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Refugee Families, Schools and Cultures of Dialogue

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Declaration and Copyright Statement

No portion of the work referred to in the Thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

I confirm that this Thesis is entirely my own work.

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During this period in my life, the past three years have been insightful, challenging and life changing. This unique experience has taught me a lot about myself as a person and as an academic, and whilst it has been challenging at times, I take away from this experience a stronger sense of self, confidence in my own abilities and a love for education which I hope to pass on to people throughout my life.

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In honour of my grandfather, Dr Albert Jamil Butros, retired Jordanian Ambassador to Great Britain, Ireland and Iceland, and Emeritus Professor of English, University of Jordan

(1934-present)

This research explores the inclusion, feelings, and emotions of Syrian refugee families in the British education system, and the ways in which they interact and exchange in dialogue with their new communities. It identifies the following three key components to the integration of refugee families: first, developing a strong sense of capital including, familial capital; second, securing individual autonomy and a feeling of praxis, in the form of action and self-reflection; and, finally, the presence of enabling social structures. This study provides an account of two Syrian families, living in the UK, where all three of these factors were realised. These families believed resolutely in family as integral to their lives; they developed a firm sense of agency and self-reflection; and they shared a keen drive to integrate that was complemented by social structures that supported their integration.

This distinct understanding of integration is underpinned by the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Paulo Freire and, in particular, their notions of capital praxis and dialogue. This theoretical framework informed a greater understanding of the experiences of the families and the ways in which they navigated their lives and the communities they interacted with. Indeed, this synthesis of the work of Bourdieu and Freire informed an innovative and original approach to the research in the field of refugee studies. Alongside these theoretical insights, the study drew directly on an integrative and thorough review of the existing literature in the field to identify key themes for the interviews. The research adopted qualitative research methods which allowed for the emotions and experience to be shared and encouraged dialogue and verstehen to emerge between the researcher and the participating families. Crucially, this approach to research enabled the Syrian refugee families to give voice to their positive experiences of and feelings relating to their positive integration, which are not commonplace in the literature.

Keywords: inclusion, refugees, family, culture, dialogue, Bourdieu, Freire

List of Contents

List of Figures

Introduction

This research focuses on refugee children and cultural integration in British schools and the ways in which refugee families can be effectively integrated into the social fabric of contemporary society. The research focuses on the theoretical frameworks of Pierre Bourdieu and Paulo Freire, and postulates that the contributions to the field are original due to the synthesis between the underpinnings of Bourdieu and Freire and their notions of praxis and practice and the ways in which these can be applied to refugee families settled in the UK. Moreover, the primary research findings have made contributions to the field of research in that they make an important insight into the connection between agency and structure and the roles of the individual and the wider social structures in the process of integration for refugee families, and this notion of agency is linked to the idea of praxis and practice which Bourdieu and Freire cite within their work.

This research aims to explore the cultural experiences of Syrian refugee families within the British education system, in order to understand greater, the role that praxis, dialogue and capital have in the feelings and experiences of integration which refugee families hold, and whether it is possible to culturally integrate Syrian refugee families into British society, with focus placed upon the school as a mechanism for this integration. In order to address this objective, this research answered the following sub-aims. To assess the difference between assimilation and integration, and how the latter is more useful; to explain the importance of Freire's conceptualisation of praxis, dialogue and Bourdieu's notion of capital when discussing cultural integration; to understand the importance of cultural inclusion; to capture the feelings and experiences of Syrian refugees in the United Kingdom surrounding their sense of integration. This research enters into a dialogic exchange with two refugee families and strives to illuminate the criticality of dialogue.

This research postulates that through a combination of Freire's praxis (action and self-reflection) and an increased consciousness to the forces which affect people's lives, and Bourdieu's acquisition of different forms of capital which allow people to navigate the social, cultural, and economic world around them, are suggestive of integration. In addition to this, it suggests the need for enabling social structures which support this sense of integration. This research has three key claims to advancing original contribution to the body of knowledge in refugee studies. First, it looks at refugee

families as a social unit, as opposed to parents or children alone. Second, it combines two theories which have seldom been used in tandem with, and in relation to, refugeehood. Third, it illuminates the positive nature of both host societies and especially of familial responses to refugees, a rarely examined phenomena that should be celebrated. This research is therefore offering something new to the field and the wider context through these factors and differs greatly from the pervasive research in the field which tends to focus on barriers and difficulties, from academics. Most interestingly, this research has illuminated the positive experiences of Syrian refugee families in the UK, and their strength and positivity in their sense of integration. The notion of familial capital was discussed as a concept which was not mentioned in Bourdieu's work and suggests the strength of family acts as a tool for integration, and one which the families possess and hope for in the future.

This research postulates three key components to integration, firstly, a strong sense of capital, namely familial capital, secondly, individual autonomy and a feeling of praxis, in the form of action and self-reflection, and thirdly, enabling social structures. The families held a strength of belief in family as integral to their lives, self-reflection, and individual drive to integrate, and social structures around them which supported their integration in the UK. The sense of dialogue can be drawn from the host learning from the refugee and with such dialogue it shows the fact that refugees are not the passive victims which they are deemed to be in the pervasive literature in the field. This research exemplified the ways in which the school and the local community can be characterised by cultures of dialogue and the ways in which they encourage a sense of dialogue to emerge. This dialogue between the individual and the agencies around them is pivotal, and interestingly, this research also enters into dialogue with the theories, wherein the work of Bourdieu and Freire are discussed in ways which are not commonplace within the literature. This exchange of dialogue between the researcher and the theory, and the theory with real life praxis is useful and informative because it allows for an insight into the experiences and feelings of the families discussed.

This research originated from two sources, one experiential, and the other, academic, and in both cases, one factor informed the other. The first contributing factor behind this research surrounded my own familial history with notions of refugeehood and exile. Both my maternal and paternal grandparents were Palestinian refugees exiled from their homes in the forced exodus of 1948, they were however fortunate enough to be in a position where they possessed the strong social, economic, and cultural tools or

capitals which allowed them to restart their lives in Jordan, where they sought refuge from the Israeli regime which destroyed their livelihoods. These notions of capital have been discussed at length within this thesis. Throughout my childhood, I always enjoyed listening to stories from my grandparents about the beauty, culture and richness of Palestine and their lives in Jerusalem before their exile. I grew up hearing their stories and experiences of leaving Palestine, the feelings, and emotions they felt, and the possessions left behind, such as my maternal great grandfathers' grand piano which he used to play. Both my maternal and paternal grandparents, and great grandparents left their homes with their keys close to their chests, in the hope that one day they could return, but until that day, they made their journey to Jordan, and have lived there ever since. My grandfather told me about the hope which he had about returning to Palestine, and this hope, similar to the hope of the Syrian refugees researched in this thesis, was a hope to return to their homeland, but for this never to be the case again. It is important to note that Arab culture is one of oral and spoken narrative and storytelling, and as such I found this to be a strong part of my own culture and heritage and my understanding through listening to the stories I was told as a little girl and now as a woman. These stories have resonated with me throughout my life, and as a result have allowed me to feel true empathy with the families with whom I spoke with in this research. This has given me a strong sense of connectedness and a hope to capture their narrative, feelings, and experiences for others to listen to and understand.

I found through this research the parallels which were drawn between my grandparent's experiences and those of the refugee families interviewed in this research. I discovered similar experiences and narratives and found that the comparisons drawn, denote to the similar experiences, narrative, and feelings between the Palestinian refugees in 1948, and the Syrian refugees interviewed within my research. These connections felt chilling, saddening, and insightful and illuminated and confirmed the realisation of the cyclical nature and the similar feelings and emotions experienced by refugees throughout the ages. Whilst it is significant to note the importance of not homogenising refugee experiences, and drawing similarities between the two, and the experiences of Syrian refugees akin to those of the people of Palestine in 1948. As a result of this, the notion of verstehen has been discussed at great length within this research and has played an integral role in the process of undertaking and analysing the primary research. This term raises challenges, because the concept of verstehen, and the notion of empathy and understanding for others can be best

achieved through discussions with people who have personal experiences with the issues at hand, and through listening to and understanding the social and cultural nuances of the social group which a researcher is studying. Therefore, the paralinguistic features can help in understanding more about what a person is saying, through more than simply listening to what they are saying, but what the gesticulation, sighing and phrases mean on a deeper level, in turn allowing the researcher to be truly au fait with the responses of the families. As such, this research is moulded upon three factors, spoken narrative and verstehen, familial experiences, and first-hand experience with refugee families within a school setting.

Secondly, this project was generated from my own experiences wherein I witnessed first-hand; the potential challenges faced by families resettling in British society through my volunteer work with Syrian refugee families through the local council in my area. I supported the families, visited them, and spent some time in a school with an Arabic speaking year three refugee child with work around English as an additional language. The impetus behind this was the experience of working in a school with an Arabic speaking year three child who struggled with acculturating into the new school and community with issues around language acquisition, communication with peers and teachers which posed as a challenge, and the parental inability to communicate with the school, without the help of myself or the Arabic speaking Council hired teaching assistant who was also at their disposal. This raised questions in relation to their dialogue with the school, their ability to communicate, the cultural and social barriers faced on a daily basis, the sense of agency possessed by the families, and the extent to which this is necessary for their sense of integration. This experience informed and contributed to the interests of the researcher to the notions of this research after interacting with the child, their teacher and parents and observing the ways in which they interact with one another.

With all these seemingly challenging barriers in place, the family I worked with was optimistic, held a strong desire to integrate and connect with their new community, and ambition, and this in turn encouraged thought around the mechanisms at play within the social structures which existed around the families. As such, I saw first-hand how strong their sense of agency was in the form of their desire to be part of life in the UK, have their children play a strong and active role in school life, and their ambitions for the future, and the desire for their daughter to go to university. This was coupled with the strong social structures around the family which I witnessed through the help of the

school, the local Council, and local volunteers in the community, and this encouraged thought around the extent to which their integration is possible with these factors in mind. As a result, for this instance, I saw the significance of agency and autonomy in people's lives and the importance of structures around them which allow them to be autonomous and supported in their daily lives.

This alongside my own personal and familial history of diaspora status through my maternal and paternal grandparents and their expulsion from Palestine by the Israeli regime in 1948, this gave me the drive to research this issue on a contemporary scale, and understand the direct feelings, emotions and experiences of refugee families settled in the UK. I decided to look at the notion of strangerhood amongst refugee children in the British education system for my MA, and this laid the foundation for the development of my research at PhD level. In my MA thesis, I took the position of Zygmunt Bauman and applied his work to the field of refugee studies particularly of Syrian refugees in the UK, and this framework was developed in my PhD through the observation of theorists which have been influenced by Marxism, with a stake for originality founded in the amalgamation of the theoretical frameworks of Bourdieu and Freire in relation to praxis, dialogue, capital, and refugee families.

It is important to convey the point, however, that this research utilises the concepts offered by Bourdieu and Freire and draws upon them in order to question the dominant assumptions which saturate the refugee experience, namely the notion that their experiences are inherently negative, as this research offers a different perspective. Therefore, it is important to make the distinction that this research is not simply about Freire and Bourdieu alone but making use of their theories to contextualise the refugee experience and in fact bucks the pervasive trend in the literature. More contemporary theories such as intersectionality give examples of the ways in which the theories of Bourdieu and Freire can be used on a contemporary scale and the ways in which the two theories can be interlinked and work hand in hand to understand the key issues which refugees face and the ways in which they can be addressed.

This research explores the cultural experiences of two Syrian refugee families within the British education system, in order to understand the role that praxis and capital have in their experiences of integration, and whether cultural integration is possible, with focus placed upon the school as a mechanism for this integration. The families and their backgrounds have been discussed in the following chapters, but both families came

from Syria and travelled through Jordan in order to seek refuge and escape the hardship and persecution faced in their home country, their names are Karim and Yasmin, a mother and father to a son aged three, and three daughters, aged seven, twelve and fifteen. Yasmin was a stay-at-home mother in Syria and Karim worked as an accountant. Hassan and Nijmeh are a couple older in age, with two daughters, one who is twelve and the other who is in her mid-twenties, who recently moved to the UK and lives with her husband and children. Nijmeh was a stay-at-home mother and Hassan worked in sales. Both families came from Jordan, under the United Kingdom's Home Office Resettlement Scheme in 2016.

Why Pierre Bourdieu and Paulo Freire?

This thesis combines the theoretical frameworks of Pierre Bourdieu and Paulo Freire in order to understand if connections can be made between the educational experiences of Syrian refugee families and their feelings of integration, as such, a combination of Freire's praxis, and an increased consciousness to the forces which affect people's lives, and Bourdieu's acquisition of different forms of capital which allow people to navigate the social, cultural, and economic world around them, are suggestive of integration. The main themes from this research, and notions which have been explored, are feelings and emotions, aspirations and preconceptions, culture, integration capital, the school, agency, and structure and belonging. These themes have been important in shaping the research and were derived from literature in the field and developed during the primary research which has been undertaken.

Bourdieu and Freire were chosen due to the unique and interesting synthesis which the two theorists presented, particularly when applied to relation to refugee studies and the concepts of practice and praxis were reflected in both theorists. Practice is central for Bourdieu and provides the individual with guidance on how to behave in any give circumstance and is defined as a 'subjective but not individual system of internalized structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group or class and constituting the precondition for all objectification and apperception...' Bourdieu 1972; 1977: 86). Freire takes praxis as the collaboration of reflection and action to transform the social structures present within society which perpetuate inequality, wherein he states that praxis is 'the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it' (Freire, 1996: 60). Both theorists

use their conceptualisation to lay the foundation for revolutionary practice, which can help in achieving equality and lifting the potential institutional barriers. The work of Bourdieu and Freire is particularly relevant to this study, and their understandings of praxis and practice shape the theoretical underpinning and the understanding of the research itself. Practice and praxis act as tools to understand the actions and behaviours which the families within this research exhibited, and the ways in which they utilised practice and praxis as a source to navigate their new communities. Moreover, the understanding of dialogue, as provided by Freire, has allowed for an understanding of the importance of voice and dialogue as a tool for discussion and for understanding the feelings and experiences of the families within this research, this notion of dialogue has shown the significance of community partnership. Moreover, Bourdieu's descriptions of field have been utilised within the context of this research as the field for which the inclusion of refugee families has taken place, as well as the significance of community dialogue and partnership to act as a strong support mechanism for effective integration.

The key findings from this research illuminate the positivity reflected by the families through the semi-structured interviews which were utilised as a tool to interview them. The families had a strong sense of awareness of the issues and barriers which they face and may face in the future such as, for example, language and access to the various capitals such as social connections and financial capital. Links can be established between refugee families, their praxis and the capitals which are needed to navigate the social world. One argues that this sense of praxis is integral to the dialogue and sense of inclusion which can be fostered with, by and through the families from their social situation in order for their successful integration. The families cited the local community as friendly and welcoming, with views which are contrary to much of the research in the field which labels refugee experiences as negative and points to the need for societal reform. This research does not aim to undermine or discount these findings but offers a contrary view which places it in a more positive light in relation to the refugee experiences, compared to the research in the field.

Notions of religious language were noticed within this study, and the role religion plays in the lives of the Syrian families as a form of reassurance. It was highlighted that the families must begin to acquire the social and cultural nuances of society in order to allow their family as a whole to integrate, to allow for capital advancement, transferability, and a strong navigation through the social world. Moreover, this study

argues that without a strong sense of agency, coupled with enabling social structures, this prospect would be increasingly more challenging. One of the key themes identified in this research is the significant relationship between power and dialogue and sense of inclusion which can be fostered with, by and through the families. Moreover, agency and structure come into play because this research aimed to enable a traditionally perceived vulnerable social group, to have a sense of ownership for their narrative, agency, and voice and this encouraged their sense of dialogue and inclusion, in and with the local community. Therefore, their autonomy plays an integral role in their sense of integration and their ability to do so, linked to Freire's notions of freedom and liberation from societal shackles. Interestingly, the two families felt they had the autonomy to choose the values which they wanted and which they did not, this encouraged their sense of autonomy and can be linked to agency and structure.

This research has also linked the notion of 'familial capital' to the work of Bourdieu, which has not been discussed or identified by him in his work.   Whilst this sense of familial capital has been used by Tara Yosso in her 2005 piece of critical race theory which highlights the theme of cultural capital and the ways in which cultural knowledge is fostered and cultivated by family. This paper uses the term familial capital in the context of the cultural capital which students experience. Therefore, whilst this concept has been discussed in the field, it has in this research been applied to refugee families and their feelings of integration and linked to Bourdieu's notions of capital. This notion of family is a key theme within the research and was identified as a strong factor within Arab culture, and as such has a pivotal role in the lives of the families wherever they settled. As a result, there has been an identification of the synthesis between autonomy, strong familial capital and enabling and liberating social structures which encourage refugee integration, and many of the research outcomes were framed upon the themes which emerged from the literature review.

Shapiro (2018:342) highlights the term familial capital and the ways in which it 'contributes to the educational aspirations and achievements of refugee-background students'. Moreover, Gofen (2009:115) defines familial capital as 'the ensemble of means, strategies, and resources embodied in the family's way of life that influences the future of their children [and] is implicitly and explicitly reflected through behavior, emotional processes, and core values'. Yosso (2005:77-80) finds that familial capital is a manifestation of 'community cultural wealth', moreover, this social and cultural

knowledge is built into the family structure and acts as a foundation for other capitals. This idea of familial capital explains the links between the social and cultural significance of the family as a source of strength and resource which can be honed upon as a support mechanism. The definitions provided by Shapiro (2018) Yosso, (2005 and (Gofen 2009) are interesting and discuss the nuances of familial capital, but this does not detract from the originality of this research which understands the conceptualisation of familial capital in relation to Syrian refugee families and their experiences. Trauma discourse seemed to be a prolific theme within the field of refugee studies, inclusion and education, and academics such as Jill Rutter, state that the field has become saturated by this notion of trauma discourse, yet this research holds a very different candle, with positivity framing the thesis. The families held views which differ greatly from research which exists within the field and provides an opportunity to think of these theories and approaches anew, especially utilising the underpinnings of Freire and Bourdieu in a positive light, not rejecting them, but using and thinking of them anew. The outcomes were surprising because the researcher expected negativity from the participants based upon the research which has been undertaken and exists in the field, as such the positive contrast was surprising and insightful. The notions of Bourdieu and Freire are class-based and surround experiences of inequality, yet this research postulates that with a strong sense of praxis and individual agency, and a sense of a self-managed life, coupled with enabling social structures, that the families are able to integrate themselves into the society which they are joining and this liberation would allow them to engage with the capitals needed in society which are dependent on the social conditions which they existed within. Moreover, one could argue that the theoretical framework was perhaps negative in light of the findings which were coherently positive, yet the use of this theoretical framework dispels the myth that all refugee experiences are negative and bucks that trend. It also suggests that whilst these theories are useful in understanding inequalities which exist within society, they can also be used to combat myths of inequality amongst certain social groups, whilst providing a framework which allows for this.

1.1. *A brief history of the Syrian conflict*

The conflict has been ongoing since the Spring of 2011 and started out as a demonstration which called for reform, this rapidly descended into a Civil War with violence and aggression, which drew attention from 'regional and extra-regional forces.'

The rebel forces have so far been ineffective in toppling the Assad regime and Tan and Perudin (2019:1) state that:

> 'there has been a fierce sectarian contest between the Shiite forces led by Iran and the Sunni camp backed by Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Qatar; the entry of the Islamic State (ISIS) into Iraq and Syria; Kurdish fighters' participation; and Western and Russian military intervention. The Assad regime has received strong external support from Iran and Russia and indirect support from China. Their support has enabled the Syrian forces to maintain control over key populated areas, regain some lost territories, and resume a position of strength to negotiate for peace, should it choose to do so'.

The Assad regime has been defined as corrupt with a culture of cronyism and bias, and this favourable approach to the Alawites lost support from the Sunni majority in Syria and the regime has no interest in standing down because this would be to its detriment. Its strategy includes the use of chemical weapons, air attacks on civilian localities and this 'further alienates it from the populace' (Ford, 2019:6). As a result of the success of protests across Egypt and Tunisia, demonstrations began across Syria in March 2011. A draconian response to the majority peaceful protests began in Daraa and this was 'the spark that ignited the conflict' (Ford, 2019:3).

The successful uprising of 2011 marked the start of the Arab Spring, which resulted in the toppling of the Tunisian and Egyptian presidents, and this in turn gave hope to the pro-democracy activists in Syria. Peaceful protests began in Syria and as a result of this, fifteen boys were detained for their support of the Arab Spring, as well as an aggressive response from President Bashar al-Assad who retaliated by killing and imprisoning hundreds of demonstrators. In July of 2011, members of the military announced the formation of the Free Syrian Army, which was a ren bel group which set up a coup which aimed at overthrowing the government, this resulted into the descent of the Civil War. Many of the protests in 2011, were predominantly non-sectarian, the armed conflict raised increasingly polarised sectarian divisions across the country. The majority of the Muslims in Syria are Sunni, but the security establishment has been dominated by the Alawi sect, of which Assad identifies. The regional actors at play such as majority Shia countries like Iran, Iraq and Lebanon have been in support of the Assad regime, while countries with Sunni-majorities such as Qatar, Turkey and Saudi Arabia have been in support of the anti-Assad rebels. Since 2016, the Turkish troops have unleashed various

operations against the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) near its borders, in addition to Turkish groups who were armed by the United States. Moreover, the US armed anti-Assad rebel groups and led international coalition bombings on ISIL targets since 2014 (Al-Jazeera, 2018).

There were many factors which contributed to the descent into Civil War, and these included the contagion effects of the Arab Spring revolts in Tunisia and Egypt, the displeasure around the ways in which the government responded to the drought years of 2007-10 and the protests in the towns of Damascus which meant that circumstantially, those who were less socioeconomically stable were more likely to protest. The effects of this devastated the country, and the severe drought caused as many as 1.5 million people to migrate from the countryside to the cities and this contributed to the exacerbation of both social unrest and poverty (Ford, 2019:3). The nature of the conflict shifted from 'a battle not only for accountability but for absolute power' (Ford, 2019:3), and as a result of this, and the fight became more sectarian with an increasingly notable presence of Sunni extremists who fought alongside the more moderate factions of the opposition. The response from the West was provision of a limited set of material aids to groups among the armed opposition and this was done in order to put pressure on the Assad regime to negotiate (Ford 2019).

Refugee status, diaspora, and forced migration has existed for thousands of years, despite this, the field of refugee studies which focuses on forced migration and the livelihoods of those involuntarily defined as refugees, dates back as early as the 1980s. The formal study of refugees has grown and gained traction out of a well-founded need for greater 'systematic analysis' of the issue at hand, and Mason (1991:2) highlighted the need for a 'refugee cycle' starting from the flight which a family takes to their new communities, ending at the day in which a solution is found, yet this is a very complex issue, and one also argues that the nature of refugeehood works in itself in a cyclical nature. However, from the perspective of the researcher, in order to gain a greater insight into the research problem, there exist a numerous number which contribute to the creation of the refugee problem. The areas which can be addressed or examined, include, but are not limited to, 'the myriad factors that create refugee and forced migration flows, the motivations for leaving, the coping skills of refugees and forced migrants, the political and legal framework for receiving refugees, the role played by the international refugee regime, the adaptation and integration process in host countries and in refugee camps, the psychological impact of relocation and exposure to violence,

gender and age differences, the physical, social and economic impact of refugee populations on host countries, the factors influencing the decision to repatriate to a country of origin' (Mason, 1991:2).

Due to the interdisciplinary nature of this research area, a comprehensive analysis of the field requires the researcher to look at the theoretical frameworks and methodological approaches which cover a variety of disciplines within the social sciences, law, and medicine (Mason, 1991), this extends to philosophical underpinnings due to the versatility of the subject area, and the relevance of the refugee problem to a variety of social, political, philosophical, and economic arenas. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) (2018) society is now 'witnessing the highest levels of displacement on record' and statistic show an unprecedented number of 70.8 million people around the world, who have been forced from their homes, a breakdown of these statistics shows that of that number, 25.9 million refugees are under the age of 18. In regard to the crisis in Syria more specifically, over 5.6 million people have fled the nation since the conflict in 2011. People have sought safety and refuge in neighbouring Middle Eastern states and countries which have taken in a significant number of refugees include Jordan, Lebanon, and Iraq, with European resettlement in countries like Germany, the United Kingdom and Scandinavian nations.

Millions more families have been displaced within Syria itself, with around 13.1 million in need of help, around 6.6 million internally displaced people, and 2.98 people in hard to reach and besieged areas (UNHCR, 2018). According to Filippo Grandi, the High Commissioner for the UNHCR, 'Syria is the biggest humanitarian and refugee crisis of our time, a continuing cause of suffering for millions which should be garnering a groundswell of support around the world'. Past and present refugee crises raised concern within society as a whole, and this heightened concern for refugees and forced migrants manifested itself in academia in a variety of ways. The first impact was the production of a spate of scholarly publications, these ranged from monographs to journal articles since the 1980s (Mason, 1991:1). In addition to these academic developments, the influx of publications launched the Journal of Refugee Studies in the 1988, and greater awareness of the problems faced by refugees, through an increased number of academic courses across a variety of universities, and an increased number of conferences convened, which brought greater attention to the phenomenon of forced migration. The Middle East is a complex region with factors which have contributed to its demise in recent years ranging from Western intervention to

radicalisation and extremism. As a result, its nation states have faced adversity in a myriad of ways, but for the purposes of this research, Syria and its troubles have been the primary focus due to the nature of the research. It is important to note that the complexity of the region must be considered within the research as the primary factor for the resettlement of thousands of refugee families across the Arab world and Europe, and the regional complexities which exist in these various areas of the world.

In order to flee the crisis, millions of Syrians have escaped across borders and fled the conflicts which have threatened their families and devastated their livelihoods. According to a BBC article written in 2014, Turkey hosts 3.3 million refugees, the most significant number across the globe, neighbouring countries such as Lebanon, settled more than a million Syrian refugees, many of whom have little to no financial resources or security. In addition, around 70% of people are living below the poverty line living in various urban and rural communities across the country. Jordan has housed over 655,000 refugees registered with the United Nations, 80% of whom live outside the camps, 139,000 found sanctuary within the Zaatari and Azraq refugee camps, with 93% of refugees living below the poverty line. Moreover, Iraq hosted 246,000 refugees, and Egypt 126,000. Whilst refugee families have been able to seek refuge during these unprecedented times of hardship, the consequences of the Civil War have been both grave and tragic for the people of Syria. In 2014, it was reported that the forced migration observed, was one of the most significant forced mass exoduses since the Second World War (BBC, 2014, UNHCR, 2020).

Arab culture, more specifically Syrian culture differs significantly from that of the Western World, namely the United Kingdom, and this contrasting cultural chasm means that dialogue is even more essential for the successful integration of Syrian families in British society. The main difference between the two nations is the importance and significance of religion in the lives of their citizens, in Syria, Islam is the predominant religion, and religion significantly comprises the identity, culture and approaches to life of many of its citizens, polarised with a Christian, arguably shifting to an increasingly non-religious or secular society in the United Kingdom. As a result of these differences, it is important for a mutual and communicational cultural understanding to be present within the society's which Syrian refugee families are joining, and the communities in which they are integrating. Haller (2003) finds that there are two significant reasons for why the relationship between the Arab world and Europe need to be considered as important in the modern world, and this is due to the process of globalisation, and the

increasing connection 'between countries and continents…in terms of economic exchanges and flow of communications through the modern mass media, business, and private travel, and through cultural and scientific exchanges' (Haller, 2003:227). They cite the 'significance of cultural similarity or dissimilarity', and this means that the images of the self and the other are dependent upon the extent to which similarity or difference between the intersection of an individual's culture and that of the other. The more akin the cultures of two countries are to one another in terms of their language, religions, and background, the:

> 'higher the probability of a positive mutual perception and evaluation; the more different the cultures are, the higher the probability of a considerable distance to each other, or even of mutual devaluation and trust'.

(Haller, 2003:229).

Interestingly, he notes the typologies of relations between different countries and cultures, and there are two dimensions to this scheme, the extent of equality or inequality between two countries regarding their socio-economic development. This suggests the degree to which there is parity between one nation and another, and the second relates to the similarities and differences in regard to their culture. He suggests that countries with greater similarities, who exchange similar dialogue, develop at similar rates, and face similar challenges and cultural patterns to one another, have relationships and experiences which intersect in many ways. Context is integral, and whilst we can observe the cultural differences between Western nations, and their Middle Eastern counterparts, historical relations, particularly the negative, are retained within the 'collective memory' of people within the regions of West Asia and North African (WANA). Centuries of colonialism, military subjugation and economic exploitation of countries in the MENA region can be observed throughout history, by imperialists in Europe, and within this, Britain features alongside countries like France, Portugal and Italy (Haller, 2003:231). Arguably, this subjugation remains in the collective memory of the nations which were affected and contributes to perceptions which communities and cultures have around certain countries in the Western world. As a result, this is one of the reasons behind the questions which were asked to the families surrounding this notion and the impact this perception has on a family's ability to integrate into the society in which they join. This has been discussed in greater detail in the following chapters.

This history of colonialism left a significant impact on these countries, and is not easily forgotten, nor should it be. This issue arises when we observe the glaring cultural chasms, which are heightened by feelings of resentment and hostility from the people of the region and their political elites, towards the West whose interference in the Middle East has continued into the modern world. This widens the possibility of sharing similarities whether cultural or otherwise and creates challenges for closing the gap between nations. However, this research argues that with a combination of a strong sense of praxis and practice from the individuals and enabling social structures which allow for a stronger sense of integration, these potentially historic barriers are ameliorated. Haller (2003:234) suggests basic socio-cultural characteristics which comprise the Arab world and Europe and cites Christianity as one of these features alongside the 'universal' aims of 'economic growth through economic integration' and securing democracy within individual countries and the retention of peaceful relations between them. He argues here that these factors are of critical interest to many countries and a 'value clash' of cultures would be difficult. Within the Arab world, he finds that cultural unity comes from a common religion and language, and one argues that when this cultural unity is lessened, the prospect of integration becomes more challenging.

1.2. _Overview of the thesis_

This thesis is constructed in a traditional sociological way, and as such, compiles, an introduction, a literature review chapter, a methodology chapter, two findings chapters with analysis and a conclusion. A breakdown of each of these chapters have allowed for the structure to be illuminated, as well as providing an insight into the following chapter content.

The introduction chapter provides an overview of the thesis and what to expect from its content, including aims and objectives, the rationale and influence of the research, the proposed and desired hopes, and aspirations for this research. It also looks at how it hopes to be appreciated, and the ambitions and findings and a brief history of the conflict in Syria for context.

Following this, the literature review chapter consists of a theoretical review of the frameworks of Pierre Bourdieu and Paulo Freire, the two theorists who have been couched into this research. Bourdieu's notions of habitus, field, practice and capital, and

Freire's concepts of dialogue, voice and praxis have been discussed in tandem and as entities in themselves. This chapter then follows on to a discussion of the integration of Bourdieu and Freire's work and the ways in which they can be linked to refugee experiences.

The second aspect of this literature review focuses on an integrative approach which observes key concepts derived from the literature in the field around refugee studies, inclusion, and education, with discussions around notions of assimilation versus integration, the oversaturation of the trauma discourse and culture as themes.

Finally, it focuses on refugee policy which exists around refugee families, and the ways in which research and policy can contribute to the welfare and integration of refugee families in order to guarantee support and provision in a variety of facets, such as in education, in employment and in healthcare as examples.

The second chapter surrounds the methodological approach taken to the research, this once again begins with an overview of the aims, objectives, and impact, which underlie the research and its approach, followed by an overview of the qualitative research method chosen for this research. This section begins with a discussion of the merits in piloting the research, process and findings, the research instrument, the significance of dialogic interviewing, notions of verstehen and reflexive sociology, the conceptual operationalisation of the key themes in this primary research and a discussion of the key themes and research questions.

The methods chapter also includes a discussion of the ethical barriers faced by the researcher, and potentially posed by the research, and the ways in which they have been ameliorated and alleviated, issues such as access to a vulnerable social group, confidentiality and data storage, sample size, source, and selection. Finally, this chapter observes the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme in which the families are situated, and the indicators of integration framework which has been utilised as a method of measuring the extent to which the families have been integrated based upon this framework, finishing finally, with a discussion on data analysis and presentation.

The next chapter focuses on the primary research findings and analysis from this research, and these were surprising, insightful, and unique to the field of refugee studies, and depicted a very different view of refugee feelings and experiences in

comparison to the pervasive literature and research which exists in the field. As such, this interesting discovery has been discussed at length during these chapters, and the discussion has been broken down by the themes and questions discussed within the interviews, as well as sections on adaptations for future interviews.

Finally, the concluding chapter encapsulates the discussions throughout, and provides recommendations for the future roles of refugees themselves and the agencies which exist around them in the process of their integration. Moreover, it highlights the utility of the theoretical framework and underpinnings discussed in this thesis, and the future scope for further research on the cultural and social integration of Syrian refugee families in the UK.

Chapter One: Literature Review

1.3.   Research aims and objectives

This study aims to explore the cultural experiences of Syrian refugee families within the British education system, in order to understand greater, the role that praxis, dialogue and capital have in the experiences of integration which refugee families hold, and whether it is possible to culturally integrate Syrian refugee families into British society, with focus placed upon the school as a mechanism for this integration. The primary aim of the research is to explore notions of praxis, practice, and capital in relation to refugee families and the school, in order for effective integration to take place. In order to address this objective, this research has answered the following sub-aims (Figure 1: Research aims, and sub aims).

This chapter has reviewed the literature and encapsulated both an integrative and theoretical review of the work in the field, because it highlights the current and existing literature within the field of refugee studies, education and integration and has looked at a variety of sources in order to gain a deeper understanding of the research currently available in the field and highlighted the existing gaps which can be filled with this research. In addition, it includes a comprehensive analysis of the theoretical framework and a justification for the rationale behind this decision. Moreover, it raises questions around the inadequacy of current theoretical frameworks for explaining Syrian refugees as a research problem – through combining the theoretical frameworks of Pierre Bourdieu and Paulo Freire in order to understand the issue, through a lens of praxis, and capital. These theories and the theoretical framework have been influenced by Marxist thinking and take their starting point from Marx. This research has also delved into the notion of intersectionality and the ways in which Bourdieu's work traverses with this contemporary theory and integrates with the non-contemporary. Due to its pertinence as a social, cultural, and political issue, this review has also engaged with current legislation regarding Syrian refugee children and families on both a national and international scale.

This interdisciplinary research combines the work of a broad and diverse range of theorists and their theoretical frameworks, and this has been heavily substantiated by research which has developed the field and informed the knowledge paradigm for

centuries. The research field of refugee studies is ever growing, adapting, and increasing its data and synthesis and as such it can be challenging to situate research within the paradigm and highlight the extent to which it elevated and contributed to the wider field of study. However, in order to do so, the work of Paulo Freire and Pierre Bourdieu in relation to culture and praxis has been paralleled, and this combined with an understanding of the existing literature in the field provided both an interesting and original discussion of refugee families and the potential for integration. In order to achieve this, the work of Bourdieu on field, capital and practice, and Freire on praxis and conscientisation has been discussed in order to understand what mechanisms can be put in place in order to promote an equalised educational playing field for refugee families. When using the term mechanism, one understands that it is a contested term but is understood on the basis of Merton's description of social mechanisms which are deemed to have 'designated consequences for parts of the social structure', and by extension, one must identify mechanisms in society which do not function (Merton 1968:43-44). Therefore, it is paramount to highlight how this research is situated within the wider research field, and its relevance can be underpinned by the gaps which exist within contemporary research on the refugee problem. The concepts have been discussed in tandem because they overlap and inform one another due to their relational connection to refugee families and cultural integration, and herein lies the originality and significance of this research.

Rutter and Jones (2003) emphasise the importance of multi-education which is prepared for the ongoing celebration of linguistic and cultural diversity, and secondly to improve provision for ethnic minority groups, and to prepare children from the dominant culture within a community for life in a multi-ethnic and multicultural society. In addition, Asikainen (1996, cited in Rutter, 2003) argues that the refugee narrative is essential in mobilising the collective memory and the shared vision of society through encouraging a sense of collective experience amongst refugee families, supporting them through their transition as they establish a new identity as a refugee, alongside encouraging a greater feeling of togetherness through exile and adjusting to feelings of refugeehood. This research finds that three components are key to integration, including familial capital, action, and self-reflection, with a strong sense of agency, and enabling social structures which provide support mechanisms in place and a means of integration.

Therefore,   without an understanding of praxis for encouraging dialogue and
cultural integration in schools and a possession of Bourdieu's four forms of capital,
integration is an impossibility due to the inherent and underlying social inequality which
exists in society.   The work of Rutter and Jones (2003) shows the school as an
essential mechanism for   cultural support and the relationships between schools and
refugee families. Therefore,   schools must endeavour to be more culturally   adept
and place the cultural needs of refugee children at the forefront of the refugee's school
experience through creating a healthy and open dialogue between the child, the
parents, and the school then a needs-based communicational understanding can be
established. This notion is useful because the need for capital becomes less of an issue
because different cultures are celebrated, and therefore capital advantage becomes less
of an issue. This research offers a new insight into cultural integration as it endeavours
to assess the extent to which schools operate in a dialogical way when addressing
refugee families, and the research hypothesises that without both an understanding of
and a presence of praxis amongst refugee families, and dialogue in schools, Syrian
refugee children and families cannot be integrated into the moral and social fabric of a
society due to the inherent inequality which exists. With this, a strong sense of agency
must be identified, alongside these social structures which are enabling to refugee
families.

1.4.   *An integrative review of the literature: existing research in the field*

The theoretical frameworks of Bourdieu and Freire have been highlighted first, in order
to allow for an investigation around the existing literature in the field and an
understanding of where this study fits into the wider research field. Moreover, it has
strived to further understand in greater detail whether the discourses around refugee
trauma, integration and culture ring true to the experiences of refugees, further
corroborating why this research is important.

1.5.   *Assimilation versus integration*

Hynie (2018) states that integration 'in its broadest sense, refers to inclusion and
participation, both economically and socially', whilst she acknowledges that there is no
single definition of the term integration, as echoed by Ager and Strang 2008; Robinson,
1998). Sam and Berry (2010:5) define acculturation as 'the congregation between two
cultural groups, which results in the progression of cultural transformation, and mental
and emotional alteration'. In addition, Ward (2013) defines integration as the full

assimilation of migrants into the new culture, and Berry (2006) highlights acculturation theory and an integration which involves equal socio-cultural participation. There is discussion around the extent to which assimilation or integration are more useful terms to be used to describe interactions with new communities, and interestingly Berry (2003) discusses the modes to acculturation, firstly, the extent to which a person values maintaining their own cultural identity and customs, and second is the extent to which it is important to establish 'intercultural' contact with other communities. Berry's work interestingly highlights that integration occurs when cultural maintenance and contact are negotiated successfully. This understanding has been criticised and academics such as Kim (2008) find that acculturation is a process which is gradual and takes place over time and references the 'intercultural transformation' which takes place.

Alba and Nee (2003) define assimilation, however, as the multifaceted process by which an individual's cultural and social boundaries are reduced and become blurred or dissolved (Alba and Nee 2003; Rumbaut 2015). This definition, therefore, suggests a less inclusive approach to cultural identity because it implies that an individual is expected to dilute their culture and identity to fit into the mainstream. However, the term integration allows for a more inclusive and overarching amalgamation of culture, whereby a person can retain their own sense of culture and identity whilst considering the cultures of the wider community. Ager and Strang (2008) identify ten core domains which assist in understanding concepts of integration, these include sectors of employment, education, housing and health practices in regard to citizenship as well as tight social connections, language barriers and cultural understanding. They identify that their framework for integration provides a basis for understanding the extent of integration within various social contexts. Integration is therefore a more useful term to be used within the context of refugee resettlement, because the term integration is suggestive of a more inclusive environment which strikes a balance between sharing and adopting the values of the host community, whilst also preserving values which a person wants to retain from their own familial history and cultural identity.

Research by Inglehart and Norris (2009) explores the extent to which migrants bring values and cultures with them, which contribute to the society which they are joining; they discuss whether or not they obtain the culture of their host nation. They highlight that long-term social and cultural values show signs of altering in a way of conformity in tandem with the dominant culture in which they exist. In relation to the presence of a refugee child and their family within a formal school setting, and the underlying cultural

capital which exists within the school as an example of Bourdieu's notion of field, wherein diluted values assist in culturally integrating because a child and their family compromise their own norms, values, and mindset to match the broader societal standards. Yet, competition still exists pertaining to the access of capital, therefore, arguably, social inequality reigns supreme and this has been discussed in this study. This addresses the research aim of understanding the difference between integration and assimilation because the latter term is suggestive of a culture of dilution, one which is not absolute or resolute in its acceptance of the values which refugee families bring with them. As such, research must endeavour to seek clarity on this issue and the extent to which assimilation is less useful than integration when understanding refugee families and feelings of integration.

Rutter and Jones (1998:2) poignantly state that the presence of refugees within the British education system reveals the underlying problems that have always existed within society, but whose prevalence is becoming more apparent. Subsequently, these issues are brought to the forefront of collective thinking and alerts society to the issues which it faces. She states that 'refugee children are about as old as education itself in the English context'. Yet, from a policy facing perspective, the resources available in order to meet the many diverse needs of refugees is never enough, however, it is easy to revert to the ideology that refugee children and their families are a 'problem' or 'social issue'. Whilst refugee children have various needs, they bring with them social and cultural diversity which enriches the learning and understanding of the school and the collective wider community. Therefore, if children bring positivity into the school environment, and the classroom on a micro scale, we must ask ourselves what barriers prevent potential from being utilised and integration from being achieved.

For refugees to feel integrated and part of the wider society they need to be seen as part of the collective, but also not homogenised and clustered as a group of refugees, this research hopes to investigate this notion and understand the juxtaposed position which refugees are placed in through being part of the collective cohort, and individuals in themselves. According to Alba and Lee (cited in Inglehart and Norris, 2009:30), the key to assimilation is 'the role of human capital, social networks, and the institutional arrangements of the state and labour market'. They find that migrants with well-established social norms and values continue to hold them throughout their lives as a result of childhood socialisation and the particularistic values of the home environment.

This research adopts a Bourdieusian outlook on the issue and cites capital as a tool for assimilating into society. Since individual identity is shaped and moulded by social factors such as community, shared history, language, religion and traditions, society needs to understand the significant influence of these factors on an individual's life.

This study has engaged with the theoretical frameworks of Bourdieu and Freire as an innovative approach to praxis, capital, and integration. Unlike the research of Alba and Lee (2009) which focuses heavily on migrants as opposed to refugees, the originality of this study lies in its attempt at understanding the feelings and emotions of refugee families and the usefulness of praxis as a tool for integration and cultural dialogue. However, whilst it suggests that conformity is common amongst migrants, particularly those who move for economic or social motives, the idea of choice should be noted as a critical element, because refugee status is not as a result of choice but due to the wider political and social contexts in which an individual or family falls victim, and in this instance, Bauman would describe refugees as 'collateral victims' of living in a globalised and increasingly precarious world (Bauman, 2011).

Refugees have encountered feelings of trauma and mistrust in their homelands, but also around the asylum system and in the communities in which they seek asylum, they have also experienced negative attitudes which have been directed towards them (Bauman 2002; Pinson and Arnot 2010; Pinson, Arnot, and Candappa 2010; Bauman, 2011; MacDonald 2017; Taylor and Ravinder 2012). Research has identified the negative experiences of refugees before, during and after the asylum-seeking process, but interestingly, the families interviewed have shown a very different perception of refugee experience and have offered a new insight into their feelings and experiences of inclusion.

Stuart Hall (1996) argues that an increasingly globalised world has led to greater labour migration, and this in turn has meant that both unemployment and inequality have increased as a result. Moreover, he cites the erosion of the national societal identity, or the collective self which has been replaced with a culture of homogeneity, and as such, new identities are formed, and hybrid cultures are established. According to this statement, there is a strengthening of the national identity of refugees and ethnic minorities in order to combat the globalised world, and living in a precarious and uncertain state, where values are at risk of modification and dilution. In addition, he cites the existing cultural juxtaposition wherein different cultures and ways of life exist

in the same neighbourhood which causes a cultural schism within the local community (cited in Rutter, 2003; Sidhu et al, 2011; Taylor and Sidhu, 2012). Moreover, Inglehart and Norris (2009:18), find that significant differences are noticeable amongst migrants themselves, namely between Muslims and their Western counterparts, such as issues surrounding the acceptance of sexual liberation and the parity between men and women. The research poignantly highlights how 'tolerance is a particularly crucial aspect of a democratic political culture' but one must argue whether democratic societies exhibit the tolerance which Inglehart and Norris cite as central. This raises interesting questions around the dual nationality and the dual sense of belonging which the families feel, due to their sense of belonging in Syria as their homeland, Jordan as the first country they sought refuge, and the UK, the place where they have now set up their lives within their new communities.

As such, the existing cultural polarities can cause demagogues to exacerbate the hatred between particular social groups, between the stranger and their counterpart, and one could argue that this heightens the possibility of social anti-assimilation, however, if agencies work collaboratively with one another and with the families in question, then integration can be possible. They find that assimilation is relative to the context in which an individual exists, and notions of diversity are either deemed as hostile or beneficial to the society and as a result integration moves the condition 'towards the innovation and creativity that makes society and economies adapt successfully to new challenges in a globalized world' (Inglehart and Norris, 2009:19). Whilst this research highlights these issues, it fails to acknowledge the theoretical consideration of praxis to achieve effective cultural dialogue between the child, school, and family and its significance as a means of encouraging a strong sense of agency. Therefore, in order to understand this issue in more depth, this study turns to the work of Freire and Bourdieu, through an amalgamation of Freire's revolutionary action and push for active and reflective praxis and Bourdieu's equalisation of the social arenas which reproduce social inequality. Therefore, arguably cultural dialogue can be acquired for the effective integration of refugee families, and this has been discussed within this research.

One of the key outcomes of studies undertaken about refugee education and integration and existing cultural problems, cite language barriers and issues with discipline as key factors to the challenges for integration (Taskin and Erdemli; 2018; Bouclaous et al., 2019). The former study focuses on Syrian refugee education in Turkey

and the main cultural issue in which teachers felt female students were more perceptive and communicative compared to their male counterparts, who did not want to converse with their female teachers. They found that some of the male students would not engage with them if they were not wearing a hijab, and female students were shy towards male teachers. Another challenge included the difference in religious practice, whilst Turkey is a majority Muslim country, the education system operates under a principle of secularism. Teachers found that the relationship between the Syrian families, students and teachers was limited because the parents could not speak Turkish, and difficulties were experienced due to the lack of provision in schools, and language acquisition. They recommend a need for increased language teaching and engagement with the education process in order to build a sense of intercommunication and friendship. But no mention of the need for cultural dialogue in schools to better understand the needs of refugee children and their families which in turn provided adequate provisions which support cultural integration. A parallel study by Gokce and Acar (2018) found that teachers encountered general communication challenges when talking to children and their families and teachers often used other Syrian children as interpreters in order to communicate with the students in their classrooms.

Khalid et al. (2007) find that individuals migrate by choice or by necessity as a result of two key factors, economic security and processes of globalisation, and the barriers which hinder the successful assimilation of refugees are as a result of cultural and religious disparity. In particular, they identify differences in moral and ethical values, gender relationships, the demonization of the Arab population in mass media and the discrimination they face (Khalid et al., 2007). These are factors that contribute to the struggles of fully integrating and acculturating into the Western social fabric, in this instance, the United States. Links here can be made to Bourdieu's key work *The Weight of the World* (1999) wherein he concerned himself with the transcriptions and recordings of the 'voices of the urban poor' in order to better understand their experiences of vulnerability and social exclusion. He found that active exclusion came about by those who were deemed to be socially undesirable, with tabloid representation driving the emotional responses of the inhabitants and the political agenda, and people internalised the media representations of the urban poor' and deemed them to be undesirable members of French society (Best, 2019:139).

The key barrier to acculturation, and the most significant in inhibiting issues for assimilation on many societal levels, is discrimination, as this can have an impact on an

individual's mental health and their quality of life (Wekhian, 2015:89; Taylor and Sidhu, 2012). Through an analysis of literature from Khalid et al., (2007, cited in Wekhian, 2015), it can be ascertained, that aside from the factors which exist on a much broader level, such as language and understanding new cultures, discrimination has the most detrimental impact. Therefore, having honest and open dialogue within schools helped reducing feelings of discrimination towards people who are perceived as different or strange, however whilst discrimination is often a challenge, it is almost an impossibility to eradicate. Most critically, the research of Khalid et al., (2007) highlighted how migrants settling in European countries have encouraged policymakers to establish an appreciation for cultural plurality, social cohesion, and a culture of accommodation towards minority communities, which to an extent, dilute the discrimination which refugees may face. Therefore, if assimilation is enough of a challenge with competing values, achieving integration in order to adapt to the social context has been equally challenging, as such the presence of cultures of dialogue and effective praxis in schools, may assist in ameliorating this struggle.

According to Ager and Strang (2008; Block et al., 2014) achieving the goal of integration holds many barriers, including the difficulty in learning the language of the host society and the limited pedagogical provisions which exist. Similarly, Bacakova (2011:163) finds that education is essential in facilitating integration between refugee children and families in host communities and they use the example of Czech schools which face a plethora of problems that include 'insufficient teacher experience, school's lack of information, insufficient cooperation between schools, parents and social workers and inappropriate grade placement'. With overt challenges like this which prevent the opportunities for initial integration, the process becomes drawn out. Ager and Strang (2008) highlight that there exist barriers towards the goal of integration in schools, including instinct support for learning the language of the host society, limited provisions within the educational setting to support their special educational needs, and limited   opportunities for refugee children to socialise with their peers. Whilst education is highlighted as a key domain for integration, and language and culture as a facilitator for this integration, it is simply not enough to learn the values of the host community, because this assimilates refugees as opposed to integrating them through having a mutual and communicational knowledge exchange between the refugee family and the host community.

Similarly, Fang and Chun (2017:303) postulate within their Hong Kong based study, that when two cultures are considerably different or conflictual, bicultural individuals experience lower cultural integration and a greater sense of cultural confusion than those individuals with two cultures akin to one another, de facto, a bicultural individual may have a blended or fused identity and still choose to alternate between the two existing cultures, depending on the context, and this is a phenomenon that cannot be explained by such clear divisions. LaFromboise, Coleman, and Gerton (1993, cited in Fang and Chun, 2017) divide bicultural modes into two key themes, fusion, and alternation, and they suggest that the fused bicultural individuals blend two cultures or synthesise the two cultures into a single new form of third culture, whereas the alternating bicultural individuals keep two cultures separate and alternate between one cultural affiliation with another, in accordance with the given situation. Therefore, bridging the gap between the two separated cultures becomes an even greater challenge, particularly if the two cultures are incompatible based on religion, values, tradition and language like Islam and Christianity, or even Islam and Secularism. Barriers come in many forms, yet:

> 'a parents' lack of familiarity and inability to negotiate with the American school system, attempts to provide instrumental support sometimes are not necessarily effective, despite the parents' genuine intention to be helpful, in part because of the parents' language barriers, the school's lack of availability of interpreters and translators and bilingual staff, absence of trust between parents and teachers, misunderstandings, and discrimination'.

> (Yok-Fong, 2017:234 and Taylor and Sidhu, 2012)

As such there exist barriers to inclusion which are both attitudinal and discriminatory. Therefore, this is an international overarching issue facing countries across the globe, wherein schools attempt to establish instrumental and useful provisions and support systems for children and their parents (Avery, 2016:405), and language barriers cause issues for misunderstanding, and a difficulty in conveying information to parents who do not have English as a first language, and these pervasive issues inhibit their ability to integrate. Essentially, a developing general theme from the evaluated literature, is that schools lack the provisions needed to communicate information successfully and effectively to children and their parents, and when the correct resources are not put in place, this becomes a greater challenge. As such, the cultural disparity which exists

simply from an inability to communicate exacerbates the social and cultural divide, which is at risk of being heightened when cultural inference is not taken into consideration. Here we can make coherent links to the need for dialogue in schools as defined by Freire (1970) wherein he cites two significant dimensions of the social world, reflection, and action, and one without the other cannot transform an individual's reality. Both these factors working in tandem allow for an understanding of praxis. This dialogue can be linked to language as a human phenomenon, and arguably the ways in which individuals' express themselves is through using language as a form of human praxis. Without this mutual understanding of language, individuals who cannot communicate in mutual dialogue struggled with integrating into the society which they are joining.

1.6.   *The saturation of trauma discourse*

The available research in the field extensively surrounds mental health and language barriers as issues faced by refugee children and their families. Jill Rutter (2006) cites in her research that the field of refugee studies has become heavily focused on the traumatic experiences of forced migrants through what she identifies as 'trauma discourse' as being increasingly overly saturated arena. She postulates that this perpetuated narrative makes discussion of refugee children and their families extremely one-sided, as opposed to ascertaining what other factors affect integration, alongside issues of mental health, which is important, but an exploration of the wider mechanisms is also pivotal to understanding. Moreover, the focus on trauma discourse homogenises refugee children and their families and renders them both weak and vulnerable, and this perpetuated narrative coalesces through assuming the experiences of all refugees are the same. Therefore, broader, and more diverse research is needed in order to encompass and greater understand the various other needs of refugee families, as well as the factors which contribute to their feelings and experiences of integration. Moreover, there is a focus on trauma discourse, issues with literacy and diminished or interrupted school which can often dominate refugee experiences (Bajaj and Suresh 2018; Block et al. 2014; Due, Riggs, and Augoustinos 2016; Gormez et al. 2017; Rumsey et al. 2018

As such, research in the field needs to focus more on other factors which affect a person's ability to integrate, and it is the originality of this study which discussed cultural dialogue and praxis as tools for this integration, as well as the significance of

agency and enabling social structures in this sense of integration. Nevertheless, these are cited as obstacles to integration and learning, and this arises as a by-product of diaspora status and ongoing inequality within societal institutions like education. Through accruing the relevant data from the research field, one is able to discover that very little research exists surrounding the challenges faced by refugee children and their families in culturally integrating into the society and its many facets, as well as the importance of bridging the potential cultural chasm which exists between refugee children and the societal institutions with whom they interact, particularly when refugee families are placed in rural Western towns and cities with less cultural diversity. Rutter further highlights the barriers which prevent potential from being utilised, including uncertain living conditions, trauma, admission into schools, psychosocial and emotional needs, and anti-refugee sentiment (Rutter, 1998 and Strang and Ager, 2010).

Rutter (2003; Bajaj and Suresh, 2018)) further find that research surrounding refugees is dominated by studies which examine trauma and psychological adaptation, and in fact, very little research on refugee children's educational experiences is noted, but simply the importance of reflective practice for practitioners, which is dominated by what encompasses this notion of good practice, including for example, welcoming refugees, looking at their psychosocial and linguistic needs, and traumatic experiences. From the outset these factors are essential to take into consideration, but in order to help with these issues, one must be aware of the social and cultural needs of a refugee child and their family alongside the context in which they existed before arrival to the United Kingdom. As such, the ways in which one would address issues of trauma with a British child differ from Syrian children for example, because taboo issues are culturally relative. Rutter (2003:5; Knowles and Holmstrom) finds that 'the hegemonic construction of refugees…assumes homogeneity', which suggests that all refugees have pre- and post-migrant experiences that differ and are relative to their own personal experiences. As such, it is fundamental to look at each case individually rather than assuming that all refugees hold the same experiences. Moreover, looking at refugees through the lens of theorists influenced by Marx, such as Bourdieu and Freire, who highlight the existing societal inequalities and polarities, and this is beneficial because the root cause of potential inequality can be understood, as well as the mechanisms which can be adopted to address the potential inequalities which they may face, such as a strong sense of autonomy adopted by the families, and enabling wrap around social structures and services which encourage and support their integration. Through

engaging with praxis, this research strives to challenge the homogeneity of the refugee experience as cited by Rutter. Therefore, a sense of agency needs to come about and through the understanding of praxis, the experiences of refugees which are not based around trauma alone can be better understood.

Moreover, Berry (1997) highlights that there exist different ways for a refugee to resolve the crisis of entry into the dominant culture of society, integration, assimilation, separation, and marginalisation, with integration being 'the only one of these that manifests in a positive way'. Integration is the mechanism of acculturation wherein an individual maintains the native and host culture in daily dialogue, assimilation occurs when a refugee leaves behind their cultural identification and adopts the culture of the host community, separation occurs when an individual maintains their native culture, and evades contact with others, and marginalisation which occurs when individuals ignore the native culture, through rejecting the cultures of other people (cited in Killian et al., 2018:14). The latter two can exacerbate the risk of radicalisation, and suggest a need for cultural dialogue in schools, wherein a child is able to integrate into the society, though preserving their values, whilst simultaneously combining the host culture with their own. The acculturation process is noted by many as part of two dimensions; cultural continuity 'degree to which immigrants wish to maintain their heritage, culture, and identity, and contact dimension 'the degree to which they seek involvement with the host culture' (Henry, 2012:587). The need for dialogue is exemplified here as a tool for understanding cultural disparities. Interestingly, these disparities were not found within the study which was undertaken for this research, and the families felt as though they were able to retain a sense of their own culture and introduced aspects of British culture to their own lives without the loss of their culture and heritage, and this shows that the notion of integration is possible, because a synthesis of the two ways of life can be combined to allow for a shared sense of cultural integration.

1.7. _Culture_

Poppitt and Frey (2007:4) define culture as a process of self-conceptualisation, as well as an actualisation of the self, including moral, personal, ethical, and linguistic behaviours which can be ascribed to a person's circumstances and socio-economic status, and this in turn influences a person's sense of self and identity. If practitioners understand the complexity of a refugee's cultural identity, this provided them with an

insight into their multifaceted needs and an increased ability to understand their cultural identity. Moreover, Spindler and Spindler (1987) argue that education is a cultural transmission which requires cultural learning, therefore, learning and transmission are never separated from one another because one is a requisite to the other. As such, societal groups, namely in this instance, refugee families, and the wider educational community coalesce to exist within a culturally diverse environment, and cultural learning must be part of the effort otherwise a merging of cultures or a bridging of knowledge and values is argued to be an impossibility. Cultures of dialogue within schools are sine qua non because without this open dialogue and an exchanging of voices, a school cannot effectively integrate refugee children and their families into its social, moral, and cultural fabric.

When a refugee combines the two fields of culture, this is known as 'acculturation', and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR,   2011) highlights the extreme feelings of discrimination and oppression which refugees face as a result of their multiple cultural identities. According to Sam and Berry (2010:5) this acculturation is described as 'the congregation between two cultural groups, which results in the progression of cultural transformation, and mental and emotional alteration'. However, academics such as (Ratts, Singh, Nassar McMillan, Butler, & McCullough, 2016) argue that true and complete multicultural competency is aspirational rather than actual and cannot truly be achieved. Acculturation is influenced by various factors including identity, socio-economic status, pre-migration education, the ability to access education upon arrival, work experiences, professional backgrounds, literacy skills, and personal losses. However, some academics argue that true and complete multicultural competency is aspirational rather than actual, and cannot truly be achieved

Thommessen and Todd (2017) find that refugees face conflicts and challenges between the familial cultural background, and the host society's expectations, this affected their sense of identity. This study raised issues to do with language-based challenges, social support, and encouragement, but little about the cultural aspects of integration, and how cultural integration can be best achieved using the school as a tool and support mechanism is identified. Similarly, Mestheneos and Ioannidi (2002) researched the experiences of refugee families in European Union states and found that regardless of national context, or the experiences and background of the refugee, common features existed within the process of assimilation. However, this is dependent on the provision of the nation state, so for example, rights to citizenship, welfare systems and the socio-

cultural setting. They found that barriers that also impacted refugee experiences were not only external, but also the personality of the individual in question, for example their desire to return home, social status, familial relationships, and the extent to which these characteristics promoted or hindered their relationships with the context they find themselves.

Pace (2018) finds that in order to maintain relationships with the community and a sense of connectedness with one's culture and origin, many families find that staying connected with the larger extended family network in their home country is vital because it contributes to feelings of cultural and familial community and relatedness. There is almost always a desire to maintain this sense of connectedness, and as such this reiterates further the importance of acknowledging and respecting the values of refugees in order to allow for integration, which combines both the values of the refugee and those of the host community together. They find that most refugees originate from a cultural background which is incompatible with that of the Western World, and this raises questions for the extent to which it is realistic to expect the two cultures to merge, or coexist, because their difference is so great. The two outcomes which often happen are ghettoization or a rejection of Western culture which means that people would be less integrated into the wider community, or that the original values of a refugee would be diluted by influence from Western culture, and a sense of assimilation is more likely to occur. In order to avoid these issues an acknowledgement of the cultural chasm is essential and the use of dialogue as a tool for integration is paramount. This raises questions for the extent to which it is realistic to expect two cultures to merge, or coexist, because their difference is so great.

According to Lum (2003, cited in Segal et al., 2005:569), key aspects to cultural assimilation and competence, include 'cultural awareness' which is an understanding of an individual's experiences and their ability to connect with people and their cultures, and how experience moulds prejudice and 'knowledge acquisition' which consists of the importance of learning about different social groups, looking at their cultural experiences and, and assessing the knowledge which they have acquired. This push for cultural awareness is diminished by the prevalent forms of capital in the field, which a refugee family might lack, and this may create further challenges towards establishing a culture of awareness of the community and vice versa. However, this research has shown that it can be combated by a strong sense of individual agency and enabling social structures. One could also argue that it is simply not enough to learn the values of

the host community, because this assimilates refugees as opposed to integrating them, therefore, having a mutual and communicational knowledge exchange is essential. This therefore suggests a gap within the field because research does not combine the notion of integration as a two-way system, with an increased dialogic culture within the school environment, and inter-agency and communicational outlook which places refugee families and their needs at the forefront of their own experience, through encouraging dialogue which promotes a quid pro quo knowledge exchange and structures which allow them to integrate effectively.

From the literature in the field, the focus from noted researchers such as Jill Rutter (1998, 2003, 2006) and Madeleine Arnot (2005, 2009) alongside scholarly articles with an interdisciplinary refugee centred research suggest negative responses from participants and refugees as a social group. This in turn, coupled with the theoretical framework of Bourdieu and Freire moulded a sense of negativity and an expectation for responses which mirrored this, and this was not the case for this research.

Indeed, the findings of this study convey the positivity of refugee families living in the UK, in an enabling environment that supported a strong sense of agency and ambition. The discovery of social structures that encourage the integration and empowerment of refugee families constitutes a positive contrast with so much of the existing literature and was thus surprising to the researcher. Significantly, these findings are situated in a dialogue with the study's underpinning theorists and theory which thus enables them to be understood anew and within a different light.

The following chapter discusses the methodological approach taken for this research, through a discussion of the impact of the research, its aims and objectives, the primary research method, an analysis of the research instrument and an evaluation of its viability, the ethical barriers and how they were overcome, and a discussion of the ways in which the theoretical framework connected with and informed the primary research and its successes. The research has three purposes, and these have been discussed at length in the following chapter, and in order to understand these and justify the research purposes one must, 'step outside of the taken for granted categories to make experiences intelligible is a situation that people who do not transgress find unnerving or even intimidating' (Best, 2019:163). This notion of strangerhood and the navigation of new situations is applicable to the view and importance of practice as a tool for understanding the experiences of others and their behaviours and praxis for reflection,

action in order to transform the world around them. This is especially relevant for the discussion of refugee families, and therefore, this research aimed to understand the voices of the participants in the study and empathise with their feelings for a truly verstehen and emotion-driven piece of qualitative research.

1.8.   *Identifying critical themes*

Both theory and research are inextricably interlinked, and one informs the other, hence why the primary research questions are directly moulded and influenced by the conceptualisations which have been derived from the integrative review of the literature, and the theoretical frameworks of Bourdieu and Freire. In addition to this, both theory and practice are essential to a researcher's understanding of the social and cultural processes which exist within society and frame the experiences and behaviours of people within the social world. The themes which have been generated include feelings and emotions, aspirations and preconceptions, culture, integration, capital, the school, voice and dialogue and belonging.

As an introduction, the concepts of aspirations and preconceptions came about through a desire to understand the ambitions which the families held for their lives in the UK, to understand the extent to which they hope to integrate in the future, and what tools and mechanisms would need to be in place to do so. Culture has been a key concept throughout this thesis, and was commonplace within the literature, this concept can be linked to the work of Poppitt and Frey (2007) who define culture as a process of self-actualisation. Culture can also be linked to the work of Freire and his idea of praxis and the sense of awareness of action and self-reflection. Capital as a term can be understood as a tool for advancement in society through economic, social, cultural or symbolic means. This term is important to operationalise, as it is underpinned by Bourdieu and supports in understanding the capital which the families possessed, but also what they thought they needed to be successful in their new communities. Voice and dialogue have been integral to this thesis and can be coherently linked to Bourdieu's notions with voice and dialogue as key to change and understanding the experiences of others, as well as encouraging social change through praxis One of the main ambitions of this research was to capture the feelings and experiences of Syrian refugee families, and in order to do so, hearing their voices and undertaking in dialogue to understand experience and community partnership is essential. The idea of belonging also came up as a concept throughout the literature, and this was deemed important to

include as a thematic element due to the dynamic nature of belonging in the lives of refugee families, and the ways in which refugeehood can create various feelings of belonging, particularly for the families interviewed, in terms of their feelings towards their home country of Syria, but also their sense of belonging in Jordan and the UK. The rationale behind these themes has been discussed in further details in the methodology chapter.

1.9.   *The Home Office: Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme*

The sample was selected through the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme within a Council in the South West and in order to convey the sample size selection and the shaping of the research, this subsection includes an overview of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, adopted by the Home Office. The Scheme was established to work closely with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees to identify individuals and families at most risk and bring them to the United Kingdom. This scheme was launched in early 2014, and had helped those in most need, with focus placed on those requiring urgent medical treatment, women and children at risk and survivors of violence and torture. In 2015, David Cameron announced that the scheme would expand with a vision of resettling 20,000 Syrian people in need of protection, and this scheme was expanded in order to include other refugees who have fled conflict in Syria, but those who do not hold Syrian nationality. According to Macintyre and Abrams (2021:13), the Vulnerable Children's Resettlement Scheme was introduced, which aimed to target and support refugee children and families.

This scheme works alongside the Vulnerable Children's Resettlements Scheme, Gateway, and Mandate, all of which provide protection to vulnerable groups under asylum seeking procedures. Local authorities and partners have played a critical role in assisting those in their arrival to allow them to settle into their new lives. The refugees resettled in the United Kingdom are selected by the government, working closely with the UNHCR and the framework which they constructed in order to determine those deemed in most need of support and identify those who would benefit from the government's assistance. The process of accepting refugees is rigorous and the screening process includes the completion of a full medical assessment which is conducted by the International Organisation for Migration (IMO) in the host country, this information is later sent to the local authority which received the refugees in order for the council to undertake a needs-based assessment including locating suitable local

care and accommodation facilities, their eligibility is then confirmed, and the IMO begins the visa application process for the refugees (Home Office, 2017).

As of March 2017, seven thousand three hundred and seven people have been resettled in the United Kingdom under this scheme, and the resettlement in different areas is dependent on various factors, such as the availability of appropriate accommodation and care packages. This is a national and voluntary scheme and the first twelve months of refugee resettlement costs are funded fully by central government through the use of the overseas aid budget, and the government has pledged an additional £10 million to English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) support, in order to enhance the language skills of adults and to 'improve their resettlement and integration experience and employability', and adult refugees are entitled to eight hours per week within one week of arrival (Home Office, 2019:21). In addition to this, for two to five years the scheme allots funding assistance to local authorities who have incurred costs through their support for refugees, which is allocated on a tariff basis ranging from £5,000 per person in the second year to £1,000 per person in their fifth year within the scheme, with an additional fund for exceptional cases of vulnerability available to the most at-risk refugees arriving to the United Kingdom. Regarding placement of refugees, the policy ensures that there is equitable distribution of refugees across the country in order to guarantee that no local communities incur a disproportionate number of refugees (Home Office, 2017).

Alongside this scheme, the government is pledges to provide humanitarian aid to regions in most need of support, as well as 'actively seeking an end to the crisis', and the total pledge to the Syrian crisis from £1.2 billion to over £2.3 billion – which is one of the largest responses to humanitarian crises to date, making the United Kingdom one of the largest donors to the crisis in Syria (Home Office, 2017). Moreover, at the beginning of World Refugee Week in 2019, Home Secretary Sajid Javid stated that the current refugee scheme had been announced for extension and thousands of refugees would continue to be resettled under a scheme which hopes to start in 2020. He said he was 'proud of the world-leading work we have done in the Middle East and Africa so far – but there is so much more to do'. This commitment to the extension of this scheme marks the importance and significance of the UK's pledge to continue its support for the plight of refugees and extend the work already being done to more children and families in need.

1.10. *The Home Office Indicators of Integration Framework*

As this research engages with the Home Office Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, and the term integration has been defined through the Home Office legislation around the concept, and one of the pivotal aspects of this research. This can be found within the Home Office Indicators of Integration Framework. According to the Government's Integrated Communities Strategy, which sets out the vision for an integrated society, the term is defined as being comprised of communities 'where people, whatever their background, live, work, learn and socialise together, based on shared rights, responsibilities and opportunities'. This framework has been utilised within the analysis and discussion and comparison has been drawn between the framework commissioner by the Home Office in 2004 (Appendix 9), and the newest interpretation in 2019 (Appendix 10). These indicators are helpful regarding feelings of integration experienced by refugee families and this research aims to gauge and understand these feelings in line with the main aim of exploring the cultural experiences of Syrian refugee families within the British education system in order to understand greater the role that praxis, dialogue and capital have in the experiences of integration which refugee families experience.

The collaborative authors of the Home Office framework of 2019, constructed an indicators framework which is a useful tool to measure refugee families' and their feelings around integration, and according to Ndofor-Tah et al., (2019:11) the framework aims to provide:

> 'guidance and tools to identify and measure the key factors that contribute to integration processes and strategies help organisations design more effective strategies.'

The term integration is defined as a 'multi-dimensional' because it is dependent on multiple and varying factors regarding access to resources, opportunities and 'social mixing', it also 'multi-directional' because it requires societal adjustment by all members of a society, it requires responsibility to be taken from contributors to a society, newcomers and those being received in the community and government members and different levels. Finally, integration is necessary within a context-specific understanding, and needs to be planned in relation to the context and within a timeframe which is bespoke for the individual or family, it cannot be seen as a universal goal with universal targets because each individual case is different, moreover, integration has been best

achieved where there has been 'reasonable parity between opportunities, experiences and outcomes for different people', and the progress of integration and the ability to measure is, its dependent on the multiple disadvantages which exist for each individual case in its context (Ndofor-Tah et al., 2019:11), as such, 'integration journeys are complex and diverse in nature' (Ndofor-Tah et al., 2019:24).

This framework strives to build on and replace the proposed framework commissioned by the Home Office and formulated by Alastair Ager, Director of the Institute of Global Health and Development at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, and Alison Strang, Senior Research Fellow in the Institute for Global Health and Development, in 2004, and this new development intends to make plans for integration interventions at a local and national level which in turn strives to promote and measure the outcomes within a range of diverse and broad contexts. This framework is useful because it provides a shared understanding for the roles of different actors involved in the process of integration, such as local and national governments, businesses and local communities, and civil society. According to the document, the domains in which integration can take place include work, housing, education, health and social care and leisure, and these contexts are widely recognised as integral to the process of integration.

The focus of this thesis surrounded education, and therefore the integration of refugee families has been discussed within this context. Interestingly for this research, this framework makes use of the theoretical framework of Bourdieu through its use of the terms 'social bonds', 'social bridges' and 'social links', and these cited concepts relate to the social connections and capital exchange which Bourdieu cites in his key works. In addition, the framework highlights how outcome indicators 'measure changes in people's lives that can reflect progress in integration, such as the achievement of a certain level of education, alongside 'local and national good practice' which 'indicates practices and structures at local and national level known to underpin effective integration'. Ager and Strang (2008) identified education as one of the core domains of integration alongside health, housing and employment, and the methods of achieving this integration and key facilitators of this integration include safety, stability and language and cultural knowledge.

They highlight that education provides:

'skills and competences in support of subsequent employment enabling people to become more constructive and active members of society. More generally,

however, for refugee children (and, in many cases, refugee parents) schools are experienced as the most important place of contact with members of local host communities, playing an important role in establishing relationships supportive of integration'.

(Ager and Strang, 2008:172)

Ager and Strang make a clear connection between the importance of education as a tool for integration for both refugee children and their parents, and the notion of family in this instance is as integral as an understanding of the experiences of refugee children or parents as a separate entity. As such, the refugee family interacts with the school as a societal institution and can use it as a tool for establishing positive relationships which in turn contribute to their integration. This is however a challenge when English is a second language, and therefore alongside language, a cultural understanding of difference and diversity as well as the ways of life of Syrian culture is integral to this notion of integration. This framework can be understood best in Appendix 9, 'A Conceptual Framework Defining Core Domains of Integration' and this is the original framework formulated by Ager and Strang who formulated a diagram which begins with the need for a strong basis or foundation for refugees and this comes in the form of 'rights and citizenship', once this is established, integration can be facilitated with 'language and cultural knowledge, and safety and stability', then a set of social connections which come in the form of 'social bridges', 'social bonds', and 'social links', these can then be measure by the markers and means mentioned previously which consist of employment, housing, education and health.

The framework suggests that if an individual can access the basis, facilitators and social connections integration in social institutions becomes more feasible. This framework is useful to understand the structures which exist in society and the ways in which refugees interact with them, alongside the barriers and facilitators which contribute to or hinder overall integration. This research aims to discuss the difference between assimilation and integration and how the latter is a more useful term when discussing refugees, but from the outset, one argues that it is simply not enough to learn the values of the host community, because this assimilates refugees as opposed to integrating them through having a mutual and communicational knowledge exchange between refugee and the host community and this is integral to their overall integration. This framework is arguably a predecessor to the new Home Office

framework which laid the foundation to the current scheme which utilises the approach taken by Ager and Strang to provide comprehensive markers of integration. This aims to be utilised by practitioners and Government to greater understand the needs of refugee families regarding their feelings of integration. The more contemporary account of this framework takes into consideration the new and subtle social nuances and developments which exist in modern society which may not have existed 2004 when the initial framework was developed. These differences include the significant advancements in technology and the digital world which affects the scope for employment in the labour market particularly within the digital economy. However, whilst the indicators of integration framework are useful it is an example of an archetypal and slightly outdated model, which has now been revised to include many of the contemporary factors which we can observe in modern society.

The contemporary scheme can be found in Appendix 10, which highlights the updated facilitators of integration, which now extend to include culture as an entity and digital skills which did not exist in the previous framework. Culture as an addition is beneficial because it highlights it as a factor which stands alone as a key facilitator for integration in the variety of fields which Bourdieu cites such as education, health, and employment, but also to the variety of streams and means of integration. However, what is critical, is the use of culture as a term in both theory and practice as an entity which deserves to be shared mutually across a variety of cultures and ways of life. As such, in order for integration to be effective, there needs to be a synergy between the culture receiving the family, and the culture joining society, and if a synergy is not possible, then a mutual respect and understanding of the two on order to ensure that importance is placed on culture as a tool for overall integration. The possibility of having this cultural synergy has been considered within the primary research aims.

This framework is useful to this research and its aims because it engages with integration and most interestingly, the demarcation of culture as its own entity, as opposed to its previous attachment to language and cultural knowledge, this change, highlights the significance of culture as a facilitator for integration. Culture as this facilitator for education has been discussed in relation to the school environment and achieved through interviewing the participants of their opinions on this. This is useful for this research because it aims to focus on the notion of integration in relation to refugee families from a cultural standpoint. The data collected has been discussed and analysed in relation to this framework, in order to further understand the extent to

which refugee families feel integrated into society and into the education system, in relation to their children and their experiences.

1.11. _Barriers to integration and the importance of inclusive practices_

Mestheneos and Ioannidi (2002) highlighted barriers to integration which included racism and ignorance, adjustments to their loss of social status, cultural differences, the welfare state system, employment, age and personality and lack of information. The most common issues which emerged from this research were language competence and employment and the 'covert institutional racism' (318). In order to address potential barriers, specifically institutional barriers within education, Rutter (2001) provides insights into the ways in which schools could support refugee children, with three important elements to 'good practice' in education, these include an environment which is welcoming and free of racism, the need to meet psycho-social needs particularly in relation to trauma and language (Taylor and Sidhu, 2012). She finds that successful inclusive practices viewed children holistically with targeted intervention.

Arnot and Pinson (2005:51) discuss policies and provisions available to refugee children and the importance of a holistic focus which considers the complex needs of asylum seeking and refugee children, and once again discusses the significance of an inclusive and welcoming environment which 'celebrates diversity' and cares for the children within their school. Moreover, (Bačáková, 2011:173) discusses the significance of provisions of support, teacher training for competence, financial, personnel and teaching resources, school-home partnerships and grade placement, all of which assist in overcoming the barriers and to encourage inclusive school practices. Moreover, refugees have experienced hostility and feelings of mistrust in the communities which they have joined, which can also hinder their feelings of integration (Pinson, and Arnot 2010; Pinson, Arnot and Candappa 2010; MacDonald 2017; Taylor and Ravinder 2012).

In regard to inclusive school cultures and practices, Arnot and Pinson (2005:6) identifies that one 'of the major tensions found at all levels of the educational system that is associated with this particular group of vulnerable pupils', and the tension surrounds 'whether to make the presence and needs of asylum-seeker and refugee pupils visible or whether to treat all pupils as equal without any special targeted policy and provision'. Veck and Warton (2019) cite a culture of listening, a culture of remediating difference, and creating environments in which refugee children can trust, and in order to do so, school culture and its role in 'securing an atmosphere of trust' must be examined, whilst

it is a multifaceted concept' (Engels et al, 2008:16). Moreover, for environments to be as inclusive as possible Carrington (1999:259) identifies the need for a 'school culture that emphasises the notion of diversity' and to encourage an environment which is accepting of all cultures and values, whilst also ensuring that pedagogues and educators listen to the voices of their students which gives 'validity to what is being heard' (Corbett 1999, 56). The work of Rutter, Arnot, Pinson and Bačáková, Corbett and Engels, provide a comprehensive analysis of the key methods of encouraging inclusive practices, and the significance of inclusion in school as a tool for integration. Whilst it is important to define and understand school cultures and practices in order to provide the most effective and inclusive environment for refugee children and their families.

1.12. *A Theoretical Review: Pierre Bourdieu and Paulo Freire*

The theoretical framework for this research and the theorists utilised take their starting point from Marx and have been influenced by his thinking, and this is one of the themes which runs through the heart of its literature. An important quote, from Karl Marx which underpins the views of both Bourdieu and Freire:

> 'Social life is essentially practical. All mysteries which mislead theory to mysticism find their rational solution in human practice and in the comprehension of this practice'.

(Marx, 1959:285)

This quote is significant in understanding this notion of practice in both Bourdieu and Freire's understandings. Marx's words underpin their utterances around practice and praxis and its utility regarding human interaction, and this sits parallel with both of their approaches. A comprehension of human practice lies at the centre of the social world and of Marxist thinking and in addition, notions of human rationale with an understanding of practice can allow for a greater understanding of the ways in which human agents interact with the social world, its agents, and agencies. The theoretical frameworks discussed within the theoretical review have been used as tools for critically engaging with existing literature in the field and have been extended to the integrative section of this literature review.

1.13. *Bourdieusian influence on this research*

Pierre Bourdieu (1930-2002) was a French sociologist and philosopher whose research was heavily concerned with the power dynamics of society, the ways in which power is transferred between different social arenas or fields, through different forms of capital, and the ways in which societal order is preserved across generations through both the use and maintenance of these capitals. According to Weininger (2002:119), Bourdieu was 'perhaps the most prominent sociologist in the world' and is one of the most referenced thinkers in the disciplines of culture theory, education, and the sociology of knowledge, suggesting his importance in the field and the relevance of his theories and approaches on a modern scale. Most notably, Bourdieu was opposed to the idea of the separation of theory from research, and as such many of his 'conceptual innovations were developed only in the context of concrete empirical analyses (Weininger, 199:120).

A theoretical overview of Bourdieu's theory of cultural and social reproduction assists in situating the theory within the research framework, and Bourdieu's work is perhaps one of the most significant attempts to explain 'the intergenerational persistence of social inequality' (Edgerton and Roberts, 2014:193). Bourdieu's abstract notions of habitus, field, capital and doxa underpin much of his theoretical framework, beginning with the idea of habitus, because it lays the foundation for which Bourdieu builds his theory.

1.14. *Habitus and practice*

Habitus refers to the ways in which a society conditions its members to become structured individuals who behave, feel, and think in a determinant capacity within long lasting dispositions (Bourdieu, 1982, in Richardson, 1986). This habitual behaviour is created through a macro or social process of learning, as opposed to something which is ingrained on a micro level. As such, this leads to transferrable patterning which can be applied from one context to another over time and space, and according to Bourdieu (1984), habitus is not simply an entity, but something which can be changed and adapted over time. Habitus exists through the ongoing interplay between notions of free will and social structures, suggesting a dualism between the two entities, because habitus does not come about as a result of the two dispositions working separately, but in tandem.

These dispositions are shaped over time and are affected by history, culture, current practice, and social structure (Bourdieu, 1984:170). Interestingly, he finds that this habitus is formed and reproduced, 'without…conscious concentration', which works in line with his underlying framework which takes its starting point from Marxist thinking, because social constructs are perpetuated without the consciousness of those involved in this form of control. According to Best (2019:6), 'theories of human agency commonly assume that people's activity starts with intentionality; a subjective meaning, motive or intention that is prior to our behaviour…and practice-based theories are commonly associated with the work of Pierre Bourdieu'. As such, the connection between practice and in some instances an unawareness of the correct ways of behaving in certain situations can be linked to social capital, which is recognised as:

> 'the sum of resources, actual or virtual that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationship of mutual acquaintance and recognition'.

(Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:119)

Therefore, this suggests that without the right social tools and connections an individual is unable to navigate the social, economic, professional, and emotional world in which they exist, however practices assist in making human actions predictable and this habitual notion of practice means that practices become learned and ingrained in an individual's approach to the social world.

According to Michael Oakeshott, the notion of practice is defined as:

> 'a set of considerations, manners, uses, observances, customs, standards, canon's maxims, principles, rules, and offices specifying useful procedures or denoting obligations or duties which relate to human actions and utterances. It is a prudential or a moral adverbial qualification of choices and performances, more or less complicated, in which conduct is understood in terms of procedures.'

(Oakeshott, 1975:55)

Practice is linked coherently to culture, and arguably different practices can be found in each individual person's cultural sphere, interestingly, according to Turner (1994:103), practice can be accessed through culture, and this can be understood from the point of view in which one understands culture and the ways in which it is constructed, because practices are deemed to be 'irredeemably cultural facts'. Therefore, culture plays a role in informing practice and human behaviour, and this therefore means that it can be used as a tool for integration because if culture informs practice and behaviours, a mutual understanding of its importance when agents interact with agencies, lies at the crux of cultural integration due to the fact that 'practices are a central constitutive phenomenon in social life' (Schatzki, 1997:110) because practice allows for understanding to be communicated comprehensively.

Moreover, practice is important because it provides the 'epistemic foundations for social action, as a resource which is drawn upon in order to behave in a meaningful way, they underpin everyday individual performances (Best, 2019:10). This notion of social action can be linked to Freire's understanding of praxis as a tool for revolutionary action and it can be argued that with an understanding of praxis, a greater understanding of individuals and their actions can assist in their own feelings of dialogue and social inclusion, wherein the socially constructed barriers become ameliorated by this

enhanced sense of praxis which Freire cites. This link further highlights the relationship between Bourdieu and Freire and their approaches to praxis, and particularly in regard to refugee families. These tools can be used to understand their behaviours and interactions with the social world, and in particular within education, thus in turn allowing for an understanding of their culture and the importance of cultural dialogue as a tool for societal integration. For Bourdieu, in order to understand practice, one must step outside their own individual practice and question the ways in which behaviours have become internalised and this is built upon the relationship between habitus, field and capital. This can be linked to the notion of verstehen for a social researcher and the desire to put oneself in the shoes of another to truly understand their practice, outlook, and way of life. This strategy adopted by Max Weber has been utilised for this research project and has been discussed at length within the methodology chapter.

1.15. *Capital and field*

The Bourdieusian perspective regarding capital suggests that:

> 'the stranger has insufficient capital to enter the social field or their relative lack of capital means that they are unable to secure a position within the field and as such their position is not regarded as legitimate'.

> Best (2019:137)

Social and cultural capital can be converted to acquire economic or educational reward, and a person's ability to draw upon these forms of capital resource and recognise them as useful as an impact on the ways in which migrants and refugees respond to societal conditions in the UK. According to Morrice (2011:6), 'an analysis of field includes and understanding of policy, and social discourses construct the category of refugee' and allot social roles and identities whilst denying others. These 'institutionalised mechanisms' construct and limit opportunities for the conversion and transformation of capitals (Morrice, 2011:6). Bourdieu asserts the notion of capital within his work, which extends far beyond an understanding of material assets, but can be applied to social, cultural, and symbolic factors, which hold equal significance and can be transferred from one social arena to another. The notion of cultural capital plays a crucial role in social power relations, which 'provides the means for a non-economic form of domination and hierarchy, as classes distinguish themselves through taste' (Gaventa, 2003:6). Within his key work *Distinction*, Bourdieu (1986:471) explains the extent to

which social order is enshrined in an individual's mind through 'cultural products' such as language, values, the education system and classification in everyday life, this social order leads to an unconscious acceptance of societal hierarchy and invariably results in particular behaviours and feelings of self-exclusion, and this can be understood within a variety of fields, education being one of them.

For Bourdieu, field is a place which is 'defined by its relative autonomy' and where the structure is associated with the 'specific configuration of agents', moreover, agents within a field are placed into 'objective relations', which are defined by the distribution of resources and capitals which parallel the process of domination (Lebaron, 2009:14). Therefore, field is a concept which Bourdieu uses to describe the various institutional arenas where individuals reproduce their dispositions and compete for the different forms of capital distribution. Examples of field include education, social networks, or cultural and religious spaces, and these fields can be identified as both a physical and symbolic place:

> 'individuals and groups have strong loyalties to their own communities in which they have a role and a contribution to make, and a set of relationships that they can draw upon when in need. These civic identities are often outside the nation state being located within, for example, ethnic or family structures.'

> (Arnot and Swartz, 2012:3)

Therefore, if we unpick this statement, we can ascertain that all individuals have capital in one sense or another, whilst it might not be the capital which is prevalent in one society, that form of capital still exists. Therefore, as a concept, capital is relative, and regardless of whether it exists, it is not easily transferable as it does not match the capital of the majority within the society in which a refugee family exists. As such, acquiring capital from a new culture is challenging, particularly if they clash with that of the pervasive culture, but culture as a concept, specifically regarding capital is a relative term, and as such it confirms the belief that it cannot be easily obtained without the right social mechanisms in place in order to aid its acquisition. These social mechanisms come in the form of enabling social structures and various fields which allow refugee families to integrate with greater ease. Field and context are key influencers of habitus because social power relations change depending on the environment which an individual operates within.

Lareau and Weininger (2005:567) discuss the concept of cultural capital, particularly the notion within educational research. They argue that cultural capital is both analytically and casually distinct from other important forms of knowledge or competence, and the conceptualisation of capital has enabled researchers to see culture as a 'resource' which provides access to social nuances and can be transmitted from generation to generation. As a result of this, the increased emphasis on cultural capital has allowed researchers to tap into this notion within a variety of fields, which allows for the idea of culture and its processes to be analysed and utilised in various ways. They find that whilst cultural capital is not as prevalent within educational research, and perhaps not as wide reaching as cultural capital, its impact and utility is nevertheless 'beyond dispute'. The school plays a vital role in the 'transmission of advantage across generations' (Lareau and Weininger, 2005: 569), and research within this field needs to understand further, the role of cultural capital in education.

Moreover, Paul DiMaggio cites that cultural capital is deemed as prestigious cultural practices, and these particular 'traits, tastes and styles constitutive of cultural capital are arbitrary in the sense that status and honour may be connected with any quality shared by a plurality' (Lareau and Weininger, 2005: 574). Therefore, we understand that capital advantage can be connected to the dominant values of the society in which an individual exists, and without this capital similarity, it can be argued that integration into the wider society and understanding its nuances and expectations can be a challenge. Symbolic capital discriminates against individuals through preventing them from entering the field and challenging the dominant position of those within the habitus (Best, 2019:145). Therefore, the barriers encountered by refugees is a form of symbolic violence based upon Bourdieu's utterance and a connection can be made between Bourdieu and Freire at this point, because this perpetuation, and lack of realisation of symbolic violence can be arguably broken by Freire's conscientisation, and one could argue that Bourdieu's conception of symbolic violence can be resisted by drawing upon Freire's conscientisation. Within the school, competition exists, and it is a place where the individual needs capital to enter legitimately. Therefore, refugee children and their families could find it difficult to gain access to the physical space in the practical sense due to challenges in placing them in schools upon their arrival, and the symbolic regard in competition for future capital advantage within the school environment (Wharton and Veck, 2019). This can be applied to the family as well as the child because the lack of capital advantage can be felt by parents as well as their children in regard to their

ability to access the capitals which allow them to integrate into the school community and environment.

The perpetuation of this symbolic violence can be exacerbated by the media, which highlights refugees as a problem for society as a whole, and a challenge to the state and its powers, as such a moral panic is created. The media discourse exacerbates issues and heightens intolerance and challenges for integration arise when the media misrepresents refugees and political rhetoric is stigmatising. Moreover, media depiction of refugees and forced migrants plays on feelings of fear amongst the public surrounding refugees. Rutter (2003; Wekhian, 2015) have contested racist discourse, and the construction of racism and they examine the linguistic and cultural forms which may result in the unequal social positioning of minority communities in the broader macro scale. However, this suggests that governments should endeavour to reject the present construction of integration, with its assimilative association of 'them' becoming like 'us' because the progression of refugee families is dependent on the maintenance of cultural forms and spaces of the country which a person joins, rather than amalgamating cultures and norms to suit their preferences.

Bourdieu discusses the term doxa, which combines both orthodox and heterodox norms and values which are often deemed to be taken for granted within the social world; when these are forgotten, society is given rise to social inequalities. When society forgets the limits that have allowed for unequal social divisions, an 'adherence to relations of order which, because they structure inseparably both the real world and the thought world, are accepted as self-evident' (Bourdieu 1984: 471), which suggests that inequality becomes second nature. Moreover, he finds that the word 'misrecognition', akin to the Marxist notion of 'false class consciousness', descends deeper because it explains a cultural phenomenon as opposed to one which is ideologically different. This differs from Marxism because it embodies the social processes that anchor the doxa which society takes for granted, and the assumptions made within social life, which are often born out of culture. As such, social power relations require a form of legitimacy, and culture is often found to be the battleground, which is sought for the possession of social conformity, ignoring the social mould which creates social differences and unequal social structures in the first place. This research offers a new way of looking at the research, and the ways in which the families which have been researched held a positive view of their new lives and the strong sense of praxis which they experienced, and this sense of action and reflection allows them to navigate the social world around

them and acts as agents who interact with the social structures which exist around them. The local Council which supported the families in the research, enabled their integration alongside the individual familial autonomy, and the strong sense of familial capital and praxis allowed them to effectively navigate the world around them and gain more knowledge of the other forms of capital which they need to navigate the social world.

1.16.   *Avoiding researcher bias*

Bourdieu's work accounts for criticism however, which suggest that tension and contradiction arise from various individual encounters with contexts, so for example it can help in explaining how particular people are complicit in one social context but dominate in another. Interestingly, the notion of field can help in explaining how for example, some women show authority and dominance in their public life, but behave submissively in their private life, showing how women and men are socialised to behave differently within different social contexts (Moncrieffe, 2006). Bourdieu's work is often critiqued for its abstract nature and finding tangibility within his work is challenging. Yet, Navarro (2006) finds that Bourdieu's work is in fact sociologically grounded across a broad and diverse range of social issues, as such much of his theoretical utterances stem from his credibility as a social commentator, and his prolific and empirically evidenced work. Moreover, as a researcher his work is politically committed, as such he views sociological methods as mechanisms for change, and when one delves deep enough, it can be discovered that habitus and misrecognition have rendered social power relations invisible.

Perhaps one of the soundest purposes of Bourdieu's work is 'reflexive sociology' (Bourdieu, 1992), which enables a person to recognise their own biases, assumptions, and beliefs in order to make sense of the social world in which they exist, and the possession of this self-critical knowledge which reveals the reasons behind social inequalities and hierarchical status. This in turn became a source of social inclusion and dialogue, which links coherently to Paulo Freire's notion of praxis and dialogue, wherein praxis is used as a tool for social inclusion and dialogue through action and reflection. Once individuals become aware of their social inequality, and a strong and established knowledge base is acquired, both these factors in tandem can become a source of social inclusion. It could be argued that it is difficult to embody the characteristics which Bourdieu cites as integral to the possession of habitus, namely the ways in which people

express themselves through speaking, gesturing, feeling, thinking and even standing, and these behaviours are often derived from an individual's background , therefore allowing the body to exist in the social world, but for the social world to exist in the body (Bourdieu, 1977, Bourdieu, 1992; in Morrice, 2011:4). One could describe this mutual relationship as a dualism between the body and the social world.

However, if the subtle inferences of a culture or dialogue cannot be understood, or even the expectations of a society and its social demands, challenges arise for their reflexive existence in the social world, and the extent to which they can navigate or embody the requisites which Bourdieu cites in his key works. Bourdieu's depictions of capital extend beyond simply his cultural descriptions, he asserts that capital comes in three other forms, social, economic, and symbolic, which alongside cultural capital allow individuals to draw upon their holistic knowledge of society to become advantageous in different fields. However, most applicable to this research is his description of cultural capital, which can exist within embodied and incorporated states, such as for example, the body and mind, respectively. Examples of embodied cultural capital include the possession of aspirations, language skills, accent, and a familiarisation with academic discourse, whereas the embodiment of cultural capital is found in institutionalised contexts such as the education system, wherein academic qualifications exemplify capital.

Morrice (2011:4), gives the example that refugees in the United Kingdom can possess both the embodied and incorporated forms of cultural capital, for example arriving with both academic qualifications and aspirations. Yet, cultural inequality is not referred to within the work of Morrice, and as such, this, alongside its lacking in other texts, suggests a need for more research surrounding the cultural disparity which exists between refugees and their host society, if at all, and how this disparity heightens feelings of ostracisation, difference and exclusion. The UK is now a 'super-diverse' nation, with a 'plethora of different minority groups living side by side' – as such, society and its institutions should mirror this diverse trend. The use of the term 'active citizen' reveals more than simply a participation in the social fabric of society, but other factors like employability which is a 'core dimension of an active citizen' (Morrice, 2011:3). Therefore, to be an active citizen, one must be able to converse in the mother tongue of the country in which they reside and understand the social and cultural nuances needed to converse with people within that society.

One could argue that capital is a relative concept because the criteria obtained in one country cannot always be applied to that of the host community, and unfortunately in many cases, the qualifications of academics or medical professionals are not deemed to be on a par with those achieved in the United Kingdom. However, possessing the incorporated aspirations and acquiring language can help in achieving the cultural capital which Bourdieu describes. Whilst this capital can be developed and honed, to an extent, it does not always exist in the early stages of a refugee's life in their new community, and as such they are at a greater disadvantage when they first arrive, meaning that honing this capital, and the subtleties of possessing it is not possible until later on in life, but inequality can still hinder this acquisition. This therefore suggests the significance of enabling social structures which ameliorate this inequality. In order to encourage this capital a dialogic relationship between the home and school is essential, and within the school environment an awareness of cultural diversity and difference is integral to the development of all four forms of capital which Bourdieu cites.

For Bourdieu's capital to be contextualised and used in an advantageous way to the individual, it must exist within a social setting or field as he describes, wherein they are legitimately recognised. If a refugee is placed in a tenuous position where their place within society is not fully recognised, for example the label of indefinite leave to remain, this makes their role and place in society more illegitimate as they are not given the absolute recognition of citizens. The relevance of this theoretical framework and its ability to bridge the theoretical gap through a combination of Freire and Bourdieu can be corroborated by the contextualisation of habitus and field to inform one another, and as such, these concepts must be evaluated in tandem. As Morrice (2011:6) highlights, in order to fully understand individual agency and phenomenology, both must be found within an analysis of the field, or the social world in which a person's dispositions can be cited. As such, an analysis of the field surrounding refugees 'includes an understanding of the extent to which a refugees' social and cultural capital is valued and can be converted to bring economic or educational reward'. Moreover, he finds that an individual's ability to refer to these resources, when necessary, critically impacts the ways in which refugees respond to and cope with the newfound conditions in which they exist. Bourdieu's notion of field includes an understanding of how social discourse and policy construct and attach categories to refugees, which in turn assigns social roles and identities to some, while denying others. As such, institutionalised mechanisms like this inhibit the development or conversion of capitals (Morrice, 2011:6). This adds to the

challenge of integration because if capitals cannot be transferred easily between cultures and ways of life, this poses an issue for refugee families resettling in a different country with varying capitals to those which existed in their field and habitus in Syria.

Morrice (2011:13; Ager and Strang, 2008) give the example of a master's degree in one country not being recognised within the UK, so for example, a degree in civil engineering in one country may not have the same gravitas as the same degree from a British institution, and whilst this person is clearly educated, their credentials do not stand up alone in the United Kingdom. Morrice adds that cultural capital exists in institutionalised states such as in the form of academic qualifications, for example, refugees in the UK can be rich in forms of cultural capital, such as through academic and professional qualifications and well-developed communication skills through multilingual experiences, but weaker in others. This places them at a potential disadvantage, reduces their skills and accolades, and perhaps makes them feel less than the rest of society. This labour market culture makes exclusion more apparent and increases the likelihood of refugees feeling ostracised from the totality of society – in turn this can lead to risks of radicalisation, and increased fear of exclusion.

Robert Putman (2000:390; Field, 2008) found that 'emigration devalues one's social capital, for most of one's connections must be left behind'. This can be connected to the refugee families and notions of capital which Bourdieu cites and this is most relevant to relative capital and the challenges in transferring one capital to another in different cultural settings. Therefore, one must ask where this capital can be acquired if it is different to that which was obtained in Syria. This primary research attempts to understand whether the school is able to take on this role of capital transmission when cultures differ and if this is enough to integrate into society as a whole and whether this can be passed from child to parent in a process of capital acquisition.

In addition, the homogenised identity of refugees places them in a detrimental position where a likelihood of economic and educational exclusion exists (Morrice, 2011). This ostracised identity makes life for refugees a challenging prospect, namely when it excludes them from economic and educational resources. Bourdieu cites 'habitus clivé' as a term translated as divided habitus which he used to define his own experiences and feelings of exclusion and social isolation within the workplace. Bourdieu elevated his social status from a humble working-class upbringing to becoming a world-renowned sociologist and he found that he existed in a hinterland wherein his familial capital did

not match that of his professional environment. Similarities could exist between this experience and that of refugee children and their families where feelings of capital inadequacy within particular social settings have a detrimental impact on development. Once an individual moves from one field to another, from one constructed boundary to another this can cause feelings of estrangement. If we take Bourdieu's notion of field, we can assert that a refugee's field can only be developed effectively if suitable provisions and parameters are put in place in order to ensure that healthy dialogue is promoted within schools in order to allow for the development and conversion of economic and educational reward, in tandem with the transformation of the capitals. Perhaps one of the most notable criticisms of Bourdieu's work is the notion that the concepts which he proposes are vague and often unquantifiable, as such his concepts are argued to be too abstract and challenging to pin down (Edgerton and Roberts, 2014:194).

However, when using his theoretical framework, one must strive to operationalise his concepts and turn his abstract notions of habitus, capital, field, and practice into concrete questions which allow for the concepts to be understood within a research-based context. Edgerton and Roberts (2014:194) argue that when research makes use of Bourdieu and his argument for social reproduction in schools, they seldom use all his accompanying notions of habitus, practice, field and doxa, and simply focus on his most famous concept – capital. Bourdieu's work is both celebrated and broadly criticised, based on the belief that cultural capital is ineffective as a concept altogether, or that freed from the wider theoretical framework his work still holds 'analytic promise'. For the purposes of this research, Bourdieu's conceptualisation of capital, habitus and practice has been focused on in most detail as they work in tandem with the framework of Paulo Freire and his notions of dialogue, praxis and conscientisation. Learning within different cultural and social world views and values is a challenge for the collective society and therefore needs a collective learning response which brings people together and provides a space for dialogue, as opposed to the pursuit of individualised and instrumental approaches which currently dominate policy. A pedagogy which supports the social and personal developments and 'provides opportunities for considering world views and cultural practices' (Morrice, 2011:135) is integral.

Zygmunt Bauman finds that within the urban movement, the most affluent members of society choose to live within the confines of gated communities and socialise their

children within similar environments which creates a culture of us and them and isolates the elite from the disadvantaged. Moreover, the chasm between poverty and wealth is continuing to expand (Slee, 2014:8). As such, the school as an institution becomes complicit in the reproduction of privilege and disadvantage, in turn normalising stratified divisions. Slee (2012:897) describes this condition as the 'collective indifference' wherein society ignores the suffering of others, because their remoteness makes them easier to ignore. This perception of the refugee as the stranger as cited by Bauman, makes the formation of cultural dialogue even more challenging because the members of a society are fearful and uncertain of the presence of difference. As such, creating a mutual and communicative environment for healthy cultural dialogue within structures which enable and support the families, can help in ameliorating this challenge. Interestingly, the ways in which the findings from this research have differed greatly from Bauman's assertions have been discussed in the following chapters, because the findings shine a positive light on the experiences of refugees.

Bourdieu's work has been discussed in relation to Syrian refugee families and this in turn allows for their feelings and experiences to be understood. This research offers a method of illuminating capital as a key element to integration, namely familial capital which is a term which has been derived from the three key components to integration. As previously stated, this research postulates that family capital, a strong sense of autonomy and enabling social structures allow for integration, and with this understanding of Bourdieu's notion of capital as key to societal success, one of the key aspects of integration, surrounds familial capital and its importance. In sum Bourdieu's notion of capital can be understood through the ways in which people navigate the social world and the familial links which act as a form of capital for the families, and this has been discussed in greater detail in the following chapters. This theory has been used in combination with the work of Paulo Freire and his understanding of praxis and the significance of action and self-reflection for the families which allowed them to integrate more effectively.

1.17. *Freirean influence on this research*

Theorist Paulo Freire (1921-1997) was an emancipatory Brazilian philosopher and pedagogue who has been defined as one of the most influential thinkers and leaders within the sphere of critical pedagogy, whose most noted texts *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* and *Pedagogy of Hope* which made significant contributions to the field of

education. Freire has been described as the 'seminal architect of introducing critical theory into contemporary pedagogical discourse' (Dale and Hysplop-Margison, 2010:1), and this influence is widely recognised within his field. In addition, Henry Giroux (2010:715) argues that Freire is one of the most significant 'critical educators of the twentieth century'. As such, we can ascertain that his influence is both wide reaching and significant within the field and remains continuously relevant within contemporary educational discourse and pedagogy.

In relation to Freire's perspective on dialogue and social inclusion, Liberation Theology needs to be discussed and it is important to make note of this movement, as a synthesis of Christianity and Marxist socio-economic analysis of society as it assists in setting the scene for Freire's contextualisation and interpretation of society. This movement first gained prominence in Latin America in the 1950s and 1960s, as a tool for emphasising social concern for those most disadvantaged in society, but this movement gained traction and extended beyond South America, with its utilisation in Palestine and black communities in the United States. According to Harvey (2019:5), liberation theology spelled the end of modern attempts at maintaining the myth of a separation between a religious and secular outlook, and this allowed for the entry of the religious mindset into the political sphere. The redefining nature of religion and political interaction was a part of this movement, and according to McLaren and Jandrić (2018:599), it encouraged:

> 'the potential for a return of the role of the Church to the people, by nurturing critical-autonomous protagonist agency amongst the popular sectors, creating conditions of possibility for consciousness raising' amongst society's most vulnerable and disenfranchised'.

It is important to refer to this because Paulo Freire is one of the founding fathers of Liberation Theology (Kirylo, 2011:167) and as a result, his influence in this movement is both significant and interesting. In relation to his interpretation of praxis, which has been discussed in the following section of this literature review, the notion of praxis is regarded as an:

> 'interplay of reflection and action…and this transformative activity leads individuals from a life of self-centeredness to a life of serving others. Thus, liberation theologians are seen as integration, dialectical in nature, between the dimensions of faith and action'.

Freire believed that 'liberation is a praxis: the action and reflection of men and women upon their world in order to transform it' (Freire, 1996: 60). Moreover, this surrounded the interaction between reflection and action, and through this interplay between theory and action, society can be transformed (Gutiérrez, 1990, cited in Kirylo, 2011:184). When reflection and action interact, those facing oppression acquire a sense of consciousness which enlightens them to the inequality which they face. This means that an interplay between theory and action or praxis is integral, and here we can make coherent links to the interplay which Bourdieu cites around habitus, and its existence as a result of the relationship between free will and social structures, which are affected by history, culture, and agency. This lies within the framework of Freire's approach to the issues at hand, and therefore, his outlook asserts that knowledge is not static, neutral, or impartial, but is the product of our socio-historical conditioning and is constructed through the interaction of individuals with each other and with the world (Freire, 1985). As such, knowledge for Freire can be unattached from the dominant power relations of the past, present, and future and it is produced through ongoing human interaction and dialogue with the social world and individual experiences.

One of his key works, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* is grounded in Freire's own lived experiences, which makes his work significant, and experience based which for the purposes of this research is critical, because it surrounds an understanding of the feelings and emotions of refugee families about education. Freire makes a clear distinction between the meaning behind his use of the word dialogue and the simplistic understanding of dialogue as a tactic to engage students in an activity, is misled. For Freire, dialogic practice extends further than this, as a knowledge-based relationship with epistemological routes, that should be understood as a social process of learning and not individualistic in its nature. Therefore, dialogue as an instrument frees people from the rigid societal chains using cultural synthesis amongst other tools, such as conscientisation. As such, it is framed upon knowledge and understanding in order to achieve effective dialogue between cultures.

Interestingly, his work did not aim to target scholars and academics but the ways in which his 'pedagogical implications targeted the poor, the suffering and the oppressed groups' who comprise too many members of present neoliberal global contexts, whilst his pedagogy targeted 'formally uneducated populations', his approach grapples with

some of the most intellectually significant and influential notions in Western thought. As such his philosophical standpoint is both critical and inclusive with a connectedness to those most disadvantaged and disenfranchised in society (Dale and Hyslop-Margison, 2010:1). Pedagogues who teach with compassion and a critical lens, are challenged by overcoming the issues and inequalities which are faced in the wider society which affect their students within the micro context. Teaching for transformation is a critical feature of Freire's work, and his ambition for the creation of a compassionate and equitable society, and education can help in transforming the conditions which cause this inequality and in doing so, form a more 'just, compassionate and equitable society', the goal of critical pedagogy (Dale and Hysplop-Margison, 2010:2). This goes hand in hand with Bourdieu's work suggesting that through the use of education for social inclusion, dialogue, self-reflection and action, and a grasp of the capitals in society which control the social, cultural, and economic factions of society, and become integrated into the fabric of society.

1.18. *Dialogue*

Dialogue is a term which Freire (2000:89) discusses in his key works and finds that all human experiences are different and that human beings can learn from one another, and encounter change through a sense of learning and understanding. He states identifies dialogue as 'an encounter among women and men who name the world, it must not be a situation where some name on behalf of others…it must not serve as a crafty instrument for the domination of one person by another…it is a conquest of the world for the liberation of humankind'.

The need for dialogue between the school and the family, namely conversations between teacher and parents are essential, because this allows for a greater understanding of the student and their familial setting to better support their needs. Therefore, the relationship between pedagogues and parents and educators as socialisers is fundamental to healthy and effective dialogue.

The term dialogue is defined by Bibler (2014:38) as:

> 'not simply a heuristic [and pedagogical] technique for acquiring monologic knowledge and skills, but the definition of the very essence and sense of learned and creatively formulated concepts [the concept is dialogic in terms of its logical nature and in terms of its psychological—for the consciousness—givenness]'.

From this definition, we can understand that dialogue comes in different forms because it is not simply the transmission of knowledge as rhetoric, but of culture as a form of knowledge which lies outside of the notion of knowledge as simply academic. Culture is learned, and not something which is acquired in order to achieve an immediate goal, but something which is learned over time, and helps in establishing a mutual and communicational relationship between both agents and agencies in society. Different forms of cultural dialogue can both exist and coexist with one another in tandem with an ongoing learning environment, within an overarching context of contemporary culture. As a result:

> 'Dialogue that is meant within the School of the Dialogue of Cultures is an ongoing dialogue within the consciousness of the pupil (and teacher) between the voices of the poet (artist) and the theoretician as the basis for the real development of creative (the same as pertaining to humanities) thinking.'

> (Bibler, 2014:38)

As such this environment means that a dialogic context establishes a relationship between the student and teacher, which extends beyond the school environment, and can be applied to the outside world. Cultures of dialogue can be applied to other contexts, and when the school mirrors the wider societal context, acting as a microcosm of society, the dialogue is something which extends beyond the school environment (Bibler, 2014). This dialogue within the school setting needs further extension because it is more than dialogue between the teacher and student, but a dialogue between the school and family. This engagement with the school, family, and child, particularly regarding refugees is essential because an engagement with the cultural differences and a strive to close the cultural gap which exists between Arab culture and British culture assisted in the integration of refugee families, but also because the notion of family is rooted in and integral to Arab culture. Refugee families face many academic challenges and adjusting to the environment can be both daunting and challenging and often feelings of marginalisation, discrimination and social alienation can exist. Refugee children must learn not only English, but 'pedagogical routines' whilst they navigate a new social system (Bartlett et al., 2017). These pedagogical routines can be attributed to Bourdieu's notion of capital within the field of education because a refugee child is already placed at a disadvantage due to their lack of understanding surrounding the social and educational order present within the school environment and how different

agents interact with one another and the wider society. Without this baseline understanding, a student faces different forms of social inequality from the outset, and as such, there is a strong need for dialogue, and enabling social structures which recognise the challenges and aid in the integration.

Therefore, enabling social structures are useful in this process, in the form of mutually communicative and successful partnership between the school, family and local community which demands a democratic and collaborative decision-making process. In addition, schools have recognised the need for parents to engage with education as true educational partners. It is possible to facilitate an open dialogue between parents, caretakers, and the school itself by conducting community dialogues, which are intergroup conversations wherein individuals from varied racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds can voice their opinions and experiences of race in a safe and organised environment.

Freire finds that dialogue involves people working in tandem with one another because the process of dialogue is essential for enhancing the community, and the formation of social capital, alongside the notion of action as a tool for social inclusion and dialogue. Therefore, community dialogue is essential in achieving a sense of collective agency and in order to implement this dialogue, and there must be an understanding of the premise that race is pervasive and permanent, a challenge to the dominant ideologies to dismantle tunnel vision and colour blindness around race and race neutrality, and experiential learning. These factors allow community dialogue to encourage a 'race conscious approach to transformation' (Cook et al, 2017:11). This idea of community dialogue is both interesting and important, because a mutual and communicational dialogue comes as a by-product of the enabling social structures needed to encourage a sense of integration for refugee families. Interestingly, in 2010, Pinson, Arnot and Candappa stated that 'the presence of migrant children in schools represents a litmus test for the levels of social inclusion and the extent of compassion which schools create' (Pinson and Arnot, 2020).

Arnot and Pinson (2005) recommend a 'holistic model' of education that recognises and addresses the multiple, complex, social, and emotional needs of asylum seeker and refugee students. Therefore, they find that educational best practice is comprised of holistically addressing the emotional and social needs of refugee children 'with a focus on inclusiveness and the celebration of cultural diversity', alongside the importance of

parental engagement as essential for positive and effective education (cited in Block, et al., 2014:135). Moreover, Killian et al., (2018) state that refugees have complex multicultural identities, as opposed to the single identity of refugee which is often attributed to them. Therefore, if practitioners and researchers understand the complexity of a refugee's cultural identity, this provides them with an insight into the complex needs and cultural differences which refugee children and their families possess which in turn assists in the integration into the wider collective society. Part of this holistic model, Due, Riggs and Augoustinos (2016, 1287) highlight the significance of considering 'the broader social context of schools in addition to the learning experiences of students with migrant or refugee backgrounds. In the UK, the Children's Society (2019) a Refugee Toolkit has been formulated to assist in supporting educational environments to develop 'a whole school approach to refugee education' (Veck, Pagden and Wharton, 2019:87). This helps support school environments and encourages a sense of dialogue between the school and various agencies who strive to support families, and this in turn will strengthen dialogue between the school and the family because their needs are more understood and taken into consideration.

Moreover, dialogue is crucial within the process of 'learning and knowing' (Freire, 2005:17), and it 'must not serve as a crafty instrument for the domination of one person by another', but as a mutual and communicational understanding of the social world (Freire, 1970:70). For children to develop the intellectual tools which in turn allowed them to acquire knowledge and turn their lived experiences into knowledge, they would not be able to participate rigorously in a dialogue as a process of learning and knowing' until this has been achieved (Freire, 1970:19). One could argue that this knowledge can be extended to cultural dialogue which is as a result of a person's historical and social experiences and plays an integral role in social integration. Therefore, if culture and its acquisition are deemed as a form of knowledge, it cannot be seen as neutral, because attached to it, is the personal, social, and historic factors which influence the ways in which knowledge is shared and transmitted across different cultures, as well as the ability to synthesise and understand culture as a form of knowledge. Often Freire's notion of dialogue is mistaken or incorrectly applied within pedagogical settings. The goal of dialogic teaching is to create a communicational process of learning and knowing, and many pedagogues use dialogue as a method, which detracts from its original aim. Dialogue is an individual's encounter with the world around them to understand its intricacies, and as such, dialogue cannot occur between those who deny

others their right to a voice, and in Freire's depiction, ongoing, dialogue is a right which must be reclaimed by those most vulnerable and disenfranchised members of society.

Freire's work in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* established his place within the arena of educational history, followed by *Pedagogy of Hope* which synthesised the ongoing struggles by the Third World and Latin America. This addition, however, looks at the notion of hope as a human need and as part of the nature of being, or as Freire defined it – as an 'ontological need', he argues that whilst hope is an ontological need, hopelessness is hope which has 'lost its bearings and become a distorted version' of the former. Within Pedagogy of Hope he highlights the significance of critical pedagogy for social change, social inclusion, and dialogue, and further iterates this by arguing that a form of 'critical hope' is needed 'the way a fish needs unpolluted water' (Freire, 1992:8). In relation to this, one of the significant tasks of a progressive educator is to unveil the possibilities and opportunities for this hope, regardless of the barriers which may be faced, this is fundamental because irrespective of this sense of hope, there is no struggle, and there is very little which can be done to achieve the liberation which is so desperately needed. He finds that 'family and school were completely subjected to the greater context of global society that they could do nothing but reproduce the authoritarian ideology' (Freire, 1992:20). He also cites the significance of moving from a sense of critical transitivity to achieve feelings of critical consciousness (Freire, 2005).

1.19. *Voice*

The concept of voice has been discussed within this research as it is fundamental for dialogue and in particular, regarding methods for effective dialogic interview, therefore the voice of families as a whole was looked at, namely Syrian refugee parent's and their perceptions and experiences of the British education system regarding their children. This is the case for two reasons, firstly within the framework of inclusive educational perspectives, the concept of refugee families has not been discussed in detail because there has been a greater focus on children. Leading academics in the field such as Jill Rutter and Madeleine Arnot have focused on these issues, and whilst this is of benefit and significance to the knowledge paradigm, it is also important to observe the significance of the family as a social unit, especially when cultures of dialogue must operate in tandem with the school and family as agencies within society, and therefore this was the chosen unit of analysis. This has been discussed within the methodology chapter, and the notion of voice has been placed at the forefront of this research in

order to ensure that the opinions and values of the families are captured in order to understand their experiences. This connection to voice also works in line with Freire's approach and this has been discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

Secondly, the ethical parameters restricted the ability to focus on refugee children specifically, due to their nature as a vulnerable social group, and this therefore steered the research in the direction of families as opposed to children alone. However, this later became an integral component to the research because it has allowed for the focus on the concept of the family as the unit of analysis, in order to understand the experiences of refugee families and their cultural integration in the UK and the encouragement of their sense of voice within the research and the wider context in which they exist. The notion of the voice of the child is fundamental, and this extends to refugee families as a whole as a tool for social inclusion and dialogue through research, and the voice of the child needs to be understood within the context of the family, therefore the discussion of children within this context has been interesting and is important because it shows the full picture of the family unit and their experiences as a whole.

The importance of the family as critical to the process of educating children is concisely identified:

> 'families are a fundamental part of the educational process for children. As well as being there to support children in being successful at school, families can also have a lasting impact on shaping the formation of an individual's identity including giving many of the attitudes, values and beliefs an individual will hold as an adult'.

> (Knowles and Holmstrom, 2013:8)

In addition, they claim that 'society could not survive without families' (Knowles and Holmstrom, 2013:8) and this confirms the criticality of focusing on refugee families as part of a social unit within the wider social setting. This further confirms the importance of focusing on the family as opposed to focusing simply on refugee children alone. The idea of the refugee family in relation to dialogue has not been researched in great detail, and this distinction draws upon both originality and a new contribution to the knowledge paradigm, and it is for these reasons that this study has engaged with the

concept of family as opposed to focusing on refugee children and their feelings alone, which further suggests its originality.

Michael Fielding (2001:137) discusses the notion of voice within his work and he identifies students as radical agents of change, and as such, he regards education as a shared achievement and responsibility based upon the 'dispositions and demanding realities of dialogic encounter'. This idea of voice is used as a tool for the formation of a positive and inclusive educational community of dialogues, and it is important to see what this community feels like, this comes down to issues of 'power and authority' and 'freedom and equality' alongside the importance of 'democratic living' which lies at the heart, because without this, the notion of democracy itself simply becomes a mechanism as opposed to a tool for 'inspiring its inception'. This can be connected to two aspects of the research, the theoretical and the methodological.

This research strives for understanding social inclusion and fostering a sense of dialogue, akin to Freire's notion of conscientisation, wherein members of society become aware of the social structures and constructs which prevent them from achievement and growth, and this research has been used as a method of providing refugee families with the voice to speak out about their feelings and emotions regarding the education of their children, and the cultural challenges which they may or may not be experiencing – whether positive or negative. The transformation of consciousness among society's most disadvantaged provides them with the tools and incentives to change their lives, which is the initial intellectual shift which education hopes to inspire, once this shift to consciousness has been inspired, through increased 'contextual awareness', and understanding of the ways in which identity is shaped, that liberation through praxis or reflective action can be discovered (Dale and Hyslop-Margison, 2010:133).

This notion of voice and dialogic encounters connects coherently with the work of both Bourdieu and Freire, in the sense that it promotes an understanding of the social structures at work in society akin to Bourdieu's utterances, alongside an understanding of capital as a form of social inclusion. This, therefore, allows for a dialogic encounter between the researcher and the participants, which in turn strives for a dialogic encounter between researcher and policy, in order to make genuine and positive changes to the lives of some of society's potentially most vulnerable members, through refugee policy implementation within the United Kingdom. Whilst Fielding's research

focuses directly on students and the notion of voice, this idea can be extended further in arguing that the voice of the family needs to be heard for positive change, dialogue, and social inclusion. He cites the importance of 'dialogic relationships' between students and their teachers, and particularly, the work of Perpetua Kirby who corroborates the significance of this encounter (Fielding, 2001:105).

In addition, Linda Alcoff (1991-2:22) finds that the construction of dialogic encounters allows for 'the possibility that the oppressed will produce a 'countersentence' that can suggest a new historical narrative' – meaning that effective research, which is dialogic in its approach, gives participants a voice in their lives which can be used for encouraging social change and policy development. As such, the dialogic encounters which have been identified are needed within schools between parents and teachers, but in order to ascertain the feelings of the refugee parent as a participant, a dialogic approach to research is essential, because 'the exploration and transformation of existing discursive sites needs to be partnered by the construction of new opportunities for dialogic encounter' (Fielding, 2004:305).

Freire finds that powerful ideologies and discourses, societal agencies, and ongoing political power, in turn means that the characteristics of refugees have become homogenised, and this sameness means that they are lacking in the qualities of a successful citizen. In his study, Lunneblad (2017) found that Swedish society is multicultural, diverse, and accepting in its outlook on refugees, with policy that mirrors this benevolent outlook. However, they find that pedagogues look too much at the past experiences of refugee children and their families, as opposed to looking into the future, and this past focus inhibits their ability to support refugees in the present and in the future. Therefore, connections can be made between this thought to the necessity of dialogue, which focuses positively on the future integration of refugee children within schools through taking into consideration all the factors which impact their everyday lives, with focus on more than simply the traumatic experiences as cited by Rutter.

Torres (1998, cited in Dale and Hysplop-Margison, 2010) finds that responses to Freire have been mystified, demonised, and misunderstood, particularly regarding the notion of the seamless transfer across cultural and historical experiences, yet in fact Freire argued more so that his utterances were in constant need of adjustment and reinvention, and this was dependent on the context in which they are being applied. Therefore, one single notion of 'best practice' cannot be drawn from Freire's work, and

as such this leave his work open to both praise and criticism, the former surrounds the applicability of his theory however, and the ability to understand his work in a variety of contexts and adjust it to the social and cultural nuances of the society which one desires to understand is a strong benefit of his framework.

1.20. _Praxis and revolutionary action_

Similar to Bourdieu, Freire references the notion of praxis, akin to the Bourdieusian understanding of practice, as Freire cites the significance of revolutionary action in order to transform societal structures, but he argues for the notion of praxis over verbalism or activism, as it directs and reflects action at the structures which need to be transformed. Moreover, education is a tool for praxis, the need for reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it (Schugurensky, 2014:1), as such education is therefore seen as means of praxis, of reflection and action of the world in order to transform and revolutionise the field. As such, coherent links can be made with Bourdieu and Freire through taking Freire's notion of praxis and applying it to Bourdieu's depiction of capital as a form of social control. In addition to this, links can be made between practice and praxis and their use within these philosophical approaches. If there exists an intergenerational social inequality and unequal social arenas within his conceptualisation of the field, under which individuals acquire these forms of capital, then a sense of equality or open and candid dialogue cannot exist. Therefore, one must strive for enabling social structures coupled with a strong sense of individual agency and autonomy in order to feel a sense of integration into the community in which they have joined.

Therefore, if one combines Freire's revolutionary action within education, to Bourdieu's equalisation of the social arenas which reproduce social inequality, cultural dialogue can be acquired, and herein lies the originality of this research. The notion of praxis which Freire cites works in tandem with Bourdieu's notion of practice as he highlights that liberation comes as a result of praxis. Freire (1970:69) argued that if action is emphasised over reflection to the latter's detriment, then the word is converted to activism and when the action exists for action's sake it 'negates true praxis and makes dialogue impossible'. Therefore, for dialogue to exist successfully, a combination of action and reflection is needed for a true understanding of praxis. Bourdieu understands practice as a result of the interplay between habitus, field, and capital, wherein this practice is an 'unconscious behaviour that is in conformity without interests and that

aims at achieving…objectives by investing in capital and fighting for capital' (Walther, 2014:15). Every society has underlying inequalities, and whilst some communities express this differently, stratification and inequality are a feature and by-product of societies across the globe, and this is an unavoidable fact. Therefore, whether extreme or otherwise, varying forms of social inclusion and dialogue are needed whether subtle or more overt, in order to assist individuals in the process of active agency and autonomy in their own lives, and for their individual and familial liberation from the social struggles which they face. Whilst the notions of social inclusion which Freire espoused were relative to the time, of a society which strongly needed liberation, this is something which can be applied to societies across the globe in varied and relative forms and into the modern day, as inequality and its potential exist to this day.

Freire takes praxis as a tool for transforming society and its constructs and through the use of praxis as revolutionary, a person can achieve an equal playing field between members of a society, and both theorists use their conceptualisation to the lay the foundation for revolutionary practice, which can help in achieving equality and lifting the institutional barriers which exist. Bourdieu acknowledged that previous attempts at understanding human action were inadequate due to their inability to accept that human action must be regarded as practical, and in his book *Outline of a Theory of Practice* he attempts to provide his own definitive account of human action and how it should be understood. He cites practice as the ways in which an individual does something, and the notion of human action is regarded as practical, which is essential to his conceptualisation of practice in order to achieve a certain outcome. For Freire, praxis is the collaboration of reflection and action to transform the social structures present within society which perpetuate inequality akin to Bourdieu's conceptualisation.

Whilst the frameworks of Bourdieu and Freire have been utilised and the rationale behind this has been explained, it is important to highlight another theorist whose work on the notion of dialogue is noted within the philosophical field and the connections between Bourdieu and Freire are strong and offer a newfound connection between praxis and practice and capital, which provides a different outlook on discussions. Finally, Freire's work, specifically his notion of praxis as action and self-reflection has been identified as an underpinning concept for this research and had framed many of the questions which the families were asked in the interviews which were undertaken. This notion of praxis, in the form of action and self-reflection is part of three key aspects

to successful integration. This research postulates that with a strong sense of familial capital, praxis as action and self-reflection, and enabling social structures, this research suggests that integration becomes possible for refugee families.

1.21. *Integrating the work of Pierre Bourdieu and Paulo Freire*

The theoretical frameworks of Bourdieu and Freire has been discussed in tandem because both Bourdieu and Freire subscribe to a framework of criticality which has taken its starting point from Marxism, and this can be noticed most prominently in Bourdieu's depictions of cultural capital and Freire's class-based emancipatory outlook which is critical of traditional pedagogy. This notion of humanistic Marxism explores 'what human nature consists of and what sort of society would be most conducive to human thriving' which is rooted in Marxist philosophy (Alderson and Spencer, 2017:17). Similar to Freire, Bourdieu asserted that the formal education system is an integral mechanism for the production and perpetuation of socioeconomic inequality due to its role in legitimising the existence of social hierarchy 'by transforming it into an apparent hierarchy of gifts or merit' (Edgerton and Roberts, 2014:194). Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) state that the education system typifies the symbolic domination of students and teachers through the culture of active participation in learning and acquiring knowledge and legitimising culture which reproduces class domination which is the outcome of this active participation. The participation is defined as a technical function, whilst the class domination is described as a social function and Bourdieu and Passeron criticise those who draw attention to the technical over the social functions because symbolic domination combines participation and misrecognition. Freire (1970) asserts that critical pedagogy is an essential part of revolutionary action, and he differs from Bourdieu because he finds that class domination lies in the pedagogy, wherein he describes the banking model of information which metaphorically defines students as containers in which pedagogues place knowledge. As such, he is in opposition to this lack of critical thinking and independent thought analysis. Yet, both Bourdieu and Freire agree that formal education is a tool used to reproduce domination and oppression.

For Freire, education served to achieve the goal of a 'self-managed life' (Giroux, 2010:716), and this can only be fully reached when three goals have been achieved, self-reflection, which encompasses an understanding of the world in which a person exists and its political, economic, and psychological facets. The notion of critical pedagogy helps a student gain a sense of awareness of the external forces which have shaped

their experiences and consciousness. Moreover, the conditions for producing this new life with arrangements and values wherein power has been transferred for the most part, to those who comprise the social world and its transformation through both themselves and nature, can assist in the achievement of this self-managed life. Once these goals have been reached, a life of subordination can be avoided (Giroux, 2010). The data collected identified if connections can be made between the educational experiences of Syrian refugee families, praxis and the latter of Freire goals of achieving a sense of self-reflection which surrounds a greater understanding of factors social, economic and political factors which affect people's lives and Bourdieu's notion of capital acquired within the specific field, which once acquired can assist in navigating the social, cultural and economic nuances of society and its expectations for the individual. As such, a combination of Freire's praxis (action and self-reflection) and an increased consciousness to the forces which affect people's lives, and Bourdieu's acquisition of different forms of capital which allow people to navigate the social world around them, are suggestive of integration.

The underlying theme and the synergy between the role of education in perpetuating societal inequality makes their work similar and allows a researcher to engage with the theories in parallel. The theoretical framework has taken its starting point from Marx, and this is a similarity between the two, yet whilst they take this starting point, neither theory relies upon the economic aspect of Marxist analysis and has not drawn upon the labour theory of value to underpin this research. Therefore, suggesting that they took their initial interest and starting point from Marx, but developed their own research in a different way. This study builds on this work by understanding the importance of praxis as a tool for social inclusion and cultural dialogue, and through combining the work of Bourdieu and his conceptualisation of habitus, field and practice, and Freire's notions of dialogue, praxis and conscientisation, then a greater understand the significance of these tools for cultural integration can be achieved.

These theoretical frameworks are well suited to the aims of this research project because they allow for the researcher to take abstract concepts and contextualise them in order to formulate concrete questions for the purposes of data collection which in turn helped in answering the main aim of this research, which is to explore the importance of culturally integrating Syrian refugee families through praxis and dialogue with schools. Both these approaches have an underlying theme, and as such, this places them in a good position to discuss the issue from through looking at the potential

unequal societal structures. The families have shown how they possess a sense of praxis and with increased ambition and drive, their ability to integrate into society increased over time. The families interviewed were given an opportunity to express and encourage a sense of reflexivity and a way of sharing their narrative and experience with others, to truly share the challenging and profound experiences which the families faced in Syria. Moreover, they showed that they in fact have forms of capital such as familial capital which can allow them to navigate their new lives and communities, alongside their sense of autonomy and the enabling social structures which exist around them. Therefore, this research strives to greater understand refugee experiences and praxis, by synthesising the two theoretical approaches. It postulates that cultural integration cannot be achieved without the use of action and reflection of practice in order to achieve communicative dialogue, nor can it be achieved without an understanding of the societal fields which perpetuate inequality within education. In addition, it understands that without both enabling social structures and a strong sense of agency from the family as a whole, then true integration becomes less likely. Therefore, without Bourdieu's definition of practice as the practical action of doing something to achieve a purpose alongside Freire's notion of praxis, it could be argued that dialogue cannot be achieved, in turn diminishing the chance of achieving cultural integration amongst refugee children and families. Therefore, through a strong sense of action and reflection a sense of agency can be established which allows the families to positively integrate into their new communities on a variety of levels, whether it be socially, economically, or culturally. Through using and understanding praxis, dialogue, conscientisation and capital as instruments for social inclusion, dialogue, and integration, it could be argued that cultural integration is a possibility when the perpetuation of social inequality and its barriers are broken down.

Notions of cultural dialogue, familial capital and praxis are essential, and in order to assist in the implementation and acquisition of integration amongst refugee children and their families across society and its agencies, but in particular within education. As a result, government policy must strive to establish provisions for refugee children and their families, and when society mirrors or reflects this outlook, then integration is encouraged. Without cultural acquisition or capital acquisition in order to navigate the social world, integration as opposed to assimilation becomes the aim. As a secondary tool for socialisation, schools should work with the family in an inter-agency manner in order to guarantee that children and young people from refugee backgrounds are

culturally integrated into the school setting and acquire the relevant skills and capitals needed for integration in the wider society. Social policy is therefore a tool for addressing the issues of representation within society for marginalised groups, as well as social inclusion and dialogue to avoid inequality and the social structures which prevent integration. Refugee children and their families should be enshrined in government agenda that the cultural integration of refugees becomes an essential feature of propaganda, as well as the formation of healthy dialogue in schools to benefit all parties involved, in a social, cultural, and economic way.

In sum, this research synthesises the relationship between Bourdieu's notion of practice (i.e., guidance on behaviours needed to navigate the social world), and Freire's understanding of praxis (i.e., the need for action and self-reflection for social liberation), coupled with an increased awareness and consciousness of social inequality, which can be combated through dialogue, agency and enabling social structures, and we can see the underlying inequalities but find tools which ameliorate these struggles faced by the families. It also highlights the significance of familial capital and its relationships to Bourdieu's notions of capital, and the ways in which this contributes to their feelings of agency within the social structures and feelings of integration. The work of Bourdieu and Freire seldom been used together and exemplifies the originality of this research and the original ways in which praxis and capital are thought about, beyond the literature which exists in the field. This research explores the experiences of refugees through a lens which is often not used in the field and exemplified in the literature in the field.

1.22. *Bourdieu and Intersectionality*

Thus far strong links have been made between the work of Bourdieu and Freire, and now it is important to situate their combined insights within a contemporary context. The notion of intersectionality is useful here, as it illuminates the contemporary relevance of these theories. As such, the notion of intersectionality can achieve this, and enhance the contemporary underpinning of slightly more obsolete theories. Whilst the work of Bourdieu and Freire is integral to this research and its underpinning, one must place their work within a contemporary scale, further suggesting the theoretical versatility and applicability to thinking in the contemporary condition. Intersectionality is a termed coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw in 1989 as a way of understanding the unique experiences which Black women faced as a result of racism and sexism, as two forms of

discrimination which are inseparable from one another. She argued that if there is no one experience that is alike another, and sexism and racism cannot be treated as separate entities, in isolation from one another, but understood in tandem as intersecting forms of discrimination (Sigle-Rushton, 2013). Intersectionality encourages a view that social actors within the same or similar social categories do not share the same relationships with power within their community and society, even if they share similar geographical locations for example (Yuval-Davis, 2015).

Intersectionality encourages analysis around the practices wherein social class, gender and ethnicity interact and overlap with one another in the production of differentiated experiences, and here links can be made between the uniqueness and relative experiences which refugee families have, which can be as a result of various factors which intersect, such as gender, race, sexuality, and geography. Intersectionality operates through an understanding of social structures and the distribution of power in absolute and unequal terms. Links can be drawn between intersectionality and the work of Bourdieu, and have been discussed as theoretical frameworks in tandem, due to the oppressive underpinning of Marxism and Feminism. The inclusivity of gender practice into Bourdieu's research is suggestive of the intersectional facets to his work, and the ways in which connections can be made between his framework and notions of intersectionality. Bourdieu referred to women and inequalities within his ethnographic research of communities in Algeria in the 1960s (Bourdieu, 1977), but he also refers to the complicity of the female habitus within the labour market and includes gender within his work. Academics such as Yuval-Davis (2015; Rushton, 2013; Fowler, 2003) have made links between the work of Bourdieu and intersectionality, and this exemplifies the applicability of his theory on a contemporary scale through the lens of intersectionality for example.

Moreover, Hill Collins and Bilge (2016) clearly identify that their approach to intersectionality is derived from the work of Bourdieu and his concepts of habitus, field, and practice in relation to school and various other institutions, and the notion of fields of power within school for example. Therefore, links can be drawn between Bourdieu's theory to notions of intersectionality, and the idea of capital in its various forms, economic, social, cultural, and symbolic, as a means of liberating oneself from the barriers of intersectionality. Therefore, the more capital an individual holds, the more able they are to navigate certain fields to escape the barriers which they face, and links

can be made to Freire's notion of praxis, as a tool for social inclusion from the struggles of intersectionality. The work of Patricia Hill-Collins can be linked to Bourdieu and Freire coherently, and their notion of praxis as action and reflection through. Due to the fact that their work was derived from Bourdieu's conceptualisation of habitus and practice, it can be understood that the ways in which various characteristics intersect and ways in which intersectionality is used as a method of criticality of praxis, and practice and how these should be seen as interrelated, thus strengthening the links between Bourdieu and Freire and the contemporary nature of their research when linked with modern theory.

Bourdieu's work is not incompatible with modern theories such, but making these links, places his work in a more contemporary area of discourse and suggests the timeless application of these theories to the modern world.

In addition, the theories discussed in this research, highlight the multiple forms of oppression faced by society's most disadvantaged. Moreover, the notion of intersectionality suggests that disadvantage can be avoided through the development of familial capital. This notion of familial capital draws upon the work of Bourdieu in relation to contemporary intersectional insights. Indeed, familial capital, emerged in this study as crucial in the alleviation of potential disadvantage among refugee families. Whilst this relationship is fascinating, the focus of this research remains the connection between Bourdieu and Freire, and refugees, but this sub-section illuminates the modernity of their research in relation to contemporary theories.

1.23.   *Refugees Families and Social Policy*

Refugees as a social group are described as a product of conflict in international, national, and regional politics, and global factors have created hostile and violent outbursts towards refugees and asylum seekers (Sidhu et al., 2011). As such, their presence is a reminder of the ongoing conflicts which the world has faced and continues to face, the interference of Western nations in the Middle East and beyond, and the existence of international conflicts which have caused refugees to suffer as a result. Therefore, the enshrinement of refugee rights within both national and international policy is integral for their integration. This research has investigated the opinion of refugees regarding their relationship with the school and their children's experiences, in order to understand the relationship in greater detail and whether greater policy is needed to support their feelings towards integration. In relation inclusive school

development, the research suggests that the promotion of change in educational environments three key dimensions for consideration, and these include, culture policy and practice (Booth and Ainscow, 2011; Dovigo, 2019)

Refugees are defined and protected in international law and the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, which defines a refugee as someone:

> 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality or membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country'.

> *UN General Assembly (1951:189, Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees)*

In order to enshrine the rights of asylum seekers and refugees two legal instruments exist, which prevent them from returning to countries where there exists a fear of persecution - The 1967 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1951 United Nations Refugee Convention. Alongside this, the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) (1989), highlights an international agreement for the 'civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities', and all children should have 'the right to be heard (Article 12), the right to life, survival, and development (Article 6), their best interests considered (Article 3) and to not be discriminated against (Article 2). Therefore, overarching legislation which stipulates the rights of refugees and their families, allows for support towards marginalised and vulnerable social groups and allows them to find a haven for their families in challenging times. In a piece of research as part of the *Improving teaching to improve refugee children education,* Veck, Pagden and Wharton (2020) discuss the various approaches to refugee education in countries in Western Europe, they highlight that even with the varied size or political character of countries such as Belgium, France, Ireland, Monaco, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom 'there is no homogenous approach to refugee and asylum seeker policies'. As a result, this quote suggests that it is incredibly important that policy approaches do not aim to cluster refugees together, and also suggests that the experiences are varied and diverse and therefore, policy should reflect this.

Other notable international policy which embeds the rights of marginalised and vulnerable groups is the United Nations, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO,

2019; UNHCR; 2016) which highlights the importance of Leading Education 2030, an agenda which is part of the Sustainable Development Goals, which aims to provide an 'ambitious, aspirational and universal agenda to wipe out poverty through sustainable development' by the year 2030. Education was highlighted for success in all seventeen of the sustainable goals and as such the goals to 'ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all'. This is fundamental for lifelong learning, and it is therefore fundamental that refugee children and their families have access to education upon arrival in the United Kingdom.

Moreover, educational policy needs to be implemented in line with the sustainable development goals, which it currently is not. In addition, conventions protect the rights of refugees when they are 'floating' so to speak, amidst a sea of countries, such as when they are in refugee camps or host communities, however, when they re-settle in countries in Europe, namely in this case, in the United Kingdom, whose autonomous policy is derived from the nation, if their needs are not represented within this, refugees might struggle to integrate or feel represented. The New York Declaration adopted by the United Nations General Assembly (2016; UNHCR, 2017) sets out a comprehensive refugee response framework which has been created for large-scale movements of refugees and the promotion of their inclusion within host communities and the development of a 'whole-society' approach to refugee responses with four key objectives, firstly easing the pressures on host countries and communities, secondly to encourage 'self-reliance; to 'expand third-country solutions' and to 'support the conditions within countries of origin for return in safety and dignity'.

Moreover, *Refugee Education 2030: A strategy for refugee inclusion*, aims to sustain 'equitable quality education in national systems' to build resilient children and youth for their participation in 'cohesive societies'. The three aims for this mission are to promote sustainable inclusion in national education, foster safe and enabling learning environments for all students, and to encourage the use of education for sustainable futures (UNHCR, 2019). The idea of safe and enabling environments is critical for the integration of refugee families because this allows for a greater ability to integrate, because families have structures around them which allow for the possibility of effective integration.

On a more national scale, policy surrounding refugee children appears to be sparse and as such, this makes meeting refugee needs even more challenging, because provisions

are few and far between, and they do not stipulate the different needs of refugee families, or the ways in which pedagogues can provide effective support. For example, the policy document, Keeping Children Safe in Education (2018) was recently updated, post refugee influx, and this talks about early help strategies to support children and young people in most need. For example, if a child is disabled, has special educational needs, is involved, or associated with organised crime groups, is at risk of radicalisation or exploitation or is misusing drugs or alcohol, provisions exist within education to support them and prevent further issues from developing. Whilst there exists international policy which enshrines refugee rights, national policy does not reflect this, as such, this research aims to assist in policy formation for future refugee schemes within the United Kingdom, particularly when they are not represented in national policy for example due to the hostility of the national context, therefore policy representation amongst refugees as a vulnerable social group is needed. The very fact that the notion of radicalisation is considered so strongly, driven by a preoccupation with the Prevent Strategy, as opposed to including a refugee child within these categories as a vulnerable individual. Overarching national policy is necessary because it provides schools with a national framework to follow and allows for the sharing of best practice around refugees within the school and wider community environment.

Due to the importance of the school, and its role in instilling values to children and young people, it is essential that pedagogues and educational policy makers are aware of the needs of the child and family from a cultural perspective, in order to assist in merging the values of the family with those of the society which they are joining. Cultures of dialogue and praxis within schools, expanding to the wider societal network are essential in order to culturally integrate refugee children and their families into the micro school context, the local community environment, and the wider macro society. Education is one of the core domains of integration alongside health, employment and housing, and the key facilitators for this integration include language and cultural knowledge (Ager and Strang, 2008). According to the Geneva Refugee Convention (1951) which outlined the social rights of refugees, employment, education, and social welfare were identified as integral to an individual's rights. Education provides core skills and competences, and it is the most significant point of contact for refugees and their host communities, therefore, this allows for the establishment of mutual and supportive relationships for integration and is arguably the root for this integration. However, there exist barriers towards the goal of integration in schools, with one of the

main issues surrounding the internal support for English as an Additional Language (EAL), limited provisions within the educational setting to support their special educational needs.

Moreover, Arnot and Pinson (2005; Arnot, Pinson and Candappa, 2010) cite ineffective strategies such as a lack of English as an Additional Language (EAL) provision or initiatives which focused too heavily on ethnic minority and race equality. schools should offer a holistic model which looks at the emotional and psychological needs of students, offer pastoral and admission support, lunchtime activities and after-school clubs. Whilst education was highlighted as a key domain for integration, and language and culture as a facilitator for this integration, the notion of increasing cultural awareness in schools surrounding the values and cultures of refugee students must be considered and this means that other students and teachers may not be as tolerant towards the families. In addition, we can observe the extent to which policy documents comprehensively provide statutory guidance for children with disabilities and special educational needs, and even then, refugees do not come under this umbrella because English as an Additional Language is not seen as a special educational need. Therefore, when overarching government policy does not include refugee children in its list of early help victims, it becomes challenging to support refugees effectively, because their needs are not implemented in governmental policy. This lack of representation is reiterated in the multi-agency policy document Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018) which also highlights children who are in most need of support within the school environment. Whilst it highlights the importance of inter-agency work, which is essential particularly when working with or supporting at risk and vulnerable children. Refugee needs and rights are not enshrined in national level policy and therefore the actions of practitioners cannot be held accountable for the ways in which refugee children learn and the ways in which the school interacts with the family.

In addition, indefinite leave to remain creates feelings of liminality amongst refugee families, because their citizenship is not absolute until they have lived in the UK for five years, whilst they are able to find employment and access education, absolute citizenship is not possible until later, as such, a precarious and liminal state of living on the 'peripheries' society becomes a factor (Taylor and Sidhu, 2012:42). Zygmunt Bauman defines this as a state of 'frozen transience' (Bauman, 2002-114-5), which can be best exemplified within refugee camps wherein the fate of refugee families is unclear

and unpredictable and planning for the future is impossible because one does not know how long their state of liminality becomes extended. Indefinite leave is not a permanent status, and as such this causes extended stress and trauma for a refugee family because building their lives becomes a greater challenge. The overarching Safeguarding Strategy for Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking and Refugee Children (2017) sets out the actions that the Government took in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, and this document looks at both the legal and clandestine pathways to arrival of refugee children and unaccompanied minors but does not set out policy for refugee families as a whole. This research aims to observe the experiences of refugee families as a social unit, and as such this has been the main unit of analysis for this research (Department for Education and Home Office, 2017).

In the UK, the Children's Commissioner plays a role in representing and expressing the rights and voice of the child. The work of the Commissioner is framed upon the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and their duty involves listening to the voice of the child and striving to take their interest into account. Moreover, the Commissioner speaks on behalf of those whose voices are least likely to be heard when this is both appropriate and in accordance with their statutory remit. Interestingly, their role allows them to assess the impact of existing policy and legislation in order to understand how these initiatives impacted the rights of the child. One could argue that roles like this do not address the challenges faced by refugee children and their families, nor does it represent or highlight their diverse needs. The Children's Commissioner should be responsible for representing the child with no voice, in this instance the refugee child and family who is not fully able to communicate their needs in English in the early stages of their arrival to the UK.

From a review of the existing literature available to refugee families, one could argue that policy surrounding them is vague and does not highlight the extent to which refugee children managed within the school setting and falls short when looking at the family as a whole, or refugee children individually within the policy. However, one argues that when policy is collective and overarching it homogenises people's experiences. Moreover, the complex and diverse needs of refugees are different depending on each family's individual experiences and this may not be highlighted to practitioners or policy makers, who may not have experience in dealing with refugee children in their classrooms or in their policy mechanisms. The socio-cultural needs of

the refugee child and their family are different to those of a British child, due to their differing values, upbringing, religiosity, and culture, and as such if this is not understood then their needs cannot be met effectively. As such, it is essential for government policy, provision, and guidelines to highlight the needs of refugee children in schools for healthy dialogue between refugee families and the school. This can only be achieved if government policy provides a framework for schools to work alongside and implement for effective practice, but for families to feel represented within policy. Moreover, if policy is effective, it acts as a barrier around the families, and crates enabling social structures which allow the families to enhance their integration.

There does, however, exist more informal policy mechanisms regarding refugee families, and therefore, there exists a juxtaposition between formal and informal policy around refugee families. This comes in the form of local council support towards families in crisis. For example, West Sussex County Council in conjunction with other areas in the district, police and voluntary groups have committed to take part in rehousing families as part of resettlement schemes (West Sussex County Council, 2019), as part of a wider Home Office Scheme which is encouraging the structures around the families. This suggests informal support to refugee families, but one could argue that this in conjunction with suitably policy and legislation would make the integration of refugees a formal goal as opposed to a relative and informal drive from specific areas and their Councils. Moreover, council responses vary and differ in regard to their approach and use of funding and initiative. This can be linked to the findings of the research that enabling social structures play a role in the integration of Syrian refugee families and allows them to progress and engage with the society which they have joined, moreover, it means that this support encourages a sense of connectedness to their new communities af fosters a strengthened connection.

The National Union of Teachers (2018) provide a guide which sets out methods of welcoming refugee children to the school environment, through providing an induction, utilising the skills of other children, creating a climate in which refugee children feel welcome and valued, making the curriculum accessible and organising the classroom effectively. However, this must be followed with a comprehension of the significance of the family as a method of learning, integration, and development for the child. This suggests an effort made by teacher-led organisations which strive to include refugees into the educational fabric, and this research aims to understand more about the

relationship which refugee parents have with the school, and whether they feel that this relationship can be strengthened through increased dialogue and cultural understanding. The Home Office Resettlement Scheme has however, been an example of support for refugees from various countries and this shows the national level support for international refugeehood, and this scheme has been extended and developed to suit the needs of various families from many walks of life across the country, and this has been discussed in the following chapters.

2. Chapter Two: Methodology

This chapter provides a comprehensive oversight of the key issues regarding the methodology of the research project, with focus placed upon the research aims, objectives and the potential and desired impact of this research. The qualitative approach taken for the purposes of this research includes the data collection method selected which is semi-structured interviews and the tools which have been utilised in order to meet the aims and objectives have also been discussed within this chapter. It also highlights the ethical barriers, informed consent and confidentiality and the ways in which these have been addressed, as well as a section about the sample size, the source from which the participants were selected and the selection process itself.

For introductory purposes, methodology is defined as 'a general approach to studying research topics' (Silverman, 2005:306), and this broad definition can be reduced down to a more specific strand of methodological study, and in this research an interpretivist, qualitative and emotionalist driven method of data collection has been utilised due to the experience and emotion driven nature of the research subject. In regard to the order of events, the figure below was constructed by the researcher and depicts the process from which the ethical approval was granted, through to the data analysis, and the stages which had to be undertaken in order to gain access to the research sample, and the testing of the research instrument in order to test the viability and utility as a tool for the purposes of this research (Figure 2: Process of ethical approval)

2.1.   *Research aims, objectives and aspirations*

This research aims to explore the cultural experiences of Syrian refugee families within the British education system, in order to understand greater, the role that praxis, dialogue and capital have in the experiences of integration which refugee families experience, and whether it is possible to culturally integrate Syrian refugee families into British society, with focus placed upon the school as a mechanism for this integration (Figure 3: Research aims, and sub aims).

The objectives strive to explore the notions of praxis, practice, and capital in relation to refugee families and the school, in order for effective integration to take place. It also strives to assess the difference between assimilation and integration, and how the latter is more useful; to explain the importance of Freire's conceptualisation of praxis, dialogue and concientisation and Bourdieu's notion of capital, field and practice when discussing cultural integration; to understand the importance of cultural inclusion and to capture the feelings and experiences of Syrian refugees in the United Kingdom surrounding their sense of integration. As previously identified within the literature review chapter, much of the available research in the field focuses heavily on mental health, language acquisition and trauma as factors which inhibit integration, but these alone do not explain the issue without first looking at the potential cultural disparities which may exist between Syrian refugees and British society. In order to achieve this, primary research is needed in order to better understand the experiences of the families and gauge deeper the feelings and experiences of a vulnerable social group and the ways in which they navigate the social world around them and interpret society and interact with its actors and institutions.

2.2. *Research aspirations*

When planning the methodology, there was consideration placed on the Economic and Social Research Council and therefore this subsection demonstrates the potential contribution to research, the body of knowledge and originality which runs through. Moreover, this research   aspires and hopes for influence. This research holds both hopes and aspirations for how it hopes to be appreciated within the field of refugee studies and education. This research hopes to inform policy makers and legislators of the existing challenges and the need for ongoing dialogue and support around the refugee issue as it is a multifaceted phenomenon which affects the social, political, cultural, and economic composition of society. Refugee children and their families cannot be effectively integrated into the social, cultural, and economic fabric of British society without cultural dialogue which allows agents involved in integration to better understand one another. Without the need for dialogue and mutual understanding, integration would be less achievable, cultural chasms would persist, and societal cohesion and collective consensus would deteriorate, and this has been grounded in the literature. These aims can best be achieved with a comprehensive approach to the primary research, through compiling a coherent plan for the data collection and a sound

justification for the selected research model, whilst also acknowledging the ethical barriers which need to be addressed throughout the process of acquiring the data.

According to a report commissioned by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (2017:5) surrounding integration and the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme in the United Kingdom integration was regarded within the refugee context as:

> 'the end product of a multi-faceted and on-going process. The successful integration of refugees, in all its dimensions (legal, economic, and social), is a crucial undertaking. It is a prerequisite for enabling a positive economic impact, but also for refugees to benefit from a welcoming environment as productive members of their new societies and towards building a cohesive social environment'.

> (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2017:5)

This suggests that integration is both a challenging and complex issue which is both a multifaceted and interdisciplinary issue and therefore, it requires a multi-agency response which is in line with this. Therefore, greater understanding around the issue of integration and the barriers which inhibit its success is important, but in order to have a successfully integrated community of Syrian refugee families, a greater need for dialogue and discussion between agencies which support refugees is essential because this allows for a communicative relationship between the family and the wider community and its support agencies. Moreover, it highlights the need for policy makers to have an insight into the experiences of refugee families in order to support them. As highlighted by UNHCR (2017) there are both social and economic benefits to integration and therefore research in this area becomes even more critical for encouraging integration and understanding it in greater detail from a policy perspective.

The lack of policy regarding refugees has been noted within the review of existing literature, and because this research aims to inform policy around refugee issues and develop knowledge and understanding in the field, policy needs to be updated to be more inclusive of refugee children and families. Moreover, policy documents identified within the Department for Education guidance, which have been updated post-refugee influx and post development of resettlement schemes like the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme, Gateway and Mandate policy have not reflected the various

needs, which refugee families may face. In addition, it has included them in integrative policy or as potentially at risk and vulnerable members of society.

The second statement of impact surrounds the notion of voice and liberation for refugee families and this research aims to break the culture of silence which Freire discusses in his research. It is important to note that whilst it is fundamental to have clear aims, a rationale, and a purpose for the research, it is also critical that the research has a clear and justified purpose. This research hopes to liberate and empower the participants involved in order to enrich their feelings of consciousness and raise their social and cultural awareness of the importance of the notion of conscientisation and feelings as cited by Freire (1970) of self-realisation around the power structures at work which control societies and its agents. Moreover, this notion of voice can also be linked to the importance of establishing a strong sense of praxis (action and reflection) which can only come about if the true voices of social groups are heard. It is fundamental for vulnerable, potentially marginalised, and precarious social groups to understand the societal power structures in which they exist because this increased sense of awareness helped in bringing about change to their lives, and according to Atkins and Wallace (2015:16) the authentic voice of the participants must be retained as much as possible and the ways in which they sit within the system. Similarly, Back (2012, cited in Baker and Edwards, 2012:12) states that the genuine authenticity of an individual can be rendered through a faithful transcription of their voice, and this makes it even more pertinent that voice is considered as a factor, and that the true voice of the participant lies at the heart of this research, and this in turn informs policy.

The desire to research for the liberation of the participants, and by extension the social group which has been studied lies within the strand of qualitative research of critical ethnography, and this research paradigm is often concerned with 'the exposure of oppression and inequality in society with a view to emancipating individuals and groups towards collective empowerment' (Cohen et al, 2007:186). The notable themes of this method include for example the notion that particular groups in society exert more power over others and inequality and oppression are inherent in capitalist society. Whilst this research adopts a qualitative, interpretivist and emotionalist driven approach, this notion of critical ethnography fits well into Freire's notion of teaching for social inclusion through reflection and action for social change. This idea is relevant to refugees, particularly when this research strives to provide a voice to those who may not feel they have one, and this research, therefore, is participant centred.

This is also particularly important when we observe the lack of representation within national policy frameworks, and whilst refugee rights are enshrined on an international level, this does not always translate into national policy. As such, this research aims to assist in policy formation for future refugee resettlement schemes and policy discussions within the United Kingdom, particularly around integration and inclusive practice, and this is especially important when they are not always directly represented in national policy for example. This connects with the first statement of impact regarding informing policy on a national scale, and as the participants have the potential to be agents of change, the research hopes to transform the lives of the families involved in this study through opening new 'subjective possibilities' (Way et al., 2015:721) and giving them an opportunity to speak of their own experiences and have their own voices heard, and this is the second statement of aspiration.

Alongside the focus on engaging in dialogue with the families and providing them with the voice and platform to speak about issues which concern them and potentially influencing policy, the third aspiration for this research surrounds the research aim of making positive contributions to knowledge through originality because it is important for emerging research to make a positive and progressive contribution to the knowledge paradigm. In order to effectively assess this, reference to the Economic and Social Research Council, is important, and their conceptualisation of impact is measured and defined as the 'demonstrable contribution that excellent research makes to society and the economy', and this is comprised of either academic impact, economic and social impact, or a combination of the two.

This research comes under both categories as highlighted by the Economic and Social Research Council, and therefore hopes to make both academic and societal contributions due to its engagement with modern and pertinent social issues, which shifts understanding and advances knowledge and allows for contribution to society and the economy. The impact of this research is instrumental in the sense that it strives to influence policy development, as well as conceptual through its aims of contributing to the understanding of policy issues with a vision of potentially reframing debates. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of this research area, it covers a range of areas, such as philosophy, refugee studies, education, and politics. Similarly, according to the Arts and Humanities Research Council, a portfolio approach to developing the evidence is the method in which impact is collected, whilst a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods is deemed as important for building a 'robust case' for research

value and impact, this research is not a mixed methods approach, it adopts qualitative methods alone, it would still be a new and original project which had an impact on the knowledge paradigm. Public engagement can be achieved through:

> 'engaging the public with your research [which] can improve the quality of research and its impact, raise your profile, and develop your skills. It also enables members of the public to act as informed citizens and can inspire the next generation of researchers.'

(Research Councils UK, 2019)

Therefore, this statement allows for an understanding of the potential that quality research has regarding its impact as defined by the Economic and Social Research Council through making positive contributions to the body of knowledge, policy development and society to engage with members of the public and influence future researchers. This research is further useful for impact within the socio-economic context because the refugee crisis, and integration are both a pertinent and topical issue for society, and therefore further research in this field is useful for future refugee resettlement schemes and policy discussions, particularly around integration and inclusive practice.

Moreover, the Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration (2018) David Bolt made seven recommendations to the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme as part of his inspection, and one of those recommendations surrounded the successful integration of refugees in the United Kingdom. He stated that The Home Office (2018:2) has been:

> 'taking sensible steps to study this over the longer-term. However, there may be lessons for the pre-departure period and first years in the UK that, if identified now, could benefit those still in the early stages of the process'.

However, he added that it may still be too soon to assess whether those individuals and families settled via the scheme had been successfully integrated in the society they joined. Therefore, this research has the potential of joining the discussion and dialogue around the integration of refugees, particularly in regard to policy, it can also make contributions to the success of the Home Office scheme as the research was undertaken five years after the Scheme was first introduced in 2015, and as such, it hopes to make interesting observations and contributions to the narrative and the dialogue.

2.3. *A qualitative research approach*

This was a primary piece of data research and as such required the assistance of human subjects to gain a deeper understanding of the issues. As such, the unit of analysis for this research is refugee families as the subject from which the data was collected. Due to the emotion-led and experience focused nature of the research and refugees as a social group, a qualitative piece of research was chosen to be the most effective, due to the interpretivist nature of qualitative data collection, the research relies heavily on the researcher and the human subject as instruments to measure social phenomena. Moreover, qualitative research acknowledges that all research is inherently subjective, and as a method it helps researchers understand individual, culture and phenomena as opposed to analysing the relationship between variables and cause and effect relationships. This method is useful for this research because it acknowledges the existence of different forms of constructed realities because truth is attached to each individual and their own understanding (Savin-Balden and Major, 2017).

Therefore, the underpinning framework for this research is interpretivism and the approach has been noted for its significant influence on educational research 'over the last thirty years' (Scott and Morrison, 2006:131), and this framework is useful because it encourages 'social actors to negotiate meanings about their activity in the world' as social reality consists of human interpretation of the world. This framework took its starting point from Bourdieu's approach to data collection, and in his work, the *Logic of Practice*, and as such the theory of Bourdieu has had an underpinning within the literature review, methodology and rationale for this research. This construction of human reality means that the interaction between actors and agencies needs to be observed in order to gain a deeper understanding of the social nuances or habitus, and the factors at play. Moreover, educational researchers utilise this approach as a method of inserting themselves into the continual process of establishing meaning to understand how reality is constructed and to explain social phenomena. This framework has been chosen because this is a living piece of research which is driven by human interaction, emotion, experiences, and feelings of belonging in their broadest sense.

Anthony Giddens (1984) however argues that routine is the most common of all forms of behaviour and therefore continuous reflection and reinterpretation often occurs infrequently, and as such, this is at the behest of the researcher. In addition, Giddens (1991/1994) discusses the term dialogic democracy as a method of encouraging free liberation and inclusivity within research as integral to successful notions of democracy, and in relation to research and interviewing, this notion is fundamental for successful

interviewing and Freire's utterances around conscientisation and education for consciousness. Therefore, this is essential for the success of an interview. Moreover, according to Scott and Morrison (2006:132), even the purest forms of interpretivism can account for the 'institutional and discursive structures that position the individual in various ways', this is because social actors are often unaware of these structures and cannot utilise them in the self-reflexive interpretations they make. These criticisms however, place very little trust or encouragement in the individual and their ability to understand the world in which they exist, and the powers at play which affect their everyday life. However, this research can only be understood within the framework of interpretivism because it is driven by human emotion, interaction, and experience, which can only be deduced through conversation, dialogue, and emotive questioning. Within the framework of interpretivism, the method or instrument adopted needs to be relevant and suitable to the social group, the aims and objectives and the overall purposes of the research. Whilst interviews vary depending on the philosophical starting points which they are underpinned by, according to Scott and Morrison (2006:133) qualitative interviews 'serve to obtain descriptions of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena' (Kvale, 1996:5).

Whilst this research adopts a primarily interpretivist approach to data collection as it adopts as semi-structured interview instrument which focuses on capturing the feelings and emotions of the participants, it also makes use of secondary sources which give a statistical insight from official statistics to reports and journal articles around the refugee problem and this therefore introduces a slight positivist slant, whilst remaining true to the emotion-led nature of the research. Nevertheless, the research remains qualitative with mixed methodological elements from the secondary research and this different variety of methodology captures the different aspects of people's experiences and their emotional responses and feelings. It is argued that in order for something to be deemed knowledge, it must be counted as true, and this therefore stands as a barrier for qualitative researchers, and this strand of research is often criticised for its ability to add to 'the sum of knowledge' if as an approach it does not look for what is true. According to Hammersley (2008), qualitative researchers can be criticised for their failure to answer the criticisms made by quantitative researchers, particularly regarding the challenge in producing generalisable findings which can be true when applied to different contexts, moreover, cause and effect cannot be proven conclusively, and this highlights the criticism of this methodological framework. However, in response to this,

qualitative researchers argue that they are not searching for generalisable findings, but specific issues which are context specific and individualised, qualitative researchers often base arguments upon the weight of evidence as opposed to proof which is both conclusive and incontrovertible evidence. This weight of evidence needs to appear from emerging or recurring themes, ideas and responses from different sources, as opposed to being grounded in evidence which is interesting evidence', this allows for a narrative to be constructed and a story to be told through the research which captures the views of the participants. This was adopted within this research in order to construct a narrative for the refugee families, to discuss their journey, their adversity, and their settlement in the United Kingdom in order to understand in greater depth their feelings and emotions towards integration in education.

2.4. *'Pilot Study'*

The potential of a pilot study was considered for this research, but due to the richness of the data acquired, it was decided that the findings would be included in their own findings chapter, along with the follow up interview with the two families. However, it was important to understand the validity and rationale behind a pilot study, and why in many cases it was necessary, this is not to say that the findings were not helpful in informing the second batch of interviews, in fact they played a pivotal role in the approaches taken to the second interviews, and in informing the themes which were discussed and developed in the second findings chapter.

A pilot study is a small-scale and often preliminary study which is undertaken to prove the feasibility of a research method, as well as its suitability and relevance to the subject area (Van Teijlingen et al., 2004). This feasibility study is conducted in preparation for the main study, and it presents the specific research aim and its viability. Pilot studies play an important role in the process of data collection and increase the likelihood of success for the main study, it is useful because it warns of the possible failures, any problems with the proposed method of data collection, and raises awareness to the researcher of any potential problems (Van Teijlingen et al., 2004). A pilot study is an integral part of the process of primary research and its undertaking is something which was highlighted as an important method of testing research instruments for the purposes of the research project. In essence this is important in order to show the viability of the method, particularly in relation to the specific nature of the project. This preliminary study allows for the testing of questions on a small-scale sample of

participants and from the anticipated population and this tried and tested method ensures that the questions are viable and have been tested for their feasibility. Moreover, they give the researcher the opportunity to remove questions which did not gauge answers or were misinterpreted by the participants.

Van Teijlingen et al., (2004) cite key reasons for undertaking a pilot study and the most relevant to this research include the need to develop and test the adequacy of a research instrument, to assess the viability and feasibility of a full-scale study, to identify possible logistical problems in using a specific method of data collection, ahead of the primary study, assessment of the proposed data analysis techniques in order to understand any potential problems, and developing and testing the research questions, and data collection plan. Testing the feasibility of the full-scale study is an essential reason to undertake a pilot study, and this is important because it means that the researcher can assess the feasibility of the sample size, the timescale and projected challenges and assess how realistic the numbers would be.

2.5. Key decisions and developments in the formation of the study

It is important to note at this point, the reasons why the original pilot study became part of the main study. Initially, the pilot study acted as a way of testing and trialling research questions and the methodological approach to the research, but due to the rich and descriptive data which came about as a result of the pilot study findings, which were simply too interesting to be placed as a pilot, I decided it was important for the findings to be absorbed into the main findings chapters. Two sets of interviews were undertaken with the families, and this enabled the researcher to gain an understanding of the key themes and discussions which came about through the review of the literature and the theory. The three-year timescale of the thesis and the dynamic and evolving nature of the coronavirus pandemic also played a role in the research and as a result, two interviews were undertaken as case studies. It is also important to note that this research is not representative of all refugee resettlement experiences, and therefore consideration must be given to this when discussing the results, which were representative of the feelings and experiences of the two families which were interviewed.

This research was conducted with refugee families due to their uniqueness as a unit of analysis and there were also considerations and ethical parameters around interviews

for children, and therefore, the decision was taken not to include children in the interviews. The families provided a full and rich account of their experiences, and this research was driven by an account of the families and their own personal feelings and experiences of integration and resettlement.

2.6.   *Process and findings*

Similar to the expectations of a full-scale study, the chosen participants were given translated information sheets and informed consent forms in order to ensure that they understood the expectations of the study, their role within it, and their rights throughout the process. Four members of the Vulnerable Person Resettlement Scheme were chosen for study, and the findings from their interviews were used in the full-scale study. The researcher interviewed in a semi-structured format, this included two families (a mother and father, and another mother and father), they were asked the questions within the interview guide which were formulated before the interview and translated into Arabic for the purposes of clarity and conciseness.

A translator was present during the interviewer, who is fluent in both English and Arabic, and this was an important factor because the questions needed to be accurately conveyed to the participants in order to gauge the responses of the interviewees. The researcher recorded the interviews for the purposes of transcription, and the recordings were stored in a locked file on the researcher's computer with access granted to the researcher and two members of the supervisory team. These recordings allowed the researcher to accurately transcribe the responses of the participants, and this ensured that their constructed narrative could be logged for the purposes of analysis. The findings from the first interviews were both interesting and useful to the researcher for the development of the full-scale study, and it highlighted the restrictions to the research which meant the number of interviews which were initially planned needed to be paired back for the purposes of realism and feasibility.

The total number of interviews took 1 hour and 15 minutes, the transcription (Appendices 1-4), and translation process took 6 hours across both interviews, and the analysis took 5 hours. As a result, in order to ensure that a successful narrative is depicted, and the analysis if full, rich, and complete, two families would be interviewed in total as a feasible number for the whole study. The findings from the first findings chapter were so pertinent, that it was decided that the findings of the initially deemed

'pilot' study would be given their own chapter due to the rich data which was obtained, and the extensive analysis which the researcher was able to derive from the data. The decision taken to focus primarily on two families was significant because the research aims to follow their own individualised and personal experiences of refugeehood, settlement and integration. As such, these detailed findings can be found in the following findings and analysis chapters. The system and process observed above was the model undertaken for the second follow-up interviews with the two families.

2.7.   *The impact of coronavirus on this study*

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic has had various effects on factions of society through the health, the economy and education, and the impact on research in higher education is yet to be seen, but on a micro scale, the ability for researchers to undertake their primary research is a major consideration. Amidst the crisis, this project was a year and a half in, and the second set of interviews were supposed to be undertaken in June 2020, within a time where countries across the globe were in the peak of their lockdown and social distancing measures. As a result, in order to guarantee the completion of this thesis, other means of obtaining data from interviews were strongly considered.

The underlying premise behind qualitative primary research, and this research in particular is the ways in which people attach meaning to their lives and how they structure these lives, and this process shares in the understanding of these social processes. Sullivan (2012) discusses the notion that videoconferencing is a method of data collection where wherein face-to-face interviewing is not possible for various reasons, such as geographical dispersal, but on a very current scale, the coronavirus pandemic which has caused insistence amongst countries to isolate and apply isolation to people's everyday lives. These methods have the potential to mirror the ability to undertake these interviews in real life, yet very little research has been done around methods of data collection which are driven by virtual and technological data acquisition methods, which in this day and age are and would be more applicable to the research process, but nature of the context and the role of technology in our everyday lives.

She identifies two aspects to technological or 'web-based' interview methods, and these two arenas ate synchronous and asynchronous environments. In light of the current environment, the second portion of semi structured interviews which comprise this primary research project has been undertaken in a synchronous environment wherein

the research includes 'real time thread communications, where such environments provide the researcher and respondent an experience similar to face-to-face interaction' in so far as provision of responses with a back-and-forth exchange of questions and answers in what feels almost like real time. This was preferable to the notion of being asynchronous which encouraged the use of email, message boards and bulletins which is often taken as an approach to survey-based research. Therefore, due to the current climate, this research re-interviewed the two families who were interviewed within the first findings chapter, as the final interviews for this research, and has been undertaken via Skype as a method of obtaining the responses from the participants. The case of rapport with this participant has already been established and is not an issue, making it simpler for the researcher to have open and dialogic interviewing with the families because they are familiar with the researcher.

Sullivan (2012) asserts that the presentation of the self and the authenticity of the individual are a method for individuals to convey their feelings and impressions within situations, and within the environment of face-to-face interviewing the researcher is in constant dialogue with the participant and managing impressions, and within research, the researcher has to hope that the participants are presenting their true and authentic self to the interviewer. In fact, interestingly, with internet interactions, individuals are able to better express their true selves, and show aspects of their self and personality which they may not in normal face-to-face interactions. With video-based interviews, the issues of paralinguistic features not being picked up on can be alleviated through the fact that gestures such as hand movement, facial expressions and verbal cues can be understood. Many of the ethical considerations come from the asynchronous approach, such as access to discourse sites, writing styles, the use of pseudonyms and anonymity on sites, and identification via certain platforms. However, this is not the method taken and the synchronous approach does not consider these factors as relevant. Sullivan (2012:58) argues that the benefits of using Skype for example amongst other forms of communication outweigh the drawbacks faced by the approach.

2.8. _Semi-structured interviews as a tool for dialogue_

The chosen research instrument is semi-structured interviewing 'a qualitative data collection strategy in which the researcher asks informants a series of predetermined but open-ended questions. This was essential for the research because it allowed for a sense of dialogue to build between the researcher and the families, and this notion lies

at the heart of this research. This method encourages the use of dialogue and fosters a relationship between the participant and the interviewer, and encourages a sense of dialogic exchange, which in turn cultivates a trusting environment. The researcher has more control over the topics of the interview than in unstructured interviews, but in contrast to structured interviews or questionnaires that use closed questions, there is no fixed range of responses to questions. Due to the challenging nature of the research group and the need for flexibility this method has been chosen because flexibility allows the respondent to embark on their story, allowing for the creation of a thick and rich description of their lived experiences for the interviewer (Ayres, 2012:811; Edwards and Holland, 2012:30; Carol and Warren, 2001, cited in Gubrium et al., 2012). These thick and rich descriptions go further than simply data reporting and involve interpretation beyond both motivation and meaning (Savin-Balden and Major, 2017). In addition to this, qualitative research methods can provide a 'deeper understanding' of the social phenomena in question that is not always possible with quantitative methods because the latter approach relies upon 'remote, inferential empirical methods and materials' (Silverman, 2005:10).

This method can be described as both rigid and flexible in its structure, it utilised two interview guides (Appendices 5-6) to allow for a sense of structure, but also allows the interviewer to alter their approach depending on the nature of the conversation to encourage trust and rapport with the respondent (Way et al., 2015). The interview guide ensures that the right questions are asked, as well as giving the researcher the opportunity to steer the questions in the right direction. The questions are discovery questions which were derived from the literature review. Moreover, the formulated questions operationalised the key themes and have been formulated through the use of key concepts such as, emotion, dialogue, culture, praxis, and integration in order to better understand the problem statement, aims and objectives and to work in tandem with the underpinning theoretical frameworks.

It is both a useful and appropriate method for the study of refugee families because it provides descriptions and cultural interpretations which are produced in order to detect social and cultural patterns which are reflected in the social world. Cohen and Manion (1994, cited in Mojtahed et al., 2014:87) argue that this method allows the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the world around them and the human experiences within it. Our experiences are endlessly moulded and shaped by human interaction with actors and objects in society – akin to Bourdieu's notion of habitus. Therefore, in order

to access these experiences, we must establish a mutual and communicational balance between participant and researcher, and this can be achieved through accurate semi-structured interviewing. On the other hand, this method has been criticised, and according to (Barriball 1994) fully structured interviews and standardised questions are more reliable because this means that any differences from respondents are due to their responses as opposed to the wording of the questions. However, semi-structured interviews are pre-planned, and this allows for the researcher to formulate their ideas and prompts before they undertake the interview (Olsen, 2012). Due to the fluidity of semi-structured interviews, the pace can be set and adjusted (Corbin and Morse, cited in Saks and Allsop, 2013), and this is useful when dealing with refugee parents because the researcher can break when necessary. However, a sense of social desirability can be conveyed, also known as the Hawthorne Effect, whereby the respondent provides answers which they believe to be socially preferred by the researcher (Barriball and While, 1994:331, Kreuter, 2011), and this must be avoided in order to provide true and accurate answers from participants.

Linked to this is the assertion made by Weber (1946) regarding the value-laden nature of research and the implications and conclusions often drawn by the researcher are grounded by the moral and political standpoint of the researcher (Silverman, 2005). Whilst this can be a problem for the researcher in ensuring that values do not cloud the overall analysis of the study and conclusions drawn, it is only through the values of the researcher that problems become identified and studied in certain ways. On the other hand, according to Reason and Rowan (1981) researchers must not be fearful of 'contaminating their data with the experiences of the subject', and they argue that genuine and good research reverts back to the subject and their 'tentative results' and then refines these in light of the participant's reactions, because responses to questions are a method of research validation (Silverman, 2005:267). Therefore, it is important for the exact words of the participants to be taken into consideration for analysis, and this played a critical role in this research in order to stay as true to the words of the families as possible. One of the key challenges of semi-structured interviews as a research instrument is that the research cannot be standardised or replicated due to the individuality of each interview (Mason, 2004), and this is often a common feature of some qualitative approaches. However, the processes can still be taken into consideration and applied to other studies, but the questions cannot be replicated due

to their individual nature and the environment which has been curated and facilitated by the researcher.

However, the research of Wood et al., (2019; Mangrio et al., 2018; Fedyuk and Zentai, 2018; Vitale and Ryde, 2018) present as examples of contemporary researchers who have utilised semi-structured interviews as an instrument for researching refugees in a variety of interdisciplinary contexts and disciplines which suggests the utility, relevance, and applicability of this method in the field of refugee studies. The work of Mangrio et al., (2018) for example, observed the emotional experiences of refugees arriving in Sweden, and this was approached with a qualitative lens, and the method of data collection was semi-structured interviews, therefore, alongside the various supporting analyses about the usefulness of this method, its uses within the field on a modern scale confirms its significance. As a result, this method was considered as viable for the purposes of the research. This research aimed to encourage a sense of dialogic interviewing and this lay at the heart of the approach, and as such, the research encouraged the families to engage in a sense of dialogue, and the use of semi-structured interviews meant that the families were given an opportunity to engage in the questions asked but the flexibility of the method meant that dialogue which was out of the scope of certain questions could still be explored without stifling natural dialogic exchange.

2.9.   *Dialogic interviewing*

The interviews which were undertaken, were dialogic in their nature, and this allowed participants to adopt a self-reflexive and spontaneous approach to their responses and gave them the opportunity to revise their opinions and beliefs even if they previously expressed initial certainty or uncertainty. This interview tool is beneficial because it allows for 'reality as a communicative construction' (Way et al., 2015:721), and this notion has been reiterated by other research and methodology (Holstein and Gubrium, 1997; Kvale, 1996; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002; Tracy, 2013). True dialogic interviewing is seen as a discursive method and is characterised by suspension of assumptions and preconceived ideas in order to gain real meaning (Barge, 2002). Therefore, when interviewers engage in dialogic interviewing, participants must be met with acceptance, kindness, with the importance of being listened to by the researcher placed at the forefront. Three key factors of this method include probing questions, member

reflections and counterfactual prompting which means that questions are asked differently to the originally articulated perspectives.

According to Alcoff (1991-2) there exist issues with speaking on behalf of others within the structures of discursive practice, and this structure needs alteration in order to allow for the participant to have a voice within the research and provide and construct a true narrative built upon their own opinions and experiences. This notion of discursive practice can be found in the work of Bourdieu. Therefore, the notion of dialogic encounter comes into   play, and this allows for a mutual and communicational conversation between researcher and participant to work towards constructing this qualitative narrative. This encounter comes about through the transformation of the existing discursive sites partnered with the construction of the dialogic encounter. This model is defined as 'emotionalist' because it places significant importance on the perspective of the individual through detailed interview methods (Silverman, 2005:10). This idea of dialogic encounter for the promotion of the notion of voice, is corroborated by academics such as Michael Fielding and Linda Alcoff who state that:

> 'only with dialogue, dialectic and criticism will collaborators in research come to a new understanding, both more sophisticated and more informed, about the circumstances of their lives'.

(Lincoln, 1993:42)

The dialogic encounter was a useful tool for interviewing refugee families because it allowed the notion of voice to lie at the heart of the research and drive its successes and it meant that the experiences of the refugee families allowed them to construct their narrative. In addition, this dialogic encounter made connections with the notion of dialogue cited throughout the literature review, as a notion which is important to this research and its aims.

2.10. _Addressing potential power dynamics_

It is important to recognise the challenging and sensitive position in which the refugee families exist within, and their potential desire to give socially desirable answers, and therefore this was taken into consideration throughout the research. I also recognise the potential power dynamics which exist within all research projects (Karnieli-Miller and Strier, 2009). As a result, mitigation of these factors took place, such as anonymity for the participants, confidentiality agreements, informed consent, and the right to

withdraw from the study at any point with information retracted. A sense of reflexivity allowed me to develop a heightened sense of self-awareness as well as attempt to identify social understandings which could have come about as a result of the research process (Riley et al, 2003). Therefore, this reflexivity (Bourdieu, 1992) allowed for me to be aware of my own potential biases to ensure that I was as reflective as possible.

Moreover, this research encouraged dialogue with the families about their own experiences and I was aware of the potential power imbalance, and therefore steps were taken to mitigate and ensure that any power imbalances did not materialise. The interviews were undertaken in Arabic, in locations which made the families most comfortable. I shared my own familial personal experiences, as well as my own vulnerabilities to break down the barriers and build rapport. The discussions with the families were driven by their responses to encourage genuine dialogue, and whilst the participants were a self-selecting group of people, who were more likely to take part in the study, this did not change the importance of dialogue and voice and the significance of hearing about their own personal experiences.

2.11. <u>Verstehen and Reflexive Sociology</u>

The term verstehen coined by Max Weber is essential when studying vulnerable groups, particularly within the framework of interpretivism, because it allows the researcher to study 'people's lived experiences in a specific historical and social context', creating a narrative for the researcher (Snape and Spencer, 2008, cited in Hennink et al., 2011:17 and Carol and Warren, 2001, cited in Gubrium et al., 2012). Verstehen is the notion of human empathy, putting oneself in the position of others to greater understand their experiences, and this tool is invaluable when researching a group of people who have faced adversity and challenge within their life because it means that the researcher can empathise and build rapport with the participant. Therefore, as a concept, it is key because it allows the researcher the opportunity to gain an understanding of the views, opinions, and values of the participants to allow for a holistic and well-rounded interpretation of the individual and the issue in question. This research encouraged a sense of verstehen as the feelings and experiences of the families were placed at the forefront, but also the research was able to gain a strong idea of these experiences and understand them in greater detail.

Verstehen is essential, yet in many cases is arguably hard to prove its successes, and the extent to which it has been achieved through the researcher's understanding more and

on a deeper level the experiences of the families compared to the knowledge already obtained by the researcher can be gauged. One must dig deeper and ask more questions on a longitudinal basis in order to understand more about the family and the consistency of their narrative. As such, a criticism of this surrounds the sample size, this research hopes to re-interview the two families within the first study and as a researcher one hopes to better understand the narrative and experiences of a small sample over a longer period of time in order to understand in detail and quality their own lived experiences. In addition, the experiences of the researcher as a grandchild of Palestinian's exiled from their home country in 1948, this research resonates on a greater level and has greater significance.

Albert Hirschman never explicitly addressed his exile in his writings, but his life was shaped by the many different experiences he faced of 'flight and displacement' (Heins, 2019:2), but this means that his sense of verstehen was stronger because he has had some level of personal experience, and this allows a researcher to feel connected to the subjects one studies. Hirschman identified that those who have experienced flight and exile in their life no longer use their voice to bring about change in their lives but strived for the cultivation of the 'art of voice' (Heins, 2019:6). Hirschman's work can be an example of verstehen, and therefore as a researcher with the desire for this to be reached, one argues that lived experiences, anecdotal narratives can help in reaching and experiencing verstehen and walking in the shoes of another. As a researcher, one hopes to achieve this in order to truly understand the experiences of the refugees which one researches. Familial experiences of my grandparents as Palestinians exiled from their home in 1948 exemplifies this understanding of and second-hand experience through familial storytelling around refugeehood. As a result, my identity is shaped by my culture and heritage, and part of this means that my parents are second generation refugees, making me a third-generation Palestinian refugee, born in the UK to immigrant parents.

As such, my sense of verstehen has been strengthened and allows me to understand and connect with people who have been through similar personal experiences, whilst the families have much deeper rooted and first-hand experiences, compared to myself, it has allowed me to reach this sense of verstehen within my research, which I feel to be integral. In addition, this can be linked to the notion of the perfect interviewer, who understands the clear linguistic features, but also the paralinguistic features that give a rich data to deal with, not simply the words translated verbatim, but feelings portrayed

through sighing, hand gesticulation, body language and the proverbial use of certain things allows for the researcher to be placed in this empathetic position and achieve verstehen as a researcher. Therefore, the bilingual and bicultural researcher can see more of what a person is saying, as it is more than what they are saying, but looking at them as a holistic person, and makes you aware of their feelings, their happiness, frustrations, desperation. Even without having had those lived experiences yourself, verstehen can be understood through anecdotal experiences and stories. Arab culture is a very oral storytelling culture and these stories throughout my life helps me understand what being a refugee feels like.

According to Bourdieu, the logic of research is 'inseparably empirical and logical' and a combination of theoretically constructed empirical cases (Bourdieu, 1992:160), are integral to research and to the understanding of practice. Bourdieu poignantly states that one cannot grasp 'the dynamics of a field without first understanding its history' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:90). Therefore, suggesting that to understand the experiences of those living in society now, one must understand their history, their narrative, their lived experiences, and this informed a researcher's understanding of their practice. Moreover, Michel de Certeau, there are three elements which achieve success in any practice and accredited as one of his most 'major achievements' of Bourdieu's theorising of practice' include firstly cultural literacy which is an understanding of an individual's position and resources within a certain field in which they are navigating. From the first study the parents seemed very aware of this fact. Secondly, self-reflexivity which consists of an awareness of the rules, values and cultural capital which characterise the field. Finally, an understanding of the roles and regulations and the negotiation of various conditions and contexts which includes the manoeuvring of members of society given their potential lack of capital within the contexts (Webb et al, 2002:57).

Therefore, adopting a verstehen-led approach to research gives the participant the opportunity to tell their story and construct their own human narrative. This constructed narrative would be transferred orally, and this makes use of voice as a tool for understanding oral cultures, and within qualitative research, the researcher is immersed in the setting (Savin-Balden and Major, 2017), adopting a verstehen led approach. This means that semi-structured interviewing allows for responses which are personal and sensitive, particularly if they have emerged through trust and rapport, as such ethics and confidentiality are pivotal (Mason, 2004). This is important in relation to

interviewing refugee families because feelings of trust are essential in order to gauge honest and true opinions and feelings, therefore, the researcher should be confident in their abilities to build this trust and rapport with the participants of the study. Employing this method is effective when exploring 'the perceptions and opinions' of participants, particularly with sensitive issues, because it allows for further investigation in order to clarify answers (Barriball and While, 1994:330). The tool of spoken narrative transcription was followed for the this research, as adopted by Loïc Wacquant (1998:17) in his work The Social Art of the Hustler wherein he supplies a transcript in order to 'take the reader through the main vista points that together constitute' the point of view of his participant, whilst he notes challenges to using this tool within qualitative research, due to the difficulties in inscribing speech which does not follow the structures of written language and the 'richness of…the speech vernacular', this method is a useful way of truly depicting the feelings and emotions of the participants. In addition, detail and attention must be given in order to ensure that the constructed transcript retains as much of the 'distinctive properties as possible' (Wacquant, 1998:17), paired with a verstehen-led approach, this research aims to truly understand the feelings and experiences of refugee families.

Within the Social Art of the Hustler, the narrative approach taken through the participant 'Rickey' provides a contextualisation to his life, and this helps in making sense of his answers, and this tool is useful for understanding the life and experiences of the participants in greater detail. In addition to this, Wacquant interspersed a section on the socio-economic context of Chicago which allowed for contextualisation amidst the primary research, and this further encouraged an understanding of context. He also took direct quotations from the participants and made connections with the current socio-economic context of the city which allowed for connections to be made between push and pull factors, and casual relations. These tools are useful within the qualitative approach and have been adopted for the purposes of this research in order to construct a narrative for the Syrian refugee families interviewed for this research. Moreover, to show the applicability of Bourdieu's theory to various research areas, Wacquant highlights the term 'hustler' and makes connection with this notion, to symbolic capital, and explains its relevance to the context.

Bourdieu discusses the notion of self-reflexive research which has its role within the realm of sociological research, and he argues that for research to fulfil its role of being self-reflexive, it must set out five main intentions. The first is to ensure that the aims of

the research are set out, an understanding of what the interviewers can and cannot say is identified, extensive knowledge of the subjects, the issue of overcoming the limitations of transcription, which include the editions made by the researcher and the inability to fully gain a sense of communication due to the lack of visibility around body language and irony for example. Finally, and most significantly, is the need for the researcher to be freed from their own perceived notions and values, taken from their own individual habitus (Webb et al, 2002:56). Here, we can refer to the notion of reflexive sociology, alongside the importance of verstehen. Reflexive sociology (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) is argued to be as useful to qualitative researchers as the adoption of verstehen as a tool for understanding the subject in greater detail, and the participant's feelings and emotions, it is important to ensure that the researcher strive for objectivity and value free objectives because this ensures that the experiences and views of the participant's lay the foundations for the research. Therefore, according to Baur (2017:50), the researcher must conduct a reflexive approach which conducts a 'sociology of sociology' and must pay constant attention to the effects of their own position on the research, 'their own set of internalised structures, and how these are likely to distort or prejudice their objectivity'.

One could argue that verstehen and reflexive sociology are not compatible approaches to research, however one argues for a combination of the two, a need for empathy in research in order to understand the feelings and emotions of others, whilst also remaining impartial and not allowing personal values to cloud the research. In order to do so, however, subjectivity must become 'detached' (Elias and Quilley, 2007) from the research and this enables the researcher to be as neutral and objective as possible. This is important for this research because the words of the participants need to be central, and therefore the researcher needs to ensure that their views and opinions do not cloud the research, and this was encouraged throughout the research process.

2.12. *Operationalising the concepts*

Bourdieu finds that theory without empirical research is empty, and empirical research without theory is blind' (Webb et al, 2017: 141), this therefore exemplifies the significance of experience and observation-based research, coupled with a comprehensive theoretical underpinning, and this is one the driving features behind this research. It strives to offer a new insight into the field of refugee studies through primary research whilst also referring to grounded theories to underpin the thinking and

substantiate the findings. As such, both theory and research are inextricably interlinked, and one informs the other, hence why the primary research questions are directly moulded and influenced by the theoretical framework and the conceptualisations which have been derived from Bourdieu and Freire. In addition to this both theory and practice are essential to a researcher's understanding of the social and cultural processes which exist within society and frame the experiences and behaviours of people within the social world. Therefore, the practices of the participants inform the understanding of the researcher. In addition, the design of the research must consider not only the isolated micro experiences, but the interactions on a macro institutional level within the field in which the participant exists, and this is why the school was chosen in part, as the field of interaction to be studied.

The identified themes emerged from the literature review and have been used as a method of operationalising the concepts from the theoretical framework, these themes have been used to structure the data analysis. The theoretical literature review lays the foundation for the research, and the themes which assisted in formulating the primary research questions. Due to the nature of the research, it is conducive to a lengthy method of data presentation, with importance placed on transcribed quotes from the participants to formulate their narrative. In order to effectively undertake a piece of research, one must strive to operationalise the key themes and concepts, and as such it is the role of the researcher to turn abstract concepts within the framework of Bourdieu and Freire and turn these into concrete questions, which have been posed to the participants. According to Costa et al., (2019:19) 'Bourdieu's work had provided something of a template for social theory as a conceptual vocabulary in applied research settings', and his work therefore lays the foundation for applying concepts to the social world and the issues at hand.

The key concepts which have been highlighted derived from the literature review and the literature which exists in the field, and the conceptual breadth of the research encompasses all the key concepts which the research felt were necessary for the theoretical underpinning and an understanding of this, and the relevance of the concepts in relation to the primary research. Therefore, whilst it can be argued that the conceptual framework is all-encompassing, the factors in which it focuses upon are relevant and expansive in order to understand the full narrative and reference to the experiences of the families in this research. In order to operationalise the key themes, they must be adequately defined, but further from this, the question which must be

asked in order to operationalise the key themes, is to suggest what [the concept] such as praxis would look like in a question posed to a participant, and as previously stated, this is a challenge. Therefore, once the terms have been defined in order to operationalise them, the responses from the participants allowed for indicators to be highlighted from the key themes which were identified, and which formed the basis of the questions. Therefore, the indicators for the operationalised themes have been formulated as a result of the outcomes of the research and the participant responses. The conceptualisation and application of the operationalised themes within different settings assisted in overcoming the dichotomy between agency and structure alongside the acknowledgement of historical and external factors which change, condition, or promote change. The conceptual apparatus provided by Bourdieu was an attempt to 'reconcile practice and theory through method, with these concepts working in the background to unearth and understand the essence of contextualised practices (Costa et al., 2019:20). The complexity arrives in defining and applying the notions and this raises questions regarding the 'theory-method relationship'. Interestingly, according to Costa et al., (2019:20), Bourdieu's key concepts have been discussed in relation to theory and research findings as opposed to the methodological choices and application of his fieldwork, this means that his contribution to methodology to date, is 'less pronounced'.

Bourdieu's notion of reflexivity encourages the 'critical understandings of social realities in both the researcher and the researched', and in order to achieve this the research aims need to be reflected and the adoption of effective instruments for data collection and the overall inquiry. The preparatory work which the researcher 'devotes to conceptualising habitus' in light of the research questions and would transform the techniques for effective methods of research, and this can be linked to Freire's approach of critical pedagogy as an essential aspect of revolutionary action, because liberation comes as a result of praxis. However, there exists challenges to navigating the interplay between reflexivity and subjectivity to arrive at a new understanding of social phenomena, in this instance refugee integration and cultures of dialogue between the school and family and translating 'individual experiences into tangible forms of knowledge' and turning them back onto the participant. This then allows for engagement within a tone of familiarity which needs to be approached from a distance in order to reignite the understanding of social reality (Costa et al., 2019:28).

As a result, this notion of critical reflexivity can be used as an essential tool in obtaining new forms of knowledge, however identifying the dispositions which lie beneath the practices is a challenge, and therefore this idea of criticality is useful. Therefore, in order to operationalise the themes highlighted within the literature review, one must apply the abstract theoretical lens on everyday life, and once it is made unfamiliar a person can begin to ask the discovery questions, because it is impossible to draw upon theory without practice (Costa et al., 2019). Bourdieu wanted to 'unite both the objective and the subjective' in relation to explaining human behaviour, and his theory of practice was based upon the notion of habitus which through its interaction with the field of study can explain 'generative principles of human behaviour' (Griller, 1996:3). Within his key work *Homo Academicus* (1984) Bourdieu's research depended almost entirely upon qualitative techniques such as biographical dictionaries and citation indexes in order to help produce a map of the field and patterned dispositions, however he found that use of qualitative methods was 'difficult and time consuming', so they altered their approach to focus on consciously publicised information to avoid issues of misinterpretation. The data which was acquired was then subject to statistical analysis, but his statistical approach was not that of the 'traditional sociological fashion', but a descriptive tool (Griller, 1996:9). Whilst Bourdieu's work has been utilised throughout this research process, the qualitative underpinning remained integral due to its applicability and relevance for the purposes of this research, and in line with the view that in order for a narrative to be constructed, qualitative research can achieve this best as opposed to statistically driven approaches. The narrative emerges from the dialogue between the researcher and the families, and qualitative research is necessary if there is to be a dialogue between the two.

Freire's notion of praxis, akin to Bourdieu concepts is challenging to operationalise, and according to Haffenden (1997), the term praxis has been utilised by different thinkers in a plethora of ways, including, Aristotle, Marx and most significantly for this research, Freire. Haffenden claims that praxis can be understood as theory guiding practice, meaning that the adoption of a theoretical model and applying it through the use of praxis to a context in order to inform action, or secondly, where the theory strives to illuminate practice through the process of reflection and analysis and upon this basis, reflective and informed action can be established. Praxis can be used as a tool for the facilitation of action, and this can be achieved through the ability to undertake either a

process of theory-practice-theory or practice-theory-practice, and this allows for the process of meaning to be enabled, and experience to be conferred.

2.13. *Thematic rationale and justification for interview questions*

The thick description which comprised the analysis of this research was constructed through the key themes which appeared from literature review, and the primary research and this helped in deciding which data appeared in the analysis in order to contribute to the narrative of the families and the thick and rich description of their experiences. Information which was selected within the data analysis fit into and comprised the key themes and made genuine and useful contributions which allowed for a deeper understanding of the experiences of the families. The interview guide was thematic, and as such subject areas included capital, feelings and emotions, aspirations and preconceptions, culture, integration, voice and dialogue, and the school.

An underlying view going into the research process was that we must go into research value free and be enlightened by the values of those we interview, and therefore, the predisposed views and interpretations of the researcher were removed from the questions, yet the themes, were of course built upon the research and knowledge which was formulated from pre-existing literature. Therefore, the questions were divided into thematic categories each of which addresses a particular aspect of the research, and have links to notions of praxis and practice, the theoretical and conceptual underpinning of the work. In addition, the questions asked were mapped to cover the variables within the themes and interests of the researcher. This theoretical case study was mapped against the empirical case study of the primary research, one argues that as a theoretical study it is limited, but when applied to an empirical study it can help in understanding the extent to which refugee families feel integrated into their community. The themes fit well with the underpinning perspective derived from Bourdieu and Freire and the overarching theme of 'familial capital'.

The notion of pattern   matching, and correspondence can be drawn here, which is a pattern match which 'involves the correspondence between a theoretical or conceptual expectation pattern and an observed or measured pattern' (Trochim, 1985:1). This was an interesting mechanism because the expectation of the research surrounded the negative findings from the research in the field which was explored within the literature review, and this therefore suggests a measure of pattern which was expected before

the interviews were undertaken, and the surprising findings which came about, which bucked the trend and suggested a sense of positivity from the families interviewed.

Therefore, the findings from this research as a whole were surprising to the researcher, and whilst they were informed by the literature in the field, and the concepts and themes which came above from the theoretical framework, the findings were positive and suggested a strong example of pattern matching and correspondence. Akin to the ways in which there is a rationale behind each of the themes which have originated from the literature review and informed the questions, the following section provided a rationale for each of the questions utilising the primary research chapters. These have been combined into a coherent list of justifications which compile the rationale behind the choice of questions. The themes allowed the researcher to understand in depth the feelings, emotions and experiences of the families and the extent to which they feel integrated into their new lives in the UK.

Feelings and emotions

This theme was important for two reasons, one because understanding the feelings and emotions of the participants is a significant aspect of humanistic research which is driven by emotion, narrative and understanding. The second reason this is important is because this helps the researcher understand further the experiences and feelings of the families, and the ways in which their agency can be understood, as well as further engaging with notions of verstehen which encourage empathy in social research. The theme of feelings and emotions is integral to this study because an understanding of the ways in which refugees feel about their experiences and how this moulds their ability to navigate, integrate and understand the social world around them is fundamental to their integration. With this line of questioning a sense can be gauged around the emotionalist and qualitative responses which identify the true feelings of the participants. Below shows a rationale behind the questions asked within this theme.

1. _How long have you been here?_

This question was asked in order to set the scene and understand the length of time which the families have spent in the UK, to understand the extent to which they have been integrated in society.

2. _What does it feel like to be a refugee?_

This question was asked as a method of gaining an insight into the feelings behind this notion of refugeehood, and the ways in which this affects their day-to-day life.

3. *Can you tell me about your experiences in Syria before coming to the United Kingdom?*

This question was asked in order to understand more about life in Syria before the troubles, and the familial experiences before arrival. This was important for cultural comparison of life in Syria and the UK.

Aspirations and preconceptions

The idea of aspirations and preconceptions is important to understand the value system of the participants, and whether this differs from that of the society in which they are joining. As such, these questions help in understanding whether different values can be integrated into the wider society, outside the notion of the family. This can be linked to ideas of praxis and practice because the responses identified whether certain values and approaches to life allowed refugee families to hold this sense of social inclusion and dialogue from the social chains which contain them.

1. *What did you know about the United Kingdom before you arrived, and how have these changed?*

This sort of question was asked as a method of gauging what the families knew about life in the UK before their arrival, and is significant to understand more about their preconceptions, concerns, and feelings about what their new lives would be like, in addition to understanding the cultural differences between British and Arab culture.

2. *What are the goals for you and your family whilst living in the United Kingdom?*

Goals are an important aspect of this research because it helps in understanding whether or not the families have a hope to integrate and become part of the moral, social, and economic fabric of society, and the extent to which they feel they can contribute to life in the UK as well as a measure of their sense of agency.

Culture

Culture is a fundamental theme and is interlinked with many of the other themes within this research project, an understanding of culture can assist in discovering whether or not cultural values can be combined, as well as its use as a tool for integrating into the

wider society and its values. Culture as a form of capital according to Bourdieu, allows members of society to move from one social arena to another with ease in with the adoption and transfer of capitals, and without this, it could be argued that integration is not possible without this capital understanding. Practice can be accessed through culture, and if the culture differs from that of the mainstream, then integration becomes a greater challenge.

1. *How is Syrian culture different from British culture? Could you give me some examples?*

This is a significant question because it aims to inquire about the notion of culture and the difference between Syrian culture and British culture, and whether or not the families feel that their culture can work in tandem with British culture in which they have found themselves.

2. *How important is extended family to your sense of well-being and happiness?*

The notion of family is integral to Arab culture, and this was asked as a way of understanding whether the families felt that family was an important part of their own feelings of integration for them and for their family.

Integration

Questions on integration are significant because they allow the research to understand the feelings which the families have towards their life in the UK, and whether they hold a sense of connectedness to their new life, this can be linked to notions of praxis as a tool for revolutionary action and self-reflection, and the argument that with this process of self-discovery and reflection and the acquisition of capital, integration can be a possibility.

1. *Do you feel any sort of connection to the United Kingdom, and do you think this will develop over time?*

This question was asked for the purposes of understanding whether the families feel a connection to the UK, and perhaps understand what would encourage this connectedness.

2. *What interactions have you had with people in the local community?*

Interaction with the local community is a source of integration and as such it is important to understand this relationship and the extent to which it exists.

3. *If you or your children have experienced hostility, racism, or discrimination, can you tell me about it. Have your children exp any of these at school?*

This question was asked for the purposes of understanding the extent to which the families felt hostility or discrimination within the local community or the school. This hopes to gauge answers which are related to notions of structure and the extent to which they are enabling.

4. *How is your English coming along?*

This question is part of the progress questions asked in the second set of interviews with the families and was asked as a means of understanding the notion of acquiring English is important to the families, and the extent to which they have done so.

5. *Do you feel your children will be able to integrate fully in the future?*

Questions about the future are often harder to justify, however, this question was asked because it shows the future aspirations and desires of the families, to understand in their words whether or not they hope to integrate or want to integrate into society.

6. *Do you feel well supported by the school, Council, and local community?*

This question hopes to understand the role of social structures in the lives of the refugee families, and the ways in which they make them feel integrated and support them in their integration.

7. *What do you feel your role in the UK for the future is?*

Once again, questions which ask respondents to speculate about the future can be difficult to justify, but this question once again asks about goal and ambitions, and an understanding of the roles of the families in life in the UK, extending to both them and their children, as well as their sense of agency, responsibility, and autonomy.

Capital

The theme of capital can be linked to the discussion on praxis and practice in relation to Freire and Bourdieu through the argument that capital understanding allows for effective action and reflection which achieves the praxis which Freire cites as integral to social inclusion. These questions were asked as a means of understanding the synergy

between capital and praxis in order to ascertain whether integration is an achievable notion. The notion of cultural capital was derived from an understanding of the intersection of social issues, the methodological approaches which bring the issue to the forefront in an empirical way, but most critically what needs to be factored into this understanding is the personal experiences, testimonies, knowledge brought about which testify to the historic and contemporary strength of the notion of cultural capital.

Bourdieu uses the example of a sportsperson to depict the meaning behind his notion of practice, and he cites that the sportsperson needs to be ahead of the game, so to speak, must understand the written and unwritten field of values, morals, and norms to navigate society and its nuances, akin to a sportsperson utilising their understanding of the sport they play to succeed (Webb et al, 2002:48). Bourdieu argues that the extent to which an individual can acquire the knowledge and negotiate the various cultural fields, is dependent on and can be understood in two ways, the practical sense, or the logic of practice, and the latter term is suggestive of a reflexive reaction to the cultural fields and understanding of one's individual practice within those fields (Webb et al, 2002).

1. *Does British society represent your values, and those you want your children to grow up with?*

Values are an important aspect to this question because it unpicks the nuanced understandings of the social, cultural, and economic fabrics of British society, and the extent to which the families understand this, and whether they feel it is in line with their own values system and cultural underpinning.

2. *What activities did you do with your children in Syria? What do you do with them now?*

This question was asked to understand more about the capital activities which the families did with their children in Syria, and whether these activities differ or even exist within their life in the UK. This also gauges the importance to the families of the role of social and cultural capital in their lives.

3. *Do school trips help in connecting your children with life in the UK?*

This was asked in order to understand whether the families saw a connection between the role of the school as a field for acquiring and transferring capital and the capital which exists in society.

The school

The school is the field in which individuals reproduce their dispositions, and transfer the capitals which Bourdieu cites, without this capital, and an understanding of the social arena in which it takes place, places refugee children and their families at a disadvantage. Freire's notion of critical pedagogy and the achievement of the goal of a self-managed life and the idea that this can only be achieved through self-reflection, and the conditions which create inequality. Therefore, an understanding of these capitals and the perception of familial capital which the families held allowed them to navigate the school and reduced their feelings of exclusion. The theme of voice and dialogue was an important part of this research as it allowed for the notion of social inclusion which Freire cites as a tool for expression. As such, the families have shown how they possess a sense of praxis and with increased ambition and drive, their ability to integrate into society increased over time. The families interviewed were given an opportunity to express and encourage a sense of reflexivity and a way of sharing their narrative and experience with others, to truly share the challenging and profound experiences which the families faced in Syria.

In addition to this, it created a healthy dialogue between the family and the researcher in order to better understand their feelings and needs. Therefore, the field in which this research is primarily situated is the school as an educational institution, and a place in which the perceived inequalities can be reproduced for Bourdieu and Freire within this field. Education, and the school are part of the process of integration and help in breaking down the structural barriers, encouraging a sense of agency and an increased dialogue between the family and the school itself, for greater integration, and to break down the perceived inequalities which exist within this field.

1. *How are schools different here to back home?*

This question was asked in order to understand the different ways in which the schools operate in the UK compared to in Syria, to draw comparisons between the social structures.

2. *How does your child feel in the education system here? Have they made friends/parents?*

Linked to notions of feeling and emotion, the role of the school as a social structure in integrating the families is important and gaining an understanding of the feelings of their children is an important aspect of this.

3. *How have the school accommodated your children's needs and experiences?*

This was asked in order to understand how the school has played a role in welcoming and integrating the children and their parents in everyday school life.

4. *Do you feel able to advocate on behalf of your children with the school?*

This was an integral question because it tries to unpick notions of voice and the relationship the parents have with the   school, or whether an external component is needed for this advocacy. The notion of voice can also be linked to the importance of establishing a strong sense of praxis (action and reflection) which can only come about if the true voices of social groups are heard.

5. *How is your child progressing in school, e.g., language, friends etc?*

This was asked as a follow up question to the families and comprised part of the second interviews, this was a 6 month follow up to see how the relationship with the school had developed, and how the child had been progressing in school.

6. *Have there been any issues with schooling since I last spoke to you?*

This is a follow up question after 6 months, and this question was asked in order to understand to what extent the school environment had changed, if at all for the families.

Voice and dialogue

This can be linked to praxis because voice transforms the societal structures which perpetuate inequality. For the second and follow-up interviews the themes which appeared as a result of the first interviews included belonging, questions about progression in school for children and parents, and the family as a whole, and integration which was discussed at length within the first interviews with the two families.

1. *How important is learning English to connect you with this country?*

This was asked in order to understand more about the priorities and thoughts of the families on what they believe to be integral to their integration, and whether learning English was an important component.

2. *How does the school communicate with you, and how do you communicate with them?*

This was asked to understand about the roles of the school, and the extent to which it is enabling towards the families, but also to understand the role of agency for the families.

3. *Do you attend meetings at the school and how are they facilitated?*

To understand the extent to which the families engage with the school, and able to, and the ways in which the school and local community supports the families in doing so.

Belonging

The notion of belonging was a new theme which emerged and is important because it discovers the extent to which the families feel integrated as their feelings of integration come partially from their feelings of connectedness and belonging within their new community. This theme was developed with the families in the following interviews and this in turn has helped in understanding their narrative, values, experiences and hopes for the future for their families.

1. *What country do you feel you belong?*

This question will gauge the sense of belonging and connectedness the families feel to the lives they now live, the society in which they exist and the community in which they interact.

2. *What makes you feel like you belong?*

This question hopes to understand what factors make the families feel this sense of belonging.

3. *Who makes you feel like you belong?*

This question hopes to understand more about who encourages belonging and this sense of connectedness with the community.

4. *Are you ever made to feel like you are still a refugee?*
   - *If so, how does this make you feel?*

Whether a sense of refugeehood is felt amongst the families, their children in school or within the wider community. This is important because it understands whether the families feel a sense of connection or resonate with the community.

<u>*Coronavirus*</u>

These questions were asked because this research became situated in the coronavirus crisis, and it was interesting to understand the extent to which the structural factors held up during this time, and the ways in which the families felt supported by the agencies in their lives during this time, especially in relation to education.

1. *How has your family been affected by the coronavirus outbreak?*
2. *How have your children been engaging with the school during this time?*
3. *Have you had any communication with the   school during this time?*
4. *Have you decided whether to send your children back to School once it is safe to do so?*

2.14.   <u>Ethical barriers</u>

There are many ethical barriers which come with the process of primary research, and these risks and barriers need to be articulated and minimised before research commences, in order to protect all those involved in the process. The researcher was responsible for disclosing any information that may cause potential harm to the respondent, the researcher, or another party, and was required to disclose information that poses as an ethical or legal concern, and this was stated clearly to the participant in the information sheet. If a respondent were to articulate something of this nature this would be dealt with, by referring the information to the relevant agency. If the participant is no longer able to contribute to the study for these reasons, their information would be destroyed and removed from any data collection or analysis. These factors have been discussed in greater depth in the following section of this methodology chapter.

In order to undertake primary research, the ethical guidelines and policies need to be adhered to in order to ensure that no harm comes to the participant or interviewer, and to guarantee that the project does not infringe on the rights of the respondents. There are ethical challenges posed to the research, and these include firstly accessing the target group which can be difficult, particularly if they are categorised as vulnerable or over-researched. Therefore, a researcher must gain permission and access to the

participants from the gatekeeper of an organisation in order to access and subsequently speak to the participant sample (Cohen et al., 2011), in this research, the participant sample was refugee parents. The research required the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the group which can be challenging for the researcher, however, the gatekeeper was emailed to ask for their permission and see whether they deem the research to be viable and suitable. They were provided with the relevant and appropriate material to allow them to make decisions regarding the study and its feasibility, or whether they need to refer the researcher onto another individual within their organisation.

In this instance, the volunteer coordinator at a Council in the South West was contacted, in order to ascertain whether access to Syrian refugee families as part of the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme was a possibility. The researcher provided the gatekeeper with a project description, the ethical procedures and guidelines being adhered to alongside any possible barriers which might be faced and how these would be overcome, as well as an informed consent (Appendix 7) and an information sheet (Appendix 8) for reference. This research was conducted with the Syrian refugee parents alone, and not the children because the family was observed as a whole and researched as a collective societal unit, but also because access to children would make the research less viable, hence why this was a contributing factor as to why children were not included in the interview process.

The interviews were conducted in the homes of the participants as this was where they felt comfortable to undertake the interviews, the first was in person, and the second was virtual and over the phone. This setting was chosen because it ensured that the participant did not incur any additional cost. The researcher agreed the location with the participants at a convenient time for both parties, and the interviews were undertaken in the same place for both the interview sessions. The interviewees' children were not present during the interviews and the interviews consisted of the researcher, the participant(s) and an interpreter who was briefed on the project beforehand and signed a confidentiality agreement. It was highlighted to the participants that at no point during the research would they be in jeopardy nor were their circumstances compromised regarding their status or application for indefinite leave to remain. It was expected that some of the themes discussed would engage with complex and emotionally charged issues and this was a consideration in regard to the ways in which the research was undertaken, with compassion, sensitivity, and

consideration. The researcher's Arabic was not strong enough to undertake the research alone, therefore a native speaker of Arabic was enlisted for assistance in order to guarantee that the information was accurately conveyed to the participants and that their responses were accurately translated to the researcher for maximum exactment.

Secondly, storing data, anonymity and confidentiality were ethical considerations for this research, and this must be addressed through guaranteeing that research is in line with the Research and Knowledge Exchange (RKE) ethics policy and procedures at the University of Winchester, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the British Educational Research Association (BERA). In order to guarantee that participants remain anonymous, data was stored appropriately, and respect for confidentiality was guaranteed. In order to guarantee this, the participant's names were not used in the study, and pseudonyms were attached to each individual participant in order to guarantee absolute anonymity for this study. Moreover, information was stored in a locked file on the researcher's laptop and the parties with access to the raw data were the researcher as principal investigator and the supervisory team, and the data would be destroyed once the programme is completed in September 2021. In addition, working in line with the ethical procedures and guidelines stipulated in the RKE policy document, the participants were provided with information sheets and informed consent forms.

One of the first stages of the process is to gain informed consent from the participants (Cohen et al., 2011; Warren, 2001 cited in Gubrium et al., 2012), this informed consent were accompanied by an information sheet which was produced in order to ensure that participants of the study are aware of the purpose of the research, the benefits and risks, confidentiality and data storage, voluntary participation, and the participant's right to withdraw from the study at any point without providing a reason. The participants were informed that they could opt-out of the research any time without providing a reason, and this was communicated to them through an information sheet and informed consent form. At no point in the research did withdrawal become impossible, even after the writeup process, however, the participant cannot request the removal of their data after the submission date, and this was communicated to them. Until this date, the data can be extracted from the analysis and destroyed at the behest of the participant. Whilst both data collection and analysis would happen at the same time, extraction would always be an option for the participant if they choose this before the date of submission in 2021.

Informed consent is essential in the research process because participants need to be happy and comfortable with the questions, and this was an especially important component for the researcher, as such informed consent played a very important role in this study, and its acquisition from the participants involved was integral. Moreover, accurate translation with language barriers is an ethical concern for this researcher. Due to issues with language barriers, achieving consent is far more challenging than it would be with someone who is fluent in English, therefore, accurately translating the purpose of the research and the freedom of the participant to opt out at any point during the process was ensured. However, articulating this accurately can be a challenge for those whose English is limited or even non-existent, so all the forms given to the participants were reputedly translated into Arabic for clarity, understanding and accuracy and to ensure that the participants were fully aware of the researcher's expectations and vice versa. All the necessary documentation was translated into modern written Arabic as opposed to classical Arabic, because some of the individuals suffered from lower levels of illiteracy or literacy in most cases, therefore the language and concepts were simplified in order to ensure that the documentation was fully understood by the participants.

The steps taken to protect the vulnerable people involved in the research were similar to those adopted by Wacquant in the Social Art of the Hustler, and these included the provision of information for the participants in Arabic in order to ensure that they understood the research and their role. Wacquant stated that before he undertook the research, his trustworthiness needed to be approved by the Authority and in order to ensure that participants understood the study and its goals, the aims were explained to them to ensure they were aware of the expectations. It can also be challenging to explain things which are not as prevalent in one culture compared to another, such as the importance of storing and protecting data, if it is not respected in the same way, even more so when an equivalence of meaning is brought into question. According to Jacobsen and Landau (2003:6), linguistic equivalence is one of the challenges of researching refugees and forced migrants, and this is also a consideration regarding informed consent. Therefore, there are many cultural implications which were taken into consideration. Similarly, Kabranian-Melkonian (2015:5) cites some of the challenges in researching refugees, and these include, the grasp of the language and the cultural and social nuances, which can cause issues of understanding within the research. They

argue that those who do not speak the language, fail to understand the cultural nuances, and sensitivities and this is an area for concern during the research process.

According to McDonald (2010:453).

> "Given the differences between cultures, cultural values and influences on behavioural expectations of members, it is not surprising that ethical relativists strongly support the view that what constitutes ethical behaviour will differ substantially across cultures".

This suggests that a researcher must approach a situation with a lens of cultural knowledge in order to understand the context of the research and those involved within it, this cultural awareness allows for accuracy and understanding within the research. Therefore, language barriers can cause issues for the researcher and the possibility of producing socially desirable answers exists. According to Kreuter (2011) it is important to clarify the questions and motivate the participant to answer with high quality responses, and record answers without interpretation and paraphrasing and this poses as a dual interpretation. The questions were clarified to the participants through the use of a translator, because the Arabic skills which the researcher possessed were not strong enough alone to undertake the research itself, therefore a fully bilingual individual was involved in the interviews in order to ensure that the participants understood the questions asked and if not, the questions were clarified to them throughout the interview process. A translator or interpreter was present during the interview process in order to translate the content.

However, poorly translated expressions and phrases affected the themes and analysis and might not reflect the respondent's true answers (Squires, 2009:280). However, this can be overcome by having an interpreter; however, some words or phrases cannot be directly translated either way, causing a challenge in gaining the real response from the participant (Lee et al., 2014:3). In order to address this issue effectively, a bi-lingual and bi-cultural researcher is needed as the ideal individual to carry out this research due to their ability to understand paralinguistic inferences, such as body language, hand gestures, picking up on social, cultural cues, and taboo issues and understanding how to word a question in order to illicit a response without coercion. For example, mental health is argued to be a taboo subject in some cultures, and therefore, if the researcher is fully aware of the taboos and nuances, they can approach the subject with more ease from a culturally sensitive viewpoint, to gain true answers from the participant and

allowed for a stronger sense of verstehen due to their strong grasp of the cultural, social, and linguistic issue. When researching participants with little or no grasp of a language, it comes down to the abilities of a truly bilingual researcher, this however becomes an even greater issue if the participants are illiterate, in their mother tongue language as well as their lack of grasp of the English language. In addition, Kabranian-Melkonian (2015) finds that one of the most significant issues from an academic perspective is the risk of biased responses from the participants, and this can come about through the use of translators, and this is an issue which needs to be considered. Moreover, the conduction of an interview in the language of the researcher can cause issues for translation and accuracy, therefore, translation needs to be accurate. In addition to this, one argues that the most accurate answers can be obtained from the researcher if the questions were asked in the mother tongue, and in this case of this research, in Arabic.

2.15. *Sample size*

The sample type adopted was a strand of the non-probability sampling category, and 'purposive sampling', was selected as the sampling method of choice because it makes use of subjective methods of deciding the elements which should be included in the sample, and the main purpose of this sampling technique is to produce a sample size which can be 'logically assumed to be representative of the population'. Whilst this method comes with its criticisms, due to its subjectivity, purposive sampling is often considered to be the most appropriate method of selection for small samples, particularly within areas with a 'limited geographic area or from a restricted population definition' (Battaglia, 2008:2). Within qualitative research, the study involves the identification of participants who had experienced or are in the process of experiencing the phenomenon that is being explored within the research, and the participants are described as the 'experiential experts' (Rudestam and Newton, 2014:107), and this lies within the verstehen driven approach taken for this research. In addition to this, a key component for the use of purposive sampling was due to the absence of a suitable and available sampling frame, and this made it more challenging to select the participants.

The gatekeeper was responsible for selecting the sample in order to ensure that the most vulnerable people were not selected for the study. This sample was a reasonable size to make meaningful statements about the population, and this was negotiated with the gatekeeper as opposed to providing a specific number from the outset, however,

the sample needed to be gender equal in order to be representative of the social group in question. It is however, not always recommended that establishing a precise sample size beforehand is possible, but to select participants who can offer 'experiential relevance' (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, cited in Rudestam and Newton, 2014:107). The justification for the sample size and sampling techniques was shaped by the ethical approach taken and the need for informed consent from all the participants in this research project. Considering this, the sample size was selected by the gatekeeper within the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and was comprised of Syrian refugee parents of any age. The research did not offer any monetary benefit or motivation to the participants, but the researcher was able to motivate them to participate through explaining in writing and in person to the refugee families involved, about the benefits of taking part in this research. These benefits included the opportunity to use their voice as a tool for change and participation in the social narrative of the society in which they exist, to air their concerns and feelings towards their situation, and share their experiences, and to contribute to the body of knowledge through their contributions.

Baker and Edwards (2012:3) cite that there is a 'paucity of explicit discussions of this basic issue for qualitative researchers', and this issue concerns the number of interviews which is sufficient for the research. However, the overarching response from qualitative researchers in this field was that the answer to the question 'how many interviews is enough', was 'it depends'. One academic suggested a consideration of whether a 'greater or fewer number of interviews would produce the desired outcome', and in many cases it is deemed to be a 'knee-jerk reaction' for early career researchers to assume that more interviews equate to better outcomes, when in actual fact, it is important to keep in mind the quality of the analysis as opposed to the quantity. In addition, the measure of how many interviews should be undertaken is dependent on factors such as the type of research questions which aim to be addressed, and the proposed methodological tool, according to Julia Brannen, researchers at the Institute of Education, University of London. In addition, the measure of how many interviews should be undertaken is dependent on factors such as the type of research questions which aim to be addressed, and the proposed methodological tool, according to Julia Brannen, researchers at the Institute of Education, University of London. Interestingly, Bourdieu undertook one of his early-stage research projects between 1958-1962, wherein he undertook ethnographic research into the Algerian War. This laid the

foundation for his further writings and was an example of a methodologically sound interpretation of primary research, which made use of a small research sample, which suggests that this is a viable option for primary researchers in qualitative research.

According to Alan Bryman actual sample sizes differ considerably, and there is very little agreement regarding what this sample size should be, and this is influences by the 'heterogeneity of the population, breadth and scope and research, the minimum requirements for sample size which are sometimes stipulated in qualitative studies, and the issue of saturation', and this occurs when the researcher continues to acquire data until no new theoretical insight have been gleaned. As such, we can understand from the compilation of research papers from the University of Southampton, and the National Centre for Research Methods, that this issue is contested particularly amongst qualitative researchers. It is important to note, however, that qualitative researchers need to be aware of the ways in which knowledge strives to be produced, through ideas, 'theoretical fascinations and sociological sociability' (Baker and Edwards, 2012:13).

The sample type adopted was a strand of the non-probability sampling category, and 'purposive sampling', was selected as the sampling method of choice because it makes use of subjective methods of deciding the elements which should be included in the sample, and the main purpose of this sampling technique is to produce a sample size which can be 'logically assumed to be representative of the population'. Whilst this method comes with its criticisms, due to its subjectivity, purposive sampling is often considered to be the most appropriate method of selection for small samples, particularly within areas with a 'limited geographic area or from a restricted population definition' (Battaglia, 2008:2). As a result, the chosen sample size was four people which consisted of two separate families, and as a result of the contested question about the sample size, the researcher felt it at their behest to choose a sample size which they felt was significant. This also allowed for extensive discussions with the families on a variety of issues and for the research to delve deeper into their experiences, which would not have been the case if the sample were bigger. Moreover, the risk of a sample size that is too small, can mean that the research group becomes homogenised and this in turn is not something which would benefit the research or its findings as it strives for each family to be able to explain their own experiences and tell their individual story, which again, would not have been the case had the sample size been bigger.

2.16.   Selection process and source

The gatekeeper was responsible for selecting the sample in order to ensure that the most vulnerable people were not selected for the study. This sample was a reasonable size to make meaningful statements about the population, and this was negotiated with the gatekeeper as opposed to providing a specific number from the outset, however, the sample needed to be gender equal in order to be representative of the social group in question. It is however, not always recommended that establishing a precise sample size beforehand is possible, but to select participants who can offer 'experiential relevance' (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, cited in Rudestam and Newton, 2014:107). The justification for the sample size and sampling techniques was shaped by the ethical approach taken and the need for informed consent from all the participants in this research project. Considering this, the sample size was selected by the gatekeeper within the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and was comprised of Syrian refugee parents of any age. The research did not offer any monetary benefit or motivation to the participants, but the researcher was able to motivate them to participate through writing in person to the refugee families involved about the benefits of taking part in this research. These benefits included the opportunity to use their voice as a tool for change and participation in the social narrative of the society in which they exist, to air their concerns and feelings towards their situation, and share their experiences, and to contribute to the body of knowledge through their contributions.

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exploration of the various variables within the research, and as a result, less participants meant that these variables could be detailed in more depth. In addition to this, the desire to engage coherently with the notion of verstehen can be achieved with more ease when there are fewer families involved in the research, so the researcher wanted an account for the individualised experiences of the families, so as to provide them with a voice, and avoid the pitfall which Jill Rutter cites, as the issue of homogenising refugees. This account was therefore a case history of two families, and it aimed to investigate the different variables which came about through the literature review and methodology chapter, as well as the variables which were brought about by the families themselves within the interviews, further consolidating the benefit of semi-structured interviews to allow for flexibility and fluidity within the interview environment. Therefore, this limited focus allowed the researcher to focus in greater detail on the various themes and concepts which emerged from the research and framed the questions and the findings.

2.17. *Data analysis and presentation*

Within the social sciences disciplines, the 'analytic story' is a common framework for data analysis, and this was the approach taken to presenting and analysing the data collected, and this has been the case for the first and second studies, and the findings from these. In order to express this, the researcher must outline the key concepts that have been used in the study, how the findings have shed light on these concepts and where the original research problem and the literature has reached (Silverman, 2005:242), and this has been discussed in more depth in the following data and discussion chapter. This analytic story has been comprised of the narrative approach taken within the semi-structured interviews taking into consideration the opinions gauged from the participants, and this has allowed for connections to be made between the responses and the underpinning theoretical framework which has been cited throughout this thesis. In addition to the work of Bourdieu and Freire and the conceptual underpinning which derived the research questions, the indicators of integration framework have been taken into context and the extent to which the refugee families feel integrated has been measured against this updated and holistic framework for integration.

According to Wellington (200:135-9), the process of data analysis and presentation can be categorised into 'immersion, reflection, analysis, synthesis, location, and

presentation, and these six categories allow the researcher to deconstruct and understand their data, break it into parts, highlight themes, patterns, and arguments, and locate how these fit into the current research field. This paired with the similar categories highlighted by Atkins and Wallace (2015:14) who state that the data should be 'illuminative, indicative, representative and illustrative', these terms should be employed, particularly when it comes to the data presentation and analysis. According to Atkinson and Silverman (1997), 'the well-intentioned desire to give voice to our subjects and pervasiveness the interview amongst qualitative researchers draws us into the structure of the interview society', and this term is defined as a speaking self-mode, which is a 'stylised and particular mode of narrating life (cited in Baker and Edwards, 2012:12), and this notion has been adopted for this research, in the sense that it strives to accurately represent the voice of the families, and formulate their narrative. The approach to the analysis is also thematic in its approach, and the respondent's voice has been placed at the forefront of the findings which put the theories of Bourdieu and Freire and the voices of the participants into dialogue with one another. In addition, the narrative approach and story comes through the voices and ongoing dialogue of the participants in this research.

In connection with this, the strategy adopted for the analysis of the obtained qualitative data was a narrative analysis approach and this sat at the heart of its processes as it aims to highlight the experiences of refugee families through dissecting and analysing direct quotations and particularly in regards to the analysis, the observations made have been categorised analytically based on the key themes discovered from the literature review and new themes which evolved and emerged throughout the primary research alongside the researcher's discretion through formulation of innovative thematic categories. The following thematic chapters, entitled '*Learning from the voices of Syrian refugee families*', and '*Fostering cultures of dialogue*', encapsulate the feelings and the families, their experiences and the surprising results which were discovered.

3. Chapter Three: Learning from the voices of Syrian refugee families

This chapter started out with the intent of becoming a pilot study chapter and aims for this research were to test the viability of the research method, the feasibility of a full-scale study, and for the purposes of developing and testing the nature of the questions to understand whether or not they gauge responses which can be linked to the themes of this research and the conceptual framework. However, due to the rich, complex, and valuable information, which was identified within these interviews, the researcher decided that it was far too valuable to be left as a pilot chapter, and in turn comprised one of two findings chapters for this thesis. It allowed for future questions to be developed, and themes raised to be discussed and analysed within the second interviews with the families identified within this chapter. The study interviewed two Syrian refugee families in the South West, and the interviews were with the parents alone without the presence of their children, in order to understand the experiences of the parents and their children within the school in order to gauge their feelings of integration. The significance of interviewing the parents allows for various layers of voice to come through this research, including the voices of the parents as educators and the children and learners, as well as the fact that these voices inform one another in the family environment. The stories, feelings and experiences of Karim and Yasmin and Hassan and Nijmeh have been discussed within this chapter, undertaken in October 2019 with a follow up interview with them which was undertaken eight months later, in June 2020, in order to further develop and understand their own spoken narrative and experiences and to strengthen their narrative.

The research tool utilised for the findings was semi-structured interviews which was the selected research method, with an interview guide (Appendix 5) which was used as a template for the questions asked to the participants involved in the study, and each set of questions was categorised by a set of themes which were drawn from a review and analysis of the existing literature and the theoretical framework, as well as the aim and objectives of this research. The questions surrounded feelings and emotions, aspirations and preconceptions, culture, integration, capital, the school and voice and dialogue. The themes allowed the researcher to identify key questions which contributed to the researcher's understanding of the participant's involved and their feelings and experiences. The transcript for these interviews can be found in the appendices of this document (Appendices 1-2).

The contributions of this research to the field are original due to the synthesis between the underpinnings of Bourdieu and Freire and their notions of praxis and practice and the ways in which these can be applied to refugee families settled in the UK. The theories synthesise the relationship between Bourdieu's notion of practice (guidance on behaviour in the social world), and Freire's praxis (action and reflection) and an increased consciousness of inequalities, which can be alleviated with dialogue, agency (praxis) and enabling social structures to navigate the social world around them, are suggestive of integration. They were observed through a lens of humanistic Marxism, wherein we can observe the underlying inequalities, but find tools which ameliorate the struggles faced by the families. The research highlighted that the three ways to overcome the struggles are underpinned by nuances which have been influenced in part by Marxists thinking, and the necessity in addressing potential inequality which lies in the stratification of many societies across the globe.

Moreover, the primary research findings within this chapter were positive from the families and make contributions to the field of research in that it makes an important insight into the connection between agency and structure and the roles of the individual and the wider social structures in the process of integration for refugee families, and this notion of agency is linked to the idea of praxis and practice which Bourdieu and Freire cite. Through a combination of Freire's praxis (action and self-reflection) and an increased consciousness to the forces which affect people's lives, and Bourdieu's acquisition of different forms of capital which allow people to navigate the social, cultural, and economic world around them, are suggestive of integration. Notably, this study suggested an incredibly positive perspective on the feelings of refugee families surrounding their strong sense of agency and integration, culture, capital, and ambition, and this was surprising to the researcher. One argues that with a strong sense of agency from the individual, and enabling social structures, the social inclusion of refugee families within education and the wider community becomes a greater possibility. In addition, its originality can be derived from the focus on the family as a social unit, as opposed to parents or children alone.

The analytical and narrative approach to the structure and presentation was inspired by the work of Ann Oakley (1979) *Becoming a mother* and Baron et al (1999) *identity, risk, and learning difficulties*, as examples of exemplar qualitative analysis which strive to produce a participant narrative, a voice, and to put their views at the forefront of the research in the most coherent and individual-led way. In order to set the scene and

provide context to the family the first question posed to them was how long both families had been in the UK. Both families had been in the UK since the Autumn of 2016 and arrived as part of the Home Office Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme. This meant that at the point of interview they had lived in the UK for three years. This question was asked in order to understand the extent of their integration and to contextualise their story for the reader and for the researcher.

The research aimed to illuminate the importance of agency amongst potentially disenfranchised groups wherein their sense of autonomy is significant but can only account for so much of their successes in inclusion, because without significantly enabling structures around the families, this inclusion becomes more challenging. Alongside this, these social structures place refugee families in an environment which can combat exclusive behaviour in their very nature and assist in ameliorating the struggles which refugees face such as trauma, language and cultural barriers which inhibit their overall feelings of integration. In addition, this research contradicts the pervasive notions which have been framed in many theoretical frameworks, particularly those with a Marxist undertone, wherein those most disadvantaged and marginalised are most likely to experience ostracisation and difference from their counterparts. By their very nature, these anti-capitalist theoretical frameworks suggest the inherently oppressive structures which are found in all factions of society, tailored to disadvantage those most marginalised from society, when in actual fact, the findings from this research are suggestive that modern social structures can be enabling and inclusive when a strong sense of agency is also present in the community in which the refugees themselves exist.

This negative outlook is noted in the work of Zygmunt Bauman for example, or Paulo Freire whose outlooks are firstly of their time, but secondly critical in their very nature and approach. What these findings seem to offer, is a new way of observing these theories and a positive understanding of the feelings and experiences of refugee families. Bauman focused his work on the notion of the stranger, as he discusses the irreducible plurality of the stranger within different aspects of society, namely in this context, liquid modernity, and takes this work and balances it with the notion of the stranger within Bauman's context. The presence of the other makes those within the community feel as though their life, their possessions, their thoughts have been impacted by the presence of the stranger, and their dominance within the liquid modern society makes them beings who bring about change, uncertainty, and fear.

Therefore, for society and its inhabitants to feel safe, the other is kept at arm's length. The work of Levinas heavily influenced Bauman and his understanding of otherness and strangerhood, and this makes for an interesting comparison of Bauman's work, with that of Bourdieu and Freire. The findings have contradicted many of the widespread findings from the literature in the field, and in particular of the work of Bauman, which is often negative in its outlook regarding the experiences of refugees and their families. Therefore, the prevalent notions of trauma discourse cited by Jill Rutter, and the issues surrounding language barriers and cultural adaptation are inevitably issues faced by not only refugees, but other factions of a society, but the positive aspects are not always documented, and this is not only a great shame, if not simply for or the sake of optimism and future progression, then for the balance of argument. This negativity is simply not the case in the following examples, and whilst this could be argued to be an anomaly, it is not without its significance.

Therefore, this chapter attempts to illuminate the voices of those who may not historically have been given this voice and strives to contradict the notions of community hostility towards refugees which is cited in the work of many academics, including Jill Rutter. This research aims to place the voices of the families at the centre of its approach and is an opportunity for the families to exercise their voice and, through an incorporation of voice both the review of the literature and the methodology, it strives for voice for dialogic encounter, voice for concientisation, voice for liberation, voice as key to this research. Conscientisation is defined by Freire as the ability for a person to make changes to the social world around them through action and reflection, praxis. (Freire, 2005). The term praxis is interlinked with this idea of conscientisation, whereby knowledge of social realities through action and self reflection, allows for people to change the reality which exists around them.

Moreover, it bucks the trend of the purported experiences of refugees in other research which has been undertaken which cites the experiences of refugees as miserable and without hope. The main discovery of this findings chapter is that refugees are simply not and should not be seen as victims, there are victims of circumstance, but they do not seem themselves as victims in any other way, they are not helpless, pathetic or without hope, they are ambitious, driven and committed to making a new life for their families and this is such an important factor for their successful inclusion, illuminating their strong sense of agency and its significance for their social inclusion.

3.1. *Family background and context*

As an overview, both families came from Syria and travelled through Jordan in order to seek refuge and escape the hardship and persecution faced in their home country. Karim and Yasmin are a mother and father to a son aged three, and three daughters, aged seven, twelve and fifteen. Yasmin was a stay-at-home mother in Syria and Karim worked as an accountant. Hassan and Nijmeh are a couple older in age, with three daughters, one of whom recently moved to the UK and lives with her husband and children. Nijmeh was a stay-at-home mother and Hassan worked in sales. Both families came from Jordan, under the United Kingdom's Home Office Resettlement Scheme in 2016. In order to respect and maintain the anonymity and confidentiality of the families, parts of their information has been removed for confidentiality.

Karim and Yasmin

Karim and Yasmin lived in South West Syria, with their three daughters. Karim was an accountant and Yasmin was a stay-at-home mother. They travelled on foot to the Jordanian border and described the harrowing and emotional journey they experienced in order to travel to safety. Karim, Yasmin and their daughter's found safety in Jordan, and applied for UNHCR resettlement, which falls under seven categories, wherein applicants need to meet one or more of the requirements. The criteria includes, 'legal and or physical protection needs, survivors of violence and or torture, medical needs, women and girls at risk, family reunification, children and adolescents at risk and lack of foreseeable alternative durable solutions' (UNHCR, 2004:243). Karim and Yasmin claimed asylum within the criteria of risk to women and girls, and a lack of foreseeable alternative durable solutions, and arrived in the UK under the Home Office Resettlement Scheme.

Hassan and Nijmeh

Before arriving in the UK, Hassan and Nijmeh lived in a village in South West Syria close to the Jordanian border, and they lived within a nuclear setting with their extended family, and their three daughters, two of whom were married before they left to the UK, and a younger child with a medical condition who was resettled with them. Hassan worked for several years in the Middle East as a sales manager, and Nijmeh remained at home in the village and looked after their family. When things became unsustainable for them in Syria and the threat became so severe, they made their way to the Jordanian

border during one of the worst winters to hit the area. They arrived at a refugee camp in Jordan. They were then able to move to a location outside the camp and settled in one of the host communities. Due to their precarious conditions and fear of their return to Syria, they registered with UNHCR for resettlement and once they were identified as eligible for resettlement they went through the process and were offered humanitarian protection in the UK. After the necessary checks were made, Hassan and Nijmeh were resettled in the UK due to their youngest daughter's medical condition. They arrived in the UK and were supported into their new life under the Home Office Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme.

3.2.   Feelings and emotions

What does it feel like to be a refugee?

Hassan – a Syrian father, living in the UK with his wife Nijmeh and daughter, presented an extremely optimistic view:

> "The society here does not make us feel like we are refugees, and we feel like we are children of this country (we belong), like normal people".

Hassan and his family felt a strong sense of belonging about being in the UK, and this feeling suggests a growing connectedness to the UK and implies that his family was not made to feel as though they were refugees, but normal everyday people. This is significant, because this encourages feelings of belonging towards the new society which the family has joined and means that they are more likely to feel integrated if they are welcomed. Academics who have researched the field of refugee studies and the experiences of Syrian refugee families, identified that there was mistrust in a refugee's homeland, and in the asylum, system refugees have found negative attitudes and experiences (Pinson, and Arnot 2010; Pinson, Arnot and Candappa 2010; MacDonald 2017; Taylor and Ravinder 2012). This was not the case in relation to this research and the experiences of the families interviewed, when Hassan identifies that they can live their lives 'like normal people'.

Nijmeh – a Syrian mother, married to Hassan, a woman of few words:

> "Thank God, we are comfortable. Thank God"

This response was a testament to the importance of religion in the lives of the family as well as being suggestive of their comfort, safety, and feelings of being welcomed into

their new life in the UK. These feelings are arguably integral to the family's future integration, as well as their individual and familial sense of agency which can be strengthened with an enabling and welcomed environment around them, and social structures which allow for their integration to be more of a possibility.

Have you ever felt discriminated against or different?

Karim – a Syrian father who came to the UK with his three daughters, a son, and his wife Yasmin:

> "No, no thank God. We felt this more in our own country, that this person is Syrian, or this or that, but we are thankful that here we have never been made to feel like we are different, foreign or refugees".

Karim spoke very highly of his life in the UK, he was very thankful that his family were made to feel welcome in their new home, and their new lives. He found that he felt more discrimination in Syria than in the UK, and both families were incredibly positive and responsive about their experiences in their new communities and did not feel as though they were refugees.

Yasmin – a Syrian mother, married to Karim told the researcher:

> "To be honest, when I arrived in the UK I was upset, but when we got off the plane and were greeted by the case workers and my brother-in-law, and we met volunteers who wanted to help us, we did not feel like we had left".

Yasmin described her initial feelings about arriving in the UK, she told of her upset and nervousness around this, but highlighted how she was reassured by the presence of her new case worker and volunteers which made her feel like has never left her family. This shows the significance of local initiatives in resettling the refugee families. This also assists in understanding the social structures which exist around the families, and the ways in which the society they are joining is supportive of their new life and has tried to be as reassuring and inclusive as possible to make the families feel welcomed. Upon arrival to the UK three years ago, both families felt comforted and reassured when they were greeted by somebody who spoke Arabic, and this suggests that cultural similarities and a sense of sameness are both comforting and settling for people in a precarious condition, especially when they are being introduced to a new way of life, faced with different challenges and barriers.

The volunteers, enlisted by the Council as part of the Home Office Resettlement Scheme, of which these families are under, have been referenced many times during the interviews, as a source of support and kindness towards the families. The volunteers seem to be one of the first sources of community contact which the families have and this is an example of inclusive individuals who have a strong desire to make the families feel welcome and safe in their city.

Hassan said:

> *"At the beginning in the first school in [rural village in England], they were surprised a bit because it was a small village and it was the first time, they saw an Arab, someone who speaks Arabic and there was a bit of tension in regard to our daughter. On the contrary, when we moved here things got better because here there are Indian people and Bangladeshi people in the area. Sometimes we get strange looks from people because of the hijab, but no hatred, especially young children".*

This rural experience made for feelings of uncertainty within the community which meant that Hassan's daughter felt different and had a sense of otherness at her last school. Interestingly, the family found that when they moved to a more urban setting, they felt a sense of connectedness with other cultures due to the diversity which they found. Interestingly, much of the provision came from the Council as opposed to the school, but nevertheless this provision was celebrated by both families, and they found that the support from the school and the Council was significant.

Could you tell me a bit about your experiences in Syria before you came here?

Hassan:

> *"Before the war we were an above average family and we were very comfortable, but after the war everything came to an end, nothing remained, financially, socially and emotionally. But when we came to the UK, we regained some of our self-respect".*

In response to this question, Hassan told of his family's status as an above average and comfortable family in possession of the capitals which Bourdieu cites as integral to one's ability to negotiate society, its nuances, and the ability to access its benefits. Most pertinently, he cited life in the UK as an opportunity for them to regain some of their

self-respect, and the importance of becoming and living life as self-respecting citizens and this was something which they wanted to feel as a family. Due to the cultural polarities between the West and the East, one questions whether these forms of capital can be transferred from Arab society to British, from societies with such differing cultural and social underpinnings. Hassan then told of the experiences of his family and the realities of the Civil War.

> *"We left in the evening, thinking we'd be back, but I knew we wouldn't. We escaped and took nothing with us, no qualifications, certificates of experience. I am 50 years old, and I am required to have a Level 2 in English and Maths which would take me five years, the problem is my age, this will be a challenge for me. We predicted we would be back in 15 days, although I knew and predicted what will happen. I told my family to say goodbye to Syria because we'll never be coming back just as what happened with the Iraqis and the Palestinians, as we were walking through the night towards the Jordanian border, I said don't, to them, don't look back just forget, don't think of homes or family, just forget".*

Hassan talked about life in Syria before moving to the UK, this was very emotive because he was very open and honest in his response, regarding the things his family saw, felt, and experienced in the lead up and during the Civil War, as well as their experiences of fleeing Syria to seek refuge in Jordan, and he was honest about his family's experiences. This was an emotional time during the interview and the process of transcribing the data because the families felt comfortable enough to share some of the most traumatic experiences of their lives. Hassan explained how his family escaped Syria with very few personal possessions, they left in a hurry, and his wife and children thought they would only be gone for fifteen days, but he told them to say goodbye to Syria, goodbye to their homes, because they would not return, just like the people of Palestine and Iraq, he told them to look ahead, not behind, forget Syria, just forget. This was both a poignant and emotive statement which showed how grave the circumstances were for the people of Syria, the fact that staying in their homes was no longer an option, that seeking refuge elsewhere was the only way for the family to be safe, alongside the saddening reality that returning home was not a possibility for a long time, if not forever.

At this point in their interview, mother and father, Yasmin and Karim had an ongoing dialogue about their experiences of the War, without interruption from the researcher:

Yasmin: *"Outside the house they were firing guns at us"*

Karim: *"The regime did not approve of the uprising for freedom when it started, and it did not tolerate it. They had snipers on the roofs and put barriers up so people could not move around easily. The last period was the most difficult because they were bombing us using aeroplanes and barrel bombs and missiles came at us from all directions. They did not leave a single attack method, and in the end, it became totally intolerable".*

Yasmin: *"Bombings came from four directions and there was no sleep for us or our children, and at dawn (6am), we went to our bedrooms to sleep, and the bombings would start and continue all day"*

Karim: *"When they occupied our area, they arrested all the young men whether they were wanted or not, they took me and my two brothers and we stayed under arrest for fifteen days, and we were subjected to all types of beatings using gun butts, sticks and electrical cables. Thank God, when we left prison, only 50 of us from the whole town were released".*

Yasmin: *"Some young men were killed with machine guns in the town square, a day before Eid"*

Karim: *"My father told me this time we were lucky, but next time we can't be sure, he said to trust in God and make your way to Jordan. This is what forced us to leave because the barrel bombs would destroy up to 500 sqm…You see your children climbing the walls, wanting to escape from fear".*

Yasmin: *"The mosques were bombed, and the minaret destroyed the houses around it when it fell"*

Karim and Yasmin highlighted their family's experience of the constant bombings outside their home, and how it was impossible for them to sleep peacefully. Similar to the experiences of Nijmeh and Hassan, life in Syria became intolerable and it was no longer an option to remain. They told of the great sadness that buildings of symbolism and culture were destroyed, the mosque was brought to the ground days before Eid and people were rounded up and shot with machine guns in the town square. Karim told of his experiences of torture from the regime, and how this was a trigger for his father to tell him that he had been lucky this time, but next time he might not be as fortunate and so they decided to flee to Jordan and sought refuge there.

Do you think language is the most important part of living here?

Karim responded:

> *"Yes, of course language is an important thing, not just for living here, but for going out and understanding people around you, like when we go to the supermarket for example, and for work, without language a person cannot work, everything is difficult for them. The only barrier was language, and thankfully with time it is getting better for us".*

Hassan said:

> *"Of course, it is the most important thing, because after language everything is possible for us. Now, my wife and I, our Arabic is not strong, we cannot do anything, not even go on a walk, so language is the most important thing. Language first, and then the other things come, language helps with everything, with life, with communication with dealing with neighbours".*

Both fathers identified how important language was as a tool for their integration, for their family, and for their ability to communicate with the world around them. The ability to speak the language of the society increases the sense of agency felt by the families, and makes it stronger, as well as their ability to integrate and communicate with the structures around them, which becomes more of a possibility. The previous questions identified the importance of language as a response given without encouragement from the researcher, and both Hassan and Karim were aware of the significance of language and had a strong sense of awareness of this as a necessity for living in the UK and integrating into the society and its way of life.

Karim said:

> *"Yes, yes, we were very worried about this…our main problem was language, we wondered how we would communicate with the world around us, and we had no English at all, but thank God our case workers spoke Arabic".*

Yasmin added:

> *"As soon as we saw our case workers who spoke Arabic, we were very happy".*

The families saw learning English as one of the most important parts of living their lives in the UK, and language was identified as essential for life in the UK as a whole, for finding work, for communication, for existing, because without this grasp of language, life would be very challenging.

So, did you feel it was easier because you had someone there who spoke Arabic?

Karim responded:

> "Yes, of course, our case worker took us to all the places we needed and helped in translation for us, at the school, the Job Centre, thank goodness, this was one really good thing for us when we arrived, we felt that nothing had changed, anything we did not understand, our case worker helped in the beginning".

The significance placed on language acquisition and the awareness from the parents can be linked to Freire's notion of praxis as a form of action and reflection which is needed for a life to be lived free and liberated from the social inequalities which exist in society. Once this sense of praxis is encouraged, Freire identifies how praxis allows people to reflect on the potential social inequalities which they face and those which may constrain them. As such, the families have shown how they possess a sense of praxis and with increased ambition and drive, their ability to integrate into society increased over time. The families interviewed were given an opportunity to express and encourage a sense of reflexivity and a way of sharing their narrative and experience with others, to truly share the challenging and profound experiences which the families faced in Syria.

Do you feel that the children help you with your English?

Karim said that:

> "Currently, my daughters are better than me at English. If someone comes and talks to me in English and I do not understand, I ask my daughter and she explains it to me. And for this reason, we must also teach them Arabic too".

The factor of language can be linked to the notion of voice and the role of the child in advocating on behalf of their parents, due to their lack of English, and both families identified that their daughters helped them in translating day to day issues and this assists in their integration through their children. As such a sense of familial capital can be identified which lies within the realm of Bourdieu's understanding of capital, but this

comes from cultural acquisition within the home, and in the case of the families, parents learning from their children.

Do you feel that your daughter helps you sometimes with language and with your English because she is learning it at school?

Hassan said:

> "Yes, especially with her mother when they are outside the house, with letters in the post, with people who come around to the house. She communicates with the hospital and her doctors, and she helps with translation".

Nijmeh responded:

> "Yes, she translates for me!"

The responses provided by Hassan and Nijmeh are interesting, because they suggest a huge responsibility for the child to advocate on behalf of their parents and place a responsibility on them to communicate with the world around them on their behalf. Links can be made here, with the notion of capital and its exchanges within society, because without a strong grasp of the language, refugee parents are unable to advocate on behalf of their children with the school, and the wider community, they are not able to access the forms of capital which are significant to their ability to negotiate society. The sense of capital which Bourdieu cites cannot necessarily be found in the home, particularly if parents are not able to speak the language of the society they live, and this can also mean that the voice of the child is lost, but to an extent, their children help in integrating their parents through language advancement

Much of the research in the field focuses on experiences of refugees in relation to trauma as cited by Rutter (2006) and this often neglects the strength and resilience which refugees possess. The research in the field therefore, is often overshadowed by a view which defines refugees as traumatised victims of refugeehood. This research shares sentiment with the work of Brough, Gorman, Ramirez and Westoby (2003), Luster, Qin, Bates, Johnson and Rana, (2009), Pulvirenti and Mason (2011), Khawaja, White, Schweitzer and Greenslade (2008); all of whom find that a refugees experience a determination to cope and take control of their lives, rather than being victims and this is central to their resilience. These pieces of research and this thesis find the strength in personal qualities and agency through optimism, belief in inner strength, adaptability and perseverance all of which, helps refugees to cope better and deal with life's

challenges.   Stewart (2020:17) finds that informal support networks play a significant role in building collective resilience, and these informal support networks include family which provides 'love and gratitude', a safe place to 'disclose feelings and provide emotional support', from former Syrian refugees, a wider Arab community to find 'shared identity through language and culture', ethnically diverse communities and volunteers who offer support and contact and 'Canadian-born citizens who provide an insight into society'.

Do you feel that you are able to advocate on behalf of your children with the school?

Karim responded that:

> *"There are times, if matters are complicated where I need to communicate with the teaching assistant, and the Council. If it was a simple matter, I can go to the school myself and communicate with them. If I encountered a   problem, I could not solve, I would use the help of a friend who speaks Arabic and English, we either talk to teaching assistant and the Council. Thank God, there are no problems".*

From this quote we can understand that there is very little ability for Karim or Yasmin to advocate for themselves or for their children alone, but there is a strong support mechanism around the family which helps in their sense of reassurance and the potential increase for their integration. This suggests that the structures around the families are both supportive, enabling and paired with a strong sense of agency and autonomy from the families, their integration has become more of a possibility even with barriers in place, such as their lack of capital. Yasmin spoke of an experience with the school:

> *"My daughter had a problem with her old school before the summer holidays started and asked her why you just now told us that there was a problem, and she said it was because she was afraid of the teacher. I told our case worker, who told the teaching assistant, who spoke with the class   teacher, and she changed her attitude towards our daughter".*

In this case, Yasmin was unable to speak on behalf of her daughter with the school or deal with the issue herself, the family needed support from the Council and their Arabic speaking teaching assistant. Therefore, without language, families struggled to have a voice for advocacy in their children's lives and this inability to advocate for their children

can be linked to Freire's notion of action and reflection for dialogue and social inclusion because without the ability to communicate, refugee families might struggle to act and reflect on the situation in which they find themselves in order to make changes to their lives and liberate themselves from their social inequalities.

What interactions have you had with people in the local community? How have you found this?

Karim said:

> *"Yes of course, in my case, at work there is a lot of communication between myself and my friends, we talk and chat and exchange phone numbers. Not just with the English people, but all visitors to my workplace. Thank God, all matters are good with neighbours, with friends, with the college, with all people".*

This sense of connectedness with the culture in the UK has been established through making friends and the desire to want more in the future, and their sense of capital is enhanced through their engagements with the local community, and the workplace. Karim highlighted a sense of connection with the community and the UK, and this allows for feelings of capital to be developed, as well as reflection and action for social inclusion and dialogue. The workplace has also been a source of integration and connection, as well as a place for increased dialogue and a means of encouraging language acquisition.

Do you feel any sort of connection to the UK, and do you think this will develop over time?

> Hassan: *"Of course, now we have connections through friends, and we hope that in times to come this will become more, and we will start to feel homesick. When I leave [cathedral city in England], I feel homesick, and I want to come back".*
>
> Interviewer: *"This is great because you feel like this is your home"*
>
> Hassan: *"When I go outside of [cathedral city in England], to London or Southampton when I come home and see the Cathedral, I feel like I'm coming back to my home and I'm comfortable and relaxed. Now we have connections between us and the place that we live".*

The connections made with the local community suggest signs of integration from the families with their new homes, as well as their desire for this to increase in the future

and. Hassan cited connections between his family and the local community, and how he misses his new home whenever he leaves the city.

And people are good to you?

Karim:

> "Very, very nice. In the case of [cathedral city in England], I felt, how can I put this, the English would call it 'friendly', and people like to make friends and help one another, anyone who comes to our house, even the neighbours, they tell me if I have any problems to let them know, they give me their phone number and say this is my house, if you need anything, come round anytime you like".

Karim identified how friendly the local community has been to his family and this has allowed the family to feel connected with the world around them and this helps with their sense of connectedness with society, its people, culture, and way of life. This makes integration increasingly possible when people are accepting and welcoming to those whom they perceive to be the other, especially when we observe the interpretations of the stranger which Bauman cites within the liquid modern condition. The findings from this study are vastly different from the position which Bauman takes in his depiction of refugees and their experiences. Pinson and Arnot (2010) have highlighted the absence of refugee children in educational policy, and in many cases the hostility from the media and the ways in which this led to asylum-seeking children being subjected to racial harassment and hostility. Within this research however, these perceived perceptions and experiences of hostility were not commonplace, and the children within the school environment were very positive of their experiences, and their feelings within the school environment, and offered a contradiction to the research in the field.

In his research, Bauman (2003) defines the refugee as the embodiment of 'human waste', of an individual with little purpose of function in society, nor a place in the society to which they arrive. This portrayal defines the refugee solely by their status as a forced migrant, with all their past narrative erased as they seek acceptance in a new community. This notion of refugee based upon this definition, shows the refugee as the stranger, the other, and an individual who is not fit for integration or assimilation in the society and often become scapegoats for fear and anxiety amongst the community and therefore are unfit for this integration. Bauman (2005) argues that society is waging war

against the most precarious members of its society and taking a Marxist outlook on this, the proletariat are malleable, controllable, and passive, and perpetuate their societal status. Moreover, Bauman (1995) is critical of the concept of assimilation, as he states that refugees are set up to fail within the society which they join, he uses Jews within the Holocaust as an example of this, and states that Jews were assimilated and clustered together, only to be excluded from the wider society, as he defined them - assimilated Jews.

Bauman's understanding is very different to the findings of acceptance, tolerance and inclusion highlighted in this research, and the members of the community which the families have interacted with, have been helpful and friendly towards them and this has made their integration more of a possibility. This negative outlook is diametrically opposed to Bauman's depictions of refugees and their feelings of resettlement because the families' held a very positive view of their experiences in the UK and did not see themselves as 'human waste', 'precarious', 'wasted lives', as described by Bauman in much of his seminal work. These terms suggest that in fact this negativity is not the case when it comes to the experiences of all refugee families, and this also reinforces the notion that refugees are becoming a homogenised group, as suggested by Rutter.

Looking at all refugees in this negative light, assuming their helplessness, and clustering them together which in turn reinforces a sense of us and them culture, can negatively impact their progression in society. If an individual is deemed in a negative light and defined as 'waste', their feelings of living in a constant state of precarity lessens their sense of agency. Therefore, realism is essential, not all cases of refugee integration are positive, but researchers have a responsibility to depict the narrative and experiences in a positive light if this is the case, and to move away from the assumption that as a result of their trauma and hardship, refugees do not have a positive, ambitious, agency-led outlook on their lives, and this research had found examples of this positivity.

However, this can only be feasible with adequate and enabling social structures built around the families in order to allow their integration to become more effective. The families highlighted that the Council offered them a supportive environment which in turn helped them in their language acquisition, relationships, and interactions with the school, and within the local community through the volunteer team which surrounded them. Therefore, one must reinforce the need for a strong sense of agency, coupled with enabling social structures, because one without the other is simply inadequate for

families to fully integrate. For example, a family could have the intrinsic desire to learn English but not have enough classes provided to them within their new community, and as such this delays the process and make it harder because their lack of social capital would mean that this goal of learning English becomes increasingly challenging, and the overall process of integration becomes longer.

Hassan responded:

> *"Over 85% of the people here are friendly and always smile and like to help. We have not seen anything offensive until now, thank God, except trivial things, but in general they are hospitable, friendly, and helpful people. I expect there are things here that are better than in our society, for example there is no envy or jealousy and people do not interfere in each other's business, and how can I get this across to you? Do not begrudge them. To summarise, they are very friendly and helpful. We hope that in the future once we have language that we can mix more with the people here, with the neighbours and the people of [cathedral city in England]"*

The term 'friendly' was used in both isolated and separate interviews as a way of describing residents of the community and this bodes well for the future and the sense of integration which the families experience. The work of Pinson, Arnot and Candappa (2010) highlights the political action of teachers in order to counteract the hostility of the state of the community. This perception of hostility was not the case, and the families expressed their feelings and safety, drive, content, and ambition to be part of their school environment. The community around them enabled and supported these feelings by encouraging feelings of dialogue and supporting the family through addressing their needs. Moreover, MacDonald (2017) discusses young male refugee experiences in Australia and the extent to which refugees felt discrimination and exclusion. MacDonald's work shows another account of the ways in which this research bucks the trend of the negative experiences which refugees face within their new communities. The families researched within this thesis identify the friendliness of their surroundings and the people they interacted with.

3.4.   *Aspirations and preconceptions*

What did you know about the UK before you came? And how did these ideas change when you arrived?

Karim said:

> *"We had a general idea of Western countries which differed from our way of life,*
> *we wondered whether it would be difficult to live there because our life is*
> *different to theirs, and their circumstances were different to ours".*

Hassan:

> *"Yes, we knew that it was an advanced European country and respected and it*
> *was like any other Western country. We used to dream we could come here to*
> *be honest, but now we are here things are good.... we know it's a respectable*
> *country, a democracy with freedom and everything".*

This theme was important in order to understand the aims of the families regarding
their life in the UK and their predispositions in order to understand what their
preconceptions of the West and more specifically the UK were, as well as to understand
more about the views of the families before coming to settle. Both fathers had a view
about the Western way of life, Karim identified an awareness of the cultural differences
between the Middle East and the West as well as a thought about whether or not living
in the UK was even possible due to these differences, this also shows an awareness of
the challenges of integrating into a society that is so different to that which an individual
understands particularly when the pervasive culture is so starkly opposed to that which
one becomes acquainted.

> Yasmin: *"In Syria we had people of different religions and we were all friends*
> *and brothers, but the war changed this"*
>
> Karim: *"We thought that Islam was discriminated against, but on the contrary,*
> *we found that they respect all religions, and each person has the freedom to*
> *practice their religion"*
>
> Yasmin: *"On the contrary, Muslims are respected here"*

Karim and Yasmin held the UK in remarkably high regard   and they saw it as a place of
tolerance and freedom to practice their   religion and the idea of religious tolerance
was an aspiration for both Yasmin and Karim. Their preconceived feelings about
discrimination towards Muslims were dispelled and they came to find that this was not
the case in their own personal experience because they had the freedom to practice
their religion in the UK, without judgement from others. With such positive feelings

about and towards the UK, as well as ambitious goals for their life in the UK, integration becomes a greater possibility for the families. This is an example of their strong sense of agency, which can be coupled with the enabling social structures previously mentioned, from the school and the Council, which assist in their connectedness with the community and their future integration. Moreover, cultural diversity within the same neighbourhood can cause cultural schisms within the local community (Rutter, 2003; Sidhu et al, 2011; Taylor and Sidhu, 2012). The benefit to understanding integration as more of a useful term than assimilation, is due to the ways in which culture can be amalgamated as opposed to diluted, and the families identified a strong sense of culture, heritage, and values which they retained, and an acceptance and adoption of other values which they felt were compatible with their own culture.

So, what are the goals you have for your family?

Karim said:

> "My goal is to live in safety, sort matters out, work and look after my family, but particularly to find work…I was scared because I have daughters and I wanted to put them in school, but they told me there were girls' schools".

Karim dreamed of safety for his family, he wanted to work and make a living to look after his family. He hoped for his daughters to go to an all-girls school, and this was important to him and his wife. In response to this question, Hassan said:

> "The first goal is to be self-respecting citizens, and the second goal is our ambition for our daughter because now we're getting older our habits are a bit difficult to change, but we would like our daughters goals our way of life is, we want to see our daughter highly educated and in tune with society here, we want to see her working and contributing here".

His primary goal was for his family to be self-respecting citizens, he identified how he and his wife were older and therefore it would be harder for them to change their habits, but they wanted their daughter to become a highly educated and contributing member of society. This notion of becoming a self-respecting citizen suggests a strong desire for agency and as well as Hassan's ambition which exemplifies the deep sense of agency adopted by the families, and their desire to be fully fledged and contributing members of society. The hopes for their daughter suggest their strong sense of praxis and an awareness of their environment and what is needed for their integration and

future successes. This is an example of a goal which works in line with the theme of integration, and the family holds this ambition for their child to integrate into society. Moreover, through their daughter's engagement with education and work, Hassan and Nijmeh hoped for her to be integrated in society in the future.

3.5.   _Culture_

How important is extended family to your wellbeing and happiness?

Hassan said:

> _"Here it's very important, and now I would like my daughter, my cousin, and my brother here so that we can all be together so there is empathy and familial empathy especially for us Eastern people, we like to have family connectedness and we like to be together. Not for any particular reason, but for a person to be able to vent their worries. The pain is shared and known. We do not have much family here, but we hope so in the future for us all to be together with English people, and us"._

Hassan identified how significant the idea of family is within the Arab culture, and extended family is integral to their lives for feelings of togetherness and connectedness. This question was important because it gauges the cultural polarities between the East and the West, and the extent to which the families' feel that their integration is possible considering these differences.

Karim:

> _"This is very important, leaving friends and relatives was a major consideration for us, leaving my mother and father who stayed in Jordan, and going to a country where I knew nobody. But the more important reason was my daughters who needed an education, and I weighed up the reasons between staying and leaving, and for the future it was better to leave"._

Karim found that leaving behind his extended family was very difficult but gaining a good education for his daughters was also very important and as a result, leaving Jordan was best for his family's future. This shows the importance of a tight-knit family environment, and this acts as a form of capital engagement for the family as a whole and for their children, in addition to Bourdieu's notions of social, cultural, economic, and symbolic capital, familial capital is something which has been identified with the

families. Thommessen and Todd (2017) argue that refugees face challenges and conflicting circumstances between their family and culture, and the expectations of the community in which they join. Moreover, they find that this has an impact on their feelings of identity. The importance of the notion of family capital can be understood in greater detail here, wherein the family acts as a tool for integration and a means of contributing and influencing behaviours, emotions, and core values. This notion has been identified at length throughout this thesis and exemplifies the significance of family as a social and cultural tool which inspires and contributes 'the educational aspirations and achievements of refugee children and their families (Shapiro, 2018:342; Gofen 2009; Yosso, 2005). The cultural integration of the families within this research also speaks to the work of Pace (2018) who identifies that connectedness to a person's cultural origin as important, in addition to the connections with the extended family as this contributes to feelings and cultural and familial identity. This is important and is something which was exhibited within this research because family acted as a source of identity, support and agency and allowed the family to navigate their lives in their new community.

Could you tell me about how the culture here differs from the culture in Syria?

Hassan responded:

> *"Umm, I think the customs here are different to those back home, but the way of life is similar, we all like to live and be better, and comfortable with our religion. But there are different traditions. Here it is a working society, and back home it is a family society. God willing, at the moment we mix with the society, but we hope for more in the future, but all people keep to their customs and traditions, the good things they keep and the bad things they leave behind. I hope to mix with society, improve my language, and my connections with the society because it's kind and friendly".*

Hassan identified that there were different traditions in the UK compared to Syria and family played a more significant role in Syria in comparison to the UK, but he hoped to mix with the customs and traditions of his new society, in order to build stronger connections with the UK and its people. Hassan said that life in the UK 'allows you to practice your way of life…without barriers' and stated, 'I hope to mix with society, improve my language skills and my connections with society because it's kind and friendly'. Most interestingly, he identifies that 'all people keep to their customs and

traditions, the good things they keep and the bad things they leave behind'. This links to the work of Arnot and Swartz (2012:3) who identify that 'individuals and groups have strong loyalties to their own communities in which they have a role and a contribution to make, and a set of relationships that they can draw upon when in need. These civic identities are often outside the nation state being located within, for example, ethnic or family structures.' This suggests that individuals hold a strong sense of connectedness to their own communities which shape their identity and family, which acts as a support mechanism and a way of accessing social and cultural norms and capitals. The families placed importance on the idea of family in their lives, and in shaping their culture and identity, but Hassan also expressed intentions to 'mix' with the society he has joined, suggesting an integrative element.

The cultural polarities which exist between the East and West asks questions about the extent to which integration is possible for refugee families when the culture differs so significantly. However, Karim found:

> *"Yes, of course, generally the Arab society differs from Western society. But as I told you, the freedom here allows you to practice your way of life, I can live here as I lived in Jordan or Syria, without barriers".*

From Karim's perspective, yes, the countries do differ, but the freedom to live one's life in peace with the freedom to practice religion and live without barriers is a difference which he cited. These views have allowed the families to integrate into society because their sense of awareness ensured they began to understand the social and cultural nuances of society. This keen desire to integrate into the culture and way of life in the UK, through adopting the customs and traditions which one wants to take on board, and leave behind those which they do not, suggests a possibility for the mixing of the two cultures and ways of life.

This point identified by Hassan was conducive to an argument around notions of assimilation versus integration, and how the latter term is more useful. He stated that some customs can be preserved, and others left behind in an attempt at combining the cultures of the East with the West, and links can be made with his idea about the freedom to practice religion and way of life because an individual is able to choose the parts of a culture which they would like to engage with and those which they do not. As such in order to integrate into Western society, certain values and customs can be acquired, and the undesirable ones left behind. Links can be drawn between the

findings of this research and the work of Inglehart and Norris (2009) who find that refugees adopt long-term social and cultural norms and values which align with the dominant culture of the community in which they join. This is interesting, because Hassan identified that life in the UK allows for freedom and for a person to practice their way of life.

3.6.   Capital

What activities did you do in Syria, and what do you do now? And how did this change when you came here?

Hassan explained:

> *"Our children had everything they needed, and it was available to   them, and we'd go on trips and outings and outings with family. But here we are still new, we do not know how to get to London, we do not know the areas where we can go and come back from, we need the Satnav for things to travel around!"*

This question was asked in order to understand capital and its acquisition in greater detail and makes links from this research to the concepts which Bourdieu cites, and questions were asked about the activities the families used to do with their children in Syria. Hassan highlighted how in Syria doing activities with the family and extended family was very common especially because the children had everything they needed at their disposal. However, in the UK a lack of economic capital is a factor which affects their ability to do certain activities with their children, as well as social capital regarding their knowledge, and access to activities which contribute to their sense of capital. Alba and Lee (2009) find that the key to assimilation is the importance of 'the role of human capital, social networks, and the institutional arrangements of the state and labour market' and this understanding has been realised within this research wherein the families who expressed a strong desire to integrate had a sense of capital which was developing, familial capital, and developing social networks through their communities, all of which enabled their integration.

> Karim: *"The children go on trips with the school, and they ask for my permission, which I give. On their trips they walk distances with their school friends"*
>
> Yasmin: "*They've been on geography trips with the school"*

Karim said: "*They go on their own and play in the garden because it's close, and if they go to the park my wife and I go with them. Sometimes we go into [cathedral city in England] and we have a brother who lives in   (an area in the South West) and we often go to visit him*".

Yasmin said: "*In the summer we went to the seaside and during Eid we took them to the funfair, and it was a lovely outing in the sunshine and the green grass. The children like to play and were told that there was a place in Romsey, people told us it was expensive, but we went*".

Karim and Yasmin identified the school as a means of connecting with the UK and the trips with the school help with the capital acquisition provided to their children, which can, in turn aid their integration. A sense of familial capital was identified with both families, and this does aid in the process of integration and in its own way is a form of capital which can be identified outside of the school environment. The idea of family socialisation is integral to the lives of Syrian people and visiting members of their family for social outings is commonplace and part of their identity. Building upon the work of Bourdieu, this form of capital has not been identified but is pertinent to the socialisation of Syrian refugee families because family plays a critical role in their social and cultural interactions.

3.7.   *The school*

Are schools here different from the schools in Syria, or even Jordan?

Karim said:

> "*Of course, here they are much better, I told my daughters that if schools here were like schools back home, I would never have finished school, but the teaching here is better, in terms of school time and breaks. In Syria, there would be at school for 4 months and there is no break for 15 days. The ways the teachers treat the children are much better. On the contrary, if they know that somebody has newly arrived and his ability is not up to standard, they will focus on him more than the English child. In fact, we feel better than others because they feel that our child needs support. In the beginning they helped and explained things to our daughters*"

As the institution in which this research was framed upon, this theme was important in order to understand the feelings and experiences of Syrian refugee parents on the

experiences of their children within the school. Karim identified how different the schools in Syria were in comparison to those in the UK, and how he favoured the schools in the UK, because the teachers treat the children better, there is adequate support and provision for them, and they have enough time off.

Hassan said:

> "The student is relaxed, and the ways they treat students is different, how the school treats the children is different too and the teaching standards are better here".

Hassan identified similar points to Karim that schools are better in than UK, and the student feels more relaxed within the education system. Both families identified that schools in the UK are culturally different, the child is placed at the centre of their learning and the standards are better, as well as support for the student until it is no longer required. This shows an awareness of the surroundings and the potential to use education as a tool for social empowerment due to the importance placed upon it by the families, in addition to their awareness of the differences and potential barriers faced by their children. A lack of familiarity of school systems and an inability to navigate them and other structures can cause issues for children and their families, meaning that certain barriers could be exacerbated such as language, lack of interpreters and translators present at the school, a lack of trust between parents and teachers and discrimination (Yok-Fong, 2017:234, Taylor and Sidhu, 2012). These barriers exist and can cause issues for children and families in their new communities, however with effective and inclusive school practices and provisions such as the use of interpreters, strengthening the potential gap between the school and home, and culturally inclusive lessons in school can mitigate these issues. The families within this research were aware of the barriers which they faced, such as in their language skills, and this echoes their sense of praxis, but the local council provided English language classes to strengthen their skills, in school support for their children, and support into employment, particularly in the example of Karim, who found work at a tailor, and volunteered during the pandemic to make protective equipment.

Have your children felt any discrimination, hatred or racism in school or life in general?

Karim responded:

"When we first arrived, they did not know English, and their problem was that they could not understand if people were talking about them or to them! But thank, God we have not had any problems. I ask my daughters how do you feel at school? And they all tell me all is well. I ask them if anyone or anything is bothering you, and they tell me, thank God, all is well. Of course, we have support from the Council and the teaching assistant at school, who tells us that if there are any problems at all, tell me and I will tell the school and we will resolve the issue. Thank God we have not had any big problems, a few little things but thank God, nothing bad".

Have you asked the teaching assistant to help resolve any issues?

Karim then added:

"Last year, my youngest daughter would tell me that she would get to school early and stand at the front of the class, and the teacher would send her to the back and put someone in her place. She would get upset about this, because she would get there early because she liked to be close to the front of the class, but the teaching assistant would send her to the back. I would tell her, maybe it is because you are tall, and she would tell me no dad, that is not why. So, I told her I would speak to the teaching assistant, and our case worker dealt with it. This was the last month of school last year, but thank God, nothing has happened yet this year".

Does the class teacher support all their needs, specifically?

Karim said:

"Yes, they help them a lot, I ask my daughters if they really understand what their teacher is telling them, and they tell me that three quarters of what they tell them is understood, but if they don't understand the teacher explains it to them or changes the wording for them".

Karim cited issues with the school, such as teachers treating their children unfairly, yet despite these issues, the teaching assistant supported the family and children in dealing with the issues and communicating with the school on behalf of the family, this questions their ability to exert their sense of autonomy and agency, but this advocacy can be developed for the future once language has been grasped.

Karim added:

> "The girls began to understand more and did not need his help as much, so he stopped and helped people who needed more help. But if we needed help the teaching assistant said he could help us communicate with the school if we needed. Thank God, now we do not have any issues with school, and we are supported".

How has the school helped with any problems that your daughter faced other than schoolwork?

Hassan said:

> "She has no problems in her new school. She has a teaching assistant from the Council who helps with translation, and he is around if we need him. If we don't understand he supports us and helps with translation"

And if you felt that she needed some extra help in school, would you be able to tell the school or the Council for help?

> "If there was a problem and she needed help, the teaching assistant is still available if we need help with language or anything, and the school helps with these problems if there is something we don't understand, and there is support from the school and the Council".

Nijmeh added:

> "She was uncertain about things when we first arrived, we left her in between English people, she was unsure and scared. But here, thank God she is very happy and relaxed. Her cousins are at the same school as her now, they go to school together. On the contrary, now on holidays she prefers to be at school. She is very happy at school, more than in Jordan, she has English friends and is very happy".

She felt that her daughter was very uncertain about things when she first arrived, and when she first started going to school, but now she is far more comfortable, confident, and happy, as she has friends around her. She now has a sense of belonging and connectedness with the school and this is useful for her future integration and capital acquisition, more so than what she had in her school in Jordan. The issue, as identified in previous themes, is that the parents are not able to directly advocate on behalf of

their children and this is where capital is not prevalent within their lives and makes their ability to integrate into the wider society a greater challenge, they must go through other mechanisms in order to support their children in school. Nevertheless, the familial ambition for their daughters in order to achieve in school suggests that education is a tool for integration, however the   challenge in advocating comes as a result of a lack of capital. Most significantly social and cultural capital is lacking and without the parent's possession of this capital, it makes it harder for them to transmit these forms of capitals to their children to utilise within education as a field.

> Karim said: *"They have friends who they talk to on the phone. When I take them to school in the morning, they point their friends out to me by name saying this is so and so and this is so and so".*

> Yasmin added: *"Our oldest daughter is fifteen years old, and she has friends and our second daughter, our eldest is a bit shy, and our second daughter is more outgoing".*

> Yasmin: "Our daughters are excellent at English and my daughters received distinctions from the school"

Both families identified how their daughters have also built connections with the school environment through making friends and they were very proud of their children's successes. In a positive light, both families cited a supportive school in the most part, with their children making great progress. Based on what the families highlighted to the researcher, the school is sympathetic and supportive of their children's needs.

Hassan said:

> *"The school are accepting and welcoming of any problems, the   headmaster and all the teachers all understand. They tried to help us with the exam for South Wilts and did lessons with my daughter to prepare for the exam. But they did not have enough time, even though they got great results. We hope next year they will pass. The school is very helpful with us and try to understand what we need and what our children need. If there are any problems we meet at school and discuss them. They are very friendly".*

Karim told of his daughter's challenges with the 11+ exam:

> *"The school told us that we could do practice tests, but we did not have enough time. They gave her 10% extra in the exam, but this was 6 minutes and was not enough. My daughter told me that she did not finish the questions, the ones she did answer she was sure about, but she did not have enough time to read the question, understand and answer. We told her next time you will be more prepared, and your English will be better".*

Yasmin added:

> *"They did not treat the Arabic speaking girls like the English, they are slow with translation, and they should've given them extra time".*

Yasmin and Karim cited an interesting example of a lack of capital engagement which came up regarding the 11+ examination which was due to be sat by students hoping to get into the local grammar school. Both families had daughters who took the exam, one responded that their daughter did not have enough time to complete the exam, suggesting an inequality which is out of the family's control. This is an example of the lack of capital available to the parents in order to understand and advocate for their children, and as a result they missed out on the opportunity to go to a prestigious grammar school. Moreover, this is a lack of social and cultural capital, and one which the school did not bridge the gap for enough.

Yasmin said that the fact that her daughter had to translate the information in her head meant that she needed enough extra time to complete her exam. Whilst there may be inequalities such as the inability to complete the exam in the allotted time, but the individual drive and ambition of the families could overcome the inequalities. Both families identified on many occasions the support provided to them through the Council and the teaching assistant who gave their daughters support in school in order to ensure that they were developing, progressing, and acclimating well to their surroundings. Both families identified that their daughters no longer needed the support because they had been doing so well in school, and they were very proud of this.

In terms of the school, do trips help with connecting your daughter to the UK?

Hassan said:

> *"In this school, they do not make her feel like she is foreign, she is like any other child, and they send us emails about trips and outings. But overnight stays we do*

not allow, we let her go on day trips to museums and the theatre. school trips have a good teaching purpose and last week they took her to an author's talk and the theatre".

Hassan felt that the school did not make his daughter feel different or foreign, she felt like she was like any other child in the school, and he also identified the effectiveness of school trips for teaching, and this can link to its role in cultural integration, and capital engagement. However, this may not yet have been identified in the home and may take time.

Do you feel that the school is sympathetic to your daughter's needs?

Hassan responded:

"The fact that she's a refugee here, we felt that the school, even more than the local community help the children feel there is no difference between them and the other children. They make them feel that they are the best especially with language although they are not at the same level as the English children, they tell them that they are better because you have two languages and everyone else has just one, and this gives the motivation to go forward with confidence. The school is so helpful with her, and if she needs it, they give her extra support".

Hassan felt as though his daughters were made to feel like the best, especially in regard to their language, because whilst their level of English is not the same as local children, the fact that she is bilingual was acknowledged by the school, and this gives them more motivation and confidence going forward at school. Interestingly, discrimination was identified as one of the most significant barriers to integration on various societal levels which has further impacts on mental health and cultural integration (Wekhian, 2015:89; Khalid et al., 2007; Taylor and Sidhu, 2012). This research did not identify these feelings of discrimination, but a welcoming environment, particularly within the school, where both families expressed how successful and happy their children were at school.

3.8.   *Fostering a sense of agency and enabling social structures*

This chapter deduced that it is clear that the families are deeply aware of the barriers and inequalities they face, such as their lack of language and inability to access certain forms of capital. Indeed, this is an example of how their praxis, as identified by Freire, operated on a social, cultural, and economic basis. The families are aware that their culture differs, their financial capital is more strained than it was in Syria, and their

social capital in the form of social connections are slowly being established but need more time to fully emerge and be noticed. Moreover, the lack of capital which the families have was identified as a source of inequality for their children in education. For example, during the 11+ exam which was taken by two daughters, and their inability to prepare enough for it due to the family's lack of awareness of the system, its requirements, and their ability to advocate for their children to have adequate extra time or a translator to help them with the questions.

Connections can be made between the refugee families and their sense of praxis, and their awareness of the capitals needed to navigate the social world and its cultural and social nuances. This notion of praxis is integral to the social inclusion of members of a society from their social situation and for integration into the wider society past the local community which according to the families has been friendly and welcoming to them, as well as fostering a sense of dialogue. Therefore, action, reflection, capital acquisition and concientisation are key tools for their sense of integration on a cultural and social level. Moreover, the use of religious language as a form of reassurance, identifies that religion plays a prominent role in the lives of refugee families and acts as a source of reassurance. Without cultural acquisition or capital acquisition in order to navigate the social world, integration as opposed to assimilation becomes the aim and in order to achieve the former, the families must begin to acquire some of the social and cultural facets of society in order to transfer capital, understand society, navigate its nuances, particularly in education and for parents to be able to advocate for their children in order to encourage their capital advancement and ability to transfer capitals within the societal fields which Bourdieu cites.

The findings highlighted the ways in which refugee families gain a sense of awareness of the external forces which have shaped their experiences and consciousness as well as the conditions for producing this new life with arrangements and values, wherein power has been transferred for the most part to those who comprise the social world and its transformation through both themselves and nature through their sense of praxis. These findings highlighted the strong relationship between power and social inclusion in that the families owned their sense of agency and their narrative, which encouraged them to be liberated and connected to the wider community. The families were interviewed on a follow-up basis in order for their own story and narrative to be depicted within the two interviews which have been undertaken with them. This was decided because the researcher felt that the emotionalist, humanistic and qualitative

driven research was best suited to fewer interviews with the same families in order to give them the voice to tell their own stories and be liberated with this.

The notions of autonomy and social inclusion and dialogue were significant and are particularly relevant to the framework of Freire and his discussions around liberation and freedom from the shackles of inequality. These findings highlighted that the families felt they had the autonomy to choose which values and cultural aspects they wanted to keep and which they did not, and this freedom allows for cultural diversity and individual autonomy which can be linked to the relationship between agency and structure. As such, when individual autonomy is paired with strong familial and religious capital, as identified within the findings, and enabling social structures, inclusion can be identified, and a synthesis between autonomy and the social norms and structures can be noticed between the families interviewed. Moreover, the idea of familial capital, a term used by this researcher and was identified within the primary research, and discussed in relation to Bourdieu, and this notion - has not yet been highlighted by Bourdieu in his work on capital. As such, this suggests the originality behind the research and its nuanced social and cultural findings. This notion came about through an understanding of the cultural importance of family for both families interviewed in this research, all of whom cited family and its value as integral to their lives and approaches to cultural and social activities. This therefore contributes to Bourdieu's understanding of cultural, social, and economic capital and adding something new to his research as the notion of family is integral to Arab culture and feelings of connectedness and happiness.

The findings were surprising because the expectations from the researcher were based upon and framed by the literature in the field, and the theoretical underpinning. The responses and experiences of the participants were assumed to be solely negative, based upon these factors. However, this was far from the reality, based upon the responses, the positive contrast was both surprising and insightful, and suggests that in fact with the correct structures in place, refugee families can be integrated into the society in which they are joining. Links can be made between the apparent feelings and experiences which the families were expected to hold, based upon the themes which emerged from the literature in the field, such as the findings of trauma discourse, language barriers, cultural differences and the theoretical underpinnings of Bourdieu and Freire whose basis and outlook on society present as negative in light of the societal inequalities which they cite within their theories.

Moreover, Bourdieu's notion of habitus clivé is suggestive of a sense of feeling out of place, unnerved and uncertain, but this was not the case for the families, and both families cited in their separate interviews, their feelings of connectedness, safety, and integration with and into their new communities. These refugee families interviewed showed no sign of this idea of habitus clivé which Bourdieu cites and there was little to no vulnerability or evidence of precariousness. This is conducive to their individual sense of agency, and the role of the social structures around them which have enabled them to feel this connection and integration, and this is perhaps an uncommon feature of other parts of society, and of other experiences of refugees in the UK and further afield. This, therefore, is not suggestive of a rejection of the theoretical underpinning of this research, but in fact, provides an opportunity for utilising them anew in a subtle and nuanced way through reworking some underpinning understandings on refugee integration. The idea of habitus clivé which Bourdieu cites in his own personal experiences, is one which could be applied to the families; however, this must not be deemed as negative, but simply as part of a strengthened sense of identity which the families felt. Their experiences in Syrian, Jordanian and UK culture have led to various feelings of societal belongingness, which have shaped and moulded their experiences. This idea of habitus clivé has allowed for a deeper understanding of the families and their diverse and dynamic sense of belonging and has been understood in greater detail through the lens of Bourdieu and his own personal experiences.

Whilst Freire and Bourdieu find that based upon class, individuals from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are more likely to experience inequality, with a strong sense of praxis and individual agency, which comes about through praxis as a sense of a self-managed life which is held by the families. Coupled with enabling social structures which are those perceived to be unequal in society, but the families are able to integrate and lead their lives through using their own sense of agency and concientisation. This would be deemed as a form of social inclusion and a means of acquiring the capitals which are dependent on the societal conditions, and the ways in which enabling social environments around the families are essential for them to negotiate the social world around them.

However, for the purposes of future interviews in the full-scale study lessons learned have been identified for their change and implementation. The findings were surprising because the expected outcomes were framed by the themes which emerged from the literature around trauma discourse, language barriers, cultural differences and the

theoretical underpinning of this research which present the societal condition as negative in light of inequalities which they cite, yet this research provides an opportunity to think of these theories anew and rework some underpinning understandings on refugee integration.

3.9. *Adaptations for second interviews*

Firstly, there was an issue of interruption between participants which meant that in some instances the mother and father were talking over one another, and this made the process of transcription challenging so as a result, questions have been targeted directly at each participant at a time to ensure they both get equal opportunities to speak, although the natural art of conversation is an expected factor and this cannot always be alleviated if the researcher wants the participants to speak freely with a sense of dialogue running throughout the interviews. Secondly, the fathers tended to speak more than the mothers, and this could be put down to the natural cultural and social dynamic of their relationships, and an area for analysis in itself, but for the purposes of this researcher and the desire to hear the voices of all the participants, the researcher encouraged the mothers further during the interviews and tailor and direct questions to them in order to gauge their responses as much as the fathers. Thirdly, the responses from the participants were mostly positive in their outlook towards their experiences and outlook on their children's education, and this was in many cases a good thing, however, the researcher wants to understand fully the true experiences of the participants, and therefore, questions have been asked to further this understanding in order to ensure that the positive and negative experiences are documented, because this allows for a narrative to be constructed based upon their true experiences if this is the case. The positive outlook of the families was depicted as a true and genuine report of their feelings, and as such, whilst it differs from the pervasive knowledge base and literature, it is a unique outlook in and of itself.

For the second round of interviews with the two families identified within this findings chapter, a variety of questions were asked which have themes which have been developed and extended from the literature review, the methodology chapter, and the findings from the first interviews. The three key themes include sense of belonging, progression in school and the building of positive relationships within this key environment, and integration. The researcher hoped to understand more about what makes a difference for refugees and their lives, what role they feel they have and what

role society has in their integration, sense of agency and the enabling environments around them. This has been discussed within the following findings chapter, the final component of this study.

4. Chapter Four: Fostering cultures of dialogue

This chapter focuses on the second part of the primary research and the follow-up interviews for the two families who were part of the case study for this research. These interviews form part of the case study of the research and aim to understand the progress made by the families and their continued feelings towards their experiences and sense of integration. Therefore, the interviews were conducted eight months after the initial interviews and the questions were framed on the themes which emerged from the literature review, the findings from the previous interviews and the current climate and context. The interviews asked a variety of questions which came about through the change in the social landscape, and themes which came about through the responses from participants in the first set of interviews, this includes, progress in education, the impacts of coronavirus and feelings of belonging.

The following chapter adopted a similar approach to the work of Ann Oakley and her research which signifies the significance of this approach as emotionalist and narrative-driven by the respondent, in their storytelling. This narrative approach documents the responses from Yasmin and Karim and Nijmeh and Hassan and their experiences, feelings, and stories about their lives in the United Kingdom. The themes from this section focus once again on the notion of voice and the voices of the participants being taken seriously as a tool for understanding their experiences, and this idea of voice speaks back to the theory and encourages a vocal and narrative response from the families.

This chapter examines the idea of voice in more detail, and the increased focus placed on the importance of family for integration and the strength of the families' sense of agency and desire to integrate. This was a theme which extended across both sets of interviews and has been a key element to their sense of integration and ability to do so. The layout of these interviews differs slightly to that of the previous interviews within the first findings chapter and it follows a more dialogue-centred analysis of the data, wherein larger segments of the interviews are included. This has allowed for a greater sense of dialogic interviewing, and this was interestingly more apparent for these interviews than the previous ones, because the families, it seemed, felt more open with the interviewer, and expressed more anecdotal and humorous exchanges with the interviewer, and this in a sense allowed for more open and candid discussion. This chapter illuminates the ways in which a sense of dialogue is exchanged between the

families and the communities in which they join, and this sense of dialogue can be drawn from the host learning from the refugee and with such dialogue it shows the fact that refugees are not the passive victims which they are deemed to be in the pervasive literature in the field.

This chapter has a thematic focus, similar to the first findings chapter, and its approach is narrative and draws upon various themes such as belonging, connectedness, voice, cultures of dialogue, sense of agency and familial capital and the themes are interconnected build upon those within the previous chapters and the findings so far from this research. The themes fit well with the underpinning perspective derived from Bourdieu and Freire and the overarching theme of 'familial capital'. The notion of pattern matching and correspondence can be drawn here, which is a pattern match which 'involves the correspondence between a theoretical or conceptual expectation pattern and an observed or measured pattern' (Trochim, 1985:1) This was an interesting mechanism because the expectation of the research surrounded the negative findings from the research in the field which was explored within the literature review, and this therefore suggests a measure of pattern which was expected before the interviews were undertaken, and the surprising findings which came about, which bucked the trend and suggested a sense of positivity from the families interviewed. Therefore, the findings from this research as a whole were surprising to the researcher, and whilst they were informed by the literature in the field, and the concepts and themes which came above from the theoretical framework, the findings were surprising and suggested a strong example of pattern matching and correspondence.

The focus for this chapter surrounded theory of voice and the significance of voice as a tool for action and reflection and a greater sense of praxis amongst the families, and also allows the families an opportunity to exercise their voice and express their feelings and experiences to the researcher. Moreover, this ideas of voice and expression, fit with the notions of Bourdieu and Freire in relation to the synthesis between the two theoretical frameworks and the relationship between Bourdieu's notion of practice (guidance on behaviour in the social world), and Freire's praxis (action and reflection) and an increased consciousness inequalities, which can be alleviated with dialogue, agency (praxis) and enabling social structures to navigate the social world around them, are suggestive of integration. This observation allows for an understanding of the potential social inequalities which are underlying and ways in which these struggles can be ameliorated.

4.1. *The impact of coronavirus and agency*

Given the context of the current climate in which this thesis was written, questions of coronavirus seemed relevant and pertinent and also showed examples of the resilience and sense of citizenship which the families exhibited using this challenging and unprecedented time. Moreover, these questions aim to gain an understanding of the sense of agency which the families and the ways in which they responded to the outbreak of the virus.

What has happened with work during this time?

Karim responded:

> *"For me, work has been open since the 1ˢᵗ of June, but they've told me not to come in until the 15ᵗʰ because there is no movement in the market, but we don't know. But when they told us to stay home, there was no work. In terms of college, we attend online, and take lessons that way".*

> Interviewer: *"Have you done any voluntary work during this time?"*

> Karim: *"I worked for five days during this time and work told us that we would work for the NHS because they were in need of clothes and equipment for the patients and even the cleaners, and I told them "I'm ready, whenever you have work that needs doing, I'm prepared", they told me it was voluntary work, and I said I have no problem with this, just let me know when you need me. I worked with them for about four days whilst they covered all the hospitals which needed equipment for the NHS".*

> Interviewer: *"So, you did this work for five days?"*

> Karim: *"Yes, five days continuously, each week I did two days, depending on what was needed".*

> Interviewer: *"Thank you for doing this, this work is very helpful".*

> Karim: *"God bless you".*

> Interviewer: *"And do you feel that this is a part of your integration in this country?"*
> Karim: *"Yes, absolutely, we felt that this is our duty to help in any way that we can, whether sewing, or in other ways".*

Karim had a strong sense of civic duty during the crisis, and this reflected in this response, wherein he was keen to help in the national effort for the provision of protective equipment for NHS staff. Through this conversation Karim displayed a strong sense of duty towards the country which gave him refuge, he stresses the importance of doing what he could to help the national effort. This volunteering allowed him to feel a part of the voluntary drive to support the NHS and made him feel part of the social fabric of the country. This strong sense of connectedness and desire to support the country is an example of the integration which Karim and his family feel, which in turn, bodes well for their future lives in the UK. This also rings true to the dynamic and unwavering sense of agency which he holds, and his autonomous and civic-led approach to the pandemic, Karim had a strong desire to help in any way he could, and this speaks to the sense of devotion and gratitude he holds to the UK, and the desire he has to support his community during a time of crisis. This also signals the ways that familial capital can be a source of strength and autonomy during times of hardship and the ways in which autonomy connects to the idea of friendship within the school and the community. These connections imply the strong relationship which the families have with the local community and the strong desire to be a part of the community effort and make a difference for friends and members of the community, further consolidating the view that their sense of agency is strong and plays a role in the extent to which they feel and act in regard to their integration.

The researcher asked Hassan and Nijmeh questions about the impact of coronavirus on the second family interviewed, Hassan and Nijmeh, and they found lockdown a challenge but did so like everybody else.

Hassan responded:

> "*Our daughter isn't at school at the moment, and we are all staying at home, and when we go to the shops, we find problems*".

> Interviewer: "*Have any good things happened during this time?*"

> Hassan: "*In regard to COVID-19, of course we have self-isolated like everyone else*"

Nijmeh said:

> "*We don't visit anyone, and they don't visit us*".

Hassan added: *"This has caused us to be bored and we haven't seen any of our English friends and even my brother, but everything is still fine because we are isolated from the danger and the disease. Our daughter is bored because she doesn't go to school, she is in year 6 and she will have to leave school without saying goodbye to her teachers. This has affected her, but as far as we are concerned, we go and get the shopping and come back. There are no comings and goings. It's been good and bad because with lockdown we protect others and ourselves from the virus and its bad socially because we miss the friends that used to visit us and the things, we were able to do before".*

Hassan spoke of the boredom faced through lockdown, and the ways in which his daughter was affected by her inability to go to school and spend time with her friends and teachers. This suggests the closeness and sense of integration their daughter feels, and her keenness and willingness to go back to school and see her friends and teachers. This shows that the school is a source of positivity and an experience which their daughter misses and feels a part of, suggesting the strength of the school as a social structure which has enabled her to feel this way.

4.2.   *Progress in school*

The questions within this subsection were asked around the progress made in school since the last interviews the researcher had with the families, and many of the themes discussed in this section crossover and directly relate to those in the previous subsection which surrounded the impact of coronavirus on agency. The questions which were asked, and the response given, reverted back to the experiences of school, hence the themes which overlapped and came through in this section.

In terms of school, how have the children been interacting with their schoolwork and homework, have things changed?

Karim and the interviewer engaged in a longer dialogue as he said:

> *"In regard to school, everything has been done through online routes, and each day the girls get online to see what work they have to do, and the 'spelling sheet', the maths work, they practise these, and their work gets marked. Thank God, they haven't been cut off from their schoolwork".*
>
> Interviewer: *"Has there been communication with the school during this time?"*

Karim: *"Absolutely, we're in contact through email and phone, and they are in touch about the online schoolwork".*

Interviewer: *"Have you decided yet whether you want to send the girls back to school?"*

Karim: *"At the present time we are not going to send the children to school because there are still a lot of cases in the country, so for the moment we will not send them back. As the situation Is not stable, we are going to leave things till September to see what the situation is like".*

Interviewer: *"Other than corona, is there anything new in regard to school since we last spoke?"*

Karim: "*No there hasn't been anything new, but our daughter will start at her new secondary school, we have registered her there and she has a place. She will be at the same school as her cousin".*

This interaction surrounds discussions of the school and the ways in which it has supported the families and their children during time testing and unprecedented time, and their daughters use the online school portal to do their work and interact with their teachers and peers. This also shows the support of the school as a social structure which has been enabling the families during this time. Hassan and Nijmeh once again celebrated their daughter's successes in school and illuminated her abilities and the ways in which she has progressed in school.

Interviewer: "*Have things changed with how your daughter does her schoolwork and how has the school engaged with you?"*

Hassan: *"Our daughter does all her studies online, she finishes all her homework and lessons online and I am in the same boat because with college I attend classes through Teams twice a week, so learning hasn't really been affected too much, but when things are face to face, they're much better and seeing the teachers is better. And if you wanted to ask us about medical issues and hospitals, this is the only thing we have been really affected by, all our appointments have been postponed. Our daughter had many appointments for her cleft lip and palate, but this is the only thing we've been affected by to be honest. That has all been delayed and had a big effect on us. But of course, we understand why because this is not in their hands".*

Hassan: "We have registered her at (local school) right next door to her school in the same area, it's a good school and we've registered her there. And we thank God because the Council helped us in this matter, they helped very much, the TA and the person in charge of the system. We have registered her at the same school as her cousin".

Interviewer: "Excuse me, I just need to check my notes. Since we last spoke, because we spoke last year in October, other than your daughter starting at a new school, how has she progressed at school? Have any important things happened in her school life?"

Hassan: "For our daughter?"

Interview: "Yes"

Hassan: "She has been very enthusiastic, and she was on the 'top table'".

Nijmeh: "She was one of the best students".

Hassan: "She was sitting in the first table with the top children in her class, but because of COVID-19 we were forced to keep her at home, but she has been following up online. Whatever she can do with maths and her other subjects, her teachers have been very supportive..."

Strong feelings and examples of integration can be noticed through this dialogue, wherein Hassan and Nijmeh expressed their pride in their daughter's success in school as one of the best students and told the researcher about the ways in which she was at the top table in her class and the supportive nature of her teachers. Their pride was a gleaning feature of this dialogue. Moreover, their capital has been enhanced as they are able to navigate the nuances of online learning and the ways in which this can be used to progress their children's education and their own, and without a sense of capital and ability to navigate this technology, they would be at a disadvantage. Therefore, their grasp of English has assisted in this, and the support which their daughter gives them in their translation.

The families were aware of the fact that they did not have all the necessary capitals at the time of their interviews, but that they wanted to improve this situation over time. As Bourdieu defines capital as 'the sum of resources, actual or virtual that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less

institutionalised relationship of mutual acquaintance and recognition' (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992:119). With this definition in mind, the families wanted to develop their sense of capital by seeking employment, encouraging their children in school, supporting them as much as possible in the school environment through attending events at the school and trying to work through the 11+ exams. Moreover, they had strong ambitions for their children such as the desire for their daughters to pass the 11+ exam and get into the local grammar school, and to succeed in school and go to university, which in turn will strengthen their access to capital advancement. According to Lareau and Weininger (2005:560) the school acts as a 'transmission of advantage across generations', and the importance of the school as a field for integration has been noticed within this thesis, wherein the families had a relationship with the school which acted as a support mechanism for their children.

4.3.   _Integration and belonging_

The interviewer asked Hassan and Nijmeh and Karim and Yasmin questions about their sense of belonging and connectedness with the UK as this was a theme which warranted further discussion after the first interviews which were undertaken.

> Interviewer: _"I wanted to ask you a few questions about integration and your feelings towards this. In which country do you feel most integrated, here or in Syria, or in Jordan?"_
>
> Karim: _"We thank God, when we went to Jordan, we felt Jordanian, and when we came here, we felt the same, that any place we go, we feel a part of the country and we never feel different. Whether here or Jordan, we have felt that we are part of that country"._
>
> Interviewer: _"What things allow you to feel integrated here, work or family or school...?"_
>
> Karim: _"In honesty, everything and what allows us to feel integrated here is because we don't feel conflict between and no feelings that you someone is foreign or local, there is no feeling that you are Arab, and you are English. The people have treated us very well, and we have never felt that we are any different or discriminated against, by the people who live here. This lets a person feel that they are part of this country, and that they need to something in return for the country they live in"._

The strong connectedness between Karim and Yasmin and the UK, can be best understood through his response to this question, and his feelings that he and his family do not feel foreign or different is suggestive of this, but also the fact that he wants to be able to give back to the country he lives in. He interestingly cites that he and his family felt no sense of discrimination or difference, and they feel as though there is no difference between an Arab and an English person.

> Interviewer: *"Do you still see the volunteers that helped you when you first arrived"?*
>
> Karim: *"Right up to the lockdown, they visited us weekly, and children call one of the ladies Teta (grandma). It was my wife's birthday, and she brought her flowers from the door".*
>
> Yasmin: *"They are good people, and I felt the council caseworker was like my mother, she was kind and so helpful to us, we spoke about her last time".*
>
> Interviewer: *"Who do you feel makes you feel most integrated in the UK?"*
>
> Karim: *"Almost everyone, in the beginning in terms of the Council and the volunteers, and people at work, and like I told you, we never feel that we do not belong to this country, we thank God, wherever we go, we feel we belong to the country, and we are a part of it".*

This dialogue suggested a sense of belonging in Jordan and the United Kingdom, suggesting the inclusivity of the country, but also the outlook and behaviours of the families who are seeking a new life in these countries. This inclusivity connects with the findings from the research, in that it assists in the understanding of the relationship between the families in the community in which they have joined and the increased sense of belonging which they feel, therefore, connections between the strong relationship with the country in which they resettle and their sense of belonging. Karim poignantly stated that his family have no feelings of foreignness in the UK, there is no feeling that they are different, and no difference in the way in which people treat him and his family as Arabs, compared to an English person which bodes well for the individual and familial sense of integration. Here, a clear connection can be made between Freire and the significance he places on living an authentic life through a lens of critical consciousness, and not the life of the oppressor (Giroux, 2010) and the notion of belonging. Freire expressed the need for people to live real and authentic lives, free

of prejudice and oppression and this power of authenticity can be noticed most profoundly when we observe the feelings which the families hold towards their lives in the UK and the essence of their feelings of belonging can be derived from the support and sense of belonging which they feel and hold, and this once again shows the surprising nature of this research.

Nijmeh and Hassan spoke about their excitement in regard to their daughter arriving in the UK, under the same scheme in which they arrived. This scheme has allowed families to reconnect with one another, and for Hassan and Nijmeh this has been a moment of unparalleled happiness and relief. This also connects with and rings true to the significance of the family as a form of capital and as a tool for integration and connectedness. The notion of familial capital has been explored within this research and identified as a form of capital which can be linked coherently to Bourdieu's notions of capital for societal success, this capital which has been derived from the family and the significance of this unit in society. This can be linked to the significance of the family researched as the unit of analysis in this research and therefore shows the significance in the lives of the families, and the uniqueness of the research because it explores the family as a unit of analysis. Here the connection with agency can be made stronger and illuminated by the strength in agency which the families possess, and the ways in which this works in supporting their integration.

Moreover, an important connection can be made through this dialogue, in that the participants have described that the people who support them are mothers and grandmothers to them and their children, and this illuminates the profound and expansive meaning of family to the lives of the refugees families, and the ways in which the roles of mothers and grandmothers can be found in people who provide support, but also the importance of having those sorts of relationships close to them to allow for support and safety as a source of reassurance, for the women in particular it seemed.

> Interviewer: *"Any other news other than school news since we last spoke, any new news or things that have happened"*.
>
> Hassan: *"Thank God the biggest piece of news which gave us the most joy and happiness, with the help of the Council thank God is that our daughter..."*.
>
> Nijmeh: *"Our daughter and her children"*.
>
> Hassan: *"Our daughter came over from Jordan"*.

Nijmeh: *"We are so very happy to have them"*

Hassan: *"And we have taken advantage of this situation and we brought them over so we can help her because their volunteers were not available due to lockdown, so we brought them here and we've tried to help them get used to the local society and the system around us. This has made us very very…"*

Nijmeh: *"Very happy"*.

Interestingly, the views and experiences of the families are consistent with notions of success, comfort and happiness in their lives and the lives of their families, and this allows for an opportunity to utilise the theories in a new way, on which understands the underlying potential inequalities which exist in society, but with strong feelings of ambition, drive and autonomy, the families are able to and have shown their abilities to integrate and become active and positive members in their local communities. In some ways, the voices of the participants speak back to the theory and this in turn allows the researcher an opportunity to understand more about the experiences and the extent to which there are issues which need to be tackled or have been tackled by the families. After this, the interviewer made conscious links to the significance of the family in line with what the participants expressed in this regard and asked further questions about the significance of family for integration and happiness. In the previous interviews, the findings highlighted the coining of the term 'familial capital', which suggests the significance of the family and its strong role in connectedness. This notion suggests the ways in which the family can connect with the society in which they join and strengthen their sense of agency and autonomy. This research has opined that enabling social structures and a strong sense of agency can help in integrating refugee families, but within the framework of enabling social structures, the family comes under this societal structure, and as such can assist in feelings of connectedness, integration and belonging. Moreover, whilst the link between agency and structure is problematic for Bourdieu, the strong link between the families' sense of agency and the structures which exist around them which assist in enabling their integration such as the local council, the community and church volunteers have allowed for this link to be drawn. The notion of familial capital can help in bridging the link between agency and structure, which has highlighted, can be problematic for Bourdieu. As such, the family stands as a social structure which allows for integration to become more apparent amongst the families

and this helps in bridging the gap and understands the connection between notions of agency and structure.

For example, individuals discuss choices and opinions and values which they have, as Bourdieu would define as their habitus with the structure of the family before acting, and this also suggests the strong notion of family as a form of capital used to support integration, but also as a form of social structure within society which can help in enabling and integrating the families in their new lives. This agency can be noticed here, yet when the notion of speculation and displacement come into play, the sense of individual agency becomes less apparent because the present and future lives and decisions of the families are placed in the hands of countries and agencies, therefore the extent of their integration reclaims this sense of agency. The strength of the family is unwavering in the lives of the families discussed in this research and is a source of reassurance, a safety net, and a tool for integration. The interviewer asked Hassan and Nijmeh more about their feelings towards their sense of belonging and connectedness to the UK and the role of the family in their lives, a theme which was discussed in the first set of interviews and extends further through to the experiences of the families and their sense of connection.

> Interviewer: "*This goes back to the importance of the   family, and do you think the family is very important to life and integration so that a person is happy and more settled"?*
>
> Hassan: *"Of course, for us coming from an Eastern society and Arab society in particular we love a social life and socialising and always make connections, we like gatherings and mixing with people especially if it is your son and daughter and their children, our grandchildren. For me as a grandfather, I love having them around me. I love them as much as I love their parents, I like them being around me and their grandmother doesn't like them to be away from her, and their aunt is so attached to them. She has waited all this time for them and when she saw them and lived with them, it was an amazing thing for her. The compositions she used to write for school…".*
>
> Nijmeh: *"Her whole life has changed".*
>
> Hassan: *"She used to write about wishing to have her sister and nephews, and thank God, Allah is great, he has made her wishes come true. Thank God, so we*

are very happy to be honest with you and thank God although they are very far
away, we would like them to be with us and close to us always. We would love it
if we all lived in one big house in our city".

Nijmeh and Hassan highlighted to the interviewer the ways in which their daughter's behaviours and outlook changed once her sister and nephews came to the UK, and the positive impact this had on her schoolwork, happiness, and confidence. Strong links can be drawn here between the relationship between the role of the family and the impact this has on integration and the successes which a family experiences. The centrality of the relationship between the family has emerged very strongly within this research and throughout the findings and analysis, and this suggests its significance as a form of capital and its ability to provide a sense of advantage to the families. This sense of advantage means that the notion of family as a form of capital is prevalent in the lives of the families and acts as a supporting tool or mechanism for their success and integration can be most noticed here, as its significance in the lives of the families is profound. This advantage means that the families are able to hone their familial capital and utilise it in society as a tool for success, akin to Bourdieu's notions of economic, social, and cultural capital. For example, if a family is lacking in one form of capital, for example, economic, they can hone their social and familial capital in order to encourage their success and their children's success.

Interviewer: *"Does having the family around help you integrate?"*

Hassan said: *"Yes, very much. You imagine yourself going to another country*
with no family or relative to help you with learning the language first of all and
to integrate and settle you cannot live on your own, you must have people
around you to help and support you. We found difficulty at the beginning
because we didn't have that but when we arrived, we saw an Arabic speaking
support worker and we felt like it was a huge relief in our hearts. We also had a
brother who lived far away, we found people interested in us, and wanted to
teach us how this society works and how to understand and relate to people,
how to deal with the hospitals, the shops but because this society is different to
ours, and what helped us was to find either relatives or people from our own
society to help us and thank God we were very lucky. My daughter is the same,
and whoever comes after her will also be the same. If anyone would like to come
here, when they find people from their society, this will give them a push

forward, about how to mix with people and to tell good from bad because some people can teach you bad or wrong things, as you know. When they are your family or relatives, they will never teach you something wrong".

Hassan and Nijmeh revealed the prospect of resettling and the feelings which a person would hold if they were to reintegrate into a country and culture in which they were unfamiliar with surroundings and the people. Yet they are thankful and settled in their new lives and consider themselves 'lucky', and this connects to agency and structure in interesting ways. He interestingly highlights that having his family around helped in teaching him and his family the ways of the society, as they would never teach them something which is wrong. Links can be drawn here with the concept of trust in the family as a form of capital versus the trust in the community and those around a person who help in resettling them.

Interviewer: *"It also helps you during difficult times, with COVID-19, for someone to having their family around because it affects your happiness and your feelings and that is very important".*

Hassan: *"Yes of course, of course. This pandemic that has spread across the world has proved that always the emotional situation wins over the physical and sickness related situation, so a person who is emotionally happy, will prevail and his or her immunity will become better. For everything, not just coronavirus or anything else. This is why social life and emotional stability, and happiness will be better than somebody who is depressed and just waiting to die, as you know, God protects everyone from death".*

Interviewer: *"Now I'd like to ask you some questions about feelings of belonging, and I would like to ask you in which country do you feel you belong most, here, in Syria or in Jordan possibly, or all of these paces, but where do you feel most that you belong?"*

Hassan: *"Would you like to answer this question?" *said to his wife**

Nijmeh laughed

Hassan*: "I'm going to ask my wife to help me with this question now".*

Hassan responded: *"To be honest, in regard to belonging, your country is your mother country, and your mother country is the base. But if your mother country*

then becomes what it has become and how we have become because of that, the fear, the terror, and the feeling of the loss of safety and what happened to the people who were there, when you don't know who is good and who is bad, makes you leave this country that you were both in which is very dear to you and go somewhere else. When we went to Jordan, we spent about three years there, and we felt we belonged to Jordan because we are neighbours, the same language and accent, we were not very upset, but when we have the opportunity to come to the UK, when we first arrived, we felt that we are part of this   society, and we would become part of this society. God willing, and we would like to be happy citizens who have our rights and our responsibilities, we would love to become part of the people here, and to belong to this country totally. Except for the private things that no one is able to give up".

Contrary to literature in the field, this view of refugeehood is one which is surprising and differs from the pervasive knowledge which exists in the field, and this has been consolidated in the second interviews undertaken by the researcher. For example, the work of Jill Rutter and Madeleine Arnot highlight the extent to which refugee experience has become homogenised with the pervasive literature focusing solely on notions of trauma discourse, moreover, the work of Rutter and Jones (1998; Berry, 1997; Ager and Strang, 2008; Thommessen and Todd, 2017), are examples of literature in the field which presents a differing view to that which has been highlighted in this research. These interviews highlighted to the researcher the extent to which the families feel a sense of positivity towards their integration. Hassan identified that in Jordan he felt like he and his family belonged, as they shared the same language and had a very similar dialect, and in the UK, they felt they had both rights and responsibilities and hoped to become members of the country totally. However, he referred to some things in their private life which one could not give up. The interviewer then asked questions about the factors which made the family feel as though they belonged in the society, and this encouraged responses from Nijmeh and Hassan, which illuminated their sense of integration and feelings towards their new home. The use of the phrase 'mother country' has strong links to the idea of family and the notion of familial capital, and the previous feelings of maternal relationships found in people in the local community, wherein people who supported the families were described as mother and grandmother.

Interviewer: *"Other than the family, what other things make you feel that you belong in a country or in the UK?"*

Hassan: *"To be honest, since we came from Jordan, we stayed in the suburbs of the city, we found the people here very helpful and good to us, and the people loved to help. They are always smiling".*

Nijmeh: *"And there has been nothing that has upset us".*

Hassan: *"We did not see anything which made us sad or bothered us. I don't know if this would be true in other areas, for example in London because there are multiple nationalities, maybe there would be some upsetting things, but here on the contrary we feel ourselves…even when we leave this area, come back, we feel that we are coming home, we feel comfortable coming back to your home, your city and neighbours, we feel very comfortable coming back to our city".*

Interestingly, Hassan highlighted that in London due to the multiple nationalities, he would consider that they would be upset, but on the contrary, in their rural city, they feel like they can be themselves, and feel like they are comfortable coming home whenever they return from being away. This shows the strength in their sense of belonging and community and their happiness in their lives in the UK. It also shows the strength in the community and their integration of the family.

Interviewer: *"Is it a nice city, you like it?"*

Hassan: *"Yes, of course, we have people, we have neighbours who are English, who are Arab, and even in the markets or the supermarkets people know us, like Tesco and Aldi everyone knows us there and we know them".*

Interviewer: *"Has anyone ever made you feel like you're a refugee or have come from abroad?"*

Hassan: *"...The people of (city) but to be honest we haven't experienced outside this city, but here as I told you, they treat us like we are English back to our father and grandfather. We have never felt that anyone has treated us that we are refugees and I told you the smile is the symbol of the people of the city, thank God. We always see people smiling at us, as if we've known each other for thousands of years".*

Nijmeh: *"Our neighbours are very nice".*

Hassan: *"Let me tell you something, a person is the one who plants love for him or her in people's hearts, I mean if I were evil, of course people would be against me badly whether I was a refugee or not, and if I were bad, people would see me as a bad person and my country as bad and where I come from as bad. But if I am a good person and I respect my neighbours, regardless of who my neighbour is, regardless of his or her citizenship or religion, when I respect him, he will respect me and that's how I preserve his respect for me. People are good, the society is good, and us or any person who comes here, refugee or not, or anyone who is a foreigner…"*

Hassan poignantly told the researcher that for him, if a person is respectful, kind, and good, those around him have no reason to hold negative feelings towards them, as such, he proposes that if a person lives their life as an inherently good person, regardless of citizenship, religion, or creed, they commanded respect from others due to their innate goodness. He concludes the interview by saying that:

"if he respects himself, people will respect him, that is a fact".

4.4. *Voices in dialogue*

This research illuminates the findings, and the ways in which the family's experiences and highlights their positivity towards life in the UK, and the people around them who have made their experiences so positive. Yet, the findings of this research have bucked the trend because in many cases, refugees feel a strong sense of hostility, uncertainty and even discrimination within the communities in which they join, as highlighted within the literature in the field. Veck and Wharton (2019) find in their article, the polarised experiences which refugees have faced during their lifetime, and cite the experiences of Baker (1990), who as a child was unable to trust a smiling adult, nor was he able to trust smiling people, which is juxtaposed next to the experiences of Hassan, who said:

"…people loved to help. They are always smiling".

In addition, Baker (1990) felt that the inability to trust a smiling adult when they extended a small act of kindness showed this juxtaposed experience. Veck and Wharton (2019:2) highlighted that suspicion arises with refugees such as Baker, who find that despite the 'indiscriminate mistrust that can confront them, trust remains nevertheless fundamental in the human condition and thus a central concern in the inclusion and education of refugee children'. Equally, the families within this research show signals of

a strong sense of trust towards their community and the people with whom they interact, and this contributes to their strong sense of belonging, connectedness, and integration. Veck and Wharton (2019) argue that educators have a role in countering the mistrust which young refugees experience through encouraging inclusive school cultures, and through the notion of listening to distinct voices, links can be made between the role of the school as a culture of dialogue, and the wider institutions in society, which need to be enabling in their outlook on refugees and their approaches to their inclusion. As a result, the central point of this discussion surrounds a strong sense of autonomy and enabling social structures which help in integrating refugee families into school and the wider community.

Arnot and Pinson (2005) and Arnot, Pinson and Candappa (2010), argue that the effects of marginalisation of refugee children and their rights in immigration policy places pressure on the educational authority which has resulted in the absence of targeted and inclusive policy towards young refugees. They highlight the extent to which refugee experiences are framed upon the racism which they experience in the school environment and wider community. In addition, they discuss the denial of the asylum experience and ignoring this suggests the homogenisation of the experiences of refugees, which Rutter argues has become the norm within refugee research. As a result, the experiences of refugees need to be brought to the forefront, but in much of the research in the field, it is clear that the research outcomes present inherently negative experiences. Nonetheless, clear, targeted, and representative social policy is key, and must be acknowledged to help in encouraging enabling social structures which exist around the families. This research presents the experiences in a different light and shows the ways in which the families had positive feelings towards their experiences, and this therefore bucks the trend in the research field. This research does not homogenise the experience of the families as inherently negativity, and in fact, suggests quite the opposite.

The work of Arnot et al is aware of the potential racism faced by refugee children and families in the school and wider community and it presents a very varied reflection on the issues, and whilst work from Arnot et al suggests a very different view, we cannot discount the potential of anti-racism in practice. However, it has not been noticed within the findings of this research as it highlights the extent of the positivity, tolerance, and engagement from the families to the local community, which contributes a new perspective to the field. The findings from this research are unexpected and different

from the prevalent research in the field which suggests that in some instances we must consider the experiences of refugee families as a positive experience rather than the pervasive assumption that it is negative.

This research illuminates why it matters that schools are enriched by and in turn enhance the capital and engage in a strong sense of dialogue with the family as a social unit. The notion of voice is noticeable within literature in the field, and was a theme which emerged within this research, and it has placed this notion at the forefront, through encouraging the voice of the participants to play a role in the researcher's understanding of their feelings and experiences. As such, the dialogue of the participants has been integrated with the concepts and themes which have emerged.

The positive findings from this research buck the trend which has been noticed throughout the literature review of this thesis, and the wider literature in the field. In this way it forces us to ask questions of the emphasis placed on the traumas experienced by refugee children and their families, since, while the hardship experienced by the families before they arrived was noticeable, their perspective going forward, and their experiences are of positivity, engagement, and the desire to integrate. Therefore, as a society we just ask ourselves whether the perceptions of trauma we hold as a host country are in fact grounded in anything more than our own bias whether conscious or unconscious, because based upon the experiences of these families, this sense of negativity is unfounded when these stories and experiences are placed at the forefront. As opposed to feelings of hostility, fear and negativity, the families hold a sense of love, warmth, and safety for their new community, and this can also be extended to the people who have helped them on their journey to integration. Therefore, whilst this research is small in its breadth and sample size, we must question this assumption that upon arrival refugees face and feel a sense of hostility and oppression, because this is simply not the case from these findings.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research has discussed the notion of the familial integration of Syrian refugee families in the UK, with specific reference to the British education system and the wider community. It has drawn on key theories to address the discussions raised in this thesis. The origins of this research have allowed for passion and interest in the subject area to be explored in greater detail and both the familial experiences of refugeehood and the researcher's own experience of spoken narrative and a culture of storytelling, and the academic development of the work which has been discussed from masters to doctorate research. The aims of this research have surrounded the exploration of the cultural experiences of Syrian refugee families in the UK and roles which concepts such as praxis, dialogue and capital have in their experiences of integration. Moreover, it has strived to understand and assess the importance of Freire and Bourdieu and their conceptualisations of practice, praxis, and capital as tools for integration. The research has also had a focus on the differences between assimilation and integration within the review of the literature and the preference to integration in discussions of refugee issues, as well as the significance of cultural inclusion. Most noticeably, this research has achieved the aim of capturing the feelings of Syrian refugee families, and this has been accomplished through the interviews undertaken with the families in order to allow for their stories to be told and their experiences to be shared.

This research has postulated that through a combination of Freire's praxis (action and self-reflection) and an increased consciousness to the forces which affect people's lives, and Bourdieu's acquisition of different forms of capital which allow people to navigate the social, cultural, and economic world around them, are suggestive of integration. This research is both original and contributes to the body of knowledge for three key reasons. First, it looks at refugee families as a social unit, as opposed to parents or children alone. Second, it combines two theories which have seldom been used in tandem and in relation to refugeehood. Finally, the positive nature of the familial responses is rare within the field and should be celebrated. Therefore, one argues that this research has made a positive and innovative contribution to knowledge and has offered something new to the field and the wider context and through challenging the literature which forms the pervasive research in the field from academics, such as the work of Jill Rutter and Madeleine Arnot. Moreover, through looking at this research from a theoretical lens which has in part been influenced by Marxist thinking, it has allowed the researcher to see the potential underlying inequalities and find tools to ameliorate the struggles faced by the families.

This research set out hopes and aspirations for this research, which were to inform policy makers and to liberate participants and allow them to express their feelings and experiences. This section has looked at the hopes and aspirations which this research strives towards, have been discussed at length throughout the thesis and have been used to frame the goals and ambitions of the research. As a researcher, these ambitions have presented a view of the refugee crisis which differs from the pervasive knowledge base and would allow policy makers to observe their policy measures and ambitions and perhaps extend their thinking on a more lateral level to the experiences of refugees, or perhaps offering policy which is directly targeted at refugee families. Moreover, this experience has meant that two families have been able to express their feelings which they may not have been able to do before, and therefore has allowed for their liberation through the interviews.

The key findings from this research illuminate the positivity reflected by the families through the semi-structured interviews which were utilised as a tool to interview them. The families had a strong sense of awareness of the issues and barriers which they face and may face in the future such as, for example, language and access to the various capitals such as social connections and financial capital. Links can be established between refugee families, their praxis and the capitals which are needed to navigate the social world. One argues that this sense of praxis is integral to the social inclusion which can be established by the families from their social situation in order for their successful integration. The families cited the local community as friendly and welcoming, with views which are contrary to much of the research in the field which labels refugee experiences as negative and in need of societal reform. It is important that this research does not aim to undermine or discount these findings but offers a contrary view which places it in a more positive light compared to the research in the field.

Notions of religious language were noticed within this study, and the role religion plays in the lives of the Syrian families as a form of reassurance. It was highlighted that the families must begin to acquire the social and cultural nuances of society in order to allow their family as a whole to integrate, to allow for capital advancement, transferability, and a strong navigation through the social world, and this also speaks to their strength and resilience   Moreover, one argues that without a strong sense of agency, coupled with enabling social structures, this prospect would be increasingly more challenging. One of the key themes identified in this research is the significant

relationships between power and social inclusion and dialogue, and agency and structure, because this research aimed to enable a traditionally perceived vulnerable and downtrodden social group, to have a sense of ownership for their narrative, agency, and voice and this encouraged their sense of liberation in and with the local community. Therefore, their autonomy plays an integral role in their sense of integration and their ability to do so, linked to Freire's notions of freedom and liberation from societal shackles. Interestingly, the two families felt they had the autonomy to choose the values which they wanted and which they did not, encouraging their sense of autonomy, agency and structure. This research has also discussed a term, the notion of 'familial capital', which has not been discussed or identified by Bourdieu in his work and this suggests the stake for originality within this research and the nuanced findings which are not prevalent nor are they present within the field and its pervasive literature. This notion of family is a key theme within the research and was identified as a strong factor within Arab culture, and as such has a pivotal role in the lives of the families wherever they settle. As a result, there has been an identification of the synthesis between autonomy, strong familial capital and enabling and liberating social structures which encourage refugee integration, and many of the research outcomes were framed upon the themes which emerged from the literature review. This research further postulates that a strong relationship between the agents around the family, such as the   school, the council and the local community bridges the cultural differences and thing which was noticed was the strong sense of autonomy and the enabling social structures, the cultural differences were integrated rather than assimilated and making life for the families easier and more accommodated within the school environment which all buck the trend.

This thesis has followed a sociological method of presentation and consisted of a literature review, methodology chapter and two thematic chapters which were framed and moulded by the literature in the field. The literature review focused on an integrative and theoretical review of the literature and encapsulated both the theories of Freire and Bourdieu and a variety of academics in the field of refugee studies which have been discussed within the literature review, including but not limited to Jill Rutter, Halleli Pinson and Madeleine Arnot.   . Notions of capital, field, researcher bias, habitus, practice, dialogue, voice, and praxis have been discussed in this thesis and have informed the literature search, the primary research and findings and the analysis of the findings. The integrative review of the literature discussed the complex themes which

were highlighted from the research done, such as assimilation versus integration, notions of trauma discourse and culture and these ideas were teased out, and later utilised to formulate the line of questioning for the interviews.

Interestingly, as it pertains to the first statement of aspiration this thesis has a chapter on refugee families and social policy and the ways in which social policy can become more targeted to the needs of refugee children and families directly, whilst the Home Resettlement Scheme is directly targeted to refugee resettlement and integration, policy which directly supports vulnerable children in education could be developed with clauses which directly pertain to refugee children and their families and ways in which pedagogues can support them in their integration. Whilst there has been a section on in this thesis on refugees and social policy has been included which has illuminated the lack of targeted support for refugees across a varied array of policy areas, namely in school, the resolve, autonomy and determinedness of the families has meant that this has not directly affected their lives, because it despite this lack of targeted support, the families have been successful in their integration and feel a strong sense of connectedness to their lives in the UK. On this point, there is something to be said about the micro level support from the Council has allowed for them to develop in this way, and this has been discussed in the various chapters, and was notably mentioned by the parents in their interviews on many occasions.

The methodology chapter focused on the research time frame, the various considerations made for a qualitative piece of research, the various ethical procedures and the barriers which were addressed and overcome in order to undertake the research itself and show its viability. The processes and findings were discussed at length, namely the decision taken to make the initially titled 'pilot study', one of the main findings chapters due to the richness of the data. The incredibly detailed accounts which the families gave, were too full to place as simply pilot findings, and as such this decision was taken. It is important to note the role that the coronavirus has played, which cannot be ignored in relation to this research and the impact it has had, and decisions which had to be made around the virtual nature of the second interviews which were undertaken. Ideas of verstehen and reflexive sociology were important and framed the thinking, and perhaps one of the soundest purposes of Bourdieu's work is the notion of 'reflexive sociology', which enables a person to recognise their own biases, assumptions and beliefs in order to make sense of the social world in which they exist, and the possession of this self-critical knowledge which reveals the reasons behind

social inequalities and hierarchical status, can in turn become a source of social inclusion, linking coherently to Paulo Freire's notion of praxis, wherein praxis is used a tool for social inclusion and dialogue through action and reflection. Once individuals become aware of their social inequality, and a strong and established knowledge base is acquired, both these factors in tandem can become a source of social inclusion and this was a phrase which has been utilised and developed throughout this research. Verstehen has allowed the researcher to understand their own biases by seeing the world through the eyes of another person, but also through the eyes of their family who hold similar experiences which the families discussed in their interviews.

The first primary research findings chapter entitled the *Learning from the voices of Syrian refugee families* highlighted the ways in which external forces shape the lives of the families through the troubles and experiences which they faced in Syria, but their strong awareness of the capitals which they need to navigate the social world around them, and the ways in which they used familial capital as a tool for strengthening this relationship and their integration as a whole. Moreover, the strong relationship between agency and structure was notable and was an example, again, of the positive contrast of this research and the originality of the research itself, because its focus is also placed on the family as a whole as a social unit as opposed to children alone. In addition, one notices the strong connectedness which the families have to their lives in the UK, and the relationship which Bourdieu cites as habitus clivé and the ways in which the families do not suffer per se with this conceptualisation which Bourdieu discusses.

The second primary research findings chapter entitled *Fostering cultures of dialogue* discussed the impact of the coronavirus on the lives of the families and the ways in which the families handled this huge shift in their lives. This illuminated the connectedness which they felt to the country such as the volunteer work which was done during the pandemic through sewing and making masks and other forms of personal protective equipment for NHS workers, this shows connectedness, purpose, and loyalty to the UK. One also found discussions on how the families felt that this country gave them a home, a place in which they trust and a place in which people smiled at them. Whilst this research is aware of the potential racism faced by refugee children and families in the school and wider community, this research presents a very varied reflection on the issues, and whilst work from Arnot et al suggests a very different view, we cannot discount the potential of anti-racism in practice which can be best noticed within the findings of this research as it highlight the extent of the

positivity, tolerance and engagement from the families to the local community, debunking these claims. The findings from this research are unexpected and different from the prevalent research in the field which suggests that in some instances we must consider the experiences of refugee families as a positive experience rather than the pervasive assumption which is presented in the literature in the field.

The three key derivatives from this research which allowed the families to feel a sense of integration included, firstly, the sense of praxis which they felt, and his notion of praxis and action and self-reflection meant that the families held a belief in their own culture and way of life, but also felt comfortable for their children to be a part of the school and its community. Moreover, their sense of autonomy meant that they were supported by the Council and the School as the structures around them but held their own strong sense of autonomy and independence to live their own lives and have dreams and desires to move away from the benefits system, through finding work, and supporting their children into further education when the time comes. Finally, in regard to the enabling social structures around the families, the local Council acted as an agency which encouraged the families and gave them support in integrating into their new communities. The researcher was able to ask the families about their experiences in the   school and how they went about navigating this new environment, and one of the themes was the concept of voice and dialogue, and how the families communicated with the school with English as an additional language. The school worked to bridge the child's home life with that of the school, and the parents appreciated being kept involved and in the loop about their children's progress. With the school being an enabling environment, this allowed their children to integrate, and for them to do so by extension.

This research also refers to the ways in which the nature of the work of Bourdieu and Freire intersect in an original way, but also how they remain relevant and flexible social theories within the modern world, applicable to a variety of issues and a range of theories in which they coincide, such as for example, intersectionality which in particular, the work of Bourdieu can be combined with. This shows both the relevance and significance of these two theorists and the ways in which their work can be adaptable. Despite this, the work of intersectional thinkers such as Patrician Hill-Collins was referenced and the ways in which Bourdieu's notions can intersect with this and why Bourdieu and Freire remain relevant and necessary for this research and its aims. The Indicators of Integration Frameworks which have been used and modelled by the

council initiatives and this acknowledged the varied ways in which people integrate and the factors which must be considered in order for effective integration to take place. As a result, it highlights the ways in which integration is context specific, and not driven by universal targets and ambitions, and it must be best achieved through parity of opportunity and experience, which incites the work of Bourdieu on capital and its necessity, as well as an awareness of the disadvantage which may be faced by an individual or family. Therefore, an understanding of the ways in which the families interviewed from this research have an enabling environment can be drawn, which allows for a stronger sense of integration, coupled within an inherent desire to be part of the country in which they have joined.

This research exemplified the ways in which the school and the local community can be characterised by cultures of dialogue and the ways in which they encourage a sense of dialogue to emerge. This dialogue between the individual and the agencies around them is pivotal and interestingly, this research also enters into dialogue with the theories, wherein the work of Bourdieu and Freire are discussed in ways which are not commonplace within the literature. This exchange of dialogue between the researcher and the theory, and the theory with real life praxis is useful and informative because it allows for an insight into the experiences and feelings of the families discussed.

In summation, ideas about good practice can be drawn, which can be spread elsewhere, and this best practice can be drawn from two sources, firstly, positive learning from the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme and the ways in which social structures like this, and a strong sense of autonomy and agency can allow for the families to feel a sense of integration. The scheme and its ethos and approach has shown the extent to which enabling social structures, enabling social environments and a willingness and desire to integrate, can intersect with one another and suggest a positive sense of belonging and integration as witnessed from this research. This research has focused on notions of reflexive sociology, and this reflexive outlook has allowed the researcher to reflect on the nature of the research and the ways in which the researcher is situated within this dynamic.

This research has allowed for both academic and personal reflection, through familial experiences of refugeehood, but also around the ways in which refugee families which were interviewed, showed themselves to hold a strong sense of belonging to the UK, and to the prospect of their integration. This research has the potential to be replicated,

on a wider scale which incorporates a larger sample of respondents and a potential for council-led refugee schemes to be compared across the country for their efficacy, but also for the extent to which the families feel integrated into their new lives within this scheme. Moreover, this research could be replicated on an international scale, but also the UK's Home Office Scheme could be compared to other refugee initiatives in other countries. As such, this research holds potential for future development and career research.

Finally, this research has shown the positive feelings and experiences of Syrian refugee families and in many ways this research has bucked the trend within the pervasive field of refugee studies. The families felt a strong sense of agency and had an affinity to life in the UK, moreover, they felt as though they would be able to integrate their values with those of their new communities and this showed the positive attitudes which they held and the possibility of integration wherein two ways if life are brought together. It also showed how safe and comfortable and welcomed the families felt in their new communities, and the happiness which their children felt in school. As Hassan poignantly stated '

"We have never felt that anyone has treated us that we are refugees and as I told you the smile is the symbol of the people of the city, thank God. We always see people smiling at us, as if we've known each other for thousands of years".

5.1. *Future research*

In regard to future research, debates and discussions around theories of hybridisation and rooting and shifting could be considered as theoretical frameworks and conceptual underpinnings for future areas of research. I would find it interesting to reinterview the families in ten years time, and perhaps speak to their children, as adults, to try and understand the potential nuances of rooting and shifting and hybridisation and the ways in which their cultures have diverged from or integrated with those of the communities which they have joined. Research in the field suggests that hybridisation is a long-term process by which boundaries and identities cross, and therefore, it is not a simple and straightforward process, and in fact cultural hybridisation is seen as 'a complex term with multiple definitions by scholars' (Li, 2016: 2218; Bhabha, 1994; Rowe & Schelling, 1991; Tomlinson, 1991; Werbner, 1997). This could also be contextualised in relation to the rise in right wing politics across Europe and the United States such as the National Rally in France, the Danish People's Party and UKIP, which can be positioned within the

notions of hostility cited by (Bauman 2002; Pinson and Arnot 2010; Pinson, Arnot, and Candappa 2010; Bauman, 2011; MacDonald 2017; Taylor and Ravinder 2012). This in turn has the potential to lead to deep rooted symbolic violence and reduce the possibility of hybridity. This indeed, is an interesting concept and raises many interesting questions and opportunities for discussion and reflection, however it falls beyond the reach of this study, but would form an interesting foundation for future work around integration.

5.2.   *Recommendations for policy and inclusive practices*

Finally, it is important for holistic but also targeted recommendations to be suggested in order to allow for an understanding of what constitutes effective integration, and what this would look like within practical environments. Firstly, all encompassing and effective social structures around the families are critical to ensure that a safety net of support exists for people who are in need of support. This comes in various forms, and under the Home Office Resettlement Scheme, this would mean support from local authorities in relation to housing, an understanding of the benefits system and Universal Credit, school admission, support into employment and language skills. These components ensure that the families have a supportive network around them, which is conducive to strong integration and feelings of safety and trust within their new community. This can be strengthened through the use of resources such as Language Line, which can be utilised to ensure that those who are supported can understand and be understood by those who are supporting them.

Taylor and Sidhu (2012:42) note the 'discursive invisibility of refugees in policy and research has worked against their cultural, social and economic integration'. This therefore suggests that research around refugee experience and policy must be strengthened and diversified, and their work also cites the need for inclusive educational strategies in Europe. This thesis has provided an interesting insight because it has shown the ways in which a strong sense of agency, familial capital and enabling social structures which are supportive and inclusive, encourage integration. These supportive and inclusive mechanisms have allowed for families to be successful in their experiences of resettlement and integration.

Secondly, it is fundamental for a bridge between the school and the home to exist, as this ensures that the needs of the child and their family are communicated, but this also provides an extra layer of support and understanding in relation to the family, their child

and their needs. Moreover, schools should ensure that those whose first language is not English, have interpreters present at events such as parents' evening to ensure that needs are reflected, and a stronger sense of collaboration is fostered. This will allow for a supportive mechanism to be in place and further guarantees that the needs of all involved are addressed. Schools should also be mindful of the cultural sensitivities around children from ethnic minority backgrounds, such as the restrictions around Ramadan and signposting to halal or vegetarian food, to take into account the cultural considerations. In light of policy and legislation around refugees, the extension and expansion of the Home Office Resettlement Scheme shows a commitment to refugee resettlement and integration but also further strengthens the need for policy to be targeted, relevant and applicable to various different people and their experiences, whilst also ensuring that policy does not homogenise refugee experiences.

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7. Appendices

7.1. Appendix 1: Transcription from interview one with Karim and Yasmin

Transcription 1: Family 1: 21.10.19: 11-11.35 am

Pseudonyms: P1 (Karim) P2 (Yasmin)

Interviewer: The first question I wanted to ask you is how many years have you been in the UK?

P1 (father): How many years have we been here?

Interviewer: Yes, when did you come to the UK?

P1: We have been here since the 23$^{rd\,of}$ November 2016.

P2: (mother): In November, it will be three years since we arrived here.

P1: Yes, in about a month, it will be three years.

Interviewer: What does it feel like to be a refugee?

P1: In honesty, thank God, when we arrived here, times were good, we did not encounter any problems, at the beginning there were concerns about School, but thank God, things started to look up for us and it was good.

P2: To be honest, when I arrived in the UK I was upset, but when we got off the plane and were greeted by the case workers and my brother-in-law, and we met volunteers who wanted to help us, we did not feel like we had left.

P1: Our main problem was language, we wondered how we would communicate with the world around us, and we had no English at all, but thank God our case workers spoke Arabic.

P2: Yes, she stayed with us for a whole year to help us.

P1: Thank God, in the beginning they helped us with everything, at the Bank, for School.

Interviewer: Were you scared at all that when you arrived you wouldn't have anyone around you who spoke English?

P1: Yes, yes, we were very worried about this.

P2: As soon as we saw our case workers who spoke Arabic, we were very happy.

Interviewer: So, did you feel it was easier because you had someone there who spoke Arabic?

P1: Yes, of course, our case worker took us to all the places we needed and helped in translation for us, at the School, the Job Centre, thank goodness, this was one really good thing for us when we arrived, we felt that nothing had changed, anything we did not understand, our case worker helped in the beginning.

Interviewer: Do you think language is the most important part of living here?

P1: Yes, of course language is an important thing, not just for living here, but for going out and understanding people around you, like when we go to the supermarket for

example, and for work, without language a person cannot work, everything is difficult for them. The only barrier was language, and thankfully with time it is getting better for us.

Interviewer: Can you tell me about your experiences in Syria before coming to the UK, and what were your feelings there before you left?

P2: Outside the house they were firing guns at us.

P1: The regime did not approve of the uprising for freedom when it started, and it did not tolerate it. They had snipers on the roofs and put barriers up so people couldn't move around easily. The last period was the most difficult because they were bombing us using aeroplanes and barrel bombs and missiles came at us from all directions. They did not leave a single attack method, and in the end, it became totally intolerable.

P2: Bombings came from four directions and there was no sleep for us or our children, and at dawn (6am), we went to our bedrooms to sleep and the bombings would start and continue all day.

P1: When they occupied our area, they arrested all the young men whether they were wanted or not, they took me and my two brothers and we stayed under arrest for fifteen days, and we were subjected to all types of beatings using gun butts, sticks and electrical cables. Thank God, when we left prison, only 50 of us from the whole town were released.

P2: Some young men were killed with machine guns in the town square, a day before Eid.

P1: My father told me this time we were lucky, but next time we can't be sure, he said to trust in God and make your way to Jordan. This is what forced us to leave because the barrel bombs would destroy up to 500 sqm.

P1: You see your children climbing the walls, wanting to escape from fear.

P2: The mosques were bombed, and the minaret destroyed the houses around it when it fell.

Interviewer: What did you know about the UK before you came? And how did these ideas change when you arrived?

P1: We had a general idea of Western countries which differed from our way of life, we wondered whether it would be difficult to live there because our life is different to theirs, and their circumstances were different to ours.

P2: In Syria, the Christian people were very good to us.

P1: We were told that there were different religions.

P2: They asked us what objections we had, and we told them we had none, because in Syria we had people of different religions and we were all friends and brothers, but the war changed this.

Interviewer: When you came here, how did you find things?

P2: Here, we are treated better.

P1: We thought that Islam was discriminated against, but on the contrary, we found that they respect all religions, and each person has the freedom to practice their religion.

P2: On the contrary, Muslims are respected here.

P1: When we first arrived, I was shown the mosque that I would pray in and I was pleased.

P2: For Friday prayers, they put us close to the mosque.

P1: When a British team interviewed me in Jordan, they asked me if I wanted to be close to a mosque, and I told them yes, this would be best. When we arrived in   (city in South West), I was shown the mosque where I would pray, and then we were taken home and I was relieved.

P2: My daughter had irritation to her chest from the dust in the air, and they put us close to the hospital.

P1: I was scared because I have daughters and I wanted to put them in School, but they told me there were girls' schools.

Interviewer: So, what are the goals you have for your family?

P1: My goal is to live in safety, sort matters out, work and look after my family, but particularly to find work.

Interviewer: Is the culture here different to the culture in Syria?

P1: Yes, of course, generally the Arab society differs from Western society. But as I told you, the freedom here allows you to practice your way of life, I can live here as I lived in Jordan or Syria, without barriers.

Interviewer: How important is extended family to your wellbeing and happiness?

P1: This is very important, leaving friends and relatives was a major consideration for us, leaving my mother and father who stayed in Jordan, and going to a country where I knew nobody. But the more important reason was my daughters who needed an education, and I weighed up the reasons between staying and leaving, and for the future it was better to leave.

Interviewer: What interactions have you had with people in the local community? How have you found this?

P1: Yes of course, in my case, at work there is a lot of communication between myself and my friends, we talk and chat and exchange phone numbers. Not just with the English people, but all visitors to my workplace. Thank God, all matters are good with neighbours, with friends, with the college, with all people.

Interviewer: And people are good to you?

P1: Very, very nice. In the case of (city in South West)   , I felt, how can I put this, the English would call it 'friendly', and people like to make friends and help one another, anyone who comes to our house, even the neighbours, they tell me if I have any problems to let them know, they give me their phone number and say this is my house, if you need anything, come round anytime you like.

Interviewer: Have your children felt any discrimination, hatred or racism in School or life in general?

P1: When we first arrived, they did not know English, and their problem was that they could not understand if people were talking about them or to them! But thank, God we have not had any problems. I ask my daughters how do you feel at School, and they all tell me all is well. I ask them if anyone or anything is bothering you, and they tell me,

thank God, all is well. Of course, we have support from the Council and the teaching assistant at School, who tells us that if there are any problems at all, tell me and I'll tell the   school and we'll resolve the issue. Thank God we have not had any big problems, a few little things but thank God, nothing bad.

Interviewer: Have you asked the teaching assistant to help resolve any issues?

P1: Last year, my youngest daughter would tell me that she would get to School early and stand at the front of the class, and the teacher would send her to the back and put someone in her place. She would get upset about this, because she'd get there early because she liked to be close to the front of the class, but the teaching assistant would send her to the back. I would tell her, maybe it's because you're tall, and she would tell me no dad, that's not why. So, I told her I would speak to the teaching assistant, and our case worker dealt with it. This was the last month of School last year, but thank God, nothing has happened yet this year.

Interviewer: So, they have never felt discriminated or different?

P1: No, no thank God. We felt this more in our own country, that this person is Syrian, or this or that, but we are thankful that here we have never been made to feel like we are different, foreign or refugees.

Interviewer: Yes, and this is important.

Interviewer: Are schools here different from the Schools in Syria, or even Jordan?

P1: Of course, here they are much better, I told my daughters that if Schools here were like Schools back home, I would never have finished School, but the teaching here is better, in terms of School time and breaks. In Syria, there would be at School for 4 months and there is no break for 15 days. The ways the teachers treat the children are much better. On the contrary, if they know that somebody has newly arrived and his ability is not up to standard, they will focus on him more than the English child. In fact, we feel better than others because they feel that our child needs support. In the beginning they helped and explained things to our daughters.

Interviewer: And you felt that this applied to all your daughters?

P1: Of course, thank God now all our daughters get stars and achievement awards.

Interviewer: Did the children feel that they were a part of the   school, and have friends?

P1: Yes, they have friends who they talk to on the phone. When I take them to School in the morning, they point their friends out to me by name saying this is so and so and this is so and so.

P2: Our oldest daughter is fifteen years old, and she has friends and our second daughter, our eldest is a bit shy, and our second daughter is more outgoing.

P1: Our eldest is now a young lady, she is shy and worries that people will laugh if she makes a mistake. At her age, she will be shy, not like a younger child.

Interviewer: Do you hope for them to go to University?

P1: Yes, God willing, I hope so.

Interviewer: In Syria, what sort of activities did you do with the children?

P1: In Syria, the child would go to School and come back on his own.

P2: Every area had its own School.

P1: During the holiday times we would go to tourist areas or go outside for a picnic.

P2: Our youngest daughter was six months when she went to Jordan and they would ask her whether she was Syrian or Jordanian and she would say I'm Jordanian.

Interviewer: And what activities do you do in the UK with the children?

P1: The children go on trips with the   school, and they ask for my permission, which I give. On their trips they walk distances with their   school friends.

P2: They've been on geography trips with the   school.

P1: During holidays [P2: weekends we take them out on Sundays], there is a garden near the house where they go and play.

P2: And a park.

P1: They go on their own and play in the garden because it's close, and if they go to the park my wife and I go with them. Sometimes we go into   (town in South West) and we have a brother who lives in   (area in South West) and we often go to visit him.

P2: In the summer we went to the seaside and during Eid we took them to the funfair, and it was a lovely outing in the sunshine and the green grass. The children like to play and were told that there was a place in Romsey, people told us it was expensive, but we went.

Interviewer: Do you have a car, and how do you find driving here?

P1: We are used to driving on the left and I have taken a few lessons, but I don't know the rules here, but I have to get used to driving on the right.

Interviewer: Do you feel that you are able to advocate on behalf of your children with the school?

P1: There are times, if matters are complicated where I need to communicate with the teaching assistant, and the Council. If it was a simple matter, I can go to the   school myself and communicate with them. If I encountered a problem I couldn't solve, I would use the help of a friend who speaks Arabic and English, we either talk to teaching assistant and the Council. Thank God, there are no problems.

P2: My daughter had a problem with her old School before the summer holidays started and asked her why you just now told us that there was a problem, and she said it was because she was afraid of the teacher. I told our case worker, who told the teaching assistant, who spoke with the class   teacher, and she changed her attitude towards our daughter.

P2: The teacher changed completely, and thank God there are no problems now.

Interviewer: Do you attend meetings at the   school?

P1+P2: Of course, we attend.

P2: The School advise the teaching assistant that there is a meeting on a certain date, and he tells us.

Interviewer: Are there regular meetings?

P1: We don't have many meetings.

P2: We have two per year.

P1: They tell us what's happening with the children at School, they showed us what they have written, about their achievements, and they tell us if there is anything we should do at home.

Interviewer: In the future, would you be able to go to these meetings without the teaching assistant?

P1: Of course, we are getting better at English, but we haven't yet reached the required standard yet.

P2: There are some challenges for us, and writing is difficult for us.

P1: I did a GCSE in Maths and thank God, I passed. The problem I have currently, is that I used to be an accountant, but the college told me I have to take a GCSE in English too, and this needs Level Two and then GCSE to be completed.

Interviewer: Do you feel you can use the experience here that you had in Syria?

P1: I used to be an accountant in Syria, but the problem here is that I have no certificates, we escaped from our home and left everything behind.

P2: We only took our personal possessions with us.

P1: Here they tell me I need to take the equivalent exam which needs to be taken in English, Maths was not a problem because it's the same principle and I could understand what was required of me in the exam and the questions were easy. It went well, the College told me that I have been here two years and shouldn't need to use a dictionary. However, they told me that to become an accountant I needed to better my English, and learn the rules and regulations, so currently I'm waiting to finish my English.

P2: Our daughters are excellent at English and my daughters received distinctions from the   school.

Interviewer: Do you feel that the children help you with your English?

P1: Currently, my daughters are better than me at English. If someone comes and talks to me in English and I don't understand, I ask my daughter and she explains it to me. And for this reason, we must also teach them Arabic too!

P2: My daughter took the grammar school exam, but we did not have enough time to prepare for it, so she did not reach the standard required, as we only had two weeks to prepare.

P1: They told us she needed to be registered a year in advance. She revised verbal reasoning, Maths and English for two weeks, she got good marks but not good enough for entry.

P2: She wanted to retake the exam, because my daughter is smart, but we need to wait.

P1: I tried to teach her the Maths, but two weeks was not enough to prepare, but we told her to try, so next time she would do better.

P2: They did not treat the Arabic speaking girls like the English, they are slow with translation and they should've given them extra time.

Interviewer: Did the School help you to prepare for the exam?

P1: The School told us that we could do practice tests, but we did not have enough time. They gave her 10% extra in the exam, but this was 6 minutes and was not enough. My daughter told me that she did not finish the questions, the ones she did answer she was sure about, but she did not have enough time to read the question, understand and answer. We told her next time you will be more prepared, and your English will be better.

P2: She finished the Maths but could not finish the rest.

Interviewer: Does the class teacher support with all their needs, specifically?

P1: Yes, they help them a lot, I ask my daughters if they really understand what their teacher is telling them, and they tell me that three quarters of what they tell them is understood, but if they don't understand the teacher explains it to them or changes the wording for them.

Interviewer: Is there always someone in the class to help the girls?

P1: In the first year, the teaching assistant used to come to one or two lessons to help the girls.

P2: He stayed with one of our daughters for three months and said he no longer feels he needs to help her. I asked him why? I hope nothing is wrong! He said thank God, she no longer needs my help!

P1: After that the girls began to understand more and did not need his help as much, so he stopped and helped people who needed more help. But if we needed help the teaching assistant said he could help us communicate with the   school if we needed. Thank God, now we do not have any issues with School, and we are supported.

END

7.2. Appendix 2: Transcription from interview one with Hassan and Nijmeh

Transcription 1: Family 2: 21.10.19: 2-2.40 pm

Pseudonyms: P3 (Hassan) P4 (Nijmeh)

Interviewer: The first question I have for you is how long have you been in the UK?

P3 (father): Yes, we have been here for three years.

Interviewer: What does it feel like to be a refugee?

P3: On the contrary, the society here does not make us feel like we are refugees, and we feel like we are children of this country (we belong), like normal people.

P4: (mother): Thank God, we are comfortable. Thank God.

Interviewer: Could you tell me a bit about your experiences in Syria before you came here?

P3: Before the war we were an above average family and we were very comfortable, but after the war everything came to an end, nothing remained financially, socially, and emotionally. But when we came to the UK, we regained some of our self-respect.

Interviewer: So, before you came to the UK, did you know much about the country?

P3: Yes, we knew that it was an advanced European country and respected and it was like any other Western country. We used to dream we could come here to be honest, but now we are here things are good.

Interviewer: And have these views changed over time?

P3: No, until now our view remains the same, we know it's a respectable country, a democracy with freedom and everything.

Interviewer: What goals do you have for you and your family whilst living in the UK?

P3: The first goal is to be self-respecting citizens, and the second goal is our ambition for our daughter because now we're getting older our habits are a bit difficult to change, but we would like our daughters goals our way of life is, we want to see our daughter highly educated and in tune with society here, we want to see her working and contributing here.

Interviewer: How important is extended family to your wellbeing and happiness?

P3: Here it's very important, and now I would like my daughter, my cousin, and my brother here so that we can all be together so there is empathy and familial empathy especially for us Eastern people, we like to have family connectedness and we like to be together. Not for any particular reason, but for a person to be able to vent their worries. The pain is shared and known. We don't have much family here, but we hope so in the future for us all to be together with English people and us.

P4: For us to be close together.

Interviewer: Could you tell me about how the culture here differs from the culture in Syria?

P3: Umm, I think the customs here are different to those back home, but the way of life is similar, we all like to live and be better, and comfortable with our religion. But there are different traditions. Here it's a working society, and back home it's a family society. God willing, at the moment we mix with the society, but we hope for more in the future, but all people keep to their customs and traditions, the good things they keep and the bad things they leave behind. I hope to mix with society, improve my language, and my connections with the society because it's kind and friendly.

Interviewer: Do you feel any sort of connection to the UK, and do you think this will develop over time?

P3: Of course, now we have connections through friends, and we hope that in times to come this will become more, and we will start of feel homesick, when I leave (city in South West)   , I feel homesick, and I want to come back.

Interviewer: This is great because you feel like this is your home.

P3: When I go outside of (city in South West)   , to London or Southampton when I come home and see the Cathedral, I feel like I'm coming back to my home and I'm comfortable and relaxed. Now we have connections between us and the place that we live.

Interviewer: What interactions have you had with people in the local community?

P3: From my perspective I won't be able to give you my opinion, but I can give you my opinion in terms of the people. Over 85% of the people here are friendly and always smile and like to help. We haven't seen anything offensive until now, thank G   od, expect trivial things, but in general they are hospitable, friendly, and helpful people. I expect there are things here that are better than in our society, for example there is no envy or jealousy and people do not interfere in each other's business, and how can I get this across to you? Do not begrudge them. To summarise they are very friendly and helpful. We hope that in the future once we have language that we can mix more with the people here, with the neighbours and the people of (city in South West)   .

Interviewer: Do you feel that people are nice to you.

P3: Yes, they are very kind, 85% is good.

Interviewer: Has your daughter ever felt any hatred, problems, or discrimination in School? If you don't have any problems with telling me about it.

P3: At the beginning in the first School in Alderbury, they were surprised a bit because it was a small village and it was the first time, they saw an Arab, someone who speaks Arabic and there was a bit of tension in regard to our daughter. On the contrary, when we moved here things got better because here there are Indian people and Bangladeshi people in the area. Sometimes we get strange looks from people because of the hijab, but no hatred, especially young children.

Interviewer: What activities did you do in Syria, and what do you do now? And how did this change when you came here?

P3: Our children had everything they needed, and it was available to them and we'd go on trips and outings and outings with family. But here we are still new, we don't know how to get to London, we don't know the areas where we can go and come back from, we need the Tom Tom for things to travel around!

P4: Like with relatives and get togethers. Before the war it was better, afterwards it was harder for us.

Interviewer: But in time you think this will get better?

P3: Of course, when a person has the language and the reading, they can ask people for help, of course then it will change for us.

Interviewer: In terms of the school, do trips help with connecting your daughter to the UK?

P3: In this School, they don't make her feel like she is foreign, she is like any other child, and they send us emails about trips and outings. But overnight stays we do not allow, we let her go on day trips to museums and the theatre. School trips have a good teaching purpose and last week they took her to an author's talk and the theatre.

Interviewer: The Schools here, do they differ from those back in Syria or even in Jordan, were you in Jordan before?

P3: Yes, we were in Jordan before.

P4: The Schools are different here, they are better.

Interviewer: In what way were they different?

P3: The student is relaxed, and the ways they treat students is different, how the school treats the children is different too and the teaching standards are better here.

Interviewer: And the approach taken by teachers with students is different?

P3+4: Yes, it's much better here.

Interviewer: From yours and your daughter's perspective how does she feel at School, does she enjoy it, does she have friends, does she like to go in?

P3: In the beginning at her old School, she never liked to go.

P4: She was uncertain about things when we first arrived, we left her in between English people, she was unsure and scared. But here, thank God she is very happy and relaxed. Her cousins are at the same School as her now, they go to School together. On the contrary, now on holidays she prefers to be at School. She is very happy at School, more than in Jordan, she has English friends and is very happy.

Interviewer: If her cousins weren't with her at School, do you think she'd still enjoy going?

P4: No, she would still enjoy going to School, she has her own friends too.

P3: She is happy to go into School.

Interviewer: When you speak to the   school, do you feel able to speak about any problems with the School?

P3: The School are accepting and welcoming of any problems, the   headmaster and all the teachers all understand. They tried to help us with the exam for South Wilts and did lessons with my daughter to prepare for the exam. But they did not have enough time, even though they got great results. We hope next year they will pass. The   school are very helpful with us and try to understand what we need and what our children need. If there are any problems we meet at School and discuss them. They are very friendly.

P4: The School practiced with them too.

Interviewer: How has the school helped with any problems that your daughter faced other than School work?

P3: She has no problems in her new School. She has a teaching assistant from the Council who helps with translation, and he's around if we need him. If we don't understand he supports us and helps with translation.

Interviewer: Does your daughter have anyone to help her in School?

P3: She had a teaching assistant last year, but now she does not need any help, she is excellent.

Interviewer: And if you felt that she needed some extra help in School, would you be able to tell the School or the Council for help?

P3: If there was a problem and she needed help, the teaching assistant is still available if we need help with language or anything, and the school helps with these problems if there is something we don't understand, and there is support from the School and the Council.

Interviewer: So, the next question I have is about language, do you think that language is the most important or is there something more important than that?

P3: Of course, it is the most important thing, because after language everything is possible for us. Now, my wife and I, our Arabic is not strong, we cannot do anything, not even go on a walk, so language is the most important thing. Language first, and then the other things come, language helps with everything, with life, with communication with dealing with neighbours.

Interviewer: Do you feel that your daughter helps you sometimes with language and with your English because she's learning it at School?

P3: Yes, especially with her mother when they are outside the house, with letters in the post, with people who come around to the house. She communicates with the hospital and her doctors, and she helps with translation.

P4: Yes, she translates for me.

Interviewer: Do you attend meeting at the school and how are these facilitated?

P3: Of course, we go to any meeting that happens at the school, and they explain what is going on at School and they try their best to understand our needs and to help us the best they can. The school is excellent, and we don't have any problems. The teaching assistant comes with us to the meetings for translation.

Interviewer: Do you feel that the school is sympathetic to your daughter's needs?

P3: The fact that she's a refugee here, we felt that the school, even more than the local community help the children feel there is no difference between them and the other children. They make them feel that they are the best especially with language although they are not at the same level as the English children, they tell them that they are better because you have two languages and everyone else has just one, and this gives the motivation to go forward with confidence. The school is so helpful with her, and if she needs it, they give her extra support.

Interviewer: How does the lack of equivalence of qualification make you feel?

P3: In my case, I do not have qualifications.

Interviewer: But in the case of skills and knowledge?

P3: This was difficult because we left a land of   war, and we just took our clothes and left. We left our passports and all our things behind.

P4: We thought we'd be back in fifteen days.

P3: We left in the evening, thinking we'd be back, but I knew we wouldn't. We escaped and took nothing with us, no qualifications, certificates of experience. I'm 50 years old, and I'm required to have Level 2 in English and Maths which would take me five years, but the problem is my age will be a challenge for me. We predicted we'd be back in 15 days, although I knew and predicted what will happen. I told my family to say goodbye to Syria because we'll never be coming back just as what happened with the Iraqis and Palestinians, as we were walking through the night towards the Jordanian border, I said don't to them don't look back just forget, don't think of homes or family, just forget.

END

7.3.   Appendix 3: Transcription from interview two with Karim and Yasmin

Transcription 2: Family 1: 08.06.20: 4.30-5 pm

Pseudonyms: P1 (Karim) P2 (Yasmin)

Interviewer: What's new since I last spoke to you, seeing as the last time I came to visit you was in October, about 8 months ago, has anything new happened during this time?

P1 (father): In honesty, nothing new has happened other than corona!

Interviewer: Have you been affected at all by corona?

P1: Not really, thank God, since the lockdown, when we were told not to come or go, we've stayed at home, we haven't visited anyone, we've just stayed at home.

Interviewer: And what has happened with work?

P1: For me, work has been open since the 1st of June, but they've told me not to come in until the 15th because there is no movement in the market, but we don't know. But when they told us to stay home, there was no work. In terms of college, we attend online, and take lessons that way.

Interviewer: Have you done any voluntary work during this time?

P1: I worked for five days during this time and work told us that we would work for the NHS because they were in need of clothes and equipment for the patients and even the cleaners, and I told them "I'm ready, whenever you have work that needs doing, I'm prepared", they told me it was voluntary work, and I said I have no problem with this, just let me know when you need me. I worked with them for about four days whilst they covered all the hospitals which needed equipment for the NHS.

Interviewer: So, you did this work for five days?

P1: Yes, five days continuously, each week I did two days, depending on what was needed.

Interviewer: Thank you for doing this, this work is very helpful.

P1: God bless you.

Interviewer: and do you feel that this is a part of your integration in this country?

P1: Yes, for sure, we felt that this is our duty to help in any way that we can, whether sewing or in other ways.

P1: Thank God, this is something simple that we have done to serve this country, I wanted to give back something to the country by showing gratitude to this country for what it has done for us.

Interviewer: Thank you, may good give you good health

Interviewer: In terms of school, how have the children been interacting with their schoolwork and homework, have things changed?

P1: In regard to school, everything has been done through online routes, and each day the girls get online to see what work they have to do, and the 'spelling sheet', the maths work, they practise these, and their work gets marked. Thank God, they haven't been cut off from their schoolwork.

Interviewer: Excellent

Interviewer: Has there been communication with the school during this time?

P1: Absolutely, we're in contact through email and phone, and they are in touch about the online schoolwork.

Interviewer: Have you decided yet whether you want to send the girls back to school?

P1: At the present time we are not going to send the children to school because there are still a lot of cases in the country, so for the moment we will not send them back. As the situation Is not stable, we are going to leave things till September to see what the situation is like.

Interviewer: Other than corona, is there anything new in regard to school since we last spoke?

P1: No there hasn't been anything new, but our daughter will start at her new secondary school, we have registered her there and she has a place. She will be at the same school as her cousin.

Interviewer: That's so lovely.

Interviewer: I wanted to ask you a few questions about integration and your feelings towards this.

Interviewer: In which country do you feel most integrated, here or in Syria, or in Jordan?

P1: We thank God, when we went to Jordan, we felt Jordanian, and when we came here, we felt the same, that any place we go, we feel a part of the country and we never feel different. Whether here or Jordan, we have felt that we are part of that country.

Interviewer: What things allow you to feel integrated here, work or family or school...?

P1: In honesty, everything and what allows us to feel integrated here is because we don't feel conflict between and no feelings that you someone is foreign or local, there is no feeling that you are Arab, and you are English. The people have treated us very well, and we have never felt that we are any different or discriminated against, by the people who live here. This lets a person feel that they are part of this country, and that they need to something in return for the country they live in.

Interviewer: Do you still see the volunteers that helped you when you first arrived?

P1: Right up to the lockdown, they visited us weekly, and children call one of the ladies Teta (grandma). It was my wife's birthday, and she brought her flowers from the door.

P2: They are good people, and I felt the council caseworker was like my mother, she was kind and so helpful to us, we spoke about her last time.

Interviewer: Who do you feel makes you feel most integrated in the UK?

P1: Almost everyone, in the beginning in terms of the Council and the volunteers, and people at work, and like I told you, we never feel that we do not belong to this country, we thank God, wherever we go, we feel we belong to the   country, and we are a part of it.

Interviewer: thank you both so much for your help.

END

Transcription 2: Family 2: 08.06.20 5-5.30 pm

Pseudonyms: P3 (Hassan) P4 (Nijmeh)

Interviewer: Any news since I last spoke to you?

P3 (father): Our daughter isn't at school at the moment, and we are all staying at home, and when we go to the shops, we find problems.

Interviewer: Have any good things happened during this time?

P3: In regard to COVID-19, of course we have self-isolated like everyone else.

P4 (mother): We don't visit anyone, and they don't visit us.

P3: This has caused us to be bored and we haven't seen any of our English friends and even my brother, but everything is still fine because we are isolated from the danger and the disease. Our daughter is bored because she doesn't go to School, she is in year 6 and she will have to leave school without saying goodbye to her teachers. This has affected her, but as far as we are concerned, we go and get the shopping and come back. There are no comings and goings. It's been good and bad because with lockdown we protect others and ourselves from the virus and its bad socially because we miss the friends that used to visit us and the things, we were able to do before.

P4: We've gained weight.

P3: I now weigh more than 100 kilos from lack of movement!

Interviewer: It has happened to all of us!

P3: I feel like my belly is walking ahead of me!

Interviewer: What's wrong with a belly!

Interviewer: Have things changed with how your daughter does her schoolwork and how have the school engaged with you?

P3: Our daughter does all her studies online, she finishes all her homework and lessons online and I am in the same boat because with college I attend classes through Teams twice a week, so learning hasn't really been affected too much, but when things are face to face, they're much better and seeing the teachers is better. And if you wanted to ask us about medical issues and hospitals, this is the only thing we have been really affected by, all our appointments have been postponed. Our daughter had many appointments for her cleft lip and palate, but this is the only thing we've been affected by to be honest. That has all been delayed and had a big effect on us. But of course, we understand why because this is not in their hands.

Interviewer: Yes, that's correct. Have you decided whether when schools reopen you are sending your daughter back to school, or are you planning for her to stay at home?

P3: If things go back to normal, and all the children are asked to go back then that's ok, but if it's a matter of choice, then no. our daughter has several operations ahead of her and her immunity is weak, so it's a question of choice.

P4: Yes, yes.

P3: If everybody in the school goes back normally, then we would be amongst the first to send our daughter back as she would like to go back.

Interviewer: Would she liked to go back so see her friends?

P3: Yes of course of course, she would love to go back as this is her last year as I told you, at this primary school so she would like to say goodbye to her teachers and her friends.

Interviewer: Where is she going for secondary school?

P3: We have registered her at (local school) right next door to her school in the same area, it's a good school and we've registered her there.

Interviewer: That's nice.

P3: And we thank God because the Council helped us in this matter, they helped very much, the TA and the person in charge of the system. We have registered her at the same school as her cousin.

Interviewer: That's nice, congratulations.

P3+P4: Thank you.

Interviewer: Excuse me, I just need to check my notes. Since we last spoke, because we spoke last year in October, other than your daughter starting at a new school, how has she progressed at school? Have any important things happened in her school life?

P3: For our daughter?

Interview: Yes.

P3: She has been very enthusiastic, and she was on the 'top table'

P4: She was one of the best students.

P3: She was sitting in the first table with the top children in her class, but because of COVID-19 we were forced to keep her at home, but she has been following up online. Whatever she can do with maths and her other subjects, her teachers have been very supportive and have been sending her messages saying we miss you but this out of her hands.

Interviewer: Any other news other than school news since we last spoke, any new news or things that have happened.

P3: Thank God the biggest piece of news which gave us the most joy and happiness, with the help of the Council thank God is that our daughter...

P4: Our daughter and her children.

P3: Our daughter came over from Jordan.

P4: We are so very happy to have them.

P3: And we have taken advantage of this situation and we brought them over so we can help her because their volunteers were not available due to lockdown, so we brought

them here and we've tried to help them get used to the local society and the system around us. This has made us very, very…

P4: Very happy.

P3: And this is the best things since we last spoke.

Interviewer: When did she arrive?

P3: She came at the end of January.

P4: On the 30th of January

Interviewer: Very nice, was your daughter happy that her sister and children have come over?

P4: Yes, yes so very much

P3: Our daughter's life has changed completely since her daughter and her nephews have come. I dropped them back home yesterday.

P3: We were very upset when they went home, and my daughter was crying.

P3: Especially since our daughter's children don't like car journeys and they become dizzy and nauseous.

P4: Yes dizzy

P3: 'Vertigo', you know. Like vertigo that's why they don't like coming and going so she is very upset because they had to go but they had some things to do in their own area. We tried to keep them with us and send their parents' home, but they wanted to go home with their parents.

P4: This is what's new since we last spoke.

Interviewer: This goes back to the importance of the   family, and do you think the family is very important to life and integration so that a person is happy and more settled?

P3: Of course, for us coming from an Eastern society and Arab society in particular we love a social life and socialising and always make connections, we like gatherings and mixing with people especially if it is your son and daughter and their children, our grandchildren. For me as a grandfather, I love having them around me. I love them as much as I love their parents, I like them being around me and their grandmother doesn't like them to be away from her, and their aunt is so attached to them. She has waited all this time for them and when she saw them and lived with them, it was an amazing thing for her. The compositions she used to write for school…

P4: Her whole life has changed.

P3: She used to write about wishing to have her sister and nephews, and thank God, Allah is great, he has made her wishes come true. Thank God, so we are very happy to be honest with you and thank God although they are very far away, we would like them to be with us and close to us always. We would love it if we all lived in one big house in our city.

P4: *Wife laughed happily*

P3: This goes back to the Council and the people who support us to find us a nice big Arab tent!

Interviewer: Does having the family around help you integrate?

P3: Yes, very much. You imagine yourself going to another country with no family or relative to help you with learning the language first of all and to integrate and settle you cannot live on your own, you must have people around you to help and support you. We found difficulty at the beginning because we didn't have that but when we arrived, we saw an Arabic speaking support worker and we felt like it was a huge relief in our hearts. We also had a brother who lived far away, we found people interested in us, and wanted to teach us how this society works and how to understand and relate to people, how to deal with the hospitals, the shops but because this society is different to ours, and what helped us was to find either relatives or people from our own society to help us and thank God we were very lucky. My daughter is the same, and whoever comes after her will also be the same. If anyone would like to come here, when they find people from their society, this will give them a push forward, about how to mix with people and to tell good from bad because some people can teach you bad or wrong things, as you know. When they are your family or relatives, they will never teach you something wrong.

Interviewer: It also helps you during difficult times, with COVID-19, for someone to having their family around because it affects your happiness and your feelings and that is very important.

P3: Yes of course, of course. This pandemic that has spread across the world has proved that always the emotional situation wins over the physical and sickness related situation, so a person who is emotionally happy, will prevail and his or her immunity will become better. For everything, not just coronavirus or anything else. This is why social life and emotional stability, and happiness will be better than somebody who is depressed and just waiting to die, as you know, God protect everyone from death.

Interviewer: Now I'd like to ask you some questions about feeling of belonging, and I would like to ask you in which country do you feel you belong most, here, in Syria or in Jordan possibly, or all of these paces, but where do you feel most that you belong?

P3: Would you like to answer this question? (said to his wife).

P4: *Laughs*

P3: I'm going to ask my wife to help me with this question now.

P3: To be honest, in regard to belonging, your country is your mother country, and your mother country is the base. But if your mother country then becomes what it has become and how we have become because of that, the fear, the terror, and the feeling of the loss of safety and what happened to the people who were there, when you don't know who is good and who is bad, makes you leave this country that you were both in which is very dear to you and go somewhere else. When we went to Jordan, we spent about three years there, and we felt we belonged to Jordan because we are neighbours, the same language and accent, we were not very upset, but when we have the opportunity to come to the UK, when we first arrived, we felt that we are part of this

society, and we would become part of this society. God willing, and we would like to be happy citizens who have our rights and our responsibilities, we would love to become part of the people here, and to belong to this country totally. Except for the private things that no one is able to give up.

Interviewer: Other than the family, what other things make you feel that you belong in a country or in the UK?

P3: To be honest, since we came from Jordan, we stayed in the suburbs of the city, we found the people here very helpful and good to us, and the people loved to help. They are always smiling.

P4: And there has been nothing that has upset us.

P3: We did not see anything which made us sad or bothered us. I don't know if this would be true in other areas, for example in London because there are multiple nationalities, maybe there would be some upsetting things, but here on the contrary we feel ourselves…even when we leave this area, come back, we feel that we are coming home, we feel comfortable coming back to your home, your city, and neighbours, we feel very comfortable coming back to our city.

Interviewer: Is it a nice city, you like it?

P3: Yes, of course, we have people, we have neighbours who are English, who are Arab, and even in the markets or the supermarkets people know us, like Tesco and Aldi everyone knows us there and we know them.

Interviewer: Has anyone ever made you feel like you're a refugee or have come from abroad?

P4: No

P3: No, this is a similar question to the one before and I told you about the people of (city in South West)   , but to be honest we haven't experienced outside this city, but here as I told you, they treat us like we are English back to our father and grandfather. We have never felt that anyone has treated us that we are refugees and I told you the smile is the symbol of the people of the city, thank God. We always see people smiling at us, as if known each other for thousands of years.

P4: Our neighbours are very nice.

P3: They are very nice.

Interviewer: Let me tell you something, a person is the one who plants love for him or her in people's hearts, I mean if I were evil, of course people would be against me badly whether I was a refugee or not, and if I were bad, people would see me as a bad person and my country as bad and where I come from as bad. But if I am a good person and I respect my neighbours, regardless of who my neighbour is, regardless of his or her citizenship or religion, when I respect him, he will respect me and that's how I preserve his respect for me. People are good, the society is good, and us or any person who comes here, refugee or not, or anyone who is a foreigner, if he respects himself, people will respect him, that is a fact.

Interviewer: Correct, thank you, I've finished my questions. I want to thank you both very much because you have helped me very much with this research.
END

7.5. Appendix 5: Interview guide for first interviews

Interview Guide (1)

1. Feelings and emotions
● How long have you been here?
● What does it feel like to be a refugee?
● Can you tell me about your experiences in Syria before coming to the United Kingdom?

2. Aspirations and preconceptions
● What did you know about the United Kingdom before you arrived, and how have these changed?
● What are the goals for you and your family whilst living in the United Kingdom?

3. Culture
● How is Syrian culture different from British culture? Could you give me some examples?
● How important is extended family to your sense of well-being and happiness?

4. Integration
● Do you feel any sort of connection to the United Kingdom, and do you think this will develop over time?
● What interactions have you had with people in the local community?
● If you or your children have experienced hostility, racism, or discrimination, can you tell me about it. Have your children exp any of these at School?

5. Capital
● Does British society represent your values, and those you want your children to grow up with?
● What activities did you do with your children in Syria? What do you do with them now?
● Do school trips help in connecting your children with life in the UK?

6. School
● How are schools different here to back home?
● How does your child feel in the education system here? Have they made friends/parents?
● How have the   school accommodated your children's needs and experiences?
● Do you feel able to advocate on behalf of your children with the   school?

7. Voice/dialogue
● How important is learning English to connect you with this country?
● How does the school communicate with you, and how do you communicate with them?
● Do you attend meetings at the   school and how are they facilitated?

7.6. Appendix 6: Interview guide for second interviews

Interview Guide (2)

1. Belonging
- What country do you feel you belong?
- What makes you feel like you belong?
- Who makes you feel like you belong?
- Are you ever made to feel like you are still refugees here?

2. Progress in School
- How is your child progressing in School, e.g., language, friends etc?
- Have there been any issues with schooling since I last spoke to you?

3. Integration
- Any changes since I last spoke to you?
- Who has supported you all during this time?

4. Coronavirus
- How has your family been affected by the coronavirus outbreak?
- How have your children been engaging with School during this time?
- Have you had any communication with the   school during this time?
- Have you decided whether to send your children back to School?

7.7. Appendix 7: Informed consent form

Informed Consent Form

Research Project Title: Refugee Families, Schools and Cultures of Dialogue

Principal Investigator: Randa Najjar

Research Participant's Name:

Purpose of the Study

You are being asked to take part in a research study as part of a PhD project for the University of Winchester. Before you decide to participate in this study, it is very important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve.

Please ask the researcher if there is anything that is not clear or if you require further information. This consent form is necessary to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation. I ask you to please read the information sheet provided, and the following information carefully.

The purpose of this study is to explore the cultural experiences of Syrian refugee families within the British education system and the extent to which cultural integration is possible.

Study Procedure

This study will require two interview sessions each lasting an hour to be agreed with yourself and the researcher at a convenient time. You will be required to answer a series of questions about your experiences of the British education system and your experiences of the UK in general. The interview will include the principal researcher and an interpreter to ensure that questions are clearly understood and translated into Arabic. The information will be recorded via note taking and audio taping, and this information will be stored safely in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and destroyed upon completion of the PhD programme in September 2020.

Benefits and Risks

The benefits to being involved in this study, include the contribution to the body of knowledge and an opportunity for you to voice your opinions and talk about your experiences in a safe and neutral environment.

There are no foreseeable risks attached to this study, and you are entitled to decline to answer any or all the questions and you may terminate your involvement at any time if you choose to do so and your information will be destroyed.

Confidentiality

It is important that you know that your responses to the interview questions will be anonymous, and every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality, including:

- Assigning numbers or pseudonyms for participants, that will be used on all research notes and documents.
- Keeping notes, interview transcriptions and recorded information in a locked file in the personal possession of the researcher only.

Participant data will be kept confidential and anonymous except in cases where the researcher is legally obligated to report any specific incidents, including, abuse, suicide risk or any illegal activity.

Quotation Agreement

I also understand that my words may be quoted directly. With regards to being quoted, please mark the statements that you agree with in the circles provided.

◯ I wish to review the notes and transcripts during the research pertaining to my participation.

◯ I agree to be quoted directly if a number or pseudonym is used instead of my name.

◯ I agree that the researcher may publish documents that contain quotations by me.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary, and it is up to you to decide whether your take part in this study. If you decide to take part, you will be asked to sign the consent form below.

After you sign the consent form you are still free to withdraw from the study at any point, and if you decide to withdraw before the research has been completed, your data will be destroyed.

Contact Information

This research has undergone ethical approval by the Head of the Faculty of Education Health and Social Care at the University of Winchester. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the principal researcher.

Name: Randa Najjar
Faculty: Education, Health and Social Care
Department: Education Studies and Liberal Arts
Email: doctoralresearch.rn@gmail.com

If you have any concerns about this research or how it is being conducted, you can contact:

Head of the Faculty of Education, Health and Social Care: *Emile.Bojesen@winchester.ac.uk*
University of Winchester RKE Ethics Committee: ethics1@winchester.ac.uk

<u>Consent</u>

By signing this form, I agree that:

- I have read and understood the information provided in this document and the information sheet.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason, and I know that this will be possible up until project submission in September 2021, because after this the data cannot be removed.
- I do not expect to receive any monetary benefits from this research.
- I can request a transcript of my interview to ensure accuracy.
- I agree that direct quotations may be used providing my name is not used.
- I have been able to ask any questions I might have and understand that I am free to contact the principal researcher with any questions I may have in the future.
- I understand that I will be given a copy of this consent form.

I voluntarily agree to take part in this study.

Participant's signature _____   Date_____

Principal Investigator's signature _____   Date_____

Information Sheet

Research Project Title: Refugee Families, Schools and Cultures of Dialogue

Principal Investigator: Randa Najjar

Contact Details: doctoralresearch.rn@gmail.com

About the Project

You are being asked to take part in a research study as part of a PhD project for the University of Winchester. This study aims to greater inform the researcher on the feelings and experiences of Syrian refugee families in the UK.

This research project aims to explore the cultural experiences of Syrian refugee families, in particular parents about the experiences of their children in the British Schools, and the extent to which cultural integration is possible.

The idea is, to greater understand the cultural experiences of refugee families within the education system to understand how institutions can better support families to ensure that they become integrated into British society and to focus on encouraging better policy to support refugee families. The purpose is to provide a greater insight into the possible problems which refugees may face in integrating culturally, and the ways in which pedagogues, agencies and the government can support the broad and diverse needs of refugee families. This research aims to inform policy makers and legislators of the increasing challenges and the need for ongoing dialogue and support on the refugee issue as it is a multifaceted issue which affects the social, political, cultural, and economic composition of society.

The goal of this research is to provide an insight into the issue of refugee integration on British society and place a greater focus on the issue of cultural disparity as a barrier to cultural integration and overall societal integration.

Who is responsible for the data collected in this study?

- The principal researcher on this project is Randa Najjar, a research student at the University of Winchester.
- The data will be collected using 'semi-structured interviews' which is an interviewing technique which allows the researcher to ask the participant a set of questions.
- The data will be recorded for accuracy and later transcription, and it will be stored until the completion of the PhD research project in September 2021, and then it will be destroyed.
- The data provided from this study will not be shared with any other organisations and will be reviewed and analysed by the principal lead only with possible access from the researcher's supervisory team.
- This research project has passed the University of Winchester Faculty Ethics Review, and the Head of the Faculty of Education, Health and Social Care.

What is involved in the study?

On the agreed dates which are suitable for yourself and the researcher, one session of interviews will be undertaken, and you will be asked a set of questions, you may choose to answer all or none of these questions and you have the right to opt-out of the research at any point without providing a reason. This will be possible up until project submission in September 2021, because after this the data cannot be removed.

No foreseeable risks have been highlighted for this study.

It is important that you know that your responses to the interview questions will be anonymous, and every effort will be made by the researcher to preserve your confidentiality, including:

- Assigning numbers or pseudonyms for participants that will be used on all research notes and documents.
- Keeping notes, interview transcriptions and recorded information in a locked file in the possession of the researcher only.

Participant data will be kept confidential and anonymous except in cases where the researcher is obligated to report any specific incidents, including, abuse, suicide risk or any illegal activity.

What are the benefits for taking part in this study?

The benefits of being involved in this study, include the contribution to the body of knowledge and an opportunity for you to voice your opinions and talk about your experiences in a safe and neutral environment.

What are your rights as a participant?

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and it is up to you to decide whether you take part in this study. If you decide to take part in this study, you will be asked to sign a consent form.

After you sign the consent form you are still free to withdraw from the study at any point, and if you decide to withdraw before the research has been completed, your data will be destroyed. You will receive no payment for your participation.

Contact Information

This project has undergone ethical approval by the Head of the Faculty of Education Health and Social Care at the University of Winchester. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact the principal researcher:
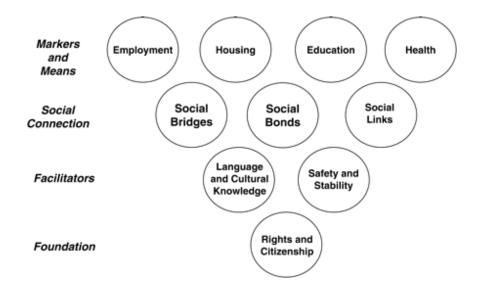
Name: Randa Najjar
Faculty: Education, Health and Social Care
Department: Education Studies and Liberal Arts
Email: doctoralresearch.rn@gmail.com

If you have any concerns about this research or how it is being conducted, you can contact: **Head of the Faculty of Education, Health and Social Care**: *Emile.Bojesen@winchester.ac.uk*

7.9. Appendix 9: Home Office Indicators of Integration Framework (2004)

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 Citizenship

7.10. Appendix 10: Home Office Indicators of Integration Framework (2019)