and raised here in New Zealand. He is a Kiwi. However, as I am Colombian, he also has a Colombian passport. When we meet new people, I prefer to say he is a Kiwi because it has its advantages, for example, when going to school, to receive the benefits of being born here. It is a kind of being in the middle of something I don't know. (Pepa)*

These mothers' unique resettlement experiences contributed to their understanding of "living in-between two cultures." Participants negotiate significant life challenges and transitions whilst adjusting to the unique context of their adoptive country. During this experience, they assimilate, balance, and evaluate their values in accordance with these new societal beliefs. The implication of this dilemma is that it might produce an environment of uncertainty for young mothers. As described by one participant:

> *...how are we going to live with these two cultures? We need both cultures; we cannot lose our cultures. We need our Colombian culture, and we need New Zealand culture. Somehow, we need to bring these two cultures together. (Maria)*

Maria's quote seems to represent a cultural conflict that adds to a redefinition and re-assessment of cultural values, prompting a reformulation of identity as young mothers and women refugees. These mothers have tried to navigate those two social worlds. There are times in which these mothers might be choosing to be in-between, and other times, they might be constrained to be in-between. It is not a choice, and it is not only about them; it is also about their children.

The previous section explained how these young mothers tried to reproduce the culture and structures of belonging through their children's engagement in sports and dance. This section will detail how these mothers have tried to maintain their heritage and cultural identity while navigating the different ways local New Zealand culture can influence their efforts to sustain their links to Colombian culture. Colombian traditions regarding clothes, food and family were important to the young mothers in this study. Many of the participants mentioned cultural differences towards pregnancy support and postpartum care. It is significant to indicate that most of the cultural learning that the young mothers undergo in New Zealand came about accidentally through cultural encounters. An example of this is New Zealand mothers' practice of gifting pre-loved (a euphemism for 'used') baby clothes to Colombian mothers who also have a baby or young child. One of the mothers explained how misunderstandings and cultural differences arose:

> *It was bizarre when one of my neighbours came to our house and gave us some second-hand clothes for my baby. I mean, second-hand clothes? I thought, what is wrong with her. My son cannot wear that. So, I said: no, thank you. We do not dress our kids in second-hand clothes. Maybe it has to be from her siblings, but not from a stranger. But after many months of living here, I realised it is ok for Kiwis to give second-hand clothes to others. I think it is a way to recycle. (Maria)*

Most participants expressed feeling offended when their Kiwi friends offered them pre-loved toys and clothes. In Colombian culture, such actions imply that these mothers were poor and desperate. In New Zealand, pre-loved toys and clothes have sentimental value and passing on second-hand items is recognised as a kind and generous offer. It is a sustainable and environmentally conscious choice to re-use items, particularly clothing, car seats, or baby care, that are often expensive and only used for a short time. It is considered an act that can give someone a warm fuzzy feeling, meaning that there is a connection established between two different people. Among New Zealanders, the act of re-gifting clothes is often perceived as a warm and caring gesture. When participants sometimes initially rejected these gifts, but later were informed by Red Cross volunteers that the practice of sharing pre-loved items for new babies is a customary practice in New Zealand. After learning about the practice, the mothers

approached the neighbours to accept their gifts and their gestures of kindness. Subsequently, the young mothers accepted this practice as part of being a Kiwi and no longer felt offended when offered gifts of this nature. The young mothers themselves noted that they changed their thinking and practices, in the process developing a sense that they were becoming more Kiwi. There is a shifting space to build a sense of belonging in more than one place. In this case, the young mothers and their children move forward in pursuing belonging in the Kiwi community. By adapting to different practices, and in this case, understanding how second-hand items are recognised as an act of generosity and connection, the young mothers were able to begin building a real Kiwi home:

> *It is funny, at the beginning I used to say: what, are you crazy? But now if somebody offers me some clothes, even for me, I get them and wear them, I save money because then I do not have to buy clothes or shoes. (Mercedes)*

Mercedes seems to understand both the Kiwi and Colombian contexts, and her intentions and shifting beliefs encourage a continuous cultural engagement for herself and her son. Questions surrounding what kind of clothes to wear or toys their children must play with and where they come from speak to young mothers' efforts to negotiate their identities as newcomers navigating a host culture. These questions suggest that young mothers are concerned with getting to know others, accepting, rejecting, or assimilating both sides' situations and experiences. Tomasa, by her part, was determined to respect the customs with which she grew up. For her, accepting used clothes signalled inferiority, and receiving them could be counterproductive, as it might perpetuate negative perceptions of her as a Colombian. She noted:

> *I do not know how other people accept second-hand clothes and stuff. We must respect our culture. It is a way to say we are flawed and cannot get money to buy new things. We can do much better than that. We can work hard and buy our stuff. (Tomasa)*

The examples I have shared from my participants illustrate how these young mothers are able to decide what they know and feel is important for them and what they are willing to adapt to in a new culture. They are able to maintain their choices in mothering, using strategies they are familiar with from Colombia as well as new ones they learn in New Zealand. The next chapter

will also show how these young mothers have created a "home" by adapting to local norms and integrate through their connections. However, it is important to note that while some of the mothers have Kiwi mother friends, some mentioned that they feel isolated and disconnected because local mothers do not meet as often and as informally as the way they do in Colombia. As Juana states:

> *We have some Kiwi friends, also mothers whom we have met in childcare or playgrounds, but even when we are friends, we do not meet that often, and if we do, we have to make a date, like an appointment. I feel alone sometimes because of that formality. In Colombia, we meet as often as possible and can visit any time. We do not need to notice. (Juana)*

Even though networking with local Kiwi mothers allows the participants to catch glimpses of people raising children in New Zealand, they frequently talk about how strange and isolated they feel as newcomers in these relationships. There are times when they might instead stick to maintaining relationships with friends in Colombia over distance and avoid connections with the local community. The young mothers feel they exist in an in-between state. This in-betweenness is why they can sometimes express longing and love for Colombian cultures, but other times prefer the Kiwi culture. Calling New Zealand their "home" allows them to maintain cultural reproduction and anchor their identity to their resettlement experiences. It can also be read as an effort to generate a continuity between both their former home (Colombia) and present home (New Zealand).

My participants commented on the limitations of interacting with kiwis based on their command of the English language. All but two of my participants cannot speak English with native-level proficiency, and this has caused to experience obstacles in participating in the wider community and finding suitable employment. In most cases, their children become translators for their mothers, especially when speaking with neighbours and during medical appointments. Participants report, however, that seeking help from their children has helped them develop strong relationships with their children and a sense of familial trust. Some of the participants have described how their school-aged children support them:

My son helps me a lot, all the time I have a problem and I need to talk with someone else I say to Emanuel, and he translates the words, and if he does not understand what I am saying in Spanish, then I try to talk English (Maria)

While the mothers report challenges related to life as a young refugee in New Zealand, including the lack of support from the extended family, they also show how much they appreciate being a mother and raising their Kiwisitos in Aotearoa. Their journeys as young mothers in a foreign country is, at the same time, difficult because they and their children must navigate numerous challenges associated with navigating New Zealand as refugees. However, one thing that sustains them is the relational process in which the bonds between mother and child become more robust, owing to the greater level of relationship building mothers and their children must engage in when they are largely on their own.

Most young mothers mentioned that their "Kiwisitos" have been helping them with their English and have shared some Kiwi traditions that they have learned at school, such as kapa haka. Many participants reflected that kapa haka songs and dances are similar to traditional Colombian dances such as *cumbia*, *porro*, and *joropo*. They expressed joy when discussing their children learning about other aspects Kiwi culture, such as waiata, or Māori songs. The mothers report that they enjoy their children being more socialised into the local culture, which in turn helps them feel less susceptible to discrimination and alleviates some of their feelings of alienation. Still, tensions arise, particularly in educational settings. For example, when these young mothers have to attend teacher-parent day at school, their communication with teachers is hindered, which make them reinforces their feelings as outsiders in New Zealand society. Mercedes says:

I feel happy when my son sings Māori songs, my Kiwisito is happy here, and even when I want to keep some of our cultures, he has started understanding the differences, and it is his choice to do what he likes. If it is suitable for him, then it is good for me. (Mercedes)

This quote evinces the struggles and dilemmas the young mothers encounter: their desire for their children to know what it is like to be Colombian contends with their desire for their children to be as Kiwi as possible.

4.3.3 Planning for the future – In search of strong ties to the homeland.

Planning for the future also emerged as a key pattern from the findings. There appears to be a reflection on the significance of how every young mother sees herself in the future with their children and the ways they might maintain strong ties to the motherland. When interviewing the young mothers, one of them says:

> *I felt hopeful when attending a Latino festival in Hamilton; I got to know other young mothers. One of them told me about a Colombian community established in beautiful Dinsdale and other people from speaking Spanish countries who have married Kiwis. Nobody had told me about that place before. I did not know. (Maria)*

This quote from Maria describes her excitement over learning that there is a place where other Latinos who also married Kiwis have moved to maintain proximity to their culture and language. Dinsdale is the westernmost suburb in Hamilton, New Zealand. Because there are cheap houses to rent, many Latinos have opted to find a house there. She concludes this quote by saying that "nobody had told her" that this community existed, suggesting that there is important information that was, at one point, withheld from her. Notions of identity, culture, and that sense of in-betweenness also come across in her narrative. Some participants seek out Colombian communities or find someone close by who can speak Spanish. Feeling at home while being in the host country forms an essential part of that in-betweenness. The young mothers have spent their first years turning to the things that remind them of home. They feel like they are swimming and holding a baby simultaneously, without direction from an old and familiar home to a new and unknown place. I understood the idea of swimming and holding a baby simultaneously as a metaphor for life. These young mothers have been struggling against the tide, other times going with the flow; they have also jumped into the deep end of mothering and stayed afloat. This idea of swimming also supports Berry's (1990) contention that there are four possible acculturation strategies arising from the beliefs and perceptions of refugees towards the value of cultural maintenance and participation in the host society.

When these young mothers with refugee backgrounds arrived in New Zealand, they mainly expressed a desire to give birth and be safe. Lucia shared her thoughts of what the most important thing for her was:

My baby's wellbeing and mine was the most significant aspect for me. It worried me a lot. When I arrived in Mangere, I remember one of the caseworkers called a midwife. What is a midwife? Like, I have never heard that word before. Does it exist? In Colombia, you know we do not have a person like a midwife. We go to the doctor, I think. But then, I met my midwife, and she looked after me in my last weeks of pregnancy. She organised everything, and when my baby girl was born, we were taken to a hospital because I was 14 years old. (Lucia)

I can clearly remember when I interviewed Lucia. As she is the youngest of my participants, her stories often made me feel hopeless. While she was telling me her stories, she was often crying. I did not ask her why she was crying, but her eyes spoke volumes. She was afraid, alone, pregnant with a baby girl, and would be a single mother in a foreign country. I do not consider myself a refugee but a migrant, yet I could not help but feel her pain as I enveavoured to objectively listening to their stories. The simple question "*what is a midwife?*" speaks to Lucia's desperate unfamiliarity with her new context. There are many things unknown; even more so when becoming a mother. For Lucia, learning to be a mother was made more challenging by being placed in a different environment, with a new language, unfamiliar people and different cultural customs. Many of my participants wished to have someone they knew next to them. But they did not have time to choose; they had no choice but to leave in a hurry because being the opportunity to move to New Zealand presented itself suddenly.

It is important to note that the young mothers expected to have a child in their mid-to-late twenties, so pregnancy was not part of their plan. However, three young mothers mentioned a key aspect that contributed to their transition to early motherhood: the ability to care for and love the baby. Here is what Pepa, Lucia and Mercedes had to say:

From the moment I realised I was pregnant. I could not see myself as a mother. I did not feel anything towards the baby that was growing inside me. I meant, this baby was not expected. I met a guy while in Ecuador; he was a policeman who betrayed me. I had a relationship with him because he promised to help me, but it was not like that. He disappeared. So, the news of having a baby was hard for me. I had pre-natal and post-natal depression. (Pepa)

Everything started when I had to leave my farm, city, and country. I was not feeling safe anymore. The police captured my dad, my mom, siblings, and I had to flee to Ecuador. I was very sad, I met a guy there, but he was too much older than me. My mom was not happy with the relationship, and then I had to come to New Zealand, and I did not know about him anymore. Later, I realised I was pregnant and had complications having the baby in the Mangere centre. Nurses there took me to a hospital because of the issues arising. I did not want to be a mother (Lucia)

I think that when you become a mom, it will be great, but there is much to it. And your dream is to have a family, you know, mother, father and baby, but that is not the reality. (Mercedes)

These young mothers experienced difficulties during and after giving birth, which left them feeling exhausted and overwhelmed, which made them unable to adjust to their new role as a mother. These women had to readjust their internal discourses.

The participants also mentioned what they expected when resettling in New Zealand, such as having an excellent hospital to deliver the baby, a safe house to raise their children, assistance in looking after their children, and opportunities to learn English and secure employment. To this, Carmen says:

I have been planning our future here in New Zealand. This country has offered us many things for my children and me, so I said: We will start from zero and go ahead from here. That is why, before coming, I had big goals. My big project is to be a nurse, doctor, or businesswoman. But I am not sure if I can make it. I have three kids now, and looking after them is so exhausting. (Carmen)

Carmen's quote describes how having big goals can be sometimes frustrating when realising that achieving might not be possible, at least while raising little ones. Although her expression: "*I will start from zero and go ahead,*" suggests that she is encouraging herself to make her dreams come true, there are still concrete difficulties that prevent her from progressing. Regardless of motherhood's positive characteristics, these young mothers have faced challenges that dramatically affect their lives. Those difficulties include coping with the

children's future, managing school, care, and working simultaneously. When she says: *"But I am not sure if I can make it"*, she also tells how hard it becomes to raise a child in a foreign country without the help of a partner or close family. As noted earlier, the participants indicated they rarely received support from their baby's father or the broader community in New Zealand.

Motherhood, however, also brought them experiences of agency. Here is what Lucia had to say about her motivation of building a promising future for her and her family:

> *I want to secure a pleasant future for my children. I just finished my English courses, and now I am studying to be a hairdresser. I want to have my salon; I want to have my own business. (Lucia)*

Lucia has an experience that is different from Carmen's. Having goals to pursue can bring feelings of enjoyment and security to young refugee mothers. For Lucia, motherhood brought her a purpose and a sense of maturity. Motherhood gave her an opportunity to step up to the responsibility. Becoming a mother, for her, meant that she needed to behave like a responsible adult.

Over time, my participants started developing a vision of their futures, which often included aspirations for good relationships and individual success. As Lucia and Carmen described, these visions were often related to finding a job to support their new family and developing a career. Being young mothers delayed their ability to start a career, to find a full-time job, and learn the language as they needed to look after their children when they were small. Mercedes says:

> *"Because I was pregnant and I was due to have my baby, I could not go to study, so that is why I did not learn basic English and I could not go to study a career either."* (Mercedes)

Some participants regretted being a young mother while still of school age themselves, primarily because they were unable finish their secondary education. Some of the young mothers could finish their secondary studies but could not start university. This situation led

them to being disadvantaged when seeking a formal job. This struggle was noted mainly among those who did not have social support networks as they did not have someone who could offer dependable guidance and assistance following their resettlement. Carmen and Lucia describe their experiences as such:

> *It is hard to study. People say: You have three kids; you cannot learn. However, I am like I can do it someday. I know it is hard. Nevertheless, I want the best future for my children, so I need to study and learn English. (Carmen)*

> *I stopped working as a cleaner to start studying. I cannot do it all simultaneously because I also need to look after my children. It is a matter of putting things first. Moreover, for me, the study is essential. I want to make the right choice, so I do not regret it in the future. (Lucia)*

As expressed by the participants, the tasks of motherhood are very demanding. Meeting their children's needs, learning English, networking and building friendships, continuing education, and finding help all presented enormous challenges for these young mothers. Nevertheless, early motherhood has also motivated them to develop visions of a better future with their children and inspired them to follow their goals. Motherhood has also offered them an immediate family structure, which translates into happiness and hope. Tomasa highlighted the desire to study early childhood as a career and be a better mother even if she must face new challenges, but as she said, it will be a better future for her children:

> *After I finish studying English, I will go to WINTEC to learn Early Childhood; I like kids, so I would like to find a job related to children. (Tomasa)*

Some young mothers want to be role models for their children to have higher aspirations. Many of them discussed their desire to work hard so that they can take up a white-collar job. They envision their children completing high school, going to university, and taking up a lucrative professional position. Maria says:

I want my son to go to school, finish it and then go to university. My son is now in boxing classes as well. He is very energetic and intelligent. So, I will work hard to achieve that with him so everybody can respect him. (Maria)

In Colombian culture, it is commonly believed that informal jobs are only suitable for people who do not have the chance to study. If you learn, you are presented greater opportunities and people treat you differently. Every participant teaches her children and encourages them to study because they believe it is the only way to succeed in life. As we can see, motherhood inspired them to develop such aspirations of social and economic mobility. Motherhood motivated them to plan a future, learn about Kiwi culture, and understand the necessary knowledge of New Zealand systems and institutions to help them pave the way for themselves and their children's futures.

Even though they have many aspirations for themselves and their children, the participants experience instances in which the line of transcendence plays its role. Transcendence, in this study, refers to how these young refugee mothers have existed beyond the limits of what is commonly understood as motherhood. There are times they do not want to trespass that line even when it means a promising future for their children. Sometimes, they feel constrained and scared of going forward. Simultaneously, if they disconnect from the Colombian community and really engage in Kiwi culture, they lose part of themselves but gain a new identity. This process can be a source of frustration – they have the opportunity, but they also lose part of themselves. At the same time, they encourage themselves and start thinking about ongoing opportunities for themselves and their children. Those issues afford new opportunities for the participants, such as speaking Spanish with their children, so they learn their mother tongue; not having Colombian friends who discourage them from learning English because they want to know more about Kiwi life. Although it might be a positive strategy initially, it also means that they must leave certain things behind, such as their dreams of being a professional and having their own business to prioritize looking after their children.

4.4 Summary

This chapter reported some of the findings of eight young Colombian mothers in order to address how the mothering experiences of young Colombian mothers in New Zealand affected their identities as first-time mothers and their perceptions of their children's identities. The

chapter aimed to identify participants' identity as young mothers and their experiences of mothering within the social and cultural background of New Zealand.

The interviews identified two significant themes. I began with "Crossing the pond: young Colombian refugee mothers' possibilities and challenges while living in New Zealand." Which described the experiences of these young mothers with friendships, English language and mothering. In addition, I discussed "Feeling at home: "La Kiwi": opportunities and constraints to create a new identity in New Zealand which outlined the action of mothering their "Kiwisitos", coping with raising their children with both Colombian and New Zealand culture and negotiating the Kiwi culture.

These findings contribute to our understanding of young mothers' identities as well as their perspectives on their children's identities and acculturation experiences. Participants sometimes decided to embrace and reject aspects of both cultures. These decisions involved the willingness to cross cultural lines and overcome challenges. The mothers learned ways to negotiate their transnational identities and adapt to a new country, as well as to make decisions about which cultural values and identities they opted to retain. At the same time, they often worked intentionally to take on the cultural values of the host country. To understand the strategies young mothers drew on when they resettled in a new country and to connect to the four possible outcomes of acculturation, it is necessary to also look at young Colombian refugee mothers' experiences of integration and social connection. The next chapter reports findings on the role of social capital in facilitating their integration into this new society while also building new relationships.

CHAPTER 5: Three tasks and the role of social capital

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter examined data related to the following subsidiary research question: how do the mothering experiences of young Colombian mothers in New Zealand affect their identities as first-time mothers and their perceptions of their children's identities, positioning participants' experiences as identity-building negotiation in in-between spaces? This chapter builds upon the last one to discuss how the young Colombian participants navigated their children's resettlement experiences in New Zealand.

After the mothers found themselves in a foreign social and cultural environment, they started playing the new role they acquired as mothers. They formed a new identity through social connections that led them to different forms of acculturation (as explained in Chapter 4). Those social connections were informed by "tasks" they created throughout their resettlement journeys with their children. A task is defined herein as a unit of work to be undertaken and that produces some form of output, be it material, psychological, or discursive (Rodrigues, Fernández & Sostero, 2021). In this thesis, I use the term *mothering output* to describe the iterative process in which participants came to perceive themselves as mothers through the accomplishment of various social, economic, cultural, and educational tasks. The Cambridge Dictionary defines the word task as work to be done, especially one done regularly, unwillingly or with difficulty. This study understands the concept of "tasks" as units of work within a very particular transformation process: that of being a young Colombia refugee mother in a foreign country. The multifaceted identities of this study's participants and the demands of their resettlement journeys make it so their tasks can quickly become very complex. To navigate the resettlement process, the young Colombian participants undertook "three tasks" that represent the mechanisms and strategies through which they achieved social connections and that contributed to their mothering output. The "three tasks" were related to each other and shared similar key discourses. They also captured how participants' "strategic in-betweenness" (see Chapter 4) was sometimes a disadvantage when relative to the perceived advantages their children held as New Zealand-born "Kiwisitos." This strategic in-betweenness was described in Chapter 4 through the concept of 'La Kiwi.' In this chapter, I focus on the implications of this fluid identity as they pertain to our understanding of how young mothers and their children gradually integrate into Aotearoa New Zealand society.

This chapter is divided into three parts which represent the following three tasks: *Encountering*, *surveying-orienting*, and *navigating*. Through gerunds that denote actions, I focus on how the roles of motherhood and social capital influence the resettlement journey. This perspective is grounded in Ager and Strang's (2008) model of integration and supplemented by Putnam's (2000) conceptualisation of social capital, which encompasses bonding, bridging and linking dimensions (see Chapter 2).

The analysis of this data led me to theorise how social capital informs our understanding of the choices young Colombian refugee women make to construct their mothering and resettlement experiences in New Zealand. I attempt to describe the role of social capital in facilitating integration as participants (and their children) rebuild their lives. To this, I explore how the participants described a process in which close ties, or bonding forms of social capital, were significant for direct support. Bridging and linking social capital further provided pathways for integration into the wider community. Through the "three tasks," I outline how social capital can alternately strengthen or hinder participants' progress in resettlement contexts. This analysis threw light on how these women practise mothering (as actions) and navigate various competing discourses of motherhood (i.e. dominant and subjugated).

5.2 Task One – Encountering (especially early encounters)

In this section, I describe the task participants experienced through their initial encounters, which often create a foundation for the latter resettlement experiences. This section focuses on the participants' encounters with people they met unexpectedly during their time at the Mangere Refugee Centre, their first point of contact with New Zealand society and its institutions. These initial encounters, although unexpected, laid the foundations for better resettlement in New Zealand.

5.2.1 The Colombian mothers' refugee experiences at the Mangere Centre in Auckland – Defining the importance of bonding

This study's participating young mothers arrived in New Zealand as part of the refugee quota programme. In so doing, they went through several phases of unconsciously reaching a sense of strategic in-betweenness that became more and more fluid. The participants spent their first six weeks at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre (MRRC) in South Auckland, where

they were met by the Red Cross and other people who were also living at the resettlement centre, who proved helpful in various ways. Despite the availability of support, some participants also expressed a need to meet other Colombians, as Carmen emphasises here:

> *We were welcomed for many people. People from the Red Cross and other refugees also living in the centre. But I felt like I needed to meet other Colombians, who could speak Spanish and understand English. I needed to hear from them that everything was going to be ok and that my baby and I could be safe here. (Carmen)*

The young mothers were forced to leave behind their lives which, although fraught with violence, were the only ones they knew. They were also forced to abandon their belongings, friends, relatives, and culture. As such, the process of social integration for these young mothers in New Zealand was full of novel paradigms and puzzles to decipher, which was compounded by their experience of being a first time mother in a different country. The complexity of their circumstances helps to explain why they created various coping mechanisms in ways that were not completely planned. Rather, the participants iterate survival strategies through a reactive, open, and ongoing process.

Evidence from the participants' stories shows how important it was for them to be welcomed from the beginning with a pathway resettlement programme, like the one offered by Red Cross New Zealand. The programme provided support to former refugees as they began their resettlement journey in this country. This programme helped the young mothers by offering them tools to understand their rights and options upon arrival in New Zealand. In this study, the participants who stayed at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre reported partial satisfaction with the centre's support structures. Many reported that the information and advice were essential in continuing their pathway to resettlement. Juana spoke about the resettlement experience in the Mangere centre as follows:

> *I remember when I arrived at the Mangere centre, everything was very well organised, and I received a bedroom, food, and they told me useful information every day. I felt safe and calm. However, the information was generally not specific about me as a young mother. You know, I did not have any idea about the conditions for delivering my baby in New Zealand. (Juana)*

However, participants also reported that they found little information about the processes associated with delivering and raising a child. Juana's statement that "*I did not have any idea about how the conditions for delivering my baby in New Zealand*" describes one of the gaps in the service, as they were not equipped to describe what it means to be a parent in New Zealand, let alone a single mother. As such, Juana could not develop confidence in her ability to raise her child solely by accessing resources offered by the Red Cross. Participants talked about how they instead found the necessary information by consulting other young Colombian mothers who spontaneously visited the participants during their stay at the centre. Juana says:

I remember that moment because everything changed when, in the welcoming celebration, young people introduced themselves as Colombians and sat down with me. I did not know them, but I was happy to listen to them and their experiences. It was an opportunity to ask them about how delivering a baby here works and how they have been raising their children by themselves. (Juana)

Five out of eight participants noted that the opportunity to meet with other Colombian parents provided them hope for facing the prospect of mothering. These interactions helped them feel confident and brave rather than scared of being in a foreign country without any knowledge of the context and system. After building relationships through these encounters, there were also other connections they needed to establish. While participants were initially housed in a centre where people from different cultures could meet, they did not have the opportunity to communicate because of English language barriers. Still, these young mothers found ways to experience bridging and bonding capital during this task. As Carmen notes:

I do not know how to explain, but through a Colombian friend I met when I arrived, I started meeting people from Pakistan and other countries, all young people that were here as refugees too, but we could not talk straight, we could not talk to each other. We did not know how to speak English. But, we could shake hands, so that was a way for us to communicate. (Carmen)

Speaking the host country's official language is crucial for the process of adaptation as it provides a means of connecting to the new society. Although English courses are offered in the New Zealand resettlement programme, these courses cannot be accessed until after the refugees

leave the centre. Carmen's quote illustrates how these young mothers' challenges with the English language reduced their social connections. *"We could not talk to each other"* shows the participant's disappointment at being unable to interact with new people. Bridging capital was difficult to build for the participants because of their lack of English as well as their lack of knowledge about other cultures. These insights suggest that these barriers inhibited them from taking advantage of several opportunities to initially establish strong ties in their new community.

These missed opportunities made it so that encounters with other Colombians were especially significant for participants. This observation highlights the important role that creating connections plays in facilitating integration. Even when other networks (or people from other communities) do not offer support initially, the opportunity to connect with people from their own community can assist when starting their journey. On the contrary, not building connections could weaken participants' integration when this failure to connect is perceived as a lack of acceptance. Here is what Pepa had to say:

> *I did not know English when I arrived pregnant in NZ, I could only say hello. But when I said hello, I did not receive any reply from the other refugees. That is why I felt they did not like me, because there was no response, they were quiet. This situation affected me initially, but when I meet other refugees from Colombia, I could understand many things because they could explain to me, then I felt safe and calm. (Pepa)*

A lack of cultural knowledge can be observed in Carmen and Pepa's comments. They seemed not to identify the cultural differences between the different peoples who represent western and eastern contexts. If they could do so, it could be a way to effectively integrate into other new societies, for example, meeting people from Pakistan, as in Carmen's case. Feelings of rejection are illustrated by Pepa's quote, in which she said *"I felt they did not like me*". When I asked her "what do you remember about your arrival in Auckland?" she put her head down and replied as such:

> *I felt sad because you know, I was pregnant and I needed help. I wanted to know how the health service worked when you are pregnant. I wanted to speak with somebody*

else but I could not make new friends from other countries while in the centre, I could not engage with them. (Pepa)

This feeling became more pronounced as Pepa recounted the trauma associated with her inability to communicate. Pepa was visibly sad telling me the story, mostly because it seemed that she was expecting others to help while she was pregnant. She wanted to tell someone how she was feeling. She could not facilitate social interaction; she could not fully participate in that new bubble called the Mangere Refugee Centre.

The young mothers' experiences give us an insight into how safety is a fundamental axis in the "tasks" of mother. The absent or arrested development of safe experiences and environments plays an important role in the ways by which young refugee mothers and their children integrate into New Zealand society

5.2.2 The journey to meet Colombians – the opportunity to bond/un-bond with fellow nationals

While the young mothers were housed in the Mangere centre, they were visited by some other Colombians who did more for them than just telling them how things worked in New Zealand. They also brought them traditional Colombian food to welcome their new compatriots, a common practice in Colombia to welcome new people and start new relationships. When asking to two participants about the moment they most remember when arriving for the first time in New Zealand, Maria and Lucia replied:

My first impression was when I arrived at the Mangere Refugee Centre. People from the Red Cross welcomed us but especially other Colombians who were there with Colombian food. We have never seen them before, so it was a surprise for us. (Maria)

What I most remember is when we arrived at the Mangere centre in Auckland. The welcoming was big, with a lot of food and gifts because we arrived at Christmas time. We were also surprised when some Colombians, also refugees, came to say hello. It was useful because they started sharing their experiences here. (Lucia)

Here, Maria's use of the word *surprise* indicates the degree of appreciation she and other participants felt about being supported by people from their homeland. This appreciation stems from the comforting knowledge that their cultural practices and settlement experiences might be shared, and familiar connections could be immediately established. Even though hospitality is a common priority in Colombia, the participants were still surprised to see the way Colombians already living in New Zealand received them. In the beginning, they thought that staying at the refugee resettlement centre would primarily serve to get information. It instead became a salient and welcoming opportunity to build a new and hopeful life.

Although some participants were comfortable with the visit, others expressed they were not happy to see other Colombians. These feeling stemmed from these participants' feelings that Colombian visitors had just come to gossip rather than help them. According to Tomasa:

> *I did not like when I realised other Colombians were welcoming us there. I did not feel confident. I felt so bad because I do not know them. I do not want to be in a place where other Colombians are. I prefer to avoid them. (Tomasa)*

Tomasa's perspective is a counterpoint to the general assumption that a young immigrant mother would like to be visited by compatriots. As I continued interviewing her, I was curious about why she was wary of people she did not know, even if they ostensibly had more in common with her than anyone else in New Zealand. This insight underscores that misperception that Colombians with refugee backgrounds - all of the people in a shelter situation- should be seen as a cohesive group. However, the diversity in geographic, ethnic, social class, and the ways in which people are affected by the Colombian conflict makes it so that it might not be possible to talk about Colombian refugees as a single, homogenous group. Additionally, the variety of relationships to the conflict in their home country might also create mistrust between Colombians in New Zealand. Tomasa smiled when I asked her why she said that, and I also asked for an example. She said:

> *Not all I guess, but there are many Colombians, who are always judging you and want to know what other people are doing and raising their children . I do not want to say what I do and how I am raising my baby or the work I am doing because it is not their*

business. I do not want to tell them my story about why I came to New Zealand. I prefer to avoid them. (Tomasa)

Despite the threat of losing anonymity, Tomasa continues to balance her motherhood aspirations with her pursuit of positive acculturation and integration experiences. Specifically, Tomasa leverages social capital to negotiate and resist the patriarchal gender expectations, mothering practices and norms she knew she would more heavily contend with in Colombia. Her situation suggests that despite its benefits in mitigating the different tasks young Colombian refugee mothers have dealt with, social capital has its downsides, primarily because it helps perpetuate identity-based changes that potentially put young refugee mothers in conflict with the wider Colombian community. The encountering task emphasised the advantage that connections can bring to young mothers and their practices. The eagerness to benefit from the "advantage" of social capital, however, overlooks the fact that social bonds, bridges, and links may at times have unfavourable consequences for a young mother. In fact, social capital might produce social liability and these liabilities might serve to weaken a strong community of networks. Tomasa also mentioned:

So, I don't want to see Colombians and particularly men because they are the one who are expecting the woman to do everything. I remember I met a Colombian guy in my English course and immediately asked me why I was studying, that I should be at home looking after my baby. (Tomasa)

In Colombian society, women are usually expected to take on the traditional role of a housewife, of being a mother and followed mothering practices. If married, young women are expected to respect man's rules and adhere to it (Sanghera & Thapar-Bjorkert, 2017). Deviating from these norms can invite violent situations for young women and their children. Tomasa's experience speaks to how being a mother in a foreign country and not following their home country's traditional practices (such as being a housewife) affects their relationships with their communities, families, and society. These intrusive and unwelcome experiences with compatriots serve to reduce young refugee mothers' participation in community and encourage them to avoid socializing out of a desire to circumvent unwelcome interactions.

Mercedes, however, maintained not being able to meet Colombians yet but open to do it:

> *I do not mind meeting other Colombians as far as they are keen to help us, share their mothering experiences and interested in a genuine friendship. Not everyone is interested in making friends but interested in gossiping about things you do and those you do not. (Mercedes)*

This quote highlights how making friends, for Mercedes, represents some of the most important experiences related to connecting with her community. Some participants expressed that creating relationships with other Colombians already living in the country allowed them to start creating their first social networks. Constructing new networks creates a sense of trustworthiness for these young mothers, which they found to be critical in facing the prospect of motherhood. Hearing the experiences of other mothers was especially important as these conversations helped them feel a sense of calm. The opportunity to hear from other Colombian mothers about how they have experienced motherhood allowed the participants to feel prepared and develop trusting relationships with other young mothers with whom they were able to communicate in their first language. These mothers' experiences of '*encountering*' entailed a range of practices that built bonding social capital. The encountering task can therefore be understood as an asset for in acculturation and integration. However, encountering can be a burden in the mothers' lives when these encounters are with hostile or intrusive individuals.

Half of the participants noted that they looked forward to visitors sharing their experiences with them as the offered insights into the process of start over in a new country. These visitors told them about all the things they and their children will get while living in New Zealand. Visitors also shared information about where to go and what to do when in need of assistance. Participants were assured during the encounters that they would receive money every week. They also shared information like the possibility of creating groups for adults or children for any activity in which they might have a skill. To this, Maria recalled:

> *It has been complicated to be a solo mom with a little child, but I think I got a little bit useful information from the compatriots who visited us in Auckland, and it has helped me to understand more how everything works when you are a mother. The information they gave me has worked—for example, how to enrol my son in childcare. (Maria)*

Information shared by other Colombians provided the young mothers several ideas for engaging with community, family, friends, and support systems. They could create new social spaces that might contribute to their settlement in this country. Their first worry was to know what was involved when having a baby in New Zealand. They were open to using some of the strategies Colombians visiting them had been using while living in New Zealand.

Participants also highlighted how their new circumstances starkly differed from the fact that, in Colombia, a young pregnant woman in Colombia is never alone. Typically, a young pregnant woman can count on the support of family members and neighbours. Participants could not depend on a similar amount support and face their new mothering by themselves. This situation suggests that limited extended family support can impact a young woman's life. This limited support lends credence to the idea that Colombian mothers should come to New Zealand accompanied by at least a few close relatives, especially during the maternity period. In Colombian culture, members of the extended family are almost always nearby and everyone is constantly checking on each other. If young refugee mothers do not have a person to help them, this isolation may exacerbate feelings of sadness and loneliness. Correspondingly, participants identify friendships as a means of countering those expressions of sadness and loneliness. The focus on building relationships with fellow Colombians not only matches the young mothers' understanding of their culture, it affords them a sense of cultural self-esteem as they navigate other challenges associated with both motherhood and resettlement.

As highlighted, community support was available during the six weeks these young mothers spent at the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre. This support played a vital role in giving the participants confidence in knowing they will not need to cope with future difficulties alone. Conceptualising these forms of bonding and unbonding capital as encounters relates to the support a mother receives as she develops her identity, through mothering as practices and motherhood as discourses that inform what a mother is and can be.

5.2.3 Linking through the Red Cross and bridging through volunteers – Enhancing Colombian mothers' way of life.

After building social connections with Colombians and other communities, participants started building connections with organisations like the Red Cross, namely by attending workshops at the Mangere Centre. This form of connecting is the second way they get more accurate

information about what to do after the six week resettlement programme concludes. The ability to engage with people from the Red Cross in their first six weeks in New Zealand presented a clear pathway for young refugee mothers to respond to relocation challenges. These relationships further established social connections, allowing them to correspond with the organisation and its resettlement programme in their relocated setting. Those social connections are highly evident at community events in which the organisation provides activities for children and adults, in a concerted effort to offer levity and shoulder some of the burdens associated with resettlement:

> *So, when I arrived in Auckland, I was so worried and scared because I did not know what I was going to do here and what should I do to work and live the everyday. However, once the Red Cross told me not to worry, that everything was already sorted out, I started feeling relieved. It was the first time for me after I left Colombia that somebody was able to help me, honestly. (Maria)*

The help they received from the Red Cross made some of the participants feel relieved. Those young mothers felt they could utilise local services which would contribute to their engagement with the host society. However, other participants did not feel confident about requesting the Red Cross's assistance. Primarily, they were sceptical that an organisation would give them money without working:

> *When the Red Cross told me I would receive a weekly income to live here. I thought something terrible would happen to me and that they brought me to do bad things. I was pregnant. I thought they were going to take my baby and leave me alone. You know there is nothing for free. (Mercedes)*

A Colombian proverb often repeated in my interviews was: "*De eso tan bueno no dan tanto*" (Of that which is so good, they do not give much; or, there is no free lunch). The use of this proverb evidenced a collective feeling that none of the benefits afforded to young refugee mothers by the New Zealand government of charitable organizations could possibly be afforded to them for free. Mercedes held on to the fear that something terrible would happen to her in exchange for accepting benefits. All the participants carried with them the ravages of violence and the culture of fear that many Colombians walk with.

Those early encounters with other Colombians and people from the Red Cross started the process in which young refugee mothers built an initial understanding of New Zealand. Moreover, the connection with the Colombians helped them to gain a vital sense of security. The encountering task also expanded beyond and across boundaries. Participants sought a "home," and meeting fellow Colombians represented one avenue for constructing that familiarity creatively. As mothers, the participants looked for ways to reproduce their culture in their children in ways that to embraced their in-betweenness, be they La Kiwi or Kiwisitos. Sometimes this was a positive experience. At other times, it could be a burden. However, the journeys, challenges and decisions the young mothers made for children offer a sense of continuity in the lives of mother and child alike. At the end of six weeks at the Mangere Center, they all were relocated with their children to Hamilton, in the Waikato region of the North Island of New Zealand. There, another story began.

5.3 Task Two – Surveying-orienting (getting a sense of the physical, social and cultural context)

In this section, I describe the task participants experienced after the orientation programme and the conclusion of their stay at the Mangere Refugee Centre. Once settler, participants began coping with every day stressors and started developing a sense of the physical, social, and cultural nature of resettlement. The young mothers explored ways to raise their children in New Zealand while *surveying* the landscape and acquiring tools and strategies that contribute positively to their efforts to navigate motherhood amidst resettlement.

I have chosen the term "*surveying-orienting*" to describe how participants experienced their positions as new mothers navigating unfamiliar surroundings. Their first encounters in the Mangere Refugee Centre laid the path for them to move onto *surveying* their new resettlement location. Equipped with a sense of knowledge about how things work in New Zealand, the resettled mothers set about surveying their mothering activities and constructing their new identities as mothers.

Once relocated, the participants started cataloguing various goals and developing strategies to cope with and navigate everyday life. While in Auckland, they built a sense of security and confidence. In Hamilton, they found opportunities to survey themselves and their new environment. Upon arrival, they found that they were still supported for another eight weeks

by Red Cross volunteers. Participating mothers saw these services as integral in supporting their resettlement and eventual integration.

5.3.1 Meeting the locals – challenges and opportunities for young mothers to build bridging capital through the volunteers

After the orientation programme at the Mangere Refugee Centre, this study's participating mothers were relocated to Hamilton. They found that they would still have support from Red Cross through the volunteer refugee programme, where people from the community help them to integrate and enrol in institutions, like the health system, and Work and Income New Zealand. All the participants reported that one of their first points of entry into the local community was the Red Cross, who arrange for volunteers to assist and support refugees. This programme also represents one of the participants' first contacts with New Zealanders. Volunteers helped the young mothers to familiarise themselves with their surroundings, extend their networks, and build bridging capital. Before meeting the volunteers who assisted them with their resettlement pathways, participants had rarely met other New Zealanders because they generally did not go out. Some had never even seen a New Zealander, excluding the staff of the resettlement centre. Refugee support volunteers therefore provided opportunities for them to meet individuals outside of their usual networks. As Lucia notes:

> *Having volunteers in here* [Hamilton], *is kind of helping to build like a bridge who always make us feel good. (Lucia)*

The volunteers helped the participants interact with a broader range of people, as they usually introduced them to their families and friends. Importantly, participants gained a degree of familiarity with locals and an awareness of potential opportunities to work or study. While the volunteer programme only lasted for three months, it contributed to making the unfamiliar New Zealand environment familiar for the young mothers. In some cases, volunteers could speak Spanish because they studied it in New Zealand schools. As none of the participants had Kiwi friends before meeting the refugee support volunteers, the programme represented a new experience that proved ultimately beneficial. It also allowed them to interact directly with other young people from several cultures that were different from their own. Those participants who could speak Spanish with New Zealanders and meet their families, gaining valuable cultural insights about New Zealanders' families and homes. Those experiences were oftentimes

mutually beneficial, as volunteers could practice Spanish while the mothers grew more comfortable speaking English. Many participants reported that as a strategy they used to build informal social networks. To this, Pepa says:

> *Getting to know Kiwis has been the best experience ever! They have been such a great help, especially because some of them can speak Spanish. (Pepa)*

Furthermore, having contact with volunteers' family members represented the first opportunity some participants had to interact directly over a sustained period with people from a different culture. This finding suggests that connections with other New Zealanders, as mediated by the volunteers, developed the young mothers' sense of cultural awareness, ability to compromise, and instilled in them a respect for difference. Mercedes spoke about her experience as such:

> *I think I know how to talk to them now. When the teacher, my Kiwi teacher was with another student, and I came to talk to her simultaneously, she got angry. She told me I had to wait for her to finish with the other pupil. I felt terrible, but then the school principal told me I could not do that with Kiwi people, so I know now how to respect them. It is hard sometimes, you know; in Colombia, we are not that formal to talk between us. However, it is different here. (Mercedes)*

The quote above indicates that Mercedes learned New Zealanders prioritize a degree of formality in their interpersonal conversations, which differs from what she was accustomed to in Colombia. Many participants reported that misunderstanding cultural norms was a big challenge for which they were not wholly prepared in advance. A perceived inability to meet these challenges, in turn, affected young mothers' prospects of acculturation and integration. Some participants rarely reached out to New Zealanders due to the language barrier. They instead tried to enrol in English courses to learn more of the language before attempting to speak it with strangers or acquaintances. The young mothers put forth different reasons for not knowing English, but they usually tied their low levels of English language acquisition to the fact that they came from a non-English speaking country and the generally low level of education they received in Colombia.

Pregnant and arriving in Hamilton for the first time, Mercedes' experience of motherhood immersed her in a world of uncertainty, which was intensified by her feelings of isolation. As a young mother without a partner to help her, Mercedes had to confess how bad she felt not having someone else to help her while pregnant. Her solitude made her feel shy, which in turn made her feel scared and incapable of continuing. The pressure of being a young mother prevented her from finishing secondary studies in New Zealand and attending English classes for more than a year.

> *Because I was pregnant and I was due to have my baby, I could not study, so I did not learn basic English. I could not go to school because of the language either. That was frustrating, but I did take advantage of that situation. Once my baby was born, I started seeing the same neighbours and studying English from home. I could greet people, and then I met other mothers in the area, mostly Kiwis. I found that my child was the connection to build those relationships. (Mercedes)*

Here, *I did take advantage of that situation* highlights some of the different ways Mercedes constructed social capital to connect to other individuals through her experience of being a mother. These are discourses that these mothers have been developing precisely because of their experiences in motherhood. They are not the ones trying to conquer the world; they are just trying to convince themselves that they can overcome those situations for a better life for their children. They are making efforts to pursue their dream for their children to be secure, healthy, and educated. They are eager to use strategies that will allow them to raise their children as Kiwis. As Juana states:

> *I want my daughter to grow up as a Kiwi, I mean it is much better because she is going to live here, she knows both languages now and can have a good life in New Zealand. We also have kiwi neighbours who are always looking after us, they love my daughter, and when it is her birthday, I always invite them to come and celebrate with us. We celebrate as Kiwis do, but the food is Colombian because that is how we have made friends (laughs). (Juana)*

Being a young mother with a refugee background in New Zealand often led to a stated desire to balance becoming a New Zealander while continuing to identify as Colombian. It is,

however, important to note that these identitarian struggles are motivated by the mothers' search to find better conditions for their children. Integrating into New Zealand society does not necessarily denote they forego being Colombians forever. Instead, all the young mothers reported that being between in two worlds constitutes only a temporary stage of their lives. Maria and Juana for example addressed this tension in the following ways:

> *We like the New Zealand culture. My son has made friends in the school and learnt how to play rugby. I had the opportunity to meet other mothers as well. I felt good because it is like you feel part of a place. (Maria)*

> *I arrived in New Zealand when I was fourteen years old. Even when it was not easy for me to get used to this culture, I tried to understand it, especially for my daughter because she was born here and she started meeting friends and getting used to this culture. (Juana)*

Notably, all the respondents had similar sentiments about trying to make friends with the locals. For the young mothers, settling in New Zealand with Colombian roots became a critical period of self-discovery that they embarked upon after *surveying* Hamilton's landscape. The motivation of a better life for their children may yet shift according to the different circumstances they encounter over the course of a lifetime.

5.3.2 Building new networks and relationships (other refugees and non-refugees) — Growing Colombian networks to overcome challenges

It struck me how frequently four mothers mentioned the importance of having friends from Colombia while surveying the landscape. These participants stated that growing their social networks was relevant because they helped them overcome certain difficulties associated with resettlement. The young mothers acknowledged that in Colombia, support from friends and family is different from the support they receive in New Zealand. Sometimes they found themselves out of their comfort zone while because everyone was trying to accommodate their constraints.

It is helpful to have Colombian friends who have been here before us. They already know how everything works, so it is good to have those kinds of friends. I think everyone has their issues, but still, they help. (Julieta)

For a Colombian, the term "helpful" can have several different connotations. As Julieta continued talking, she referred to generosity as a Colombian characteristic that involves other people supporting a person in need. In this study, the participants felt supported at first because they met fellow Colombians at the resettlement centre who could speak Spanish and understand them. These initial connections gave the young women confidence to approach those new acquaintances if they needed assistance.

Some of participants therefore felt a need to build a Colombian network first. Once relocated to Hamilton, there were two strategies the participants used to grow their Colombian networks. One was reaching out to Colombians based on their previous connections. The other way was to attend organised events in which Colombian refugees could socialise. For the participants, there was an emphasis on relationships based on people they met when they arrived in Auckland. Mostly, their current Colombian friends are the ones they met at those early stages. Others were introduced to them by their previous contacts. Some participants were very interested in engaging with the Colombian community in Hamilton, which provided them with a feeling of being at "home":

When we arrived in Hamilton, we started meeting other Colombian refugees. People in Auckland talked to us about them, so we contacted them once we arrived in Hamilton. They invited us to all the festivities, to dance cumbia, salsa, merengue, to share meals. They were always checking on us, and if we needed anything, they were still keen to help. They told us what to do if we need to go to the doctor or if we want to study or where to buy cheap food. I did enjoy meeting them because I felt at home. I liked being with them because I could speak Spanish. They were like another family to us. (Lucia)

When we celebrate together, everything is lovely, we play Colombian music, and all the girls and children start dancing. Like in my city, Popayan (a city in Southwestern Colombia), I feel like in my town. I feel as if I was there for a while. It is wonderful. It is an opportunity to transmit our culture to our children. I feel like I was with my family

because most people that go to the events are Colombians. Some Kiwis go too, but not too many. (Juana)

Lucia's reflection, *"I felt at home"* demonstrate how she continues to value closeness to family. Feeling like having *"another family"* enables young mothers to maintain familiar relations and share cultural practices. Such networks thus play a significant role in the resettlement process. Several young mothers indicated that it would be the family's responsibility to look after them after delivering a baby. Without family help, they might get worried about who can look after their babies or help them take a shower, for example. The primacy of family in the young mother's cultural identity thus helps to explain why some participants felt compelled to recreate similar bonds upon arrival in Hamilton.

5.3.3 Becoming familiar with the community to build networks

I have mentioned previously that some of the young mothers who resettled in Hamilton choose to stick with the Colombian friends who visited them in the resettlement centre, as they were the ones who first offered them the information they needed in Spanish. However, through their stories, I realised that once the young mothers became more familiar with other individuals and knew more details about how being a mother works in New Zealand, they often felt brave enough to build new spaces with others in Colombian community. They even started organising events through organisations like the Red Cross. These events, in turn, helped the young women and their children to pursue leisure while sharing their skills and mothering practices with others. I remember one of the participants answering my question about what events and activities she participated in with Colombian people. With a smile, she replied:

I was so happy when one of the Red Cross caseworkers offered me the idea of opening a group to organise Colombians' events for new mothers. I was keen to do it because I know how essential it is to have that kind of support around you. So, I started creating events for the young Colombian community, especially to celebrate our festivities, share our heritage and listen to other new mothers' journey. For example, I made a Colombian group where young mothers went to learn how to knit. They were doing ponytails and knitting clothes for their babies. (Maria)

This quote suggests that Maria wanted to grow her friendship network by inviting young mothers living in New Zealand to join. Although this interest might have been a strategy to

increase her connections, it can also be seen as a way of giving back for what she has received, in addition to creating a source of income for her and the other Colombians who were part of the workshop she led. In Colombia, underprivileged people commonly set up small businesses to earn money for their daily expenses, particularly single mothers. Knowing a skill provides young mothers with a tool to earn money as well as a motivation to knit outfits for their children. In Colombia, many entrepreneurial people, including Indigenous people and young women, learn to make and sell handmade artisan crafts or accessories. This experience informed the young mothers' efforts to both earn and save money, as they were keen to knit everything from stunning handwoven sweaters to unique beanies and woollen ponchos both for their children and for sale. This was particularly pronounced in Juana's case, as she participated in all of the national heritage festivities and knitted with enthusiasm. All the while, she had been blending Colombian and New Zealand cultures, celebrating both while making sense of what it meant to belong to both cultures. While she was telling me her story, I also asked her about her participation with the Colombian community after she relocated to Hamilton:

> *Some Colombians living in Hamilton like to celebrate our country's independence. We usually celebrate in the central park garden because it is also an opportunity for the children to play. Many Colombians and people from other nationalities join us because we also have a food market. I love this time. We play and dance Colombian music. **I feel like… If I were there, in my country for a while. I think I am at home**. (Juana)*

As a mother, Juana spent her first year in Hamilton looking after her child, doing household chores, living day-to-day, and working as a cleaner in a school. As December is an important month for Colombians because of the national celebrations, she looked for ways to get involved and the Red Cross served as a bridge to those new networks. Colombians are expected to exhibited strong patriotism and to celebrate national holidays wherever they are. During this surveying-orienting task, where they were gaining a sense of belonging to New Zealand, and expressing discourses of motherhood, they used their culture to negotiate with the host culture. *"I feel like… if I were there for a while. I think I am at home"* suggests that during this surveying-orienting task, Juana became accustomed to her sense of being "in-between" two worlds, navigating differing cultures, structures, behaviours, attitudes, and environments. The sense of being in two worlds describes their young refugee mothers' gradual process of change.

That is, achieving acculturation and beginning to feel at home consists of bridging disparate cultural, social, educational and psychological from both their old and new homes.

Many of the young mothers commented on how getting involved in New Zealand culture is not only a challenge but an opportunity for them to be closer to their children. Some of the challenges emerge out of the fact that their children will be born and raised with New Zealand customs while the mothers themselves continue speaking Spanish and following certain Colombian mothering practices:

> *Nobody in my family can fully speak and understand the language, only my daughter. Moreover, she can also speak Spanish. I am making an effort to speak English correctly. I am studying full time now because she sometimes talks with Kiwi slang, and even when I understand, sometimes I misunderstood the context of the word. So, I want to know what she is talking about and what she does at school. **I want to be able to engage with their friends' parents fully**, so I have to understand this culture too fully. (Pepa)*

The aspiration to "engage with their friends' parents fully" gives us a notion of some mothers' efforts to fit in their children's world. It does not mean they want to do it, rather, they view it as essential for understanding their children's experiences in New Zealand. The next section explores how fitting into their children's world also creates tools for the participants to build new networks and engage in their new society. Trying to integrate through their children's eyes is also a way to reconcile with their past, as it presents new approaches to parenting.

5.3.4   Belonging and reciprocity in motherhood times – committed friendships and giving back what has been received; a show of compassion and mutual social support

Getting to know many people during this process of *surveying the landscape* has been a journey for the young mothers who were eager to become familiar with the community to build their networks and reinforce them with a sense of belonging. Most of the participants expressed how they received help and support during their resettlement process in Hamilton, particularly, while *surveying the landscape.* Half of them now want to be grateful and repay the community with the use of their skills and to help new arrivals overcome the encountering task faster. When I asked the young mothers about what events or activities they participated in with

friends, neighbours, and other people, they described creating groups to meet others and securing stalls in local markets to sell Colombian treats and food. These kinds of activities have changed the participants' viewpoints about being in New Zealand. The young mothers were happy to tell me how and why they started these events:

When I arrived the first time, many people helped me with my son. Every time we needed something, friends from Colombia, some kiwi neighbours and friends from school offered their help. Now the Red Cross invited me to do a Zumba class, and I happily accepted it. They need me to do this and any other thing I will do because I want to be grateful. I want to give them back what I received. It is also an excellent chance to meet other people as the place is always full though. (Maria)

When it is Christmas time, I like to organise a celebration for the Colombian community in Hamilton to thank them for all their support. For example, the day of the little candles "las velitas"(traditional holidays in Colombia). *I make the farolitos* (paper lanterns) *for families, especially those with children. I did the same on 20 July (Colombian's Independence Day) because I know it is not easy to be a solo mom. They also helped when I was for the first time in Hamilton. We celebrate that in Central Park. All Colombians go, refugees and no refugee people join us. It is beautiful; we play Colombian music and dance. When that happens, I feel in my hometown* (Popayan). *I think I have found Colombia in New Zealand. (Juana)*

Their responses evince a burgeoning sense of belonging and reciprocity that came out of participants' involvement in the local community. This kind of belonging is further fostered by committed relationships with friends, family members, people from other nationalities, refugees, and non-refugees.

Some of the participants valued spending time with close Colombian friends and family, which enabled them to share cultural practices like "dia de las velitas" (or "Little candles day") and maintain usual patterns of networks. *"I think I have found Colombia in New Zealand"* highlights the notion of relationships built during participants' stay in this country, which has played an important role in them feeling "at home." For example, most of the participants pointed out that traditionally celebrating their national festivities is a way for families in Colombia to have precious time together and receive a blessing to celebrate those events.

Without celebrating "*dia de las velitas*" for example, the young people do not get the blessing from family to continue with the year ahead. *Día de las velitas* is one of Colombia's most recognised and traditional celebrations. On December 7, it is celebrated on the brink of the Immaculate Conception, a Catholic holiday that honours the Virgin Mary. This day has taken on additional significance as unofficial start of the Christmas season in Colombia. On that night, many people place candles and paper lanterns on streets, sidewalks, balconies, parks. They put them everywhere so they can be seen as grateful for the Immaculate Conception. There are also many celebrations including fireworks and shows throughout the holidays.

Young mothers' efforts to establish relationships with Colombian and non-Colombian communities provide them opportunities for beneficial social experiences in their new country. Many of the participants noted the importance of appreciating what both New Zealand and their the fellow Colombians have done for them. To do this, they willingly help others and create spaces to entertain all communities. They reciprocated the actions of the Colombian visitors who welcomed them at the Mangere Refugee Centre and started welcoming new compatriots, especially those with children.

Reciprocity was an important aspect of the participants' experiences, as participating in the community becomes a two-way activity for the young mothers. That is, the act of participating in community activities also required participants to think of novel ideas for getting more involved and offering up their skills. This reciprocated trust extends to young mothers relationships with people from other communities, whose friendships they often valued as much those with other Colombians. These relationships, built on reciprocated trust also helps them to develop the confidence to pursue even more relationships, even in spite of their limited English language skills:

> *I have some Kiwi friends I like to get along with because I can trust them. They are sincere, like us. They are the one who is always giving me ideas to go and participate in the markets and other activities in Hamilton. They say that because I am learning English and want to practice their Spanish; then it is fair. My Colombian friends are the same; that is why I want them as friends forever. They can help me out. (Juana)*

Juana's quote highlights the possibilities of how different people can work together. There is an exchange of help and knowledge that allows the participants to sustain their friendships. Simple words like, *"go and participate in the markets"* shows how the young mothers put their

agency into action. These experiences contribute to the participants' practice of being socially engaged in their mothering practices rather than remaining alone.

However, just because some of the participants made contact with other communities did not necessarily mean their *surveying* journey would be pleasant. The other half of the young mothers were struggling with building networks. They were complaining about the language, cultural practices in the country, ways of living, or needed to find new ways to make friends. One of the participants said:

> To be honest, I am not particularly eager to go out to nightclubs. I do not have many friends, just a couple of friends, so I make sure that I can hang out only with them and not with strange people I meet outside. I have also found out that making friends in New Zealand is not like in other countries. (Tomasa)

I can remember Tomasa's sighs when asking about her participation in the community. She answered these questions while staring at the floor. She was the youngest of the participants I interviewed and was not willing to build networks with Colombians. However, she might be seen as rude by other Colombians. Maintaining her distance seemed to serve as a kind of protection and safety for her, as Colombians were the ones who made her flee her country and obliged her to cope with the new way of living as a refugee in a foreign and unrecognisable country.

Unintended experiences were also key parts of each participant's journey. As we can read from their experiences, some of them tried to fit in the New Zealand society by building relationships through their own culture. Others tried to make friends with other refugees, mainly because they thought those people might have similar experiences. However, they realised that even when they came from a refugee background, there were still differences that made it hard to continue with certain friendships, such as culture, language, food, mothering practices, and motherhood discourses.

The participants reflected how they felt when trying to manage their friendships to settle in the country, learn a new language, and understand local customs. Given the vast diversity in New Zealand, participants still found it difficult to comfortably fit into a particular niche of society. Indeed, they encountered a variety of challenges related to social expectations and language barriers, even when interacting with other Colombians. These challenges inhibit their ability to pursue their aspirations and limit their feelings of belonging in New Zealand.

Sometimes, participants face these difficulties in learning English because of various conditions related to their background. Participants' oft-cited inability to speak fluent English is not only a consequence of the fact that they come from a non-speaking English country; it is often because they come from the most underprivileged part of Colombia, where residents seldom have the chance to finish high school. While these refugees might find difficulty fitting in to a foreign country, they did not experience widespread acceptance in their own country. Knowing the culture, speaking Spanish, dressing like Colombians, and eating like Colombians was not enough for them to be safe and have decent housing. Living in their own country did not guarantee they would get primary education, food, a home, employment, or a career. Some participants reported that living in Colombia only contributed to their insecurity, decreased their aspirations, and made them vulnerable. These participants fled the country without even knowing proficient Spanish. They only knew what they learnt from their grandparents and parents, many of whom were not formally educated people. The issue cannot be reduced to their positionality as refugees in a foreign country trying to settle down and learn English. Young Colombian refugee mothers are also facing psychological trauma associated with trying to fit into a new society with a new language and different mothering practices while coming from one that lacked access to basic needs like safety and primary education.

In Colombia, standards for foreign language teaching are poorly structured, especially in rural communities that do not have dependable access to formal schooling. In many cases, only those who have enough money can attend private schools and language institutes to learn English. Participants may therefore see the necessity of participating in new networks, as these can help them to gain access to social resources, support, and opportunities to practice English (Portes, 1998). In order to achieve this, many of this study's young mothers proceed to the next task of navigating resettlement. The next section will explain how the navigation process meditates young mothers interaction and participation experiences in New Zealand, in addition to those of their children.

5.4 Task Three -- Navigating

In the previous section, I explored how the task of *surveying the landscape* became an important part of the journey of the mothers' resettlement in Hamilton, New Zealand. In this section, I aim to show how the experience of being a mother, the influence of motherhood discourses, and participants' approaches to mothering practices all play a role in the ways

young women navigate their social interactions and participation in New Zealand. *Navigating* refers to forms of social capital where various combinations of bonding, bridging and linking capital determine whether opportunities can emerge from individuals working together (Woolcock, 1998). For this study, the task of *Navigating* is defined as planning and directing the course of being a new mother, particularly by using instruments such as their strategies of maintaining and sustaining relationships while allowing others to fade over time. *Navigating*, for these young women, also means physically travelling through their resettlement country, which they sometimes found difficult. Yet at other times, as the following analyses hope to show, participants find themselves eager to face new challenges.

5.4.1 Compiling a set of strategies for coping with every day and navigating life

The experience of meeting Colombian people in the first six weeks allowed them to feel confident and open their minds about the possibilities of getting involved in their new community in Hamilton.

The chance they had to hear about other young refugee Colombian mothers' experiences created a sense of encouragement, even when they were forced to flee Colombia and look for refuge. These encounters allowed them to pursue dreams for the future of their children, even if they might not be achievable at the present moment. The participants' interest in making friends was first centred on how well those relationships might help them to move through their resettlement stage as young mothers, how to face childrearing in New Zealand, and strategies for reducing homesickness:

> *I was so sad when I arrived with my baby, but a friend I met here in Hamilton has* **helped me not miss my home** *too much, to feel happy and comfortable here. She speaks Spanish, and she teaches me how to do massages to work doing that. I want to explore new things. I want to feel happy to look after myself and my son, and -why not- earn some income. (Maria)*

> *Being in this country has created anxiety and a sense of homesickness. When I realised Hamilton was so quiet and small, it makes me feel sad. Nobody to talk to initially but getting in contact with other Colombians makes me feel better and more confident. I am feeling better now,* **I am not alone.** *(Carmen)*

It is important to remember that even when the participants faced persecution and threats of violence in Colombia, it was not in their plans to leave their homeland or start a new life in a different country. Now resettled, they attempt to cope with traumatic and stressful circumstances, including those imposed on them by fellow Colombians. Over time, participants began to understand the New Zealand system. Here, "*helped me not to miss home*" highlights aspects of building trustworthy relationships through meeting with compatriots. As we can see, exploring those interactions allowed the participants to engage in their communities, which further helped assure them of networks of support.

When participants share feelings of support, such as "*They offered to help me and guided me finding a midwife,*" we can see how receiving assistance from other Colombians reduces their feelings of anxiety and provides them a sense of security. This security helps them continue the resettlement process, as the information provided contributes to their emotional development. Furthermore, participants find that receiving guidance on finding a midwife is essential considering the situation in which these young women find themselves. Even though they may feel alone, the pregnancy process compounds existing difficulties associated with resettlement. As mothers, their mentality has changed so that much of their actions and aspirations revolve around the well-being of their children. Most of the young mothers in this study identified their main priority as securing support throughout pregnancy and during labour, followed by receiving help with postnatal care.

This sentiment is intimated when Carmen says "*I am not alone,*" which points that a crucial source of bonding capital is the sense of belonging which participants gained when they met other Colombians. Coping with everyday life brings both challenges and chances to maintain relationships with the Colombian community and receive general assistance. Meeting their community, especially during the *surveying* task, provides confidence and support while adjusting to an unfamiliar environment.

Although there were opportunities to build their support systems, the young mothers also encountered significant barriers that prevented them from networking in their new country, such as not understanding cultural differences. This limitation came at a cost to them, as many participants offered their friendship to people against their preferences. Still, they pursued these connections in order to secure opportunities for their children. When interviewing all of the

young mothers and asking them about their networks, most of them mentioned that there were people with whom they did not engage because of the cultural differences. Some of those differences include preferences regarding clothing, food, or their practices and beliefs. Still, participants reported that these experiences were useful for gathering information about how to live in New Zealand:

> *You know, there are some "friends" that I keep in contact with because I am getting useful information from them. However, **I do not want to be their friend for long,** I do not want to have Colombian friends because they don't like my accent. I am from the coast, so the way I dress is judged by them because they say that's not adequate for the male population. So, I want real friends, real relationships. (Tomasa)*

Whilst navigating, young refugee mothers encounter circumstances in which their feelings of longing and homesickness increase. Missing their families, their farms, and the routines of their former lives was a common concern reported by participants. Theirs were lives full of fear, violence and judgment. Still, they miss it. They miss the way they were and are struggling to face the way they are now.

5.4.2 Exploring the link – Enhancing the relevance of bonding and bridging while developing linking with organisations

Another significant challenge for the participants lay in developing social networks that enable them to benefit from government services and other institutions. This section explores participants' experiences of enhancing their bonding and bridging capital while exploring ways to increase linking capital. Governmental and non-governmental organisations are directly involved in the participants' resettlement journeys, primarily by offering orientation programmes, activities, and information on the education, health, and employment systems in New Zealand. As mentioned above, communal activities like cultural festivals and orientation programmes positively affected the resettlement process of young Colombian refugee mothers. The young mothers further suggested that they liked to learn from others. They also appreciated their networks of support, the chance to develop their culinary skills, and their ability participate in markets to sell their food. Even when the language was a barrier, it did not always stop them from adapting to this new culture. They often credited the Red Cross in New Zealand

for providing interpreters, because they enabled them to attend events and meet more people. Carmen noted:

> *I like going to meetings, local activities, and workshops run by the Red Cross because I can see other family members and meet new people, including Colombians experiencing a similar situation. It is a time for me to feel **relief** sharing our experiences of being a young mother. It is a beautiful moment. I went because it was like an announcement from the Colombian association group. (Carmen)*

Similarly, Maria reported that:

> *The Colombian association is always giving us useful information. For example, I participated in workshops led by the Red Cross; they run a workshop with young mothers in New Zealand to tell each other the challenges we face adjusting to a new culture. We realised we have been through the same experiences, laughed, enjoyed a lot, and became friends. I realised I was not alone, that I could talk and make new friends. It was real support between all the young mothers. Paco (son) and I enjoy going to cultural festivities where we can meet new people. We are so happy when that happens. Especially because Red cross invited us to an event where I did a Zumba class, it was so lovely; I loved that. (Maria)*

The young mothers were also supported by settlement centre in Waikato. Like its counterpart in Mangere, the centre provides support to migrants and refugees. Their support initiatives cover a range of services, including English language classes, translation, driver training, and legal advice. Three young mothers credited a refugee support volunteer for introducing them with the personnel in the centre. Lucia credits the Red Cross for her positive association with the resettlement centre:

> *I am not sure if the Red Cross offers the same support, but thanks to one of the volunteers who helped me in my resettlement process, I got to know about another institution who offers also help to people like me. The name is the settlement centre Waikato. I was keen to start learning how to drive. I went to the centre and they offered*

me driving coaching for two months. It was really helpful because I really needed to learn driving. (Lucia)

In this study, the young mothers used the support and information provided by the Red Cross to build relationships after the initial resettlement period. They highlight the strategic necessity of sharing their experiences and challenges with other people with the same background. As Carmen said, it is a "*relief*" for them to express themselves without being judged. The Red Cross became crucial for young mothers, as it provided a bridge between them and other people experiencing similar situations. Simultaneously, the Colombian association continued playing an important role in young mothers' efforts to build social capital.

"I realised I was not alone, that I could talk and make new friends" highlights how the young mothers felt supported and valued by organisations. For the participants, support always comes from various sources. These include the Colombian association in Hamilton, fellow Colombians, service providers like the Red Cross, the settlement centre and local people. In the absence of robust social networks, the participants relied on institutions or volunteers to help them apply for jobs, secure accommodations, enrol in academic institutions, find midwives, organise events for children in their community, and learn to drive. Participants in Hamilton often attested to how these organisations had been excellent sources of support for their journeys as they provided friendship, information and support:

> *Red Cross has been always there for us. For example, one day we, as an association, needed some printers to make copies for kid's activities, tents, and some stationary. They provided us with all of that. I also receive emails from them, offering me training courses. For example, last year, I did a first aid course where I could meet other Colombians. Another time they invited me to do a beauty course, so I had to go to Auckland. There, I met some Colombian refugees living in Auckland. They have been helpful for me; I learned a lot, and I have more friends now. (Pepa)*

> *Red Cross invited me to a conference on women's day. It was a surprise for me to see other Colombians there. Because we were teenagers, they had many activities for us, such as learning how to ride a bike, then we had a shared meal, played many outdoor*

games, and had the chance to meet other young Colombian mothers with whom I still
keep in touch. It was a happy day. (Mercedes)

In this study, two organisations linked the young mothers to the Colombian community in New Zealand while serving as their first point of connection to local New Zealanders. These agencies provided workshops, seminars, training, and other entertainment activities for refugees and, where applicable, their family members. This type of help allowed these young mothers to gain access to resources and services that helped them navigate mothering practices in the resettlement process.

5.4.3 Maintaining and sustaining relevant encounters – a chronological aspect of social capital

In the previous sections, I have explained how getting to know other Colombians, people from refugee and non-refugee backgrounds, and New Zealanders enabled the participants to experience their new country while building and extending their networks. Before their engagement with other cultures, participants had rarely interacted with other people, whom they generally avoided due to the language barrier. Some had never spoken to people from other cultures, even to say hello. However, their efforts to build on networks generated by and for the young mothers through community groups, English classes, and volunteer programmes from the Red Cross had significant benefits in easing the experience of resettling in New Zealand as a refugee and as a young mother.

This section explores how maintaining and sustaining relevant relationships may enable the participants to develop their confidence to extend their social connections beyond those familiar to them. Those networks further allowed the young mothers to engage in ongoing relationship building, as weak ties grew into long-term resources and support systems the young mothers could access. For many young mothers, the tasks they developed in creating their connections have become a way of life. The tasks are their ways of meeting people and maintaining long-term relationships. Those networks also worked as support systems and even constitutive elements in these young Colombian mothers' cultural, social, and economic lives. To illustrate the strategies young mothers used to engage with their new environs, I include the following quote from Maria, who spoke about how meeting other Colombians early in her journey helped her grow her network and community:

*Thanks to the people I met when I came for the first time to New Zealand, I could know more about the Colombian association in Hamilton. I could apply to be the Secretariat of the association as a way for me to be involved with the Colombian community. When I got the position, I started meeting more Colombians and **created a dancing group for the children.** It allows me to feel part of the community. (Maria)*

Maria stresses the importance of maintaining connections to strengthen her and her child's relationship with other Colombians with whom she works and in establishing trust in her community. The participants began creating sub-clusters, such as the dancing group, in order to get acquainted with the community while keep some of their cultural practices alive. When Maria said, "It allows me to feel part of the community" she suggests that broader opportunities exist for young mothers to feel create a sense of belonging amongst other Colombians in Hamilton.

When the young mothers started to meet more Colombians, they often found that they had access to resources that could help them feel culturally validated. For example, Maria was the founder of the dancing group in which other mothers participated with their children to enjoy a time together and share experiences. The group, which was named 'Topazaraya', offered a space of fun for young Colombian refugee mothers with children born or raised in New Zealand. According to Maria, 'Topazaraya' means the constant encounter with rhythm and joy. Dancing activities, especially for the children, include drama and learning Colombian culture practices through their mothers' knowledge. The children who attend the activities are between the ages of 0 to 14 years old. When they have a performance ready, they take opportunities to showcase their talent in national festivities for Colombians and other Latinos celebrating around New Zealand. These occasions help "La Kiwi" navigate discourses of motherhood. Those celebrations and the participants' engagement have moreover changed the way they see life:

This dancing group has changed my son's life and my one, and the way we see things. I am a much more open person; I mean not shaped like an entirely Colombian. My son, for his part, want to participate in Kiwi sports and celebrations as well. (Maria)

These experiences were related to the Colombian association in Hamilton, the Red Cross community, and various education settings, where social relations were undertaken and linked to their coping strategies. *"I am a much more open person"* relates to how experiencing new things has shaped Maria's new identity as a young mother from a refugee background. This new self is not the same as the one she constructed back home. The young mothers also mentioned that they now recognise specific identity markers belonging to both New Zealand and Colombia. Indeed, many of the young women considered themselves to be equally Colombians and New Zealanders:

> *I was born in Colombia, you know, but I like my life here. I feel like a New Zealander, too. (Tomasa)*

What Tomasa says indicates that her identity reformulations might not necessarily be associated with her distancing herself from her old identity. Such reformulations might result from complicated identity negotiations shaped mainly by the efforts of young mothers and their children to navigate the in-betweenness of their respective New Zealand-Colombian identities. In the long term, young mothers' constant interactions with the local culture (particularly through their children) has forced them to have to acculturate into New Zealand society. Tomasa, for example, has learned to speak almost perfect English, peppered with local idioms and colloquialism. Tomasa also feels that calling her "La Kiwi" is a compliment rather than an insult. Maria, however, has become a "La Kiwi" through the eyes of her son. She, like all the mothers in this study, was not prepared for such significant changes. However, her son's development and performance in school and sports made her come to love the country and its people.

> *My son loves sports and school, he is a good student and a great footballer. I feel really happy of the life we have here in New Zealand (Maria)*

We can begin to more deeply understand these mothers' actions as living in a stage of hybridity, indicating a position of in-betweenness. The young mothers' experiences can also describe the general permeability of cultural boundaries. The navigating journey explains how these participants face the complexities of living in a new world and how those factors form the motherhood discourses these young mothers bring with them about home, culture, and what is means to belong to a place.

These mothers' experiences have involved renegotiating a new life in New Zealand while sustaining relationships that can support them when needed. Participants have also drawn upon a range of symbolic and material resources to assist them in this process. The maintenance of cultural values, language, and practices, all contribute to a sense of cultural identification. Mercedes comments that having Colombian friends around also help alleviate her homesickness:

> *I love my culture. I want to keep my mother's tradition and culture back at home. To maintain some friends, I usually invite them to my place, cook Colombian food, party, and have fun. We also listen to music while talking. In summer, for example, we plan to go camping, it is only a small group of five mothers with little kids, but it is also time for us to have fun and enjoy New Zealand. We can speak Spanish, so I feel I do not miss Colombia anymore. I think this is my home. (Mercedes)*

Mercedes's quote explains why some mothers have found engaging with friends while living in New Zealand to be important. She explains that these activities sustain her relationships with others while providing for moments of leisure: "It is also a time for us to have fun and enjoy New Zealand" shows how she shares an emotional connection with other participants in Hamilton. They have found a mutual kinship as mothers, speaking the same language, being Colombians, and having a refugee background. They show how similar characteristics strengthen networks. With time, those networks reinforce individual life choices and help refugee mothers find support during different stages of their resettlement journeys. Understanding their new position in New Zealand can also offer opportunities for young refugee mothers to gain a sense of belonging. Feeling that their new country is their home can also mean that over time, young refugee mother may experience a diminishing Colombian identity, and that their new identities might have been constructed to suit prevailing norms in New Zealand. This sentiment was captured when Mercedes´ spoke of gaining a sense of belonging while reconfiguring her understanding of what it means to be a Colombian mother, which is never fixed but always changing.

Julieta similarly commented about the process of renegotiating a new life in order to better enjoy her role as a mother. She noted:

Most of my friends I met through other Colombian friends are also mothers, so it is easier for me to hang out with them or plan vacations with them. For example, one summer we were on holiday for two weeks, we rented a house with a pool in a rural area in Northland, and we all stayed there. All of us are the same age, so we could talk in Spanish, enjoy some Colombian food and the children could play with each other. When we are not together, we call each other, and on weekends we always meet in one of our houses or any place we agree to go. In another opportunity, we rented a boat, and all of us went to Taupo. We also meet on the beach when it is summertime and do a BBQ. I enjoy too much meeting them. (Julieta)

Some of the participants have continued embrace Colombian culture by maintaining their original identities. Some participants also referred to the aspects they liked about being with other Colombians, in which the idea of engagement helps consolidate relationships. Sustaining relationships with other compatriots helps reduce the stress associated with being accepted despite increasing levels of English fluency. Whether from refugee or non-refugee backgrounds, strong and long-lasting relationships are a significant type of social support. In the participants' cases, new community connections could come through formal channels such as the Red Cross sessions or programmes housed in the Mangere Refugee Resettlement Centre. Regardless of their impetus, the building of networks and support systems is instrumental to positive integration experiences as they help participants imagine the possibility of creating a strong connection with a wide variety of communities in the life ahead.

5.5 Summary

This chapter reported some of the findings and insights that emerged out of my interviews with eight young mothers in order to explore how young Colombian mothers navigated the resettlement process in New Zealand for them and for their children. The chapter aimed to describe the social connections participants formed by "tasks" that they created during their resettlement journey with their children. I also showed how young mothers used their social capital to navigate the early stages of their motherhood in New Zealand.

The interviews identified three important themes. I began with "encountering (or early encounters)" which described participants resettlement experiences in their initial interactions

with institutional entities and staff in New Zealand. Next, I discussed "Surveying-orienting the landscape", which outlined young mothers' experiences of coping with the everyday and getting a sense of the physical, social, and cultural nature. Finally, "Navigating: strategic in-betweenness" discussed how cultural values and the experience of mothering a New Zealand-born child play a role in the ways that young mothers construct their identities and navigate different forms of social capital (bonding, bridging, and linking) as they managed their connections with the community, society, and several institutions.

These findings contribute to our understanding of the factors, including the role of social capital in facilitating young mothers' integration in New Zealand, as well its role in building new relationships. I showed some of the ways in which bonding, bridging, and linking capital were alternately beneficial and challenging during young refugee mothers' resettlement journeys. I then introduced three tasks to show how young mothers made use of their social capital. The findings indicated that the various forms of social capital utilized during each task enabled participants to build their own pathways toward resettlement and the negotiation of motherhood. The findings also represented a way to address some of the challenges young mothers faced as they began to enter motherhood amidst uncertain futures. The next chapter pulls together the young mothers' experiences to outline a conceptual framework for understanding their respective strategies for negotiating motherhood, navigating the process of mothering, and understanding discourses of motherhood as they coped with the difficulties of integration and acculturation in New Zealand.

CHAPTER 6: Negotiating motherhood and settlement – A conceptual framework

6.1 Introduction

The previous two chapters presented the findings from the interview data to illustrate different aspects of the young mothers' experiences of resettlement. Chapter 4 discussed the notions of *crossing the pond* and *raising Kiwisitos* to demonstrate the contextual, dynamic, and relational aspects of coming to New Zealand as a refugee and as a prospective mother. Chapter 5 used three tasks of *encountering, surveying-orienting* and *navigating* to illustrate the role of social capital in facilitating young Colombian mothers' experiences of integration and acculturation in New Zealand. The women's stories highlight both the maintenance and negotiation of cultural belonging in a settlement context. This chapter pulls together the young mothers' experiences of motherhood to develop an original conceptual framework for understanding how these young Colombian mothers with refugee backgrounds negotiated the process of mothering and navigated the discourses of motherhood whilst coping with the challenges of acculturation and integration.

Prior research on acculturation, social capital and integration provided valuable insights into the resettlement experience in this study. However, these approaches do not fully capture the dynamic and situational nuances of these young mothers' experiences as they craft a new life for themselves and their families. First, I interrogate the discourses of the 'good migrant' and 'good mother' to begin to understand the tensions and challenges they faced. I then present four typologies that showcase the mothers' actions and experiences to provide a more nuanced approach to theorise the dynamic, contextual, and relational aspects of the mothers' lives. As this is the final chapter of the thesis, I also present the important theoretical contributions that the thesis makes to different fields of study. I discuss the limitations of the research, including suggestions for further research, and recommendations for policies, programmes and practices related to the resettlement of refugees who are also young mothers. I conclude with a consideration of two supportive strategies that are currently enabling the young mothers to maintain their Colombian cultural ties while they build a new identity and look to a new horizon in their country of settlement.

I now explore how various representations of the 'good mother' and 'good migrant' influence the mothering experiences of young Colombian mothers. In the following section, I examine how social capital theory helps us understand how, during resettlement, many encounters are unexpected and fleeting but are sustained through horizontal relationships (bonding and bridging capital). I further explore how vertical relationships (through linking capital) provide a structural analysis to account for the ways in which community and institutional dynamics impact the mothers' resettlement. This is followed by the typology of four representations of motherhood that arises from my analysis and comprises my original contribution to the field.

6.2 Representations – The power of discourse in young mother's lives

Stuart Hall's (1997) work on representation provides a basis for understanding how motherhood practices, actions, and discourses are informed. "Representation is the production of meaning through language" (Hall, 1997). For Hall (1997, p.3), representation refers to the system that helps people make sense of world by delineating connections between individuals—things, events, ideas, objects, etc., and our conceptual map. Representation links language and meaning to culture. Representation is an important element of how meaning is exchanged and produced between individuals within wider social groupings. Hall (1997) also notes that culture relates to the exchange and production of meaning— the 'taking and giving of meaning'— between individuals within a group. Cultural meanings are not only found in the individuals' interpretations of what they think, they regulate and organise social practices, impact people's conduct and have practical and tangible outcomes (Hall, 1997). For example, as described in Chapter 4, "the Day of the Candles" is a cultural practice in the Colombian community. Colombians have given this day a meaning in which they celebrate not only the Catholic Immaculate Conception, but it also marks the unofficial start of the Colombian Christmas. Colombians celebrate this tradition, which informs what they feel and think about the opportunity of reuniting family. These feelings go on to take on broader cultural meanings that individuals integrate into their everyday practices.

In this chapter, I define discourse from a social constructivist standpoint and as a way of thinking that can be communicated through language. Discourse is also a social boundary that characterises what statements can be said about a topic (Fairclough, 2011). Fairclough developed a triad framework to analyse discourse, which involves:

- **interactions** (e.g., in my study, young mothers' connections with the new society),
- **social practices** (e.g., the experiences of being a new mother in a new context) and,
- **spoken or written text** (e.g., concepts of motherhood developed during the resettlement experiences) at the local, institutional and group levels.

The three elements illustrate the connections among certain social practices, texts, and interactions. These enable us to understand the structure and implications of discourse. Furthermore, this framework provides a way to interpret how and why social practices are changed, constituted, and transformed in the way they are (Fairclough, 2011).

A particular way to understand these dynamics is to explore how discourses inform their associated representations. According to Hall, discourses affect our views and actions. Within this, there are competing discourses, with some that are dominant and others that are less so (often referred to as *subjugated*). Within this framing, it is possible to see how discourses of motherhood are constructed and given meaning through representations informed by language and images. As Hall (1997, p. 16) notes, discourses are 'signifying practices' that serve three main purposes:

- **A system of representation** – the rules and practices that produce meaningful statements

- **A group of statements** – that provide a language for talking about a particular topic in a particular historical moment

- **The construction of the topic** – that governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully discussed, reasoned and engaged

Across these signifying practices, it becomes clear that discourse is not a closed-off system; it draws ideas from and into other discourses. Understanding discourse in this form does not depend on the traditional qualification between action and thought. It "…consists of the creation of knowledge through language. But it is itself created by a practice: *discursive practice*—the practice of making meaning" (Hall, 2006, p. 165). Because all social practices have meaning, all practices have a discursive dimension, or what Hall (2006) refers to as the practices of representation.

Within this study, two prevailing discourses affected participants' experiences of motherhood. These were especially evident when trying to understand their strategies for managing their interactions with the community, society, various institutions and their maintenance and negotiation of culture following their aspirations and hopes in a settlement context. I have labelled these two discourses as a broader New Zealand-oriented *good migrant* discourse and a more narrowly defined Colombia-oriented *good mother* discourse.

6.2.1 The good mother

The 'good mother' discourse refers to social practices and social arrangements related to parenting. These practices include the imposition use of rules, schedules, punishments, expectations, and rewards associated raising the children in a new context and operates beyond women's choices or belief systems (Goodwin & Huppatz, 2010). The 'good mother' discourse changes according to an individual's positionality within space and time and has many real-life effects. As Porter and Kelso (2006) indicate, "representations of motherhood and the associated expectations of mothers are in continuous change as they adjust to the changing socio-cultural context" (p. 12).

The 'good mother' discourse relates to the roles of the young women in this study. As McGannon et al. (2017) suggest, understanding and standards of the 'good mother' relate to the women often placing their family's needs before their own. Those needs impact how mothers engage in their communities and wider society due to the responsibilities and roles of being a new mother in a foreign country and with a refugee background. In Christian-influenced cultures, a 'good mother' has a representation frequently embodied in images of the Virgin Mary. Through these Catholic teachings, strong cultural beliefs about what constitutes a good mother in terms of mothering actions can be rigidly defined through gender. These discourses are particularly pressurised for the mothers in this study, who were often in their teenage years and unmarried. Thus, the pressure to conform to various good mother discourses when they are already on the periphery of what is deemed acceptable in their culture, sends powerful signals of how these women should raise their children and act as mothers. Furthermore, good mother discourses may also be anchored in the participants' personal experiences as children.

Patriarchal ideology also informs good mother discourse. Studies that examine motherhood representations for Latin Americans in Australia (Sha & Kirkman, 2009), Spain (Medina Bravo et al., 2013) and Argentina (Faur, 2014) show a strong patriarchal influence that portrays motherhood consistently with an understanding that society is organised to control women's behaviour such that it consolidates the power of men. Returning to the findings of Chapter 4, where Carmen experienced a gendered perspective of being a woman and unable to build connections because of her husband's influence to not speak with other Colombians, show a way of a man controlling a woman. Pringle (1995) notes that recognising the questionable nature of patriarchy and its usage has been reported as both mundane and representational magnified acceptance of the extent of male power. Gender norms in Colombia are patriarchal, where machismo is related to the representation of violent, dominant men as the protectors and breadwinners of the family (Flake & Forste, 2006). This portrayal contrasts with that of women, who are expected to be submissive and liable for familial and domestic responsibilities (World Organisation Against Torture, 2003). As mentioned in Chapter 4, one woman experienced a similar dynamic, where her husband did not like her to go out, especially with Colombians and other men. This can be attributed to patriarchal discourses in which men wish to control women (Hynes et al., 2016). These situations also highlighted the complicated relationships between patriarchal rules and community contexts, as the quality of close relationships was impacted by the ways in which women and men's interactions failed to correspond to those rules.

A study in Colombia about women's perceptions of gender normative behaviours with a displaced community of around 100 households found that gender rules regarding the care of the partner and household (such as having the house organised and clean, cooking, cheerfulness, and faithfulness in the relationship) was experienced by Colombian women. The displaced women also expressed that men were unwilling to let a woman go outside the house (Hynes et al., 2016). According to Hynes et al. (2016), a Colombian woman outside the household represents a transgression in many ways for men, as it represents being neglectful of her responsibilities to the family and home, as well as the potential of being unfaithful and gossiping with neighbours. This study suggests that women's perceptions of gender normative behaviours may be attributed to men's desire to control women. Returning to the findings in Chapter 4, this patriarchal system in Colombia highlights how complex the relationships between patriarchal gender rules can be and how women's and men's engagement failed to correspond to those rules impact the quality of couples' relationships. For instance,

displacement worsens interpersonal conflict, which might inform aggressive interpersonal behaviours (Human Rights Watch, 2012; Wirtz et al., 2014). In one instance, the partner of a young mother was expecting the mother not to talk with male friends. Young Colombian refugee mothers can be further threatened by men who feel disempowered by their lack of capacity to satisfy their breadwinner role, a representation that closely attached to constructs of masculinity. As mentioned in Chapter 2, these experiences from conflict and forced migration can also weaken women's social capital and structural systems, reinforcing unequal gender rules and discrimination because of displacement status, class and group. All these components may balance gains in women's empowerment (Hynes et al., 2016) and add to the notion of being a 'good mother.'

As already indicated, the good mother discourse is prevalent within a Colombian cultural context, but it is also powerfully constituted in New Zealand. In New Zealand, the definition of the good mother is heavily gendered and can define how women and men engage in parenting (Schmidt, 2008). It is mainly seen in mothers having 'choice' in areas such as infant traditions, values and customs. The good mother discourse entails mothers adjusting to and predicting children's necessities (Wall, 2005) and raising their children with beliefs in accordance with how the mothers were raised themselves. Of course, mothers who make decisions based on other ideas and follow other traditions are not necessarily represented as *bad* mothers. Still, the good mother discourse often involves exhortations to maintain home traditions and culture and was frequently cited by participants in my study. These sentiments are reflected in statements such as "Each decision I make is around my child" (Tomasa) and "I want to keep my mother's tradition and culture back home" (Mercedes).

Therefore, discourses are forms of thinking of, talking about, and representing a particular topic in ways that create meaningful and valued knowledge (Hall, 1992). This knowledge can be seen as how particular representations of motherhood are informed by dominant discourses. Dominant understandings are further shaped by language and images in any particular historical moment. Discourses empower the construction of a subject in a specific way that simultaneously restricts different constructions of a similar subject. Motherhood, as a form of discourse, evinces how participants expressed similar ways of negotiating dominant discourses of motherhood and coming to understand themselves as mothers. As an example of dominant discourses of motherhood, Verduzco (2011) explored how young mothers continued to be portrayed as bad mothers within Colombian and New Zealand sociocultural contexts. Those

dynamics are related to ideologies of motherhood that place all of the duties and blame for children's well-being on young mothers without considering young women's level of access to social and economic resources. Verduzco (2011) notes that even when mothers are able to embody the ideal of the good mother and gain respect from family and close friends, doing so reinforces the ideology that mothers can only be good if they are willing to sacrifice and work hard for their children. Returning to the findings in Chapter 4, when most of the young Colombian mothers experienced difficulties while mothering, they made a point to demonstrate their commitment to raising their children, yet were still judged to be 'La Kiwi' by other Colombians. The ideology of personal duties obfuscates social understanding of how privilege is transmitted and how social realities associated with race, class, and mothering in a foreign country make the labour of parenting more challenging.

I now turn to the construction of the 'good migrant' to explore how this framing also impacts the mothers' experiences. The combination of these two framings will then provide the basis of the presentation of four typologies of that I have devised that provide a conceptual mapping for theorising how young Colombian mothers navigate social relationships alongside their settlement experiences.

6.2.2 The good migrant

While the good mother discourse exhorts participants to pass down the values of their home country to their children, the *good migrant* discourse cautions the mothers to learn the practices and customs of the host country to achieve the financial goal of fulfilling a better future and intellectual growth, for themselves and their children alike. According to Collins and Bayliss (2020), the good migrant discourse is based on New Zealand's socio-cultural and economic context. The authors note that in New Zealand, a good migrant is considered to be a dutiful, loyal worker, reflecting human capital approaches that emphasise talent, skills, or economic attainment (Collins & Bayliss, 2020). This discourse is dominant both in terms of labour migration and migration in general (Findlay et al., 2013; Scott, 2013). The good migrant discourse also relates to the acculturation process and the orientation programmes the young mothers had to complete as part of their resettlement. Within the good migrant (Findlay et al., 2013) discourse, there is the expectation that a migrant is one that can contribute economically to their new country (MacKenzie & Forde, 2009). Good migrants are also seen to be self-

sufficient and upstanding (prospective) citizens. Good migrants are also expected to understand the host culture, speak the language, be able to navigate bureaucracies, and hold jobs (New Zealand Red Cross, 2021). These discourses underpin the orientation programme for refugee resettlement (see Chapter 2). During orientation, former refugees are connected to their community, introduced to new neighbours, connected to local services and taught how to navigate the local system. Studies on migration (Heineman, 2017; Collins & Bayliss, 2020) found that such discourses highlight the importance of migrants learning the host language and culture. In numerous instances in this study, the ability to speak English was portrayed as integral for gaining entrance into the labour market and being recognised by New Zealand citizens.

Findlay et al. (2013) claim that perceptions of good migrants involve "migrant's self-awareness concerning the vocabulary of employers" (p. 149). While the valuing of migrants is noticed in different continuums of desirability, the perception of being a good migrant (Findlay et al., 2013), good worker (Mackenzie & Forde, 2009), or good (possible) citizen (Anderson et al., 2011), are powerful discourses that encouraging migrants to make themselves credible, desirable, and legible. The construction of migrant identity becomes important, which in turn demonstrates how migration discourses inform daily assertions of agency and identity-management (Calhoun, 2017; Anderson, 2010). Returning to Chapter 1, the idea of the Refugee Resettlement Strategy is that people with refugee backgrounds are fully participating and integrated economically and socially in the new community so they can live independently. Certain discourses encourage them to exercise the same rights and perform the same duties as other New Zealanders. These ideas govern normative understandings of integration and exert pressure on young mothers to strive toward to ideal of the good migrant.

6.3 Four typologies of motherhood

In this section, I present four typologies that I have devised to explain and encapsulate the factors that influenced young Colombian mothers' acculturation and integration experiences as they resettled in New Zealand. I illuminate how the young Colombian mothers in my study shifted between various acculturation strategies (as per, Berry, 1990) and drew on different types of social capital (as per, Putnam, 2000) across the contextual, relational and dynamic aspects of their settlement experiences. Across these typologies, the notion of what constitutes

women as a 'good migrants' and 'good mothers' powerfully influences the associated shifts. These four representational typologies include beliefs and practices that relate to:

- *"Motherhood as cultural transmission"* – transmitting traditions from the young refugee mothers' country of origin to their children;

- *"Motherhood as protection"* – ensuring that their children are safe and thriving by adhering to particular protocols;

- *"Motherhood as cultural rupture"* — beliefs and practices of breaking with Colombian traditions and cultural norms; and

- *"Motherhood as personal development"* – aspirations and actions taken toward goals related to themselves and their children.

These four typologies illustrate different dimensions of what it means to be a mother and a refugee in a new resettlement country. Berry's acculturation framework has normative tendencies, whereas my typologies of motherhood provide a more dynamic perspective. They also provide a more nuanced understanding of integration and belonging. In the sections that follow, I discuss how the good migrant and good mother discourses influenced mothers' strategies and actions in relation to the four typologies.

6.3.1 Motherhood as cultural transmission

Mothers transmitting traditions from their country of origin to their children experience motherhood as cultural transmission (MCT). MCT can be seen as a strategy for maintaining cultural heritage. As per Berry's (1990) acculturation framework, these young mothers' acculturation strategies play an important role in influencing their efforts to transmit Colombian culture while in New Zealand. Their acculturation strategy was shaped by their social relations, their experiences, and the extent to which their cultural heritage is salient to them.

The mothers who reflected MCT appeared to have passed their values to their children through a form of imitative behaviour. Nevertheless, their experiences indicate that they still have a personal life alongside their mothering responsibilities. The young mothers in my study tried to preserve their culture as a way to help their children maintain contact and ties with family

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members back home. They did so by revisiting their cultural heritage as support for the emotional growth of their children. Those actions, including dancing to music from their country and maintaining contact with family members using the Spanish language, show a high sense of valuing Colombian culture and belonging to the mothers' native culture and language. Family connections are often seen as essential for nurturing and transmitting meaning-making. Stories, histories, and values of their culture are transferred to their children. In my study, data suggested that mothers transmitting their culture and customs to their children helped them draw on various social and cultural sources to negotiate being a mother in alignment with their new context. Examples of such actions include attending Colombian mothers' support groups, learning how fellow Colombians have raised children in New Zealand, and preserving practices and beliefs from their homeland.

While motherhood as cultural transmission could serve a protective role in the adaptation experiences of young mothers it, at times, proves problematic for family relations. Merry et al. (2017) note that when new migrants enter a new culturally-diverse social setting, they often face new parenting practices that differ from those they recognise and wish to maintain. These differences can lead to awkwardness and distress in parent-child relations. As a result, cultural transmission can sometimes contribute to disruptive parent-child interactions or relationships.

Additionally, MCT may also hinder the process of resettlement when limited opportunities for bridging social capital are present, which may affect young mothers' efforts to build new interactions while maintaining their cultural heritage. According to Pinquart and Silbereisen (2004), transmitting values is a two-way process between parents and children in which they may negotiate beliefs and principles, thus, concurrently modifying and keeping to the culture in which they live. The concern, however, is that the transmission process is more challenging when it happens in times of resettlement and rapid change, as the young mothers may feel stuck between trying to adopt new norms, values, and cultures whilst attempting to maintain those from home. The young mothers in this study sometimes equated cultural transmission with rejecting foreign and unfamiliar cultures. They oftentimes strengthened contact with family members back home, which provided them with a sense of belonging they wanted to transmit to their children. Yet, this belonging is predicated on what is known and gives rise to the rejection of the unknown.

The good mother discourse identified in a Colombian context and its exhortations to maintain the mothers' home traditions and culture clearly contributed to their efforts at cultural transmission. At times, however, the good mother discourse exists in tension with the good migrant discourse to create an experience of motherhood characterised by *cultural rupture*, in which diverging opinions, traditions, attitudes, or morals between their two different cultures are revealed. In this study, motherhood as cultural rupture is characterised by the young Colombian mothers trying to resettle into New Zealand society by raising their children with Kiwi customs and learning the language and cultural systems. In line with the good migrant discourse, which is identified in the wider social context, the mothers wanted their children to speak English (because it is the language of success) and to learn the host culture (as this knowledge will prevent them from being marginalised). As Berry et al. (2006) and Lee et al. (2020) note, adolescents from refugee backgrounds frequently negotiate between two cultures as a function of their daily existence. However, doing so may place them in danger of confronting acculturative stressors. These might emerge for different reasons, including learning new social codes, expectations and values, navigating unfamiliar social settings with limited direction from guardians, or encountering adverse treatment because of minoritised social or ethnic origins (Lee et al., 2020; Sirin et al., 2013). As mentioned in Chapter 2, Berry's (1990) framework offers four strategies that may be used to negotiate relationships between individuals' own culture and the wider society. The proposed typologies in my research address mothers as members and dynamic interactions with both the host and the home cultures. In this cultural transmission typology, the home society and the host society are neither opposed nor independent. Rather, they interact with the four typologies to create the dynamic experience of acculturation. These various typologies can create movement across the strategies that Berry identifies.

6.3.2 Motherhood as cultural rupture

While participants often engage in cultural transmission, motherhood as cultural rupture (MCR) describes how resettlement often pressures them disconnect from their native culture and language. These difficulties may be experienced by the mothers in the same day and in rapid succession. Within MCR typology, there might be mothers who want to leave behind their culture of origin so that their children have a better future and the best education in New Zealand, but also there are occasions in which they want to transmit their cultural heritage so their children may have the opportunity to create their own identities. As mentioned in Chapter

4, a mother described how not speaking Spanish to her child secures a better future for her child as they were born in New Zealand. Some young mothers tried to seek daily interaction with other cultural groups to shed their cultural traditions and be immersed in the dominant community. Young mothers' experiences of cultural rupture are constituted around the idea that children need to be raised with New Zealand customs and learn English as these characteristics will keep the children from being marginalised.

However, as Bayram-Özdemir et al. (2021) note, cultural ruptures driven by the good migrant discourse may coincide with experiences of cultural depreciation, which may encourage identity threats between young mothers and separate them from mainstream society. Overall, these young mothers seem to be building new identities for themselves and their children by exploring their cultural backgrounds and looking for their meaning. Returning to Chapter 4, in an example where the mothers created the name "Kiwisitos" for their children because they tried to mix both cultures. The mothers were also called "La Kiwi" by fellow Colombians who recognised the hybrid identity of these women. These actions suggest that refugee adjustment is a negotiation between and within cultures; new migrants bring practices, customs, and symbols from their culture while adopting new codes from the new culture. Additionally, motherhood as cultural rupture, protection, cultural transmission, and personal development are not incompatible; they are not independent of the context and can operate simultaneously.

Most young people from a refugee background need connections, resources, and social services to help them to re-define their identities. As Berry (1997) suggests, individuals may maintain their home identities while preserving relations and emerging identification with mainstream society. This cultural identity is considered a predictor of acculturation, as it indicates that an individual's sense of belonging to a specific culture and a feeling of attachment to a new way of life (Kim, 2006; Lee & Kang, 2011). For example, the young mothers in my study wanted their children to speak the language and raise them with the practices associated with being a New Zealander, which they saw as important consideration for their children's future.

Overall, *motherhood as cultural rupture* implies deficiency in existing cultural identity. This typology may be present only as a fleeting experience and may also relate to the three tasks, (see Chapter 4), which highlights the temporal aspects of this study. However, cultural rupture may not be adequate for theorizing the social development of children. As Huq et al. (2016)

and Supple et al. (2018) note, cultural clashes with caregivers can destabilise a child's sense of belonging and connection toward the origin of their culture. As Berry (1992) suggests,

> A personal change to become accustomed to the new environment (a form of the adjustment strategy of adaptation) is frequently the only realistic option. However, conforming to the interpretation that there is not just one adaptation strategy like adjustment, assimilation is not the only form of acculturation.

I therefore understand employing bonding, bridging, and linking capital, not as separate experiences but as experiences that rely on and relate to each other. The relationships between bonding, bridging, and linking social capital continue to play an important role in the reconstruction of the participants' lives in this research. It is understandable from this and other previous studies (e.g., Norris et al., 2008; Rowlands and Tan, 2008) that while bonding social capital offers one level of connection and security, it might not support wellbeing in challenging circumstances. Bonding capital helped these participants and their children in their new journey. However, the lack of community assets during resettlement left many young women hopeless and struggling to sustain their own and their children's lives.

In the theme of motherhood as cultural rupture, bridging social capital was especially important in daily activities and helped participants during their resettlement stage. Young mothers' efforts to build relationships outside of their communities helped them raise their Kiwisitos within the confines of the good mother discourse. Bridging capital also facilitated opportunities for the children to develop their own connections to wider society. The usefulness of bridging capital was specifically salient for participants who wanted to leave behind their culture and learn the new culture in this new setting. Assistance from Work and Income New Zealand represented another important sources of bridging social capital, which proved indispensable in the refugee resettlement process. As young mothers are new to their resettlement environments, they also expressed how the Red Cross introduced them to activities for children and educational services for learning English, culture, and local ways of life. These new migrants' integration experiences significantly affected the construction of their cultural identity. In other words, children become a way for the participants to feel part of their new culture. Such intentional experiences can encourage the formation of a coherent and clear identity (Gartner et al., 2014). However, unintended experiences, such as, cultural clashes, can

hinder young people's cultural identity formation – and this applies to both mothers and children alike.

6.3.3 Motherhood as protection

Motherhood as protection is the third typology. In examining the concept of mother-child security relationships, Ager and Strang (2008) researched the critical domains of integration. These theorists developed a conceptual model of integration by examining safety and stability as one of ten domains; with safety nominated as a facilitator of integration, alongside cultural knowledge and language (Ager & Strang, 2008; Strang & Ager, 2010). Safety is largely influenced by the *good mother* discourse, which sees mothers as adjusting and catering to the children's needs at the expense of their other interests. As Ager and Strang (2008) argue, the lack of safety inhibits integration. The young Colombian mothers in my study described how being away from home and having to look after a child alone has diminished their capacity to connect with other individuals and create new relationships. Because refugees have to resettle in new settings, relocation sometimes hinders their ability to build strong networks with the new community. Their acculturation strategy of separation also means that they are limited in their opportunities for education, employment, and networking in the new environment

Young mothers, who are charged with protecting their children often adhered to practices of motherhood as protection (MP). The young mothers in this study often perceived their children as vulnerable because of their cultural background and worried about their safety. Returning to Chapter 5 where I noted mothers' experiences of anxiety, I argue that the anxiety the mothers experienced concerning protecting their children is related to their worry about the resettlement process.

For the mothers in this study, it seems that the good migrant discourse dominated their acculturation strategies over time, especially when the good migrant discourse intersects with the good mother discourse of protection. Under the good migrant discourse, the purpose of the protection is to reduce children's future vulnerabilities and deal with the economic risks of individuals, communities, and households (Avato et al., 2010).

While the good migrant discourse may contribute to the young mothers' efforts to integrate into the host society, there also times in which this discourse may make mothers develop anxiety during resettlement. Such anxiety is associated with mothers realising the future social and economic pitfalls of maintaining their culture of origin at the expense of integration. Young mothers often worry that if they do not initiate conversations, build friendships, and express themselves, their children do not build social and cultural skills, which they fear will lead them to being bullied. Young mothers' anxieties related to protection, moreover, increased over time. Lichtensein and Puma (2019) note that refugees go through a surge in insecurity over time while resettling. This finding suggests that resettled refugees' sense of protection may change over time as they develop more social connections and come to know the new environment and society.

In resettlement settings, new and difficult experiences related to safety sometimes develop due to constant threat of discrimination and harassment (Phillimore, 2011). Such protective sentiments have been identified in research conducted among refugees, where many had a sense of feeling unprotected from living in new settings (Stathopoulou et al., 2019). Similarly, the mothers in my study verbalised their experiences of anxiety, explaining how their children came home from childcare and showed signs of not wanting to go again due to their negative experiences.

To be a good mother, the young women developed defence mechanisms for creating a safe environment for their children. They adopted Berry's (1995) strategy of *separation* to cope with their insecurity and to protect their children. Separation involves cultural maintenance, which means characteristics and cultural identity are maintained and valued, and participation and contact with the local community, including contact with people of other ethnicities, are avoided (Berry, 2005). Participants sometimes rejected relationships with New Zealanders and other ethnic groups in favour of maintaining cultural traditions as if they were in Colombia. The separation activities were all undertaken in pursuit of the child's protection. At other times, participants achieved a balance between building Kiwi networks and maintaining Colombian friends. They sometimes created new networks but maintained those they had back home to cultivate a sense of security for themselves and their children. In addition, the mothers often prioritised staying home with their children, playing with them, teaching them their culture, and calling relatives in their country of origin to avoid contact with strangers outside their home. Mothers who said they did not want their children to talk to strangers for fear of

something happening to them stated that the most important thing is that their children nurture relationships with their family members in their countries of origin. They also expressed hope that their children would speak the Spanish language to keep their roots. Limiting intercultural contact and maintaining cultural heritage are therefore prevalent in this discourse.

These separation strategies met the mothers' emotional needs, such as interacting and being loved by family members or others in the community. Although the young mothers limited their children's relationships with strangers, they cared about maintaining connections with their grandparents, uncles and cousins back home and tried to improve their relations with them. The participants described how maintaining contact with relatives back home allows them to develop the confidence to increase connections beyond those familiar to them and may facilitate them to gain bridging capital. It is probable that meeting and speaking Spanish with grandparents, cousins, uncles, and other relatives played a significant role in protecting the children. Weine et al. (2004) note that keeping contact with family members back home may have a protective effect on anxiety-inducing experiences for refugee people. Indeed, while in resettlement countries the participants maintained relationships with family from afar, which created a sense of belonging to transnational families. As Strang and Ager (2010) suggest,

> Solid bonding capital, particularly during resettlement times, offers support, self-esteem, and confidence and helps refugees cope with the challenges of adjusting and resettling to a new environment. (p. 166)

In addition, they were hindered by a lack of trust and cultural mores when engaging with the new society. For example, young mothers forbad their children to talk with strangers in this new milieu as a form of *protection*. As Judson (2014) suggests,

> Some essential factors might make settlement more challenging, including family communication, acculturation gaps and anxiety between parents and their children in resettlement safety experiences. (p. 33)

Yet, mothers' strategies were more dynamic than they would seem at first glance and women's acculturation strategies move across Berry's domains in more dynamic, relational, and contextual ways. When the young mothers in my study realised that protecting their children is linked to their ability to integrate, this facilitated their desire to integrate more fully. Although this process might not be straightforward, mothers' concerns for the well-being of their children

catalysed their efforts to build those new relationships. For example, one participant noted the importance for her and her child to learn Spanish and English because "my son cannot be marginalised." While mothers were more willing to engage in new relationships with their children, their commitment to maintaining cultural practices was often motivated by individual aspects of acculturation, such as experiences and circumstances lived before fleeing their home country (Berry, 1990). Having said that, overzealous attempts at assimilation, the failure to follow a preferred strategy, and the anxiety to settle in too fast can result in acculturative stress (Phillimore, 2011).

Mothering as protection challenged some aspects of the resettlement process by making it so young mothers from did not feel acculturated before their children. This situation aided in the development of intergenerational gaps and a lack of cultural understanding between mother and child. Cultural maintenance and intercultural contact also generated struggles and conflicts related to young Colombian's mothering practices. However, maintaining connections with family back home was often paramount in helping young mothers and their children achieve successful acculturation, resettlement, and personal development, as they encountered positive experiences in embracing the host culture while retaining their original culture.

6.3.4 Motherhood as personal development

In addition to the other three typologies, motherhood as personal development (MPD) is the other important form to incorporate in a dynamic understanding of mothers' lives. MPD shows how at times there would be pressures for personal development and others for protection. These kinds of challenges were often present in mothers' everyday lives. In this typology, mothers might want to focus on their actions and commitments, such as cultural and economic goals related to themselves and their children. MPD also allows for occasions in which they want to protect children from the risks associated with broader society.

Young women, appreciated the important meaning that motherhood plays in their life and their aspirations for personal fulfilment. As these typologies may be experienced at any time and can be repeated through the years and in different times for young mothers, participants developed MPD as a way to evaluate their qualities and skills, contemplate their goals in life, and set goals to realise their potential. This typology, at times, relates to the process in which participants identify abilities that improve their employability and increase their confidence.

This can be seen in Chapter 4 with Lucia's experience with her encounters and this can co-occur as the mothers navigate various life stages. Often, participants believed that if they are successful, their children will also be successful: "If I am good, my child is good too." In other words, participants' goals for personal development are related to the needs and future of the child but at times this situation changes as the encounters also does.

Like the other typologies, motherhood as personal development was also influenced by the good mother and good migrant discourses. The practice of MPD differs from the discursive practice of good mothering, in terms of fostering the child and personal fulfilment. Young mothers who manifest the MPD seem to have changed their lifestyles to prioritise the responsibilities and needs of their children. Motherhood as personal development is of great importance to the participants, as it enables them to legitimate themselves as good migrants, create social connections in New Zealand, and cultivate their sense of belonging. The good migrant discourse emphasises the talents, skills or economic capital of migrants. Young mothers were conscious of the effects of not having a qualification, not finishing school or not having a career. They, therefore, wanted to take a new path to reduce their disadvantages in New Zealand and pave the way for their children's future, such as attending school, learning the English language, or running their own food business.

The good mother discourse often intertwines with the good migrant discourse to generate mothers' motivations for personal development. In the Colombian context, a good mother is not so much an educated mother but one that takes care of the baby and family. When the mothers in this study sought personal development, their goals were often related to their children's needs rather than their own. For example, young Colombian mothers often feared the uncertainty of assuring an economically healthy future for themselves and their children. These young participants mainly were conscious of the effects of not having a qualification, not finishing school or being more likely to start a career. They were thus willing to take the new path of education to reduce disadvantages in New Zealand.

However, for the participants, pursuing personal development and mothering amidst relocation presented both difficulties and opportunities (Mosselson, 2020). Personal development involves what Tedeschi et al. (2018) term "personal growth", which is an experience of change, initially brought on as a response to distressing events. This growth may be affected by social or personal resources, such as coping abilities, economic support, and strong interpersonal

relations. Young mothers are often already challenged in many developmental mothering transitions. Challenges in achieving personal growth are likely to be higher for mothers who do not have partners or family support. Additionally, difficulties associated with nurturing young children arise as soon the child is born (Layne, 2015). Although there might be times in which personal development can maximise the potential of mothers, at other times, it may generate stress as it complicates their mothering challenges even further.

Berry's acculturation strategies (1990) played an important role in understanding how the participants locate themselves in this process. The central dynamic in young women's acculturation experience was that they wanted to live between two cultures. However, through these four typologies, I could explore new understandings of their acculturation outcomes. When young mothers navigate new relationships through the three tasks related to their personal development, they had the opportunity to experience ways to integrate with others and by crossing the pond as many times as it is necessary. Such relationships include local society and refugee community leaders working on developing these newcomers' social capital. For instance, institutions working with refugees are acknowledged as crucial instruments for lessening social isolation, advocating the voice of refugees, and promoting cultural maintenance and connection (Duke et al., 1999, Hale, 2000, Ager and Strang, 2008).

This research also suggests that social support was also present in various stages of mothers' lives and is a valuable asset in the process of personal development. As Deng and Marlowe (2013) suggest, most of the difficulties refugees confront on their way to advanced education indicate that newcomers need the support of their close contacts, including family members, acquaintances, and governmental and non-governmental institutions, in order to thrive. Refugees who settle in zones where they can connect with friends and families find that these networks may help them overcome the challenges of resettlement (Hauck et al., 2014). For the participants, being a young mother and having a refugee background presents numerous challenges. Mothering amidst relocation therefore entails both difficulties and opportunities (Mosselson, 2020). Mothers are effectively drawn in during the process as they balance the past and present, the old and new, and construct new social and self-understandings as refugees and mothers (Mosselson, 2020). Support from organisations and friends that can help mothers cope with mothering is also an important consideration for successful acculturation. As Taubman-Ben-Ari (2019) suggests, support from others, including the host community,

encourages intellectual processing, stimulates self-disclosure and provides new viewpoints, which helps set up a strong support network in traumatic circumstances.

To reiterate, motherhood as personal development occurs alongside the other typologies. While young mothers may have the desire to study and learn in the new culture, transmitting cultural heritage to their children occurs simultaneously. Mothering experiences include protecting the children and other times involves avoiding potentially hazardous relationships. A lack of familiarity with the host society's culture, norms, values, customs, systems, and laws is a substantial barrier to these refugees' network development (Pittaway et al., 2016). All of these considerations help us understand what being a young Colombian mother might mean in New Zealand.

6.3.5 Summary

Mothers' practices that reflect the *good mother* and *good migrant* discourses are informed by the competing pressures and commitments around maintaining their cultural heritage, rejecting the host culture, creating a safe environment for their children, and planning for themselves and their children's future. The various ways young mothers and the wider society interact with these typologies inform how acculturation outcomes emerge. These outcomes further implicate a series of changes that involve mothering practices and motherhood discourses. Although Berry's (1990) framework provides a model focusing on relationships between two or more various cultural groups or individuals, the cross-cultural conceptual framework presented above regards four typologies indicating such changes are the outcome of acculturation dynamics rather than its core element. Rather than exploring general acculturation orientations as Berry posits, I argue that a focus on these four typologies to inform the mothers' actions and experiences provides a more nuanced approach to capturing the dynamic, contextual and relational aspects of the mothers' lives.

These four typologies relate to Berry's acculturation framework, in that the acculturation strategies these young women experience in New Zealand, are not as simple as predicting the types of social networks and organisations that mothers join. Instead, these typologies are co-occurring, which means that the priorities of mothers may shift in terms of what social capital they access or is afforded to them. These choices will influence their outcomes in education,

health, participation in society, housing and employment, as well as their advancement, income, wellbeing, social connections, and employability.

The good mother and migrant discourses suggest powerful ways to consider the young mothers' experiences and produce meaningful knowledge about mothering and motherhood. This knowledge impacts individuals' social practices and has effects and consequences within their families, communities, and social networks. As we return to the women's experiences and narratives in this thesis, it is possible to see how various representations of the *good migrant* and *good mother* can influence understandings of motherhood. I created four typologies relating to motherhood that emerged from my study to show how these representations can influence the settlement trajectories of young Colombian mothers with refugee backgrounds. The typologies provide greater understanding of the various acculturation strategies that mothers may adopt and even move between across time and context, thereby enhancing understandings of acculturation and resettlement.

6.4 Raising 'Kiwisitos' and 'crossing the pond' – Implications for social capital and acculturation theory

Now that I have outlined various discourses around how the *good mother* and *good migrant* discourses influence beliefs and practices through the four typologies of motherhood, I turn to the implications of what raising Kiwisitos and 'crossing the pond' represent for social capital and acculturation theories. These lived experiences relate to the horizontal relationships of bonding and bridging capital providing various affordances to belong and participate in society, as illustrated in Chapter 2.

The idea of the three tasks (encountering, surveying-orienting and navigating), as well as the notions of Kiwisitos and crossing the pond, suggest the different ways mothers approach different tasks and at various times. The way they engage in these tasks can differ as participants go through varying life stages. The findings of Chapter 5 suggest that the encounters are constantly reoccurring, such as when the mothers need to go to school, to language institutes, or move to a new part of Hamilton. There are also different life stages to consider, as it is in those stages where the notions of Kiwisitos and crossing the pond relate to each other. The notion of crossing the pond does not mean that the mothers go from encountering to surveying and navigation, but refers to how mothers pursue resettlement in

ways that might shift according to the need of involved parties and over time. As mothers go through the encountering task, the findings showed how they maintained a floating sense of motherhood before engaging in the surveying or navigating tasks. The young mothers also showed times when they went back to meet new people, as experienced in Chapter 5, and all these experiences occurred and continue occurring in their lives because this is what the 'pond' means. These are only examples of multiple life experiences of motherhood where others might also find themselves.

As mentioned in Chapter 5, there were multiple times in which some mothers would return to each task with their children; at other times, their children would go ahead of them, and they needed to support them (e.g., when Mercedes stated that "I found that my child was the connection to build new relationships"). This suggests the importance of the four typologies and helps us understand that Berry's (1990) acculturation framework's barriers are not as deterministic as portrayed. It is not that young mothers were experiencing each task separately and in sequence; on the contrary, acculturation is evident in the ways these young women move across different tasks and the four typologies (motherhood as cultural transmission, motherhood as cultural rupture, motherhood as protection and motherhood as personal development) which, in turn, become the vehicle that helps us understand the ways in which these mothers experience motherhood. What follows is a return to a deeper discussion of the role of social capital in identifying which typology each mother mostly embodied, which, in turn, highlighted the different ways they embraced *good mother* and *good migrant* discourses.

6.4.1 Negotiating horizontal and vertical relationships

As mentioned in Chapter 2, concepts of social capital are useful to explore young Colombian mothers' negotiations with various communities in relation to their experiences of motherhood. The young women's engagements with their ethnic group and wider society were mediated by returning to the different tasks of encountering, surveying-orienting, and navigating. The ways in which these tasks are manifested differ as mothers go through various life stages. In these ways, mothers negotiate their relationships to fulfil their responsibilities, to prioritise children's wellbeing, and to develop relationships with their cultural and host communities.

6.4.1 Bonding capital: Necessities and potential downsides

The aftermath of forced migration offered a unique opportunity to closely examine the role of social capital in facilitating the integration of young mothers. Bonding and bridging social capital enabled the young mothers to navigate their journey of being new mothers in New Zealand and therefore had the potential to enhance access to their community and maintain some familial relationships back home. These relationships are helpful for cognitive and social development (Coleman, 1990). The resources and advantages of the relations between organisations or individuals can be categorised into two broader types (Putnam, 2000): bonding and bridging social capital. For this section, I will start with bonding social capital, particularly as it relates to the Colombian community.

Young mothers experienced bonding social capital with the Colombian community (Portes, 1998), through the tasks of encountering, surveying-orienting and navigating. For example, the young women used their encounters in their visit to the Refugee Mangere Centre to establish friendships. Most mothers used bonding social capital to develop close friendships with other mothers by focusing on similar characteristics, such as their refugee background and ethnicity. These findings resonate with Putnam's work on social capital, where he indicates that groups frequently bond along similar dimensions (in this study, refugee status and ethnicity) (Putnam et al., 2004).

My research documented some of the experiences of bonding social capital as articulated by young mothers. They described the challenges of being a new mother in a foreign country, their future life paths, and what they expect for their children, including educational futures and career interests and, in some cases, rejection of their community. Given my dataset, I cannot make directional claims about the extent to which young Colombian mothers' interactions and encounters directly shaped their education, mothers' aspirations, and relationships. However, as noted in Chapter 4, most of the young women who found themselves in situations where they and their children experienced being called 'La Kiwi' and 'Kiwisitos' described these experiences as influencing their aspirations in different ways, such as rejecting relationships with Colombians, meeting non-Colombian people or rethinking their perceptions of the world. As one young mother explained, experiencing relationships with Colombians and seeing how they have lived their mothering lives, allowed her to create strategies to face their challenges as new mothers. These encounters provided her with information that she used to analyse

various paths her life might take, such as learning English, finishing school, starting a career, and creating different kinds of networks. These experiences are consistent with the idea of bridging social capital, which is formed through relationships with people outside of one's immediate connections. Because mothers did not initially speak English and were trying to learn how to raise their children in New Zealand culture, they did not have the opportunity to build new networks, potentially showing a darker side of bonding social capital.

6.4.1.1 The potential dark side of exclusive bonding capital

Young Colombian mothers found it helpful to have new encounters during their first weeks of resettlement. However, across the different opportunities they had to meet new people, I realised how their relationships with and interest in meeting other people changed over time. This was evidenced in their experiences of the surveying-orienting and navigating tasks, where when some mothers were interested in creating other networks, they still had Colombian encounters during their journey. The necessity of meeting fellow nationals accorded with their needs as mothers, along with what they perceived to be their children's needs. Because of these experiences, it appeared that there might be negative consequences related to social capital. Studies that look at the negative repercussions mention the other side as 'dark sides of social capital', 'bad social capital' or 'unsocial capital' (i.e., Callahan 2005; Dekker 2004; Fiorina 1999; Rudolph 2004; Levi 1996; Portes and Landolt 1996; Putnam 2000).

Young women and their process of constructing bonding social capital was based on some shared fundamental aspects, such as Colombian encounters and speaking the same language. However, the dark side of social capital could be seen in some of the mothers' efforts to create and attend Colombian events and community groups (see Chapter 5). While these groups strengthened their connections within the Colombian community, they also often limited opportunities for relationships with outsiders. Putnam (2000) indicates bonding social capital also presents risks like rupture with the mothers' own cultures, low cultural transmission to the children, poor networking, and poorer education achievement. In Chapter 5, the young women described their experiences of creating new connections and finding ways to return the help received. Because of the solidarity within these dense Colombian networks, they oftentimes excluded outsiders while engaged in the encountering task. Although it might be good for the mothers to maintain these networks, they also risked limiting themselves and their children's

freedom (Portes, 1998). For example, it limits their possibilities of learning or improving English, finding a job, knowing about other cultures and most importantly, in some cases, managing instances in which they face discrimination. The issue is also pronounced when their children who attend school and, while managing the language, face discrimination due to other forms of difference, such as skin colour and refugee background. An example is in the MP typology where a mother expressed the need to protect her child against the risks of society. This may include maintaining their Colombian networks that insulate young mothers from discrimination, but doing so can also be disadvantageous. Along this line, when self-interest and group (e.g., Colombian community) boundaries are fostered by groups to build exclusive social capital, this outcome may be disadvantageous to society as a whole (Zmerli, 2008).

Young women's extended family members are also part of their bonding social capital. As most came alone, family connections were maintained throughout their life stages and often over distance. For Colombian mothers, family represented an important principle of social organisation. Some of the mothers' parents, for instance, could help them regulate social relationships and find access to resources and services back home. As mentioned in Chapter 4, mothers' relationships with their parents back home generally carried obligations regarding helping on the farm, looking after siblings, and cousins, household chores and their parents' guidance which are supported by customs and traditions, particularly for rural communities. The implications of not helping on the farm back home and not receiving personal advice were essential to the social conditions of these mothers resettled in New Zealand. Seven out of eight young women found a kind of freedom by becoming mothers without a partner. They were working in informal jobs, which at times provided them with new possibilities for rebuilding their lives, at others, these informal jobs may mean they do not earn enough to effectively support their children. As Sanchez (2016) indicates, it is common for Latin American women to look after the house and family while men work to sustain their families economically.

However, some of these mothers also created other forms of bonding capital beyond the archetypal 'ethnic' bonding that often exclusively encompasses this space. For example, half of the participants created a wide gap between them and the Colombian community. Returning to Chapter 5, Tomasa expressed that behind her lack of engagement with fellow Colombians lay sentiments of distrust. This offered a weak foundation for future development of bonding

capital but the possibility to build bridging social capital (Putnam, 2000) with different people from different ethnic backgrounds, particularly other mothers.

6.4.1.2 Bonding social capital: a focus on gender

As mentioned in the encountering task in Chapter 5, some women experienced having encounters with other women who were also mothers with refugee backgrounds. These were often important encounters because young women in this study needed insight into what being a mother in a foreign country meant. For instance, this event informs us of the increasing participation of women in the community (Hall, P.A. 1999). These experiences played an important role in sustaining bonding social capital for themselves and their children, both with family back home and in the New Zealand context. One of the participants met her husband once she was living in New Zealand. He disagreed with her request to attend an event with Colombians and recommended that she meet women from other ethnic backgrounds instead. Under a gendered analysis of social capital, this woman's experience illustrates how social capital is "impregnated with gendered hierarchies and gender inequalities" (Van Staveren, 2002, p. 22), which can potentially affect these young mothers' interest in building and sustaining social capital. Van Staveren (2002) suggests that these gender-based hierarchies and gender inequalities are usually present in communities, families, households, and associations in civil society, meaning that civil society not be gender neutral and does not actively look out for women's empowerment or wellbeing. Thus gender inequality, for these participants, can be understood as the accumulation of both human and social capital and may influence mothers' understanding of social and cultural differences (Sanghera & Thapar-Bjorkert, 2017). These disparities exacerbate young Colombian mothers' lack of opportunities to connect with the mainstream community relative to other groups in New Zealand.

6.4.2 Bridging capital: Navigating social mobilities, opportunity and loss

As noted in Chapter 2, Putnam (2000) indicates that bridging social capital refers to the activities and processes in which a person gets to know people who belong to another social class or cultural group. Putnam states that while bonding social capital is focused on the relations between people with similar characteristics, such as family and co-national, co-ethnic, co-religious or other groups, bridging social capital describes connections, for example, between refugees and host communities (Putnam, 2000). In this study, young mothers

facilitated opportunities to foster bridging capital primarily for their children. For example, participants made connections with the host and other communities because they learned more about the host culture by connecting with New Zealanders and other ethnic groups with refugee backgrounds. This resonates with Putnam's et al., (2004) latest work on social capital as noted in Chapter 2.

For young women, who arrived pregnant in New Zealand, their networks were small because they did not know many people outside of the resettlement centre and their Colombian encounters. After those contacts, English language schools and childcare providers represented some of the first places that mothers had the opportunity to create relationships with people from different backgrounds. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the young women's parenting groups were also beneficial when they needed assistance in understanding how to bridge language and cultural gaps, learn new systems, and make new friends. English language schools and childcare centres can also increase young mothers' relationships by offering more opportunities for the mothers to interact with staff, parents, peers, and external community members. According to Berg et al. (2006) childcare has "an integrated focus on childhood and youth development, family support, social services and health, and community development" and functions to "recognise and tackle issues of class and race and describe diversity as a strength" (p. 4). Participating in activities such as teaching or learning languages and childcare meetings, mothers can also make meaningful relationships with other parents, students, or staff members because they have a mechanism to communicate. They may also have the opportunity to meet more members of the external community who might be present at these meetings. As mentioned in the findings chapters, English language schools and childcare centres can promote bridging social capital by finding ways for young mothers to volunteer that fits around their motherhood duties. These were ways that young mothers experienced new encounters, expanded their connections, and strengthened their bridging social capital.

Also, participants often talked about how building relationships with other groups shaped their mothering philosophy and how their new connections reinforced this. This comment connects with Putnam's (2000) idea that the new connections developed during mothers' experiences of motherhood are well-suited as opportunities for enhancing their bridging social capital. New relationships open opportunities for themselves and their children in terms of employment, socialisation, and language acquisition. Returning to Chapter 4, the data suggest that the young

women needed to negotiate new ways to reconcile their cultural traditions with the host society. The results of this study indicate that the young mothers construct the meaning of motherhood and parenting based on their customs. For example, at home, young mothers' construction of 'good' mothering is always doing the best for their children. This discourse effectively excludes working mothers from 'good' mother status, and the construction of the happy mother/happy child situation precludes mothers who are working or studying from developing identities outside of their motherhood. This situation is where the various typologies of motherhood come into play, as they show how bridging capital may influence how receptive the women are to the good migrant or good mother discourses. By enjoying other forms of social interaction outside the Colombian community (through education, employment, attending social events and going to public libraries), these experiences have the potential to shift how discourses related to being a mother, mothering, and motherhood are embraced and enacted.

6.4.3 Linking capital – Institutional and cultural structures

In order to capture the power of vertical relationships, linking social capital depends heavily on the voluntary contribution of refugee support volunteers who commit many hours supporting new members in the community to assert the young mothers' rights, as well as gain access to resources from organisations such as the Red Cross, Work and Income New Zealand and other government agencies (Searle et al., 2012). The wider young Colombian mothers' community benefited from the links their volunteers and other agencies' staff built. As mentioned in Chapter 2, bridging social capital is an intermediate step between bonding and linking social capital. Returning to Chapter 5, young mothers in this study had the opportunity to build connections with people from the Red Cross, Work and Income and migrant associations in New Zealand, where power, wealth and social status could be accessed by various groups (Woolcock, 2001).

The New Zealand refugee resettlement system depends on volunteers to help families in their first year in the country and offers them support for learning English. Opportunities to build new relationships with other communities in New Zealand society (Spoonley et al. 2005), cultivate friendships, and learn from different ethnicities frequently develop from these connections. As mentioned in Chapter 5, participants potentially develop ways to learn the

norms of respect and networks of trusting relationships between them and staff in those institutions who were interacting across explicit, institutionalised or formal authority or power gradients in society (Szreter and Woolcock, 2004).

The important characteristic in linking capital is related to the differences in power or social status. An example is the relationships young mothers created in the Colombian association between them and those associated systems that supported these bonds. When young mothers tried to connect with the migrant Colombian association, many were interested in volunteering to assume one of the hierarchy roles, such as secretary or president of the association. However, some of them expressed not being able to volunteer as those roles are unlikely to be pursued by women who are mothers as they are precluded from committing to full-time hours. This can be seen as a gendered issue where power, wealth and social status are accessed by various groups and made inaccessible to certain women (Healy and Cote, 2001). This dynamic speaks to the extent to which young women build connections with institutions and people who have relative power over them (e.g. to offer access to resources, jobs and services) (Woolcock, 2001; Szreter and Woolcock, 2004).

Mothering practices also created a form of solidarity between young mothers that brought participants and other groups together but have also reconfigured institutional spheres that have informed how governments and societies react to issues associated with gender equity and forced migration. Other organisations provided assistance by gathering donations from the community and obtaining necessities for families, including food. The young mothers' use of social capital as a tool is corroborated by what was found in this study. Although in forced migration contexts, mothers' challenges can be different to a natural disaster (Aldrich, 2017), the role of social capital is fundamental in the recovery process of affected populations. However, as explained in the dark side of the social capital section, sometimes communities also constrain the affected people's journey.

Westoby and Harris (2020, p. 554) note that not all communities create inclusion but instead build borderland practices across the domains of representation, encountering, and configuration. We can see this in examples of studies that follow disasters where there are delays to recovery and response efforts (Aldrich, 2017). Young Colombian mothers represent a case study of women making use of social capital assets and acculturation into the wider

community, which can help them and their children to achieve independence in their new situation. Because of these forms of assistance, configurations are created and, in some cases, may exacerbate social and political issues that create extended conflicts, as seen in the Colombian internal war. Thus, the social organisation of difference can generate positive and negative outcomes. It can illuminate how progressive social resources and movements can gain power in some cases and how discriminatory discourses and oppressive governments can be sustained in others.

6.4.2 Incorporating a more dynamic appreciation of acculturation through typologies

Comprehending the full meaning of 'crossing the pond' requires a more dynamic understanding of acculturation. As mentioned in Chapter 2, Berry's (1990) acculturation framework explores the orientation of immigrants towards the new cultural society along two dimensions related to the extent to which people balance their desire to maintain their culture with a need to interact with the host society (Berry, 1990). As per this definition, there is a need for a more dynamic appreciation of acculturation. Thus, I presented a more dynamic and a less static appreciation of acculturation processes through the four motherhood typologies to provide a more complex understanding of young Colombian mothers' experiences of resettlement. My conceptual framework brings to light the role of four typologies that facilitate constructive relations between mothers and different cultural communities.

Crossing the pond for the young mothers is concurrent; they do not stop doing so at a certain life stage but both the mothers and their children go through different stages as the journey through motherhood progresses. As mentioned in the preceding chapters, there were multiple instances when these mothers had daily encounters through channels such as the children's school, their language institutes or at work. In the dynamic of these relationships, between mothers and various cultural groups, acculturation outcomes are shaped. This entails a sequence of mutual change that involves the four typologies. Whereas Berry's general acculturation orientations are static, I argue for a dynamic focus on what happens in motherhood (through and across the typologies of cultural transmission, motherhood as cultural rupture, motherhood as protection and motherhood as personal development.) Returning to Chapter 5, we find Carmen who studies part-time English and looks after the household and her child. Multiple times in a given day, she interacts with classmates in her English class

where other people from different cultures ethnicities also attend. In the evening, she will go to her child's childcare and probably have a chat with New Zealand teachers and staff from other cultural backgrounds. After this, she will return home and talk with her husband and neighbours, who frequently share food with them. Presumably, Carmen's experience of being a young mother and cultural minority differs across these encounters and she will not present the same acculturation strategy within the various interactions. To understand what happens in each of these interactions, future research needs to focus on the way these mothers cross the pond in different and multiple times and at different life stages rather than as part of a pre-determined strategy.

6.4.3 Summary

Analyses of the social capital young Colombian mothers built through their social relationships (Putnam, 2000) present a valuable framework for understanding the link between exposure to various kinds of people and the implications of these social networks for future engagement. Social capital can help us consider how social assets (e.g., social support, information, help) were made available and how gaining access to various individuals could benefit young mothers. The young women described a process through which close ties (*bonding*) were significant for immediate support. Some mothers found bonding social capital was the most important resource in the New Zealand setting, as those with limited English proficiency or local social networks could not communicate easily with the host community. However, *bridging* social capital provides pathways to longer-term survival and wider neighbourhood and community integration. *Linking* social capital, where they connect with people, agencies or organisations with power, resources and status will prove even more important in their future as they gain confidence in their new identities and locations.

Social capital connections for the participants in this study were highly important but I argue for a more holistic picture of social capital by including also the downsides of social capital in these young women's experiences. I suggest that bonding, bridging, and linking social capital also helped perpetuate mothering assumptions through dominant discourses. Dominant motherhood discourses sometimes clash with the host society and vice-versa, which means that even when these participants value themselves as a mother, they are still continuously reminded that others in society may not appreciate motherhood in the same way. Woolcock (2001) suggests that social capital makes the most sense when recognised as relational. Thus, having

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a more dynamic understanding of acculturation through the four typologies explained in this chapter, helps inform research on how acculturation outcomes can be shaped. The four typologies can facilitate information about the unique role of being a mother and describe competencies that make individuals understand the complexities of the settlement journey and why these mothers may make experience various choices and constraints.

The existing theoretical frameworks (social capital, acculturation and integration) that were introduced at the beginning of the thesis proved invaluable in designing the study and in the analysis but the next section outlines how these frameworks were also foundational in creating an original conceptual framework that also drew on notions of discourse and representation to create four typologies of motherhood. The study's theoretical contributions of the thesis are now outlined.

6.5 Theoretical contributions

6.5.1 Existing theoretical frameworks

This section first discusses how existing theoretical frameworks were employed to create new understandings of the young women's settlement experiences, relationships, and practices of motherhood. By listening to the voices of my participants, and drawing from pre-existing frameworks on social capital, acculturation and integration, I was able to design a new typology for understanding the young mothers' experiences of forced migration and resettlement.

There is an urgent need to develop a deeper understanding of the aspects that help to promote, in particular, young mothers with refugee backgrounds' social capital, acculturation and integration in this country. Although New Zealand has resettled more than 2000 Colombian refugees (INZ, 2020), there remains a gap in the literature that explores this unique population's experiences with resettlement. Thus, this study is the first to examine young Colombian mothers' resettlement experiences in New Zealand. Understanding the factors that might support young mothers with refugee backgrounds is important when designing effective conceptual frameworks that can contribute to fostering the successful integration of this unique group.

Social capital theory (Putnam, 2000) describes of the kinds of social assets these young mothers required to survive, adjust and thrive in their new country. Putnam outlines three types of social capital – bonding (gaining social support and resources from those most like themselves), bridging (gaining wider opportunities and support from those different from themselves) and linking (gaining access to structures with power and status). This study supports that for these young Colombian mothers, social assets (e.g., social support, information, help) were made available and enabled them to navigate the resettlement process in New Zealand for themselves and their children. Gaining access to different individuals benefitted the young mothers in adapting to their continually changing situations. Bonding and bridging social capital played important roles in their successful adjustment and linking capital was most often accessed through the contacts they had already made through bonding and bridging encounters. Becoming more aware of the role of social capital in young mothers' integration process could be important for individuals, such as Red Cross volunteers, who work with the young mothers. It could strengthen their ties to the community and enhance their lives and that of the wider society.

It is important to remember that this study is grounded in two cultures, the one that young Colombian mothers left behind and the New Zealand culture in which the mothers are resettled. the initial analysis of the data, two themes appeared, as outlined in Chapters 4 and 5: 'Crossing the pond: identity and mothering Kiwisitos'; and 'Three tasks and the role of social capital'. In relation to the first theme, I highlighted that the acculturation and identity journeys of these young women were full of constraints and challenges related to the women's new roles as mothers and their mothering practices. In relation to the second theme, I provided examples of how young mothers experience interactions with their community, family, wider society and organisations. I also explained how they used social capital to access social resources in the host community. Both themes offer more insights into how researchers may approach the Colombian population, and service providers may create new opportunities that provide solutions to the young mothers' needs and enable them and their children to become part of the host community. The host community thus benefits from their contribution to wider society.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Ager and Strang's (2008) indicators of integration also contributed to the understanding of young Colombian mothers in relation to their community and wider society. As such, these indicators provide us a sense of how the mothers are integrating on a

functional level. However, as Mestheneos and Ioannidi (2002) and Fyvie et al. (2003) suggest, measures of integration do not stand alone. It is frequently the interrelation between indicators that is critical and provides the greatest potential to deepen our understanding of mothers' integration experiences. For example, returning to Chapter 5, I showed how the inability to connect with other communities could impact on young mothers' ability to progress in other framework areas, such as employment or education. Thus, the three tasks introduced in Chapter 4 (encountering, surveying-orienting and navigating) can provide a new perspective on our understanding of integration and make stronger connections between Ager and Strang's functional indicators and this study's three tasks, which highlight the practical side of integration.

A cross-cultural framework grounded in the notions of crossing the pond and motherhood discourses built through a Colombian lens and a New Zealand culture, also enabled me to bring to light concepts of 'La Kiwi' and 'Kiwisitos' to more fully understand mothers' experiences of resettlement. This study also expands the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 by viewing their experiences through a more focused cross-cultural lens. This means that Ager and Strang's (2008) integration framework, notions of social capital (Putnam 2004) and Berry's (1990) acculturation framework can be enhanced by this cross-cultural conceptual framework.

In conclusion, this study challenged some of the dominant labels and frameworks that constrain what is possible, to provide a more nuanced understanding of these young mothers' resettlement trajectories.

6.5.2 A new theoretical framework – A typology of motherhood representations

The new and original theoretical contribution of this study is the set of motherhood typologies. The framework did not arise in a vacuum but was constructed in several iterations as the data were first analysed using social capital, acculturation and integrations theories and matched against the two themes drawn from the data (as outlined in Chapters 4 & 5). The next layer of analysis revealed the ways in which the young mothers were influenced by discourses of motherhood, particularly how the tensions in the 'good mother' discourse interacted with the expectations of the 'good migrant' discourse. As the young mothers revealed their struggles, a way of encapsulating the representations of motherhood that they were adhering to, began to

emerge. *Motherhood as cultural transmission* describes the mothers who felt obliged to maintain links to the people and traditions of their homeland. *Motherhood as protection* was when they ensured that the safety of their children was their first priority. *Motherhood as cultural rupture* describes the mothers (and times) they put aside their home cultural practices in favour adopting the new culture. *Motherhood as personal development* describes the times that they were able to benefit personally from their experiences and those of their children.

The motherhood typologies also have practical implications, particularly in identifying young mothers and helping them become involved and connected with their culture. The results of this study reveal a strong orientation to cultural identity within its population of Colombian women, making it so that heritage ties are positively related to young mothers' perceptions of their children's identities and their responsibilities as mothers. Studies conducted on other young refugee groups, examining the relationship between acculturation and the perception of their children's identity demonstrated mixed results. What this study suggests is that, when it comes to this unique population's negotiation of their acculturation process, the young women traverse back and forth between each of Berry's (2006) acculturation approaches, according to their perceptions of the needs of their children and their role as mothers.

6.6 Study limitations and recommendations for future research

In this section, I consider the limitations of this research and indicate possible directions for future studies. This research provides a rich understanding of eight Colombian women who came to New Zealand when they were pregnant. While it illuminates the specific experiences and challenges they have navigated for themselves and their children, there are still multiple ways in which the findings of this thesis can be extended. The value of these mothers' experiences provides an appreciation of depth but may not necessarily relate to the breadth of experience across the Colombian community of mothers from refugee backgrounds, in general.

First, this research uses only a sample of 8 young Colombian mothers as a case study to understand the factors that facilitated their experiences of integration and acculturation in New Zealand, including the role of social capital. Only 8 young mothers, from a population of 2,224 Colombians in New Zealand with refugee backgrounds (INZ, 2020) participated in this study. Although the total of young mothers in that population is not specific, this sample size could not be considered enough to characterise the entire population of young Colombian mothers in

New Zealand. Therefore, it cannot be stated that the findings of this research are representative to every young Colombian mother in this country. A larger sample would have added more insight into motherhood experiences of resettlement in this country. However, as described in Chapter 3, the number of young mothers recruited in this investigation is consistent with the amount recommended for qualitative research by different researchers (Creswell, 1998; Guest et al., 2014).

Second, the use of alternative theoretical frameworks may have presented different interpretations. For example, social capital is cited in some literature as problematic to operationalise across groups of individuals and may change across age ranges (Cagney & Wen, 2008). In the present research, social capital contributed to wider conceptual explanations, although future research could investigate how to further measure, validate and develop the different forms of social capital. As the study used a conceptual combination of bonding, bridging, and linking social capital, this research cannot provide recommendations for how these forms specifically interact with particular integration indicators, although this study signals their overall significance for the integration of these young Colombian mothers.

Third, this research investigated a sample of young mothers resettled in one New Zealand geographic location, but groups with refugee backgrounds may have a variety of experiences based on this variable alone, not to mention how their personal resettlement experiences are different, relative to their own cultural norms, who they are resettled with, past traumas, and/or how they experience pregnancy (Lamba & Krahn, 2003; Cheung & Philimore, 2013). Therefore, this intrinsic case study's outcomes cannot be generalised to all populations of mothers across their lifetimes. This study does suggest, however, that there is promise for future studies to continue to examine the buffering influence of social capital for women with refugee backgrounds as they resettle and become acculturated into their new countries.

Finally, there are a range of other methodologies that could have been drawn upon to investigate the experiences of young mothers relevant to this type of population, such as survey or ethnography. However, in order to make an authentic connection with the participants to get genuine insights into their stories, an intrinsic case study suited the sample size. Similarly, qualitative semi-structured interviews seemed to be the most appropriate method for this study.

A more open qualitative approach also enabled me to create an authentic relationship with their stories through my own.

In summary, the limitations of this research suggest that there are other target populations, theoretical frameworks or methodologies that could be explored in future research.

6.7 Recommendations

The study's findings also suggest recommendations beyond future research for policymakers, programmes and practitioners relating to young refugee mothers. They are a unique population with particular needs and therefore there should be more targeted resettlement policies and programmes for young mothers with refugee backgrounds and on-going support throughout the various stages of their life course.

6.7.1 Recommendations for policymakers

- Provide training at all levels so that management, policy and staff at the Red Cross, the Mangere Refugee Centre and other institutions working with young people are aware of the different types of needs of young mothers with refugee backgrounds and their children. For example, when a young pregnant woman she should be supported to know how the pregnancy and birthing process works in New Zealand, or that at least she will have a counsellor to orient her at the beginning. Her experience is very different from one who arrives with other family members or with a partner.

- Include maternal institutions in service-delivery discussions, especially for parenting group leaders or to the Association of Colombian Refugees' leaders.

- Prevent challenges arising as a result of young mothers lack of knowledge by having a programme at the Mangere Centre or through a home visiting programme before delivering the baby, which focuses on the needs of young mothers with refugee backgrounds.

6.7.1 Recommendations for programme deliverers – Refugee Resettlement Programme

- Improve social linking opportunities through the availability of individuals who understand the refugee resettlement experience to provide brokering, training and support to mothers, schools, and early childhood education staff. This would incorporate key organisations building relationships and communicating with education services working with young people from refugee backgrounds.

6.7.1 Recommendations for practice – for educators and service providers

- Organise group sessions for young mothers, other communities, and local young mothers to get together for information exchange, mutual support, and social occasions.

- Provide parent education that addresses concerns of being a mother, both in their current stage and for the future.

- Contemplate services where these might not be apparent to young mothers. For example, counselling for young women who were victims of violence in the past because of the violence experienced during migration. Also consider health and sexual education for young women to prevent further and unwanted pregnancies.

- Encourage young women's children to develop skills in their mothers' language so that ongoing dialogue with their mothers and their families back home remains a possibility.

- Acknowledge that seeking help may be stigmatised. Foster outreach programmes that address this.

6.8 Looking to the horizon

Alongside the study's contributions, limitations and recommendations, there are also rich possibilities to explore further how young mothers from refugee backgrounds might craft an existence and identity for themselves and their families in resettlement contexts. In particular, I want to focus on the impact of transnational relationships and the importance of social media in connecting these mothers to family and friends living in Colombia, as these young mother look to a new horizon.

6.8.1 Transnational relationships

The young women had already experienced relationships with extended families back in Colombia. They tried to maintain and sustain these transnational relationships through the telephone, video chats on Facebook and Instagram and Zoom, where other family members wanted to join to see their children. The challenges experienced with their children speaking English and missing family traditions, customs, food, meant the young mothers needed to use other forms of connection that allowed them to feel at home, at times. There are theorists who suggest that new kinds of social capital can be re-established (Ballard, 2003; Goulbourne, 2002; Portes et al., 1999; Vertovec, 2001) through social networks to sustain and enable family relationships across national borders (Glick Schiller et al., 1992; Goulbourne and Chamberlain, 2001; Portes et al., 1999; Zontini, 2010).

Social capital also facilitated young mothers' settlement and the connections they had created through the years enabled them to access resources and information in New Zealand. These connections went beyond borders and were mobilised within transnational family relationships in times of need, such as instances when mothers encounter difficulties with childrearing and economic hardship (Ballard, 2003; Voigt-Graf, 2004). Whilst mothers were not tied to localised communities, ethnic and family ties that were sustained through trust continued to play an important role in their process of motherhood and resettlement. Landolt (2001, p. 217) explores how practices and norms happen through "paths of transnational interests and responsibilities". For example, mothers maintained relationships with their children's father back home, which some were still interested in keeping because of what they represent for their children. Transnational partner relations play a crucial role in the processes explored by Landolt (2001) and Vertovec (2004), particularly in extending family connections and mobility.

Therefore, according to Sanghera and Thapar-Bjorkert (2017), women may be fundamental in constructing and sustaining transnational social networks. In this study, some young mothers used their networks to foster ties within New Zealand cities as well as back home in Colombia. These forms of connections were double-edged: in one part, they became important assets of emotional and symbolic capital for the mothers. On the other, they reproduced specific gendered relationships of power (e.g. male-child preference, arranging ways to talk with the child's father). As explained before, these networks might be maintained through social media

and communications, and their reasonable relation has meant that this new world and homeland (e.g. ethnicity networks and extended family) are closer for transnational relatives.

6.8.2 The role of social media in informing social capital

Social media is becoming increasingly important, particularly for young people's everyday experiences. According to Ellison et al. (2014), young people's networks, as enabled by Facebook or other kinds of social media, can potentially grow their social capital in ways that influence their point of view about the new society. For instance, Ellison et al. (2007) explore how the identity data in a Facebook profile might present users with the impulse to pursue friendships because the "particularised profiles show both differences and commonalities among participants" (p. 1163). Young mothers in this research identified a connection in relation to their families and friends back home between social capital and social media. Most of the participants talked about how they connect with family back home or how they share and receive information regarding playdates and times for their children from parenting groups they belong to. They also share information concerning Colombian events. However, most relationships they experienced were based on face-to-face. The relationship between social capital and forms of social network use found in the Ellison et al. (2007) study may not apply uniformly to these young mothers, whose networks within New Zealand relied more strongly on physical proximity. For these mothers who spend most of the time at home looking after their children with fewer possibilities of relationships may encounter limited opportunities to use social media to expand and reshape their relationships in meaningful ways. However, being connected to some Facebook groups may improve intercultural relations between other refugees as well as other social media sites to acquire cultural competencies and language. These young mothers also demonstrated the importance of social media for contacting friends and family in Colombia to obtain emotional and social support. Komito (2011) indicates that for people with refugee backgrounds, using social media to cope with emotional and social support can be even more important and noticeable in tackling resettlement difficulties. For example, mothers highlight the importance of bonding with friends and family back home, and social media is the main channel for connecting with loved ones. Hence, mothers' use of social networks for bonding social capital can be related to differences concerning their perceptions of integration either one or both ways (Castles et al., 2002). Social media can reinforce existing relationships but limit their exposure to new connections and thus constrict the construction of bridging social capital.

6.9 Conclusion

My study aimed to understand the factors that facilitated young Colombian mothers' experiences, as young mothers, of resettlement and acculturation in New Zealand. The purpose of my study was not only to identify how their mothering experiences affected their identities as first-time mothers and their perceptions of their children's identities but also to examine how the young mothers navigated the resettlement process in New Zealand for themselves and their children. To do this, I used an intrinsic case study methodology guided by my social constructivist orientation. The review of the literature enabled me to frame the study's design using relevant concepts from existing theoretical frameworks, in particular, Putnam's (2000) social capital theory, Berry's (2006) acculturation theory and Ager & Strang's domains of integration (2008). These concepts were invaluable in analysing the themes in the data, which related to (a) 'raising Kiwisitos' and 'crossing the pond' and (b) the three tasks of encountering, surveying-orienting and navigating. The two findings chapters (Chapters 4 & 5) gave detailed insights into the lived experiences of 8 young mothers as they navigated their way through their resettlement experiences in Hamilton, New Zealand.

These young mothers had distinctive experiences within the socio-cultural setting in which they found themselves, and their experiences can provide understanding and insight into forced migrants and refugees who are also mothers. For the young women in this study, motherhood discourses were an element of their identities, through which they transmitted language and cultural practices. Examining the discourses of the good mother and the good migrant enabled me to highlight the constraints, tensions and challenges they faced and, from this higher-level analysis, to create a typology of four motherhood representations: (a) motherhood as cultural transmission; (b) motherhood as protection, (c) motherhood as cultural rupture and (d) motherhood as personal development. While specific to the data from this study, these typology representations can be a useful source of future research, analysis and development for other scholars in the fields of refugee and forced migrant studies, as well as motherhood studies more broadly.

My conceptual framework highlighting representations of motherhood advances a more complex view of culture focusing on a number of key factors that impacted these mothers' acculturation strategies. In particular, the framework allowed me to highlight the nature of the mothering experiences of these young Colombian mothers in New Zealand as they developed

their new identities as first-time mothers in relation to their perceptions of their children's needs and emerging identities. I posit that these young women's new cultural identities evolved through the acculturation process. Prior research drawing upon Berry's (1990) acculturation framework has recognised multiple acculturation approaches adopted by individuals resettled in foreign countries. By adding the motherhood typology as a theoretical framework to the evolving literature, there is also the opportunity to inform cultural studies across multiple disciplines, including cross-cultural diversity, identity formation, adaptation, social capital, acculturation and integration.

Postscript

... Lucia is still in New Zealand, trying to navigate an endless amount of challenges that, through the years, were increasing as the baby was not anymore a baby but a child who needed a guide and guidance that she did not have the opportunity to receive because the forced displacement that obliged her to flee her homeland, quit her belongings and came to New Zealand to start a new life from scratch. Lucia's journey still incorporates aspects of loss and uncertainty, but she has also navigated those challenges. She has accomplished certain achievements, such as raising her child with available resources and support. However, there are still other questions that remain: Will I fully integrate? Will my child leave me when he is 18? Will I be able to speak English perfectly one day? Will I marry? What if I cannot go back to Colombia? Will my child ask me for his father?. Will I have a great career once I finish my childrearing? Lucia's aspirations and concerns remain over time. She might be able to find answers but she will also face challenges in her everyday life.

After seven years I, too, remain in New Zealand, finishing my doctoral studies. My husband is still working while I finish and my son will turn five this year and go to school. I am still here trying to understand and feel for these mothers' experiences of forced migration. I am still in this beautiful country, trying to get ahead, looking for opportunities, learning Māori, singing Kapa Haka, eating fish and chips, running a marathon and missing my family. I also went through the three tasks of encountering, surveying-orienting, and navigating. I continue to do so as I submit this PhD and watch my boy growing up, speaking English as a native, while conversing in Spanglish (a combination of Spanish and English) with our family back home. I am in New Zealand, engaging with my family from afar, using social media to post my son's

photos and stories so that his grandparents, aunties, uncles and other relatives can see him growing. I am still in New Zealand with hopes and many goals still to achieve.

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Appendix A: Ethics approval form

Research Office
Post–Award Support Services

The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92019
Auckland, New Zealand

Level 10, 49 Symonds Street
Telephone: 64 9 373 7599
Extension: 83711
Facsimile: 64 9 373 7432
ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz

UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE (UAHPEC)

29-Jun-2018

MEMORANDUM TO:

Assoc Prof Jay Marlowe
Counselling, HumServ & SocWrk

Re: Application for Ethics Approval (Our Ref. 021393): Approved

The Committee considered your application for ethics approval for your study entitled **Colombian Refugees in Aotearoa New Zealand: Social Capital and Resettlement Experiences of young adult people**.

We are pleased to inform you that ethics approval has been granted for a period of three years.

The expiry date for this approval is 29-Jun-2021.

If the project changes significantly, you are required to submit a new application to UAHPEC for further consideration.

If you have obtained funding other than from UniServices, send a copy of this approval letter to the Activations team in the Research Office at ro-awards@auckland.ac.nz. For UniServices contracts, send a copy of the approval letter to the Contract Manager, UniServices.

The Chair and the members of UAHPEC would be happy to discuss general matters relating to ethics approvals. If you wish to do so, please contact the UAHPEC Ethics Administrators at ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz in the first instance.

Please quote Protocol number **021393** on all communication with the UAHPEC regarding this application.

(This is a computer generated letter. No signature required.)

UAHPEC Administrators
University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee

c.c. Head of Department / School, Counselling, HumServ & SocWrk

Assoc Prof Carol Mutch
Mrs Carolina Castro

Additional information:

1. Do not forget to fill in the 'approval wording' on the Participant Information Sheets, Consent Forms and/or advertisements, giving the dates of approval and the reference number. This needs to be completed, before you use them or send them out to your participants.

2. At the end of three years, or if the study is completed before the expiry date, please advise the Ethics Administrators of its completion.

3. Should you require an extension or need to make any changes to the project, please complete the online Amendment Request form associated with this approval number giving full details along with revised documentation. If requested before the current approval expires, an extension may be granted for a further three years, after which a new application must be submitted.

School of Critical Studies in Education
Faculty of Education and Social Work
Phone No: +64 9 623 8899
The University of Auckland
Private Bag 92601, Symonds Street
Auckland 1150, New Zealand

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET

Project Title: Colombian Refugees in Aotearoa New Zealand: Social Capital and Resettlement Experiences of young adult people.

Name of Supervisor (s): Dr Carol Mutch, Dr Jay Marlowe

Name of researcher: Carolina Castro

My name is Carolina Castro, I am a doctoral student from the Faculty of Education and Social Work at the University of Auckland. I am currently working on my doctoral thesis on the Social Capital and Resettlement experiences of young adult Colombian refugees in New Zealand. My research will attempt to understand how social relationships are developed and how these inform the various aspects of integration (education, employment, housing and health). I will be recruiting approximately 15 young adult Colombian refugees.

I would like to invite you to consider participating if you are:

- Identify as being a former refugee from Colombia and are between 18-30 years old

- Have lived in New Zealand between 1-3 years

What would be involved?

If you choose to participate, I will conduct a one-hour and a half interview with you about your resettlement experience in New Zealand.

You will be asked questions such as:

1. Tell me a little about yourself and your family?
2. What social events/activities have you participated in with your family since you came?
   a. Where were they? What did you do? What did you enjoy about them?
3. Tell me about how your health has been since you resettled in New Zealand?
4. Have you engaged in any education or training course since you have been in New Zealand?
5. How would you describe support from the government or other agencies in helping you and/or your family have sufficient funds to settle in Hamilton, for example, WINZ (Work and Income New Zealand)?

6. Tell me about any issues or problems about your house?
7. How well are you getting to know your neighbourhood and the facilities it provides?

Benefits: The results from this project will help us understand the resettlement experiences of young adult Colombian refugees in Hamilton, New Zealand, allow the voices of Colombian refugees to be heard, and hopefully, contribute towards better settlement support.

I do not anticipate any risks with this study. However, if you feel distressed as a result of participating in the study, I will provide you with support services in New Zealand that are free of charge such as healthline, Red Cross, HMS Trust (Hamilton Multicultural Services), English Language Support and Youthline. You would not need to identify as being a participant in this study to receive this support.

Interviews

After the research is conducted, you can elect to receive a written transcript interview. You will have up to four weeks to make any changes or withdraw your participation and data from the study once it is sent to you. After this four-week period, the information cannot be removed from the study.

To thank you for your time and participation in the interview session, you will receive a $20 Prezzy card.

Data Storage, Retention, Destruction and Future Use

For the interview sessions, I will use an audio recorder to record our conversation and will notify you when the recorder is 'on' or 'off'. Should you feel uncomfortable with the recording at any point in time, you can choose to have the recorder turned off at any time. In such cases, I will use manual note taking using a pen and paper. All the audio recordings will be transcribed.

Information from this study will be kept for six years in the researcher's password protected computers backed up and stored on the University of Auckland server. Consent forms will be held as a copy hard data and will be stored in a locked cabinet in the supervisor's office to be separate from the data material. While in Hamilton, the data will be store in secure, clean and environmentally stable containers and documents will be scanned into PDF. Documents will be accessible only to the researcher and her supervisors after transcription and translation. After that time, they will be permanently deleted off the hard drive and hard copy data will be destroyed.

The data will be used after analysis for my dissertation, journal publications, as well as conference presentations.

Right to withdraw from participation

You have the right to withdraw from participating in the research at any time and you can remove your data at any point up to three weeks after receiving your transcripts without giving a reason. You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during the study. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me. Your participation in this research is voluntary (it is your choice) and whether or not you choose to participate will neither advantage nor disadvantage you.

Confidentiality

The preservation of confidentiality is paramount. The information you share with me will remain confidential to me. Aliases will be used to protect your identity. Personal identifiers such as your names and age, as well as contextual identifiers such as your employer and family will be changed to protect your identity. I will use the information you provide for my thesis and for other academic publications. If the information you provide is reported or published, this will be done in a way that does not identify you as its source.

A copy of the research findings will be made available to you in your Spanish, if you wish, once the study is completed and written up.

CONTACT DETAILS AND APPROVAL

Thank you for making this study possible. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact me at c.castro@auckland.ac.nz. You can also contact my Research supervisors at c.mutch@auckland.ac.nz (Dr. Carol Mutch) and (Dr. Jay Marlowe) at j.marlowe@auckland.ac.nz

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference.

For any concerns regarding ethical issues, you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Research Office, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373-7599 ext. 83711.
Email: ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz

Regards,

Carolina Castro
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School of Critical Studies in Education
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Approved by the University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee on the 29th of June, 2018 for three years. Reference number 021393.

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HOJA DE INFORMACIÓN DEL PARTICIPANTE

Título del proyecto: Refugiados colombianos en Aotearoa Nueva Zelanda: Capital social y experiencias de reasentamiento de jóvenes adultos.

Nombre del (de los) supervisor es (son): Dr. Carol Mutch, Dr. Jay Marlowe

Nombre del investigador: Carolina Castro

Mi nombre es Carolina Castro, soy estudiante de doctorado de la Facultad de Educación y Trabajo Social de la Universidad de Auckland. Actualmente estoy trabajando en mi tesis doctoral sobre el Capital Social y las experiencias de Reasentamiento de jóvenes refugiados colombianos en Nueva Zelanda. Mi investigación intentará comprender cómo se desarrollan las relaciones sociales y cómo éstas informan los diversos aspectos de la integración (educación, empleo, vivienda y salud). Estaré reclutando aproximadamente 15 jóvenes adultos refugiados colombianos.

Me gustaría invitarlo a que considerar participar si usted se:

• Identifica como refugiado procedente de Colombia y tiene entre 18-30 años de edad
• Ha vivido en Nueva Zelanda entre 1-3 años

¿Qué tendría que hacer?

Si elige participar, llevare a cabo una hora y media de entrevista con usted acerca de su experiencia de reasentamiento en Nueva Zelanda.

Se le harán preguntas tales como:

1. ¿En qué eventos sociales ha participado con su familia desde que vino?
2. Dime cómo ha sido su salud desde que se reasentó en Nueva Zelanda?
3. ¿Ha participado en algún curso de educación o capacitación desde que está en Nueva Zelanda?
4. ¿Cómo describiría el apoyo por parte del gobierno u otras agencias que lo han ayudado a usted y a su familia a tener los fondos suficientes para reasentarse en Hamilton, por ejemplo, WINZ (Work and Income NZ)?
5. ¿Cuéntame sobre algún problema o problema relacionado con tu casa?
6. ¿Qué tan bien conoces tu vecindario y las instalaciones que brinda?

Beneficios: Los resultados de este proyecto nos ayudarán a comprender las experiencias de reasentamiento de jóvenes refugiados colombianos en Hamilton, Nueva Zelanda, permitirán que las

voces de los refugiados colombianos sean escuchadas, y con suerte, contribuyan a un mejor apoyo de asentamiento.

No anticipo riesgos con este estudio. Sin embargo, si se siente angustiado como resultado de su participación en el estudio, voy a ofrecerle servicios de apoyo en Nueva Zelanda que están libres de cargo, como Healthline, Cruz Roja, HMS Trust (Hamilton Servicios Multiculturales), English Language Support y Youthline. No necesita identificarse como participante en este estudio para recibir este apoyo.

Entrevistas

Después de realizar la investigación, puede optar por recibir una transcripción escrita de la entrevista. Tendrá hasta cuatro semanas para realizar cambios o retirar su participación y los datos del estudio una vez que se le envíe. Después de este período de cuatro semanas, la información no se puede eliminar del estudio.

Para agradecerle su tiempo y participación en la sesión de entrevista, recibirá una tarjeta Prezzy de $ 20.

Almacenamiento de Datos, Retención, Destrucción y Uso Futuro

Para las sesiones de entrevista, usaré una grabadora para grabar nuestra conversación y le notificaré cuando la grabadora esté encendida o apagada. Si se siente incómodo con la grabación en algún momento, puede elegir que la grabadora se apague en cualquier momento. En tales casos, usaré la toma manual de notas usando un bolígrafo y papel. Todas las grabaciones de audio serán transcritas.

La información de este estudio se mantendrá durante seis años en las computadoras protegidas por contraseña del investigador, guardadas y almacenadas en el servidor de la Universidad de Auckland. Los formularios de consentimiento se guardarán como copia impresa y se almacenarán en un gabinete cerrado con llave en la oficina del supervisor para separarlos del material de datos. Durante la estadía en Hamilton, los datos serán almacenados en contenedores seguros, limpios y ambientalmente estables, y los documentos serán escaneados en PDF. Los documentos serán accesibles solo para el investigador y sus supervisores después de la transcripción y la traducción. Después de ese tiempo, se eliminarán definitivamente del disco duro y se destruirán los datos impresos.

Los datos se usarán después del análisis para mi disertación, publicaciones de revistas, así como presentaciones de conferencias.

Derecho a retirarse de la participación

Tiene derecho a retirarse de participar en la investigación en cualquier momento sin dar una razón. Le recomendamos hacer preguntas en cualquier momento durante el estudio. Si tiene alguna pregunta, no dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo. Su participación en esta investigación es voluntaria (es su elección) y el hecho de que elija participar no lo beneficiará ni perjudicará.

Confidencialidad

La preservación de la confidencialidad es primordial. La información que comparta conmigo será confidencial para mí. Los alias se usarán para proteger su identidad. Los identificadores personales como sus nombres y edad, así como los identificadores contextuales, como su empleador y su familia, se modificarán para proteger su identidad. Usaré la información que proporcione para mi tesis y para

otras publicaciones académicas. Si la información que proporciona se informa o publica, esto se hará de una manera que no lo identifique como su fuente. Una vez que el estudio esté completo y redactado, se le proporcionará una copia de los resultados de la investigación en español, si lo desea.

DETALLES DE CONTACTO Y APROBACIÓN

Gracias por hacer este estudio posible. Si tiene más preguntas, no dude en ponerse en contacto conmigo en c.castro@auckland.ac.nz. También puede contactar a mis supervisores en (Dr. Carol Mutch) c.mutch@auckland.ac.nz y (Dr. Jay Marlowe) en j.marlowe@auckland.ac.nz

Por favor, guarde esta hoja de información y una copia del Formulario de consentimiento para su futura referencia.

Para cualquier consulta relacionada con inquietudes éticas, puede ponerse en contacto con la Presidencia, el Comité de Ética de Participantes Humanos de la Universidad de Auckland, la Universidad de Auckland, Oficina de Investigación, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Teléfono 09 373-7599 ext. 83711.

Correo electrónico: ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz

Saludos,

Carolina Castro
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Aprobado por el Comité de Ética Participantes Humanos de la Universidad de Auckland el 29 de Junio de 2018 por tres años. Numero de Referencia 021393.

**EDUCATION AND
SOCIAL WORK**

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CONSENT FORM

THIS FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF 6 YEARS

Project title: **Colombian Refugees in Aotearoa New Zealand: Social Capital
and Resettlement Experiences of young adult.**
Name of Supervisor (s): Dr Carol Mutch, Dr Jay Marlowe
Name of Student Researcher: Carolina Castro

I .... (Write your name here) have read
the Participant Information Sheet and I have understood the nature of the
research and why I have been invited. I have had the opportunity to ask questions
and have them answered to my satisfaction. This consent form and information
gained from the study will be held in a secure cabinet at the University of Auckland
for 6 years.

- I also agree to take part in this research.

- I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that
  I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in
  any way and without giving a reason.

- I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they
  will also be audio-recorded and transcribed. They will be also translated into
  English.

- I understand that I can remove data up to three weeks after receiving my
  transcripts

- I understand that the information from this study will be safely stored and
  locked by Carolina Castro in a desktop computer at the University of
  Auckland for six years. After this time, this information will be destroyed.

- I understand that consent form will be held as a copy hard data will be
  stored in a locked cabinet in the supervisor's office to be separate from the

data material. While in Hamilton, the data will be store in secure, clean and environmentally stable containers, will be password protected and documents will be scanned into PDF.

- I understand that documents will be accessible only to the researcher and her supervisors after transcription and translation.
- I understand that the data will be kept for six and stored securely by the researcher on a password-protected computer. After that time, they will be permanently deleted off the hard drive.

- I understand that absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed given the small size of the Colombian community, though any particular identifying information such as my name will be changed in my transcripts to protect my identity.

- I understand that if the information I provide is reported or published, this will be done in a way that does not identify me as the source.

- I understand that the interview will be audio recorded but that I may choose to have the recorder turned off at any time without giving a reason

- I understand that I can leave or stop the interview at point without giving a reason.

- I wish/ do not wish* to review my interview transcripts. I understand that any edits must be made within three weeks of receipt of the transcript. I will receive it either mail or hand delivered.

- I wish/do not wish* to receive a summary of findings in my language, which can   be   provided   to   me   at   this   email/postal   address: _____

Name: _____   Signature: _____

Date: _____

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CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO

ESTE FORMULARIO SE GUARDARÁ POR UN PERIODO DE SEIS AÑOS

Título del proyecto: Refugiados colombianos en Aotearoa Nueva Zelanda: Capital social y experiencias de reasentamiento de jóvenes adultos
Nombre del (de los) supervisor (es): Dr. Carol Mutch, Dr. Jay Marlowe
Nombre del Estdudiante Investigador: Carolina Castro

YO ………………………………………………………............... (escriba su nombre aquí) he leído la Hoja de información del participante y he entendido la naturaleza de la investigación y por qué he sido invitado. He tenido la oportunidad de hacer preguntas y hacer que respondan a mi satisfacción. Este formulario de consentimiento e información obtenida del estudio se llevará a cabo en un gabinete seguro de la Universidad de Auckland durante 6 años.

- También acepto tomar parte en esta investigación.

• Entiendo que participar en este estudio es voluntario (mi elección) y que puedo retirarme del estudio en cualquier momento sin estar en desventaja de ninguna manera y sin dar una razón.

• Entiendo que se tomarán notas durante las entrevistas y que también se grabarán y transcribirán en audio. Ellos también serán traducidos al inglés.

• Entiendo que puedo eliminar datos hasta tres semanas después de recibir mis transcripciones

• Entiendo que la información de este estudio será guardada y encerrada de manera segura por Carolina Castro en una computadora de escritorio en la Universidad de Auckland durante seis años. Después de este tiempo, esta información será destruida.

• Entiendo que el formulario de consentimiento se retendrá porque una copia de los datos se almacenará en un armario cerrado con llave en la oficina del supervisor para separarlos del material de datos. Durante su estadía en Hamilton, los datos serán almacenados en contenedores seguros, limpios y ambientalmente estables, estará protegida con una clave y los documentos serán escaneados en PDF.

• Entiendo que los documentos estarán accesibles solo para el investigador y sus supervisores después de la transcripción y la traducción.

• Entiendo que los datos serán guardados por seis y almacenados de manera segura por el investigador en una computadora protegida por contraseña. Después de ese tiempo, serán borrados permanentemente del disco duro.

• Entiendo que no se puede garantizar la confidencialidad absoluta dado el pequeño tamaño de la comunidad colombiana, aunque cualquier información de identificación particular, como mi nombre, se modificará en mis transcripciones para proteger mi identidad.

• Entiendo que, si la información que proporciono se informa o publica, se hará de una manera que no me identifique como la fuente.

• Entiendo que la entrevista será grabada en audio, pero que puedo elegir que la grabadora se apague en cualquier momento sin dar una razón.

• Entiendo que puedo abandonar o detener la entrevista en el punto sin dar una razón.

• Deseo / no deseo * revisar las transcripciones de mi entrevista. Entiendo que cualquier edición debe realizarse dentro de las tres o cuatro semanas posteriores a la recepción de la transcripción. Lo recibiré por correo o entregado personalmente.
• Deseo / no deseo * recibir un resumen de los hallazgos en mi idioma, que se me pueden proporcionar en este correo electrónico / dirección postal: _____.

Nombre: _____ Firma: _____

Fecha: _____

Aprobado Por El Comité De Ética De Los Participantes Humanos De La Universidad De Auckland el 29 de junio de 2018 por tres años. Numero de Referencia 021393

Appendix D: Interview schedule (English and Spanish version)

Resettlement Experiences of Young Adult Colombian Refugees in New Zealand

Semi-structured Interviews *

(English Version)

*[Resettlement questions derived from the New Zealand Refugee Resettlement Strategy and designed to investigate refugee experiences through three levels of social capital – bonding, bridging and linking].

M / F

Age:

Arrival in NZ:

- Qualitative interview introduction
- Verbal review of ethical considerations

Length: 60-90 minutes

Primary goal: to know through a conversation the experiences of resettlement of Colombian refugees after arriving in New Zealand.

Background Information (General questions to put participant at ease)

  a) Tell me a little about yourself and your family?
  b) Did you come with your family or others?
  c) How long have you been here in New Zealand? What do you remember about your arrival?
  d) How long have you been in Hamilton? How are you finding the city?

1. Participation

a) What social events/activities have you participated in with your family since you came?

    a. Where were they? What did you do? What did you enjoy about them?

b) What events or activities have you participated in with friends?

    a. What do you do? How often do you do these things?

c) How well do you know your neighbours?

    a. What kind of contact have you had with them?

d) What events/activities have you participated with Colombian people?

    a. What did you do? Where were they held? What do you enjoy about them?

e) Have you attended sports or other cultural events (like concerts)?

    a. Tell me more about these. Who did you go with? What did you enjoy?

f) As part of your resettlement process, what kind of participation have you had with agencies or other formal organisations? (For example, Red Cross)

2. Health and Wellbeing

a) Tell me about how your health experience has been since you resettled in New Zealand?

b) Tell me about your family's overall health experience in New Zealand.

    a. Has resettlement helped or hindered you or your family's health?

c) Have you needed to go to a health provider (general practitioner, nurse, hospital, clinic)?

    a. Have you needed health information (for example, about inoculations)?

    b. How have you engaged with others to get this service or information?

d) If you feel comfortable, could you tell me about your overall wellbeing during your resettlement (this could be your physical, emotional or mental wellbeing, e.g., happiness, emotions, problems, issues).

e) If you have faced an issue, where have you gone for support (family, health line)?

f) How would you your family's overall wellbeing (other than health)?

3. Education

a) What was your level of education when you left Colombia?

b) Have you engaged in any education or training course since you have been in New Zealand?

c) Tell me about engaging with people in your institutions (tutors, teachers, facilitators, lecturers)

d) How did you find the process of enrolment or other systems in the school / university / institution?

4. Self-sufficiency

a) How would you describe support from the government or other agencies in helping you and/or your family have sufficient funds to settle in Hamilton, for example, WINZ (Work and Income New Zealand)?

b) How do you manage to meet your basic needs (e.g., food, clothing, transport)?

c) Are you engaged in any kind of work (unpaid, part time, full time, voluntary)?

d) What agencies or individuals have helped you or your family to look for/find employment?

e) If you have full employment, what do you do?

f) How did you secure this job? How are you finding this job (the tasks, the hours, your employer, and your co-workers)?

5. Housing

   a) How is your house meeting your and your family's needs?

   b) Tell me about any issues or problems about your house?

   c) How well are you getting to know your neighbourhood and the facilities it provides?

   d) How well are you getting to know your wider community and your city?

   e) How do you communicate with others when problems arise, (for example, your landlord if you need repairs)?

Experiencias de reasentamiento de jóvenes colombianos refugiados en Nueva Zelanda

Entrevistas semi-estructuradas *

(Versión Español)

* [Cuestiones de reasentamiento derivadas de la Estrategia de Reasentamiento de Refugiados de Nueva Zelanda y diseñadas para investigar las experiencias de los refugiados a través de tres niveles de capital social: vinculación, creación de puentes y vinculación]

M / F

Edad:

Fecha llegada a Nueva Zelanda:

a. Introducción cualitativa de la entrevista
b. Revisión verbal de consideraciones éticas

Duración: 60-90 minutos

Objetivo principal: conocer a través de una conversación las experiencias de reasentamiento de refugiados colombianos después de llegar a Nueva Zelanda.

Información Introductoria (preguntas generales para que el participante se sienta cómodo)

a) ¿Cuéntame un poco sobre ti y tu familia?

b) ¿Viniste con tu familia u otras personas?

c) ¿Cuánto tiempo llevas aquí en Nueva Zelanda? ¿Qué recuerdas de tu llegada?

d) ¿Cuánto tiempo llevas en Hamilton? ¿Cómo ves a la ciudad?

1. Participación

a) ¿En qué eventos / actividades sociales has participado con tu familia desde que viniste?
   a. ¿Dónde estaban ellos? ¿Qué hiciste? ¿Qué disfrutaste de los eventos?
b) ¿En qué eventos o actividades has participado con amigos?
   a. ¿Qué hacen? ¿Qué tan seguido haces esto?
c) ¿Qué tan bien conoces a tus vecinos?
   a. ¿Qué tipo de contacto has tenido con ellos?
d) ¿Qué eventos / actividades has participado con personas colombianas?
   a. ¿Qué hiciste? ¿Dónde fue? ¿Qué disfrutas de ellos?
e) ¿Has asistido a deportes u otros eventos culturales (como conciertos)?
   a. Cuéntame más sobre esto. ¿Con quién fuiste? ¿Qué disfrutaste?
f) Como parte de tu proceso de reasentamiento, ¿qué tipo de participación has tenido con agencias u otras organizaciones formales? (Por ejemplo, Cruz Roja)

2. Salud y Bienestar

a) ¿Cuéntame cómo ha sido tu experiencia en la salud desde que te reasentaron en Nueva Zelanda?

b) Cuéntame sobre la experiencia en general sobre la salud de tu familia.

   a. ¿El reasentamiento ayudó o dificultó tu salud o la de tu familia?

c) ¿Has tenido que recurrir a un proveedor de servicios de salud (médico general, enfermera, hospital, clínica)?

   a. ¿Has necesitado información de salud (por ejemplo, sobre inoculaciones)?

   b. ¿Cómo te has comprometido con otros para obtener este servicio o información?

d) Si te sientes cómodo, ¿podrías decirme sobre tu bienestar general durante su reasentamiento (este podría ser tu bienestar físico, emocional o mental, por ejemplo, felicidad, emociones, problemas).

e) Si te has enfrentado a un problema, ¿a dónde has ido para obtener ayuda (familia, línea de salud)?

f) ¿Cómo es el bienestar general de tu familia? (que no sea la salud)?

3. Educación

a) ¿Cuál era tu nivel de educación cuando saliste de Colombia?

b) ¿Has participado en algún curso de educación o capacitación desde que estas en Nueva Zelanda?

c) Háblame sobre la participación de personas en tus instituciones (tutores, profesores, facilitadores, conferenciantes)

d) ¿Cómo encontraste el proceso de inscripción u otros sistemas en la escuela / universidad / institución?

4. Auto-eficiencia

a) ¿Cómo describirías el apoyo del gobierno u otras agencias para ayudarte a ti y /o a tu familia a tener fondos suficientes para establecerse en Hamilton, por ejemplo, WINZ (Work and Income New Zealand)?

b) ¿Cómo logras satisfacer tus necesidades básicas (por ejemplo, comida, ropa, transporte)?

c) ¿Participas en algún tipo de trabajo (no remunerado, a tiempo parcial, a tiempo completo, voluntario)?

d) ¿Qué agencias o individuos te han ayudado a ti o a tu familia a buscar / encontrar empleo?

e) Si tienes un empleo completo, ¿qué haces?

f) ¿Cómo conseguiste este trabajo? ¿Cómo te parece este trabajo (las tareas, las horas, su empleador y sus compañeros de trabajo)?

5. Vivienda

a) ¿Cómo está llenando tu casa las necesidades tuyas y de tu familia?

¿Cuéntame sobre algún problema relacionado con tu casa?

¿Qué tanto conoces a tu vecindario y las instalaciones que brinda?

¿Qué tan bien conoces a tu comunidad y a tu ciudad?

e) ¿Cómo se comunica con los demás cuando surgen problemas (por ejemplo, con el propietario de la casa si necesita reparaciones)?

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