

**Foster carers' narrative; Looking after
unaccompanied refugee children in the UK**

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Abstract

As the number of refugees increases, the number of unaccompanied refugee children (URC) seeking asylum have continued to surge too as war, famine, and political issues are endless. Following a difficult and often traumatic journey into the United Kingdom (UK) the URC are often placed into foster homes; yet little is known about the foster placements they are placed in as the research in this area is sparse. The current literature has failed to capture the foster carer's experience of looking after a niche group of children. This study hopes to offer a valuable insight into how we can understand their needs by adopting a narrative thematic method to hear their stories.

The research was carried out with five Tower Hamlet foster carers who have had at least one URC in their placement. Each participant engaged in one semi-structured interview which was conducted online due to the Covid-19 outbreak. The interviews were recorded, transcribed by the researcher, and then analysed using narrative thematic analysis, focusing on the stories they shared about their experiences of looking after URC. The analysis found five shared narratives; 'understanding culture', 'accepting help', 'feeling safe', 'our skills', and 'duty to help' and one uncommon narrative 'abusing the system', in which foster carers described their experience.

Chapter One: Introduction

In 2019, the number of refugees known to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR, 2021) reached 20.7 million. They noted the total number of people forcibly displaced were 70.8 million worldwide, suggesting that the number of individuals fleeing their native countries to escape war, persecution, and discrimination is increasing. UNHCR aims to protect refugees from returning to dangerous areas, have access to a fair asylum process, and to ensure their basic human rights are respected (UNHCR, 2021). When looking specifically at children under the age of 18 who sought refuge as unaccompanied refugees the statistics reported that there were 3261 unaccompanied children who sought asylum in the United Kingdom (UK) in 2018 (Refugee Council, 2019). More recently, between January and June 2020 it was reported that 2032 unaccompanied children arrived in Europe (Unicef, 2021). Research on the issues affecting individuals who are under the age of 18 is minimal. Little is known about their journey, their living arrangements in UK, and how they navigate becoming accustomed to the British culture. Historically, there have been many large groups of children who have sought refuge in other countries and are then placed in foster care (UNHCR, 1994).

This chapter aims to summarise some of the existing literature on unaccompanied refugee minors (URC) who have lived with a foster carer, by doing this the researcher is able to contextualise the current research study. Following this there is a literature review outlining the current literature on URC, where they are placed when they enter the UK and foster care is shared. The chapter will then share the research question and the rationale for the current research study. However, as UK based literature on this topic is limited I have shared findings of studies that are not based in the UK.

Defining terms

In the following section I define the terminology related to URC and foster carers within the UK. The purpose of this section is to highlight the conceptual frameworks that I have used to understand the terms refugees, URC, asylum process and foster care.

Refugees

Following the Second World War the United Nations convention was formed in 1951 and allowed the movement of individuals within Europe, however the updated 1967 protocol allowed individuals to move worldwide. It is important to note that the terminology referring to refugees, migrants and asylum seekers are often used interchangeably in public discourse. I have chosen the following definitions as they align my understanding and nuances. A 'refugee', as defined by the United Nations Convention on the status of refugees (1951), is a person who has been displaced from the country of their nationality due to issues of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. 'Migrant', as defined by the United Nations, is someone who chooses to change their country of residence irrespective of the reason for migration (Refugee Migrants, 2022) 'Asylum seeker', as defined by UNHCR, is an individual who is awaiting the outcome of their request for sanctuary (UNHCR, 2021). For the purpose of this research study, the term refugee will be used throughout.

In the (UK) once the refugees have been processed by the Home Office they are granted official status. Indefinite leave to remain allows the refugee to remain in the UK permanently and gives them access to work, education, and social welfare. Other refugees may be granted humanitarian protection which is not a formal refugee status however it grants them five years of leave to remain within the UK (BPS, 2018).

Unaccompanied Refugee Children (URC)

URC are defined as children under the age of 18 who have fled their home countries due to war, famine, and dangerous political issues (UNHCR, 1994). This term is the common reference given to this group of children and is used in legal documents, media and most existing literature (Evans et al., 2018; Van Holen et al., 2019). The refugee council (2019) suggests the term 'separated children', as they argue this better describes their ongoing separation from parents or care givers. This population has also been referred to as underage minors (UM), unaccompanied asylum seekers (UAS) etc. As there are multiple terms used to refer to these group of children it was important for me to use a term that aligned with my own positioning therefore the term unaccompanied refugee children (URC) will also be used throughout.

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health (RCPCH, 2018) have found a 56% increase in the number of URC who have applied for asylum between 2014 to 2015; the majority of those who applied were between the ages of 14-17 years old. The British Psychological Society's (BPS, 2018) guidelines on working with refugee children report that 88,245 unaccompanied children applied for asylum in the European Union (EU), 3045 of those sought refuge in the UK. Currently if a child is considered to be under 17 years old, they are accepted by local authorities and are given the same rights as all looked after children in the UK, therefore a majority of them are placed in foster care placements.

In the UK, children who are placed in foster care are generally referred to as looked after children (LAC) and URC represent a small number of the LAC population in the UK. LAC is defined as any child in public care such as foster care or residential homes (Berridge, 2007). Due to this they are entitled to receive support with: accommodation, education, health assessments and some financial aid (Refugee Council, 2019). Once they are processed

as LAC children the local authority follows LAC policies and procedures in regard to their care.

The BPS (2018) outlines the complexities that URC face compared to children who have sought refuge with their family. In some cases, they may have fled their home countries with their family but have become separated during the journey. Most of the time they travel across multiple countries to gain access to the UK, often reporting a hazardous journey. Furthermore, the House of Lords (House of Lords, 2016, as cited in BPS, 2018) report indicated that due to the increased number of URC seeking asylum the system has become overwhelmed and this has resulted in a culture of disbelief and suspicions where the URC's age has been disputed. If they are deemed to be 17 years old or under, they are given support from a local authority social care team and are placed with foster carers. If they are believed to be over the age of 18, they are recognised as adults and do not receive social services support (BPS, 2018).

Asylum process in the UK

Once an individual has arrived in the UK, they must begin the formal asylum process with the support of a lawyer. The lawyers and asylum seeker are responsible for preparing the relevant documents and making the application to the UK Border Agency (UKBA), a specific section of the home office, in order to receive a formal refugee status. The asylum application process can take up to several years and may require the individual to attend interviews with UKBA to ascertain their story which can affect their psychological health (BPS,2018). At this point if their story is not deemed appropriate for the asylum process, they can be refused asylum but have the opportunity to appeal this decision (BPS, 2018).

Fazel and Stein (2002) note that the large majority of URC are granted exceptional leave to remain until they turn 18 years old. This provides the URC with a temporary solution to their refugee status but once they are 18 this decision is reviewed and can result in them

being refused any further status in the UK. This can cause ambiguity surrounding their future in the UK.

Foster Care

Foster care in the UK is when a local authority has approved an individual to be a foster carer who is deemed suitable to look after vulnerable children. Foster care is designed to be a short-term resolution for children in crisis with the aim that long term more stable placement is found (Barbell & Freundlich, 2001). Foster care is a provision given to children and young people whose parents or families can no longer safely look after them. The placements can range from temporary, short term, or long-term placements, and around 79% of looked after children currently live in foster homes (UK Fostering, 2017).

Foster placements have been reported by Kluger et al. (2000) and Kalverboer et al. (2017), as having more positive outcomes compared to other placement choices such as group homes or semi-independent living. There has been a historical debate around whether foster placements are the best types of placements. The UNHCR (1994) argue that LAC children should be placed in the context of a family and community similar to their own, as this will help them meet their developmental and cultural needs.

Van Holen et al. (2019) suggest that URC enter foster care due to different grounds; generally children who are from the UK are placed in foster care due to maltreatment from carers but for this group of children and young people they are in care due to war torn migration issues. This may mean that their experience of the placement and their needs are different to other groups of children placed in foster care.

The BPS (2018) also stipulate that because of URC differential needs, psychologists play an important role in supporting URC, their communities and the institutions that support them. Moreover, psychology as a field has an abundance of knowledge that can be used to help improve the lives of those seeking safety. Due to the large number of URC who have

applied for refuge in the UK, this group of young people have become a new client group for psychologists to work with (BPS, 2018). Psychologists are also in the best position to engage with local authorities at strategic levels to support the URC. They are able to provide training to all provisions such as school, social care, and placement providers to ensure they are looked after safely and that their needs are being met. Training can also encourage good practice which will help long term social inclusion for URC (BPS, 2018).

Furthermore, the BPS (2018) guidelines report that local authorities recognise children should be cared for within family settings, with statistics indicating that around 79% of LAC are living with foster carers (UK Fostering, 2017). Despite the evidence indicating foster placements are the best settings for all looked after children including URC, economically there are not enough foster carers to meet the current demand (BPS, 2018). Bates et al. (2005) reported that URC were more likely to experience more post-traumatic stress disorder, display disruptive behaviours and have symptoms of anxiety compared to non URC youth in foster care. Therefore, the foster carers may need additional training on how to support the URC through these challenges compared to other LAC.

However, one of the challenges that arise when recruiting foster carers is the time it can take to assess and approve a foster carer. This process can take on average up to six months, which means that local authorities are not able to approve enough foster carers to meet the demand of all looked after children (The FCA, 2020). In addition, there is a period of training that most local authorities ask their foster carers to attend prior to accepting a placement. The training provided to all foster carers is generally of a high quality with a variety of different topics covered but there is no specific training provided to foster carers who look after URC (BPS, 2018).

Foster carers are in contact with the URCs the most compared to other professionals in the URC's network. Foster carers are there to support the URC throughout their placement

until they reach the age of 18 years old. Hence, it is important for the development of the counselling psychology field that we understand the process and the journey that foster carers experience whilst looking after URC.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

The literature review was carried out with the following review question in mind, what are the experiences of the foster carers who have looked after URC. The following issues will be discussed in detail: Foster carer's perspective of what support is required, what foster carers can do to make the experience more successful, the challenges URC face whilst in foster care, mental health of URC, what external agencies can do to support the foster carers more, and culturally matched placements. The literature review will provide a detailed and critical review of the current available literature and will conclude by summarising the key findings.

Search process

The search for the literature was conducted by using electronic databases (such as EBSCO, PsycINFO and Science Direct) and the following terms were used in the search engine: 'foster care AND refugee' 'foster care AND asylum seeker' 'Foster care AND unaccompanied minors'. Following this, references used in the selected published articles were also examined. Publications were only included in the review if they were written in English, with the full text available, no other data restrictions were imposed in the search.

Findings of the review

The current literature on the views and experiences of foster carers who have looked after URC is limited. Most of the research on children who have sought asylum are often focused on their experiences with their birth families or those who live within immigrant

families and their mental health rather than children who have come unaccompanied (Fazel & Stein, 2003; Watters, 2007; Hodes & Vostanis, 2019; Fazel & Betancourt, 2018). In addition, a large amount of the data comes from the United States and European countries, with a small number of recent papers addressing this area in the UK. Therefore, the research may differ to findings within the UK due to different policies, procedures, and socio-political context. Due to the paucity of UK studies, papers from the USA and European countries have been included; however, the researcher does not assume the experience will be the same due to the reasons highlighted above. Within the literature review, there are two papers that have looked specifically at the foster carers experience of looking after URC even though URC have been placed in foster care for decades (UNHCR, 1994).

‘Foster carers’ perspective of what support is required’

Due to the limited research, specifically with URC, broader research papers were considered. Brown (2008) used a mixed methods design using concept mapping for qualitative data with sixty-three Canadian foster parents who looked after non URC children. This study looked at what the foster parents’ thought was required to have a successful placement. The foster carers identified clusters which have been found in previous studies, such as having the right personality and skills, a good relationship with the fostering agency, having good community support and a supportive family. They also identified a cluster that has not been identified before which is the need for information around policies and procedures individual for each child.

Hudson and Levasseur, (2002) suggest that recruiting and retaining good foster carers was difficult as there are various factors such as standard pay rates, not getting support with challenging children, and not enough support for the foster carers in general which all played a part. They note that the children being placed in care have more complex or challenging difficulties which results in them being more demanding in terms of their care. They sent

questionnaires to foster carers who lived in Ontario, Canada to investigate what support they felt was necessary, so that they could continue their foster care role. They found three themes that emerged from the data, the first being practical and emotional support, the second was to receive respect and recognition for their role and finally having a good relationship with the foster agency.

Van Holen et al. (2019) carried out a study that looked at the experiences of Caucasian foster carers who have looked after URC. They interviewed 30 Flemish foster carers who lived in Belgium. Each foster carer was asked, 'What do you need to be a good foster parent for the URC?' Their responses were examined using a concept mapping method which uses a mixed method design by using a quantitative statistical algorithm to analyse qualitative data. Once all statements were collected the participants were then asked to rate the statement according to importance. They were also asked to group statements together that they thought belonged to the same theme. Overall, the researchers identified eight cluster areas that their participants felt had to be present in order for a placement to be a success: good parenting skills and good fit of URC in the family, an open attitude in relation to the background or the URC's friends, potential contact with biological families and how to prepare the URC for this, good parenting conditions, and support from other foster carers. They also suggested that the local authority's level of support was important in ensuring the placement was stable and successful. Thus, their findings indicate the variety of issues foster carers face when looking after URC.

Moreover, Van Holen, et al. (2019) found issues around discrimination, loneliness, trauma, and stress may make it difficult for the refugee to maintain a stable placement within a family based foster care setting, regardless of the foster carer's level of training and support received. Their study is one of the only studies within the literature, to the best of my knowledge, that has investigated the experiences of foster carers who have looked after URC.

It has made a valuable introduction to this area of research; however there are some limitations to the study. The chosen method to analyse the data, concept mapping, is generally an explorative method, but the research question is very broad and therefore resulted in a large number of generalised responses. Moreover, it is unclear whether their responses are from their own experiences as foster carers of URC or whether they are what they assume to be common stereotypes thus the findings may be more generalised. This suggests that more in depth research looking into the experiences and understanding the nuances is required. In order to understand their experiences further, a more specific question looking into the why the foster carers felt those issues were required is needed.

Another study carried out by Lee et al. (2010) found similar results, as they conducted qualitative focus groups with the foster carers one-year post placement of the 'lost boys' of Sudan (a group of refugees who arrived in the US after living in refugee camps in Sudan). The data was analysed using ethnographic content analysis which identified the causes of unhappiness in their experience: feelings of disappointment as the youths took a long time to acculturate, especially in regard to personal hygiene and clothing. Cultural conflicts were also noted, such as disrespect and power struggles at home, as the authority of the female foster carers was often challenged. Moreover, not being sufficiently prepared for the fostering experience, due to the lack of time given to prepare before the arrival of the URC and the problems faced with the agency before, during and after placement, led to the experience becoming difficult for the foster carers.

Moreover, Lee et al. (2010) also shared the methods the participants used to cope with the above stressors; the first was cognitive restructuring. Here they reported reassessing their expectations, being more empathetic and finding the humour in things, helped them manage better. Additionally, they also found great support in other foster carers who were in a similar position; it is important to note that this was reported as more supportive than the fostering

agencies. The foster carers felt the experience enabled them change for the better and become less self-centred, and this experience allowed them to learn new things about the world. Additionally, they also reported feeling successful when they were able to see the youth adapting well by attending school and engaging in other social activities. They noted experiences of developing a strong bond and a nurturing relationship. The researchers concluded that placements of URC may work better if foster carers are preselected to take on this group by providing them with the relevant training and education to manage developmental and cultural issues (Lee et al., 2010).

The above study recruited participants from a mid-western state in America (laws are implemented on a state level across America) therefore it can be suggested that their experiences would differ compared to foster carers in the UK. It is important to note that the discourses and narratives around refugees may also differ due to the different socio-political discourses. Furthermore, only one participant had professionally fostered prior to this experience, as they were not foster carers by profession. This would suggest that they did not have access to the amount of support foster carers who are recruited specifically by local authorities would have. Moreover, as this was the first time the participants had fostered it can be suggested that they may not have the skills required to be a foster carer. The participants were encouraged to become foster carers through their church and may have felt an obligation to offer their help, particularly if other members of the church had done so too. In addition, they may have felt further internal pressure due to their own religious values. This would suggest that their experience would be significantly different to foster carers who are recruited and trained specifically for the fostering role, as the motivation for carrying out the role is different.

Research into the foster carers' experience is limited; most of the literature used mixed methods or quantitative methods to analyse the data therefore the discourses and

narrative are not explored in great detail. Most of the research has been carried out in the US with some in European countries which limits the generalisability to UK context. However, no research has been carried out in the UK to date, thus suggesting that there is a gap in the literature. Furthermore, it is important to note, the process of fostering, recruitment of foster carers and the agencies that assign URC to foster carers are different according to the laws of each country or state, and due to these differences, the foster carer's experiences may differ significantly. Therefore, it is essential for research to be carried out within the UK to understand what support foster carers need in order to look after URC.

In summary, areas that the foster carers have been identified as currently lacking are cultural awareness, requiring more support from other agencies and having more information regarding the process of looking after URC.

What foster carers can do to make the outcome more successful for URC

A pilot study was carried out by Evans et al. (2018) which looked at a US based programme that provided training specifically to foster carers. The training involved how to support the URC in gaining independent living skills, English language skills, support with immigration status and access to their cultural activities. Overall, the programme trained the foster carers to provide case management for the URC with the main aim to provide the URC with the skills necessary for adulthood in the US. When the URC finished the programme, they were given the Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth (Courtney et al., 2010) questionnaire. The questionnaire looks at areas such as social support, education, employment, and other life skills. Evans et al. (2018) modified the questionnaire to ensure questions were not inappropriate, potentially re-traumatising or culturally irrelevant. The data from the questionnaires was analysed using a chi-square and then compared to the data of those who participated in the Midwest Study carried out by Courtney et al. (2010). The results from the survey suggested that 73% felt they had learnt a lot from

the programme and 77.7% felt lucky to be in the programme which was significantly higher than individuals who lived in domestic foster care. The results when compared to results of youth who had left foster care are as follows: 80% reported feeling satisfied with the programme compared to 59.4% of the youth who left. Of those who were still in foster care during the interviews, 77.8% reported feeling close to their foster families and 94.4% reported that their foster parents were helpful. Overall, they found this unique project resulted in the URC thriving after leaving care in the US. These areas of support led to better outcomes for the URC and may be beneficial if adapted for the UK population.

This study was unique within the literature as the participants were URC who were over the age of 18. This allows for a direct insight into how the URC have experienced foster care. However, the data was compared using secondary data which was gathered a number of years earlier than the current study. The political climate has changed significantly since then, and this may have affected the experience of the URC, the economic situation of the state responsible for looking after them and the resources that were available to the foster carer at the time. Additionally, as this study used a quantitative method to analyse the data there was no space to gain an in-depth response to the questions and did not allow the URC to expand on the answers or provide detailed explanations which would have been advantageous.

Another area of support that the foster carers could provide for URC is around cultural similarities, as a separate study found that URC reported culture was significant when reflecting on their foster placement experience (Ni Raghallaigh and Sirriyeh, 2015). The study found that the URC felt their culture was significant to them. Having to deal with changes in friends, family, food, and clothing when they arrived in the host country was difficult, therefore having some similarities in their foster placement was useful and allowed for continuity of culture.

Ni Raghallaigh and Sirriyeh (2015) carried out two studies; one in England where focus groups were conducted, and interviews were taken with the URC. The second study was carried out in the republic of Ireland where a mixture of URC, foster carers and social workers participated in interviews and focus groups. Both studies carried out thematic analysis to analyse the data. The themes that emerged from both of these studies were the importance of culture, communication/ language and food - all of these themes centre around the key concept of culture. The participants placed higher value on placements that facilitated the sense of culture. This was possible in placements where the foster carer was from the same cultural background and in instances where foster carers from different backgrounds made conscious effort to meet the URC's cultural needs. In addition to this, social workers reported that cross-cultural placements can work very well but only if the foster carers were open to diversity and supported the URC's development of cultural identity. Overall, the research suggests that being open to cultural differences and being allowed to explore their native culture was important to the URC and this could be achieved in cross cultural placements if the foster carers facilitated this. As it was found in the above study, some carers were from a similar background as the URC, but others who were not made conscious efforts to meet the cultural needs of the young person. Furthermore, it would be beneficial for foster carers to receive training on how to communicate better and to help them develop realistic expectations. It should also focus on issues that may arise due to differences in culture and the effects trauma or mental health awareness (Luster et al., 2009). Thus, identifying areas that the foster carers themselves can adopt to enhance the URC's experience further and make the placement more successful.

There are some limitations in the methodology and analysis of the Ni Raghallaigh and Sirriyeh's (2015) studies. As both studies used thematic analysis, it can be argued that this method does not give a detailed understanding of the individual lived experience of the

participants. The main aim of thematic analysis is to identify patterns across the data of all participants as one data set and then groups them into themes. It does not focus on the individual experiences of each participant (Willig, 2013). As the researchers were able to recruit URC's as their participant group interviews with the URC would have been ideal to gain a more in depth understanding of why culture was important to them.

Further research supporting culturally matched placements have been reported as they are often seen as the most appropriate type of foster placement due to the cultural continuity for the young person. However, culture cannot just be defined by the nationality or origin of the foster family, it is wide ranging and is formed of multiple different features (Ni Raghallaigh and Sirriyeh, 2015). Ethnically matched foster placements help the URC to continue their cultural identity and have positive benefits for their mental health as the foster carers were able to understand their cultural needs (Small, 2000). Linowitz and Boothy (1988) found lower rates of depression in those who were placed with foster carers who were from the same ethnic background. They also report that around 50% of the placements broke down due to cultural differences, the trauma experienced before they were placed in foster care and expectations.

Furthermore, Goldstein and Spencer (2000) found not being able to speak the same language was a challenge as some URC were not able to speak English when they arrived in foster care and found it difficult to communicate with their foster parents. Subsequently, the URC reported that they were now not able to communicate in their native language anymore, which highlights the importance of being placed with foster carers who are from the same cultural group.

The challenges the URC face

The literature suggests that there are many challenges that the URC face which can make their experience in foster care problematic. For example, Groark et al. (2011) carried

out a qualitative semi structured interview and utilised interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) with six unaccompanied asylum seekers in the UK. They identified themes of psychological distress, loss, adjustment and negotiating a new life as areas that the URC reported finding difficult. The researchers stipulate that the current theories for understanding trauma reactions and loss may not apply to this group of children as their experience can often have complex social and psychological issues due to leaving their home countries.

Furthermore, Hek (2007) reports that there is a feeling of impermanence which leads to the URC feeling insecure within their placements, but regular review and planning meetings help provide a sense of permanence. This sense of permanence is argued to be more important than the legal permanence. Moreover, once in the placement there could be further feelings of impermanence as placement breakdowns are very common. Crea et al. (2017) conducted a quantitative study looking at the predictors of placement change in 256 URC who arrived in the US from 2012 to 2015. They found that 26.5% of the sample experienced a placement change due to challenges in the relationship and were moved to another placement. They found that experiencing violence in their home country and displaying challenging behaviours whilst in foster care were the biggest predictors of placement breakdowns. Age or gender were not statistically significant in contributing to placement change.

Another study looking into the challenges faced by the URC was conducted by Luster et al. (2009) who conducted semi structured interviews with eighteen Sudanese 'lost boys' and focused on their experience in foster care. Using thematic analysis, they found a variety of difficult factors such as cultural differences which led to misunderstandings, problems accepting foster parent authority, and difficulties around trust. However, it was noted that as the youth's language skills improved, cultural difficulties and differences reduced too. Thus, identifying that there are a variety of different challenges that the URC face when they are

placed in foster care. It is important to be aware of these issues so they can be addressed and as much as possible reduced in order to provide longevity for foster placements.

The BPS guidelines (2018) suggest that once the URC reach the UK they may believe that their difficulties are over but are met with further challenges which can lead to severe psychological impact. Research supporting this has been found by Bates et al. (2005), who found that refugee youths in foster care were more likely to present with post-traumatic stress disorder, disruptive behaviour, and anxiety compared to United States (US) born youth in foster care. They compared the mean post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) scores of the 'lost boys' of Sudan with other children who had experienced a single traumatic incident and found that the URC scored twice as high. Similarly, Van Holen et al. (2019) found URC have higher levels of stress due to the uncertainty of their immigration and legal status and worries about their future. Moreover, Luster et al. (2009) compared URC with children who immigrated to the US with their biological families. They reported that they generally faced additional trauma and challenges in their adjustment to the new country, for example, trauma on their journey into the country and not knowing the fate of their biological family members.

The UK National Collaborating Centre for Mental Health (UK NCCMH, 2006) states that 'being a refugee is not a diagnosis, and refugees may present with any of the psychiatric disorders or none at all'. Lane and Tribe (2014) argue that only a small number of refugees require professional help for debilitating psychological issues, most refugees may prefer a community response to trauma, so they can build on their capacities rather than loss. It is important to understand that each refugee will have their own unique experience and has lived through different practical, political, and personal circumstances. Thus, it is imperative to be aware of the difficulties the URC may be facing due to their journey into the UK.

What can external agencies do to support the foster carers

In the study carried out by Ni Raghallaigh and Sirriyeh (2015) it was suggested that a pool of foster carers should be identified who are trained and can provide in depth support to help meet the needs of the URC. Once the URC arrives in the host country they should be placed with a foster carer who is a part of this pool as the foster carers will be adequately prepared for the placement. However, they noted that social workers and placement providers need to be in support of this pool of foster carers in order for this to be successful. Furthermore, the researchers acknowledged the financial aspects of creating this pool of foster carers and reflected on the lack of resources available to make this financially viable.

Additionally, Carlson et al. (2012) note that a good understanding of the needs of foster carers who look after URC is imperative for the recruitment and retention of foster carers. Being aware of these external agencies can also help to identify other areas of support they may require. Therefore, in order to support foster carers further external agencies must also be aware of these challenges and empathise with the foster carers who are in this position.

Summary of Literature review

The literature review was carried out with the following review question in mind: what are the experiences of the foster carers who have looked after URC? The literature review identified that there were gaps in the literature, little research has been carried out on the foster carers' experience and journey of looking after URC. Whereas a large amount of research has been carried out exploring children who are immigrants arriving with their families or those who live in immigrant families. Within the review only two papers found looked specifically at the foster carers experience of looking after URC, even though it has been noted that URC have been placed in foster care for decades (UNHCR, 1994).

The literature review was structured according to general themes, including the experience of the foster carers who have looked after URC, which was the focus of the review question. The number of studies that related to the paradigmatic underpinnings of the research were limited. Hence, the ability to assess how these studies contributed to the researcher's understanding was affected.

After completing the literature review, the notion of cultural similarity or cultural appreciation became apparent. URC reported cultural continuity was helpful when becoming accustomed to the culture of their host country. Studies also found the culturally matched placements led to better mental health and lower rates of depression (Small, 2000; Linowitz & Boothy 1988). With a number of studies reporting placement success with the ability to protect the cultural identity of the URC (Ni Raghallaigh & Sirriyeh, 2015; Lee et al., 2010). Furthermore, some foster carers found cultural differences difficult to manage and this often led to the breakdown of placements (Linowitz & Boothy, 1988).

It has been noted that foster carers who identify themselves as available to look after URC receive no extra training or support prior or during the placement. Therefore, they are often left feeling like they are working harder because they manage a more difficult group of children. This feeling is further amplified when their hard work is not recognised. (Hudson and Levasseur, 2002). The literature review has identified that external support is necessary for foster carers to have a positive placement outcome (Lee et al., 2010). Foster carers who received a holistic support and training package received positive results in the URC's ability to integrate into their host countries society Evans et al. (2018).

Rationale for current research study

Counselling psychology values, epistemological underpinnings, and positioning statement

Counselling psychology's values and identity cannot be explored separately from the economic, political, and social context of the society they live in. At the core of the discipline the person's personal and subjective experience supersedes the diagnosis, assessment, and treatment models (Strawbridge & Wolfe, 1996). Counselling Psychology is traditionally associated with phenomenological and humanistic concerns (Rogers, 1961). Social constructionism puts a large emphasis on the external historical, political, and social aspect surrounding the data rather than the data isolated. It can also be assumed that the categories and concepts commonly used to understand the world are historically and culturally specific and this depends on where and when in the world we live (Burr, 2018). This view is reflective of the researcher's views as a trainee counselling psychologist. It is also recognised that we may not be able to directly access people's experience; however, by being reflective we may be able to understand others' meaning-making of the world.

Working with the refugee community has always been an interest for me. Coming from a family background of refugees who settled in the UK for better living standards it often resonates with me how my family members may have been perceived by the British population. I acknowledge that the differences in the social and political situation that underlie my family's migration are different to the current situation. However, I am aware that the discourse and narratives around migrants are still damaging and have not changed significantly over time. Furthermore, my South Asian ethnicity has always led to some British people questioning my family origin and how I ended up living in Britain. It is important to note that this may have potentially influenced how the participants responded in the interviews as they might have also questioned my ethnic background. Thus, narratives around not truly belonging have been prominent throughout my life. This sparked my interest in choosing a research study that mattered to me and hoping that the research may make a

difference to a URC's outcome here in the UK. I embarked on a study to further understand how foster carers make sense of looking after URC.

Butina (2015) argues that qualitative methods of research allow researchers to explore an issue to gain a better and or detailed understanding. A greater understanding in the foster carer's experience may help us to understand how they can be better supported. Due to the foster carers being based in the UK it was decided that the interviews would be conducted in English as this was the language they would utilise in their role as a foster carer.

Problem statement and relevance to counselling psychology

The British Psychological Society (BPS, 2018) guidelines state that psychologists' play an important role in supporting asylum seekers. Psychology as a discipline has a wealth of knowledge that can be applied in supporting these individuals to help improve the lives of those seeking safety. Due to the increasing numbers of people seeking refuge, particularly URC, there is an increasing need to support their practical, psychological, and social needs; for instance, in creating a new client group that counselling psychologists may not have worked with previously. Due to URC being placed in local authority foster care and the important role foster carers have in helping the URC adjust to their lives within the UK, it is important for the development of the counselling psychology field that we understand the process and the journey of the foster carers who look after URC. By understanding this further it is hoped that the foster carers experience of looking after URC is enhanced. As stated in the literature review above, the foster carer's experience of looking after a URC is an under researched area and the proposed research could help to explore this.

Research question

How do foster carers make sense of looking after URC?

Study aim

- To gain an in-depth understanding of the lived experience of foster carers who have looked after URC.
- To understand how foster carers make sense of looking after URC

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter explains the methodology used to address the aforementioned research question. My ontological and epistemological position and the rationale for using a narrative thematic analysis (NTA) is shared. The study's design and an outline of the NTA process is given; following this, my reflexive position is described concluding with the analytic method undertaken to produce the findings of the study.

Methodological considerations

Counselling psychology aims and values in relation to this research

CoP are encouraged to utilise the scientist-practitioner model, as one of the main aims of the profession is to bridge the gap between clinical practice and research (Thorpe, 2013). CoP acknowledge that therapeutic relationships are co-constructed through the therapeutic process (Lane & Corrie, 2006; Martin, 2009) and that truths are constructed in this exchange rather than 'found' (Josselson, 2011). Blair (2010) states that practitioners use theory to inform their practice, reflect, and create working formulations. It has been argued that qualitative research assumes that the relationship between the researcher and the participant involves the values, perceptions, emotions, and the cultural context of those involved (Sciarra, 1999; Ponterotto, 2005).

However, there are tensions when research and practice are integrated together as both these roles (reflective-practitioner and empirical-scientist) are complex and require '*two different underpinning philosophies*' to come together (Kasket & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011, p.21). Despite this, the counselling psychology discipline encourages practitioners to engage in the tension described above and to reflect on how to maintain a critical position (Kasket, 2012).

Counselling psychology actively encourages reflection and reflexivity as one of its core values (Martin, 2009), therefore adopting a reflexive stance in research is aligned with the underlying philosophy of the profession.

Qualitative methodology

The decision to use a quantitative or qualitative methodology is dependent on the research question and the aims of the study (Willig, 2019). Qualitative research can be defined as a naturalistic, interpretive approach concerned with exploring experiences (Ormston et al., 2014). Therefore, as the research in relation to foster carers' experience of looking after URC is limited, an exploratory research question will help increase understanding in this area (Marshall, 1996). Experiential questions allow the exploration of social processes in depth by analysing non-numerical data (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Moreover, qualitative methodologies can be used to gain an in-depth exploration of how participants construct meaning and understand their experience (Willig, 2013).

Ontological and epistemological position

Research paradigms set the context for research projects and the methodology chosen allows the researcher to question how that knowledge will be gained (Ponterotto, 2005). A paradigm contains implicit assumptions that might reflect the researcher's ontological view (their assumptions on the nature of being), their epistemological view (their assumptions on

the nature of knowledge), and their axiological views (their assumptions on the nature of values) (Harper, 2011).

Epistemology is a subdivision of philosophy and attempts to answer the question ‘what, and how, can we know?’; it is concerned with the theory of knowledge (Harper, 2011). Epistemology can be placed on the realism-relativism continuum, relating to the extent that data mirrors reality. Realism argues that the data collected mirrors reality exactly, whereas relativism argues there are multiple interpretations of the same observation, therefore data cannot directly mirror reality (Harper, 2011).

Whilst considering the social constructionist approach, individuals’ understanding of themselves, and the world is a dynamic process (Burr, 2015). Social constructionists are not concerned with the true nature of an event and understand there is not one universal truth to be discovered (Parker, 1999). The approach is concerned with the way people tell their story and experiences (Willig, 2012). Moreover, language is the vehicle in which this experience can be conveyed, and a large emphasis is placed on this as it is argued that language constructs reality. Researchers within this paradigm are seen as architects who are trying to de-construct social reality (Willig, 2012). Furthermore, the reflexivity of the researcher is essential as there is an assumption that the stories being told are also heard by the listener thus creating a co-constructed story (Esin et al., 2014; Martin, 2009).

I have chosen to adopt a social constructionist approach which is a combination of the above and adopts the view that an individual’s experiences and the interpretation of context are essential to comprehend knowledge (Harper, 2011). My aim in this study is to understand how foster carers make sense of looking after URC. The stories shared by the foster carers are co-shaped between the individuals, cultural, societal, and political forces that they interact with (Gergen, 1999).

Narrative Analysis

Narrative analysis was chosen as the method most appropriate to answer the research questions and aims as it nurtures an in-depth understanding of the experience of looking after URC. Butina (2015) argues that narratives are an essential part of the meaning-making process and that humans are natural storytellers. Narrative approach falls under the postmodern framework; the assumption here is that knowledge is constructed not discovered (Wertz et al., 2011). The analysis looks at the relationship between the researcher and the participant, the social and historical context and culture, which is what makes the narrative a personal story. It is a combination of these features that narrative analysis provides that is best positioned to answer the research questions whilst also aligning with the researcher's social constructionist epistemological position.

The aim of the current study is to gain an in-depth understanding of foster carer's lived experiences whilst looking after URC. Researchers argue that narratives are essential in the meaning making process. Butina (2015) claims that humans are natural story tellers therefore it is easier for them to elicit stories which usually provide in-depth data. Analysing the content of a story helps researchers determine what moments of personal experience the narrator has determined as noteworthy and meaningful.

Some researchers argue that narrative analysis produces social constructionist knowledge, as researchers are interested in how individuals construct an experience; what they choose to include or exclude, and what their story means to them (Willig, 2013). Narratives occur through conversations which include the interaction between the storyteller and the listener. They are combination of a person's inner thoughts and feelings with the outer world's observable actions and affairs. Reissman (2008) suggests that social conditions and power relations are expressed within narratives. However, an event on its own does not create a narrative; it is the experience of the event and the retelling that forms a narrative. They are seen as mediums through which we see the world, ourselves, and others, produced

in social interactions (Smith & Sparkes, 2006). Wertz et al. (2011) have argued that storytelling and the construction of narratives is a subjective, individual venture and there are not universal, fixed narratives or truths 'out there' to be discovered.

Narrative analysis suggests that the researcher uses open ended questions which allows the individual to give free flow answer and to give more detail (Reissman, 2008). This could lead to rich detailed data being provided which can share an insight into how individuals make sense of their experience. Riessman (1993) suggests when creating an interview schedule researchers should include five to seven broad questions and some probe questions to help those participants who may find it difficult to give a more detailed response. Open ended questions do not limit the answers and allows the participant to answer based on their knowledge and understandings. Reissman (2008) states that if researchers want to understand an experience in all its complexity, then it is essential that the details are shared. Therefore, when creating a narrative, the storyteller pieces events into a sequence and ensures that the meaning is right for the particular listener. The events that the storyteller selects in their narrative often have significance to them and their listener. Meaning is made and constructed within the social, political, and historical context of the storyteller.

Narrative thematic analysis (NTA)

Narrative analysis can be analysed by four different methods: thematic, structural, performance/dialogic, and visual. For the purpose of this research, NTA will be utilised which aims to produce themes within the narratives. The thematic approach to narrative analysis is diverse and can be applied to multiple different types of texts such as interviews, written documents, or group meetings. This type of analysis studies the substance and looks for the motifs that are present in data, the type of story that is being presented (such as stories of grief or survival) and the genre of the story (Shay, 2014). By conducting this analysis, the content of the story indicates to the researcher what moments of the experience the

participant has determined as meaningful (Parcell & Baker, 2018). Additionally, Reissman (2005) argues this type of analysis focuses on ‘what’ is being said rather than ‘how’ it is being said and accepts that language underpins the approach. Similarly, Butina (2015) suggests that the focus is on the content of the narratives shared. This approach is advantageous when trying to find a common theme across participants and their stories (Shay, 2014). The intention is to create knowledge that can help and to improve the experience of foster carers who look after URC; however it is important to note that the research question is based on how foster carers make sense of this role and to get a deeper insight into their journey. It is hoped that the research will produce an understanding of how foster carers have made sense of this particular time in their lives.

NTA has been recognised as an important aspect of social change as it gives power to marginalised groups whose voices may not be heard thus researchers are able to address various social, political, and educational issues (Shay, 2014). The shared narratives can help resolve crises, improve understanding of conflict, and promote change (The Centre for Narrative Research [CNR], 2008). Therefore, the selected methodology in this study, narrative thematic analysis informed by Reissman (2005), was utilised to develop an in-depth understanding of foster carers’ lived experience of looking after unaccompanied refugee children.

Analytic steps

The analysis was conducted after all interviews had taken place to avoid any bias in the following interviews. The interviews were then transcribed verbatim by myself. Riessman (1993) argues that it is essential for the researcher to transcribe the interviews themselves as this allows them to immerse themselves within the data. I did not edit the transcripts to meet the standards of English grammar allowing the foster carers’ narratives to be told in their words. Following the transcription, I ensured that I re-read the data several times to

familiarise myself with the text and to gain an insight into the subjective experiences of the participants (Bute & Jensen, 2011). Sciarra (1999) suggests that this enables researchers to become aware of the empathetic space within the different participant's accounts and in turn learn more about the participant's world.

Following the transcription, the transcripts were imported into NVivo Pro 12 software for analysis to begin (see appendix G for example of analysis process from NVivo). The analysis was carried out in five stages: initially the researcher organises and prepares the data, then gains a general sense of the data, followed by coding the data, identifying themes, and finally interpreting the data (Creswell, 2014). By analysing themes, I am informed of the participant's personal experience and what they feel is meaningful and noteworthy (Parcell & Baker, 2018). Developing themes from the narratives allows comparison with other stories that may be describing similar life events. From the analysis I am able to identify if there are any shared narratives present across the participant's narratives (Shay, 2014). Furthermore, the analysis can also identify if a theme is missing in other narratives, which may indicate that it is unique to a particular individual (Loots et al., 2008).

Due to the volume of data generated, the themes were data-driven and initial codes such as 'feeling safe', 'different cultures' and 'external support' were identified. Following this, I then re-read the narratives to understand and gain insight into the participant's lived experiences. This then led to the researcher identifying the final themes. Following this, a final reading was carried out which focused on the content of the data and the narratives generated. Specific segments of the foster carer's narratives will be shared in the analysis chapter.

Alternative analysis methods

As discovered in the literature review, concept mapping was utilised in previous research and its benefits can be seen when attempting to understanding the needs of a specific

group of people. Due to this benefit, concept mapping could have been an alternative method for me to explore, however the gap in the literature suggested that a more detailed understanding would be more valuable for the population group. Unlike the previous studies I set out to gain a deeper understanding of the foster carer's lived experience and aimed to go beyond statements given to the researchers. Evaluating Lee et al. (2010) paper highlighted the importance of recruiting appropriate participants who are homogenous enough in terms of their 'professional' fostering background. Foster carers are in contact with URC the most in comparison with other professionals in the URC's network and they are there to support them until they are adults. Hence, it is essential that we understand the narratives foster carers create whilst looking after URC.

Another qualitative method that could have been implemented to answer the research question is Interpretive Phenological Analysis (IPA), which helps to capture the experience and aims to understand the meaning people make of their experience (Willig, 2001). However, IPA does not utilize the participant's stories and researchers often have more control over the interview schedule limiting the narrative account. This can lead to participants being prohibited from using narrative forms of storytelling (Crossley, 2000). Due to this, narrative analysis was chosen rather than IPA.

Thematic analysis (TA) was also considered as a potential research method as it involves coding and theme development. However, TA analyses the whole data set and looks for patterns or themes focusing on the shared the experiences. Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that TA is a methodology that can be used across multiple epistemologies and research questions thus indicating its flexibility as a research method. However, TA often requires large sample size to generate the themes (Smith, 2010). Whereas narrative analysis focuses on the rich detail of each individual story therefore requiring a smaller sample size (Reissman, 1993). However narrative analysis was chosen as the most appropriate method for

this study as the focus is on the individual stories that the foster carers choose to share about their lived experience of looking after URC.

Research design

Recruitment

I utilised purposeful sampling (Reissman, 2008) where the London Borough of Tower Hamlet's Fostering Team were contacted specifically (I chose to specifically approach the London Borough of Tower Hamlets due to previous working relationships which allowed access to the team). Purposeful sampling is common in narrative analysis as the aim is not to generate a generalisation of the population but to gain an in-depth interpretation of the meaning and function of the stories produced in interviews.

I attended the social worker's monthly team meeting where the research was promoted. The inclusion criteria was discussed, and social workers were informed of the aims of the study. The participants were given the research advertisement by their social workers and had the option to engage in the research. I was aware of the potential bias this may have on the sample; the participant may feel pressured by the social worker to engage in the research due to a particular relationship they have which may potentially have a particular power dynamic. The social worker may only approach the foster carers who they have a good relationship with if they are worried about receiving negative feedback.

With regards to sample size, NTA is not feasible for studies with a large number of participants and does not have prescriptive rules in relation to the participant sample size (Reissman, 1993). However, the literature suggests that it is more important for the researchers to be satisfied that they have rich enough data rather than focusing on the number of participants that took part. Some researchers argue that five to eight participants are

sufficient to gain rich detailed information (Earthy & Cronin, 2008), whilst Wells (2011) suggests five is sufficient for narrative analysis.

At the time of recruitment, the number of foster carers in Tower Hamlets who have or were currently looking after a URC was thirteen. The participant pool may have been too small and therefore there may not have been enough participants required for the study. If this was the case, then a neighbouring local authority such as Newham or Hackney may have been contacted.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria

- The following criteria was implemented to identify potential participants
- Any Gender
- Aged 18 and over
- No restrictions on marital status e.g. single or couple
- Looked after a URC at least once in their fostering career for any length of time
- Foster carers showing any level of distress were excluded due to safeguarding issues (assessed by social worker)
- Kinship fostering or those who have a special guardianship order will not be included in the research due to the nature of their relationship (they are often family members or friends known to the young person).

The foster carers must have a good level of spoken English as the interviews will be conducted in English. Due to the research being conducted by the researcher alone and a lack of funding to recruit interpreters only foster carers who felt confident in conversing in English were interviewed. However, it is important to note that their level of English was not specifically examined. It was a decision the foster carers chose to make themselves.

Furthermore, for all the foster carers that were recruited, English was their second language, and they were all from a south Asian and African background.

Participants

Five foster carers were recruited to participate in the study. The number of URC each foster carer looked after ranged from 1-4. The ethnicity of the URC varied as they arrived from Sudan, Albania, Afghanistan, Bangladesh, and Vietnam. For the purpose of protecting the participant's confidentiality the names used are pseudonyms.

Table 1

Demographics of participants

Participant (pseudonym)	Gender	Ethnicity
1. Jasmin	F	Eritrean
2. Lilly	F	Bengali
3. Dahlia	F	Bengali
4. Violet	F	Bengali
5. Rose	F	Bengali

Data Collection

Traditionally within narrative analysis, data is collected through in-depth semi structured interviews with participants (Butina, 2015).. After gaining informed consent from the participants, the interviews were recorded on two audio recording devices. The recordings were then transcribed verbatim by the researcher.

The data was collected between June and August 2020. In the initial ethics application, I had planned to complete the interviews face-to-face but due to the Coronavirus pandemic the ethics application was amended. To follow UEL guidelines all interactions with

the fostering team and the interviews conducted with the foster carers were conducted online via Microsoft Teams.

Research procedure

Foster carers interested in participating in the study gave permission for their contact details to be shared by their social workers. The researcher then contacted the participants via telephone and the aims and procedure of the research was explained verbally. They were also emailed a copy of the participant invitation letter (Appendix A) and consent form (Appendix B) for them to complete prior to the scheduled interview. Following this, a suitable date and time was arranged for the interviews to take place and then the foster carers were emailed a Microsoft Teams meeting link. Participants were reminded to ensure that they should be in a quiet room alone where they felt free to talk. Participants were informed that all personal identifiable information would be removed from the transcript to ensure confidentiality is adhered to. Participants were then given the opportunity to ask any questions. The interviews were recorded on the researcher's dictaphone and on Microsoft Teams.

The interviews followed a semi-structured format and lasted between 40 minutes to 85 minutes. The interview questions (Appendix C) intended to explore their experience by using open-ended questions with the use of follow up questions to clarify responses and to ask for further depth to the responses (Patton, 2002). The questions were discussed with the research supervisor to ensure they were free from bias and were relevant to the research question and aims.

Reflexivity

Narrative analysis argues that the researcher has an important role. Researchers are seen as active participants, as the questions they ask and the relationship they form with the participant can determine which stories the participants chose to disclose and which they choose to hide during the interview. Moreover, during analysis, the researcher's own

assumptions will bias their interpretation of the participant's stories (Willig, 2013). Hence, it is essential that the researcher bears this in mind and adopts a reflexive attitude, to promote transparency within the research. For these reasons, reflexivity is important in narrative analysis, and I will now unpack my personal and professional positioning and discuss how this might have impacted the research at both data collection stage, as well as analysis.

I acknowledged that I have not had any clinical experience of working with foster carers or URC previously; however, my own assumptions regarding the amount of support the foster carers and the URC receive. For example, I am aware that there is a lack of funding available and how this may affect the amount of support and training the foster carers receive. This assumption may have influenced the type of questions I asked and the responses given during the interviews. In addition, the research is being conducted within the local authority that I am employed by, it is possible that I may have a bias towards ensuring the local authority was portrayed in a positive light. This may in turn affect the analysis and interpretation of the data as I may avoid asking questions in relation to the local authority. In order to be aware of how these biases may have affected the research, I kept a reflexive journal throughout the study so that this could be addressed if required.

I ensured that I noted my initial thoughts and feelings, which is an essential exercise in CoP as it encourages the scientist-practitioner to become aware of their own process and how this may affect their research. Being aware of their own process also highlights the role the researcher has in narrative research, as Harper (2011) suggests researchers are active members in co-constructing the meaning with the participants.

Ethical considerations

Ethical approval

Ensuring that the research study avoids harm to the participants is essential (BPS, 2014). This can be done by ensuring there is a rigorous ethical approval process which meets

the ethical guidelines set out by professional bodies. In the case of this research study, the British Psychological Society (BPS) guidelines were followed when the researcher sought ethical approval. The researcher applied for ethical approval from Tower Hamlets Ethics Board (Appendix D) and the UEL Ethics Committee (Appendix E) to undertake the study.

A data management plan (Appendix F) was created and reviewed by UEL to ensure the data is handled ethically. All participant's data was anonymised to protect their privacy and all data was stored on an encrypted password protected device until the research was published. All audio recordings were saved in the UEL H drive, and a copy was saved onto the UEL OneDrive. All consent forms and transcripts were also saved in UEL OneDrive, no paper copies were used as all interviews took place virtually.

Ethical and practical considerations

The study abided by the BPS 'Code of ethics and conduct' (BPS, 2014), which is based on four ethical principles: respect, competence, responsibility, and integrity. 'Respect for the dignity of persons and peoples' is noted to be one of the most vital principles, and due to this, the nature of the research was clearly outlined to the participants and their informed consent was gained. The aims of the research was outlined to them in an information sheet prior to them giving consent and participating. Participants were informed of their responsibilities, their right to withdraw and the cut-off date to when they could ask their data to be removed from the study. The researcher confirmed that their participation in the study is voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw without having to give a reason any time up until the cut-off date. The purpose of the cut-off date is due to the argument put forward by Smith et al. (2009) that researchers are unable to offer the opportunity for participants to withdraw at any time as once the data has been published it is not possible to withdraw. Participants were given a two-week period in which they were able to contact the researcher

to withdraw their data. All participants gave their full consent and none requested to withdraw their data following the interviews.

It is important to note the power imbalance that may be present in interviews (Mishler, 1986). The researcher may be seen by the participants as in a position of power, perceived or real. The researcher must not at any point use this power to put pressure on the participant to participate or respond to questions if they do not wish to (BPS, 2014). Furthermore, as the participants were informed of the research by their social worker, they may have felt pressurised in participating in the study. In order to reduce this, the participants were reminded prior to the interview, during and after that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any point, aiming to reduce any possible pressure they may feel.

Careful consideration was given to ensure that distress was minimised in the participants. Researchers must ensure that the participants are safe and do not come to any harm, physical and/or psychological (BPS, 2014). The potential for harm may have been quite significant in research with foster carers who have looked after refugees (Bates et al., 2005), as participants may have experienced vicarious trauma through the refugees' traumatising experiences. Participants may have also had negative experiences with the social care team or the professional systems they interact with which could have led to apprehension about the study and concerns about how their data may be shared. To reduce this risk, participants were given an invitation sheet which outlined the aims and objectives of the study, the interview procedure, confidentiality, and details of the dissemination (Appendix A). This was given to them prior to the interview by their social workers. Moreover, at the initial telephone call prior to the interview the information sheet was discussed again in detail. The purpose was to ensure that the participants fully understood the purpose of the study and to gain consent. As the interviews were conducted virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the consent forms were sent electronically and the participant's

returned a scanned copy with their signature. Post interviews all participants were de-briefed and were sign posted to appropriate support services (Appendix G).

Additionally, in order to safeguard the participants, the researcher had a risk protocol (See appendix H) if any risk was disclosed. The researcher reminded the participant of confidentiality; however, if confidentiality was broken due to risk, the participants would be informed of this. The researcher would contact the Tower Hamlets fostering duty team during working hours (Monday – Friday, 9am-5pm). Interviews were not conducted outside of these hours.

Researchers should also attempt to maximise the benefits of their research to society and to the individual participants (BPS, 2014). I will disseminate the findings of the research with Tower Hamlets Foster Team, conferences, and also via publication in peer reviewed journals. Participants were aware of where the research would be disseminated to which may have led to participants omitting information due to fear of the Fostering team reading the research. Psychological research aims to contribute to the common good in society (BPS, 2014); it is possible that the findings of this study may make an impact on the policies and procedures relating to foster carers who look after URC. However, it is important to note that the participants may be under the assumption that what they share may lead to guaranteed changes in policies and procedure for foster carers who look after URC. Therefore, it is important to manage their expectations by informing them that I will endeavour to disseminate the research where possible but cannot guarantee that the findings will make changes.

Summary

This methodology chapter has highlighted my choice of methodology to answer the research questions and satisfy the research aims. I have outlined the research design and how the analysis procedure has been implemented. The next chapter focuses on the analysis of the

interviews and explores the themes that have been identified whilst critically examining the discourses utilised by participants to narrate their stories.

Chapter Four: Analysis

Introduction

Whilst presenting the findings of the research, I focused on the shared narratives across the participants (Shay, 2014). The decision to present the findings under each theme was to avoid confusion as to the stories shared often overlapped and were interrelated.

There were four themes identified across the narratives with subthemes these are shared in the table below.

Table 2

Themes and subthemes generated from the analysis

Theme	Subtheme
‘She is a different culture... everything is different’ Understanding Culture	Food Language
‘You need to go somewhere and talk about and relieve your stress sometimes’ Accepting help	Social Services External Support family
‘I was thinking he could be a man underneath; how do I know? Adult or child;’ Feeling safe	Age discrepancy Safety
‘I’m gonna help him through past my past experience of my life’ Our skills	Registration/legal Duty foster carer Personal experiences
‘I have got this in my heart to be honest. I have to be foster mother to my heart; Duty to help	Duty Foster carer

The findings are presented under each theme and the quotes are presented in the order that the participants were interviewed in. The quotes are in italics and indented, pseudonyms have been used to protect the participants' anonymity. Any further identifiable data such as the ethnicity of the URC has been removed (HCPC, 2016) as they may be identified due to this. The quotes included are verbatim and are extracts from the transcripts. Prior to sharing the findings from each theme, I have shared a short synopsis of the participants to provide context to their stories. Participants' details shared are brief to safeguard confidentiality (BPS, 2018).

Dahlia

Dahlia is a single, Bangladeshi female who has been fostering for fifteen years. She shared her experience of looking after four URC who all varied in their cultural backgrounds. Dahlia spoke a lot about her feelings of guilt and her desire to help support the URC.

Jasmin

Jasmin is a single, Eritrean female; she identified as a refugee herself and spoke about this experience throughout her narrative. Jasmin often related issues that the URC faced with the troubles she faced in her past by sharing stories of her own struggles. She described being a foster carer for a long time and has looked after URC for the last four years.

Lilly

Lilly is a married, Bangladeshi female who has looked after URC for over eight years. Her story shared the development of her relationship with a URC who she has looked after since the age of 13. Lilly prioritised sharing her concerns about the URC's legal status and reflected on the difficulties this caused for herself and the URC.

Rose

Rose is a Bangladeshi female who has been a foster carer for over twelve years. Her narrative focused on her recent experience of looking after URC and how she has managed looking after this unique group of children.

Violet

Violet is a Bangladeshi female and has been fostering for a number of years. Her story is unique compared to the other foster carers as she had looked after only one URC. Violet's story focused on her distinctive relationship with the URC and her efforts to provide a better outcome for them.

Theme 1: 'She is a different culture... everything is different' Understanding culture

Similar to the findings in the literature review, cultural differences led to challenges in the relationship between the URC and the foster carers. In the broader social context, since URC are arriving from different countries, it is inevitable that cultural differences will be apparent. However, the findings describe how the foster carers made sense of these differences and how this affected their ability to care for the URC. Within this theme, two subthemes emerged: language and food. The findings demonstrate how the subthemes were interconnected with the cultural issues due to the fact that language and food was associated with the URC's home country.

Subtheme 1: Language

The majority of the foster carers' accounts shared the difficulties around language as the URC placed with them were from different cultural backgrounds, significantly, from countries in which English was not an official language and it was unlikely that any of the URC would be proficient in English. Due to the language barrier, communication as a whole was difficult with potential for external support such as use of interpreters and translating tools.

Dahlia

Dahlia's interview reflected her experience of navigating the language barrier that was present between her and the URC she looked after. Dahlia shared her role in managing the language difficulties, thus taking a personal responsibility for this. She described the activities she engaged in, creating a shared experience that would lead to rapport building and a better understanding of the URC. Dahlia described the importance of understanding the URC, suggesting her assumption that this will lead to a better relationship with the URC. Her story infers that the URC can see the effort she has put in to understand them as no one previously has. Dahlia's narrative reflects stories of empowerment as she tried to empower the URC's voice by actively trying to understand them. Her story shared the multiple methods she utilised to reduce the language barrier and as a result better understand the URC.

They couldn't speak English. So they were speaking Arabic and like their other language. So luckily one of them used to watch enough Hindi film and he would sing me Hindi songs. He would love to sing Hindi songs that we could communicate in through it like that...

Just just find out like you know when they're just watching music or something just find out when the background. I do tell them like whatever music is you? which film? let's watch a film from your country.

Dahlia's narrative also highlighted the support she received from interpreters from various different agencies, but she noted that this was not always available. Due to this she shares her alternative methods.

But because they're at home, so we still more body language, sign language like this that.

Dahlia's story inferred that there was a shortage on interpreting services available to her and the URC therefore she shared with me the alternative methods she has utilised to manage. Overall, Dahlia demonstrated her abilities to manage the language barriers by highlighting her problem-solving skills. With Dahlia feeling a need to ensure she is doing her best to support the URC and to reduce all their problems. She portrays herself as a 'guardian' who is always looking for an alternative method to resolve difficult situations.

Jasmin

Jasmin's speech indicated how she thought language is an essential tool for the URC to have stability in the UK. She drew on a lot of her own stories of learning the English language as this was an additional language for her. She thought it was important to have a foster carer who speaks the URC's native language, although she added that this may be a hindrance for the URC to learn English as they would have limited exposure and opportunities to speak English. Thus, she inferred that in order for the URC to 'fit in' they must speak the language and embrace the cultural norms of their host country. Her story seems to suggest that those who are not proficient in English may be deemed as not assimilating to British culture. This may reflect Jasmin's own past experience of feeling like an 'outsider' and not being able to integrate into the British culture until she was able to speak English. She articulated that being proficient in English has the potential to make one's life easier by reducing barriers of prejudice.

Language important... so when you know English language all the problem is sorted...without language, he hasn't got any direction you blind.

Jasmin's narrative is unique as she herself was a refugee and it is likely that her past experiences influenced her role as a foster carer. Due to this there is a sense of connection to

the URC as she believes she has experienced similar situations, particularly similar barriers, e.g. language difficulties. Jasmin's story advocates for the URC to learn English by relaying how she overcame her challenges of learning a new language. Her narrative focused on her 'expertise' as she suggested that the URC should take her advice.

Jasmin's explanation of the cultural diversity within the borough of Tower Hamlets indicated a sense of envy as she was unable to access such facilities when she was in a similar situation. Her story highlights her frustrations about her past and suggests how she would have benefitted from this.

They are lucky at least they gave me I can speak language to them. But other if you go other places, you don't know nothing language... So how these children in Tower Hamlets they come to Tower Hamlets foster care they have language that heaven to be honest, they are lucky

Jasmin's tone suggested her annoyance at the URC not using this opportunity to learn the language seriously. This could potentially be due to her never being given the same opportunities and support.

Jasmin continued her story and emphasised the importance of socialising with English speaking people. She thought it was important to share with me how she became accepted by the British society as her narrative indicated her desire to be accepted. This could reflect the tensions she felt as she no longer belonged to her native culture and struggled to be accepted by the British society. Furthermore, Jasmin does not seem to acknowledge the positives of engaging with people who speak the same language as the URC as this can offer cultural continuity. She continued to articulate the importance she assigned to becoming integrated into British society.

Yeah that's why I believe to be honest it's not just for the same we are here in English we have to be with English society to learn our language them language and then to do start our skills.

Jasmin described how she has used her language skills for interpreting, suggesting effectiveness of being multilingual, but notes that she is not a professional interpreter and cannot interpret in professional settings. This may be relevant for Jasmin to highlight as she thought her language skills were being abused when no professional interpreter was available. Her tone suggested a feeling of pride that she is able to do this but also a sadness for having a unique set of language skills overlooked.

Sometimes I am the one the interpreter when they stuck with some when they struggle it cant be cant get interpreter. I can help because this is part of my language... For something is interview for Home Office, for sometimes for the doctors, you know health issue I can say I need proper interpreter.

Overall, Jasmin's discourse around language highlighted her challenges around 'fitting in' English society. In addition, her story emphasised the importance she gave to speaking the English language as she thought it was a sign of integration into English society which was required if the URC wanted to continue living here.

Lilly

Lilly narrated the difference between caring for a URC whom she speaks the same language as compared to a URC that speaks a different language. When sharing her story about the URC who originated from the same country she reflected on how much more she

could help the URC as they shared a cultural background. Her tone suggested a sense of relief that this was something she did not have to worry about. From this I inferred that she assumed all the other issues relating to the URC would be more manageable as the biggest hurdle is often the language and cultural differences.

*I thinking you know he is I am *** and he is *** as well and how much I can support. I can try my best and I think is if I do something for him, then I can feel better... And he didn't speak English as well and better for him because same language and same culture, everything is same.*

Lilly goes on to recall difficulties when looking after a URC who could not speak English and so she was unable to communicate with her verbally. Lilly's story suggested that once the URC was able to effectively communicate in English she was able to create a better managed placement as there were no longer any misunderstandings due to communication difficulties.

She is a different culture, different religious, everything is different but I've managed it it's beginning a little bit hard but it's okay now it's okay

Lilly's narrative aligns with the common narrative found in the literature review, namely, that speaking a different language to the URC caused challenges in the ability to look after them. As she shares in her story that once she was able to communicate with the URC there were no longer any issues. Thus, this reinforces her understanding of how language can resolve all the difficulties for herself and the URC.

Rose

Rose's account of the language barrier brought up a different concern compared to the other stories. Her narrative appears critical and focused on her frustrations with not being able to communicate with the URC. This may suggest her past experiences of being misunderstood and the judgement she faced when others were unable to communicate with her. Rose describes using an alternative method to try to break the language barrier, but notes there was still a gap in the story as there was no direct communication possible. Her story indicated a desire to understand the URC, but she could not find a method that could satisfy her desire. Her tone throughout this theme suggested a sense of desperation as she wanted to do better. Furthermore, throughout her narrative Rose proposed rhetorical questions to bring me into her story, she looked to me for verbal and non-verbal cues to confirm if I agreed with her statements thus suggesting that she needed validation for her actions. Perhaps this reflects her fear of failing in her role of looking after the URC.

Uuum its very much difficult begin to the starting point. They don't speak English.

And as I said, they're from different background, different culture

We chat with the Google translator and I ask them information, what they want, how we want to express our views to them. But still, still, there is a gap isn't it. But talking to someone directly. And the Google translator is different, right?

Rose moved on and talked about the lack of trust between herself and the URC due to the language barriers. Within her story Rose raised her concerns about the URC talking about her and her family in their native language amongst themselves. Rose's story indicated a paranoia that potentially resulted in the mistrust between the URC and herself. This lack of

trust may also be fuelled by a presumption that refugees are not trustworthy, and that she should be wary of their behaviour, thus highlighting stories of mistrust and vulnerability.

Maybe they talking about us, we don't understand, but sometimes the body language, the context, you get that they're talking about this issue or they're talking about that content.

Her narrative suggested that Rose is unable to feel like an 'insider' as the URC chose to keep her at a verbal distance. This may have led to her feeling like an 'outsider' in her own home which Rose struggled to accept. Rose's narrative shared stories of failure and frustrations as she continued to battle the language barriers whilst looking after the URC.

Subtheme 2: Food

This subtheme was present throughout majority of the foster carers' narratives highlighting the importance URC placed on having access to food from their native countries. Furthermore, the stories shared describe the availability of such food and the ease of access to them. I noticed that this theme was of interest to me as I had assumptions that managing this issue would be challenging. Listening to the foster carers' stories gave me insight into how they managed the differences.

Dahlia

Dahlia highlighted the importance of ensuring the URC had access to home cooked food native to their home country. Her narrative highlighted the significance of food within her culture as she seeks support from external resources to facilitate this access to native foods. This implies that Dahlia places a high value on eating food from her native country and her desire to share food and try each other's cultural food.

*I have to find somebody a lady from *** who used to cook for us.... They used to eat rice and curry, you find out like what taste, how much spices they like, what they don't like. It just slowly. Or tinned food we will take them to the shopping. Which like where do we go for shopping for *** like tinned food things like that or bread and she will show me the shop and we used to go. Cooking with pasta they will put sugar. White rice with sugar.*

Although Dahlia expressed that this experience was not easy and posed challenges for her, it seems it may have contributed to her drive to help URC as she went beyond her duty of providing food. Thus, it was implied that she placed a large emphasis on ensuring that she was able to provide the food they desire as this would lead to her creating good relationships with the URC. Furthermore, Dahlia's story focused on solving the problems the URC faced by actively engaging in methods to make their integration in the UK easier. It can be suggested that her story described her passion for her role and highlighted her drive to do better for the URC.

Lilly

Lilly's narrative is similar to Dahlia's narrative as she talks about the importance of having food that is from the URC's native country. Their stories share a similar struggle of searching for suitable sources for native foods. Through her interactions with the URC, Lilly was able to adjust her cooking style to suit the needs of the URC. Implying her ability to be flexible and welcoming when looking after the URC.

*And she is from *** she bit a little bit you know similar for dinner. She is eat rice and curry but not hot sometime I make her, give less spice and make a little bit different.*

*And now she's she learned how to cook because she use you know YouTube and everything. I taking her to *** shop, *** shop and she buy her stuff now.*

*But we found in a *** shop is a little bit far but I took her shopping and she shop she likes everybody like their own food.*

Lilly shared the advantage of finding grocery shops that catered to the ingredients used in the URC's native foods. Lilly implied that everyone would like to eat their native food, and this may reflect her desires to eat her narrative food. Thus, her drive to ensure that the URC had access to this food was clear. She noted that the food challenges reduced when the URC was able to learn how to cook. Lilly reflects on how she has supported the URC to become more independent, implying that the burden of cooking has been resolved. Her reflection presented a sense of achievement as she was able to support the URC to become independent. She seemed to suggest this independence was due to her supporting the URC, thus describing a story of triumph.

Rose

Rose's speech focused on the challenges she faced around feeding the URC. She began by comparing URC to other LAC suggesting that it is more difficult to accommodate for the food preferences of URC. Rose identified this as a challenge for her; this highlighted her awareness of the issues, but she did not relate how, if at all, she managed this challenge. Her speech suggested that she may have been at a loss for how to manage this challenge as she reported trying her best to provide the food the URC liked. One possible conclusion I drew from her speech was her desire to convince me that she was trying her 'best' in order to avoid feeling judged by me. Her tone emphasised her frustration and again she asked me a

rhetorical question. It can be implied that the use of the rhetorical question was possibly to prove to me that this was an impossible task and therefore I should not judge her for failing.

If if the children are from this country is different, children coming from abroad is different. Totally different experience and different expectation as well. Like children from this country they will eat fish and chips or chicken and chips, you know, fast food anything.

So food wise, they find difficult, and you now confused what to give them what they would be eating. You try your best level to put the food on the table and they can be thinking Oh, no, we don't like these. We don't like the smell. So what do you do?

Rose's speech implied that the effort she put in to provide food for the URC had been wasted and therefore her annoyance was justified. She feels frustrated and potentially unappreciated by the URC as she has not succeeded in providing them food they like. Overall, Rose's dilemma associated with the URC's food highlighted her narratives of frustration and annoyance. These narratives suggest that her experience of looking after URC have been difficult and have at times led to her questioning her abilities.

Theme 2: 'You need to go somewhere and talk about and relieve your stress sometimes'

Accepting help

This theme focused on the various sources of support the foster carers mentioned in their narratives. Each story shared the importance of receiving support whilst looking after the URC. It was noted in the stories that they could not manage their roles if their support systems were not in place. Thus, indicating that receiving support played an important role in

how they made sense of looking URC. This theme generated the following subthemes: support from social care and support from their support network. These two were the prominent sources of support that were discussed within their narratives.

Subtheme 1: Support from social care

As social care was responsible for placing the URC in the foster carers' homes the foster carers spoke about the varying degree of support they received from them. Moreover, this subtheme identified the different perspectives the foster carers had about the role social care played in helping the URC and the foster carers. Furthermore, I acknowledged my own interest in understanding the role social care played as I am aware of my own assumptions regarding their input and support available.

Dahlia

In Dahlia's narrative it is evident that she has a positive relationship with social services, this relationship may shape her experience of social care. Furthermore, as Dahlia is a foster carer mentor it could be suggested that she is affiliated with the local authority and therefore advocated for the fostering service. Her tone reflected the pride she felt and the importance she gave to her role. Her experience of the support she received appeared to be too positive and her description of the support she received seemed over exaggerated because being too critical would reflect on her too. However, I note that this may be my own bias as I acknowledged earlier that resources available are minimal.

If you're new foster carer, you get matched up with the experienced foster carer, you get a mentor and you get to go to support group. You can there's lots of people's number you can have like, you will also have your social workers number, you have child's social workers number and you have a number for emergency duty team at

night time, but then also you get you can foster carer, there is a Foster Care Association...., I also do mentoring.

Dahlia noted the difference between looking after URC and LAC and she offered some suggestions as to how social services can support foster carers further. Dahlia acknowledged the power that social workers have compared to foster carers but noted that this was underutilised, which led to the URC facing legal issues. She shared her frustrations she had experienced within the legal/ registration process and offered an alternative resolution to the current situation. By offering a solution, Dahlia appeared to take on a personal interest in resolving the URCs problems. This may reflect her past experiences of not receiving support and so Dahlia appears to tackle these issues herself. Her story highlighted her drive to support the URC and this was present throughout her narrative.

So social services will have a lot of things or they can say well, we'll give you this because they got more authority than foster carer isnt it.

Dahlia's narrative continued to highlight how powerless she felt foster carers are in comparison and she equated herself to parents who she assumed rarely had the necessary qualifications or authority to make significant changes. This signifies her desire to be more powerful, so she can support the URC further.

Lots of things happen. Lots of children case got rejected, because the solicitor keep changing, the solicitor firm got closed down. So like, by the time is social, foster carer, we're not we got basic training, but we are not lawyers, you cant fight with anybody. Well at the end of the day, we're just like parents, isn't it? You can knock

and knock and knock and if somebody listen, that's good enough. We have no power to make them listen to you.

This lack of power was reflected throughout her narrative where Dahlia referred to other services in the system that she assumed had more power and authority compared to foster carers. However, Dahlia seems to challenge this lack of power and attempts to support URC beyond her role as a foster carer.

Jasmin

Jasmin also shared the support available from social care but stated that she had not required any of their support. Her tone suggested that she had been coping well and does not need intervention from social care, as this may be seen a weakness and she appeared proud of this. Nevertheless, Jasmin narrated that if she required support from social care, she would be able to access this easily. This highlights her positive relationship with social care as she assumes the support is readily available and she does not seem to be aware of the challenges in accessing social care support.

To be honest the social workers if you need them is there I call them but really so far I don't need.

Jasmin's speech suggested that receiving support from social care was a sign of weakness and this did not align with her central narrative of being a strong role model for the URC. This potentially implies that if she sought support from social care then she has failed and is weak.

Rose

Rose identified that it is difficult to talk about her issues and frustrations with the URC to others, such as family member or friends, due to confidentiality. However, she notes

that she has received emotional support from her social worker, and this has alleviated her stress.

I can't go out and talk to my friends and family about this children, because this is not the right professional way to do that.

Within this extract I was able to empathise with Rose, as a trainee CoP I have often found myself in this position too. Being bound by confidentiality leaves little space to share stressors with family and friends. From her speech it can be seen that the relationship and support she received from her social worker were essential for Rose.

Rose moves from talking about her social worker to reflecting on the local authority and the central government. Overall, Rose expresses a very different narrative compared to Jasmin and Dahlia. She articulated how the URC system was broken, and that policies and procedures need to be more robust. Her narrative suggested that refugees should be differentiated from British nationals as they are not viewed as being the same and therefore should not have the same rights. Rose makes a clear distinction that there is a 'they' and 'us' group and she aligns herself with being a British national. This narrative seems to be central throughout her story and one that she refers to several times.

I don't know how much they should, there should be some, somewhere somebody should be lobbying about this abusing the system and how this department is working with the unaccompanied children... You have to have a different policy for the children in this country coming to in care and the people coming from abroad.

But nobody's addressing this. Everybody's taking as it coming and they're taking it and dumping them into the foster carers, I would say dumping.

Her tone suggested an irritation with the lack of support provided and the language she used was more accusatory compared to the other foster carers. Her speech also suggested a lack of empathy towards the URC's difficulties. This frustration may be projected onto the URC as she often described difficulties in their relationship.

Rose identified the need for more specialised training as this would better prepare foster carers to meet the needs of URC. This is similar to the findings found in the literature review.

But unaccompanied children training very limited... Our foster carers need more training. So we need more funding on this. And they should measure that how many children coming from unaccompanied asylum seekers in the authority? And we should be working according to that and addressing rather than hiding it. I feel it's kind of like a hidden kind of things

However, Rose raised her suspicions around whether this would be possible. Her paranoia surrounding the URC accentuated again, and she was concerned that the truth relating to their migration was hidden purposefully. This suspicion is found throughout her narrative which suggested that she found the URC and the local authority untrustworthy thus, highlighting stories of anger and paranoia. Furthermore, by holding these paranoid views about the URC her ability to look after the URC may have been impacted negatively.

Violet

Violet's story explained how she was let down by social services. She spoke about her experience of looking after a URC for eight years and noted that she did not feel supported by

social care. Within her story Violet shares a sense of resentment suggesting that she may have let the URC down because of the lack of support she received. Thus, she acknowledged that looking after a URC would be easier if social care supported her more.

And I said, If I knew this, I got this information before then I can help him more. But umm there is a asylum seeker got so much support its there so much organisation you know, support those asylum seekers, but I didn't know before.

Violet described the extra responsibilities of looking after a URC and voiced her desire to be paid more than the rates she is paid for looking after LAC. Despite being rejected by social care she did not dwell on the poor payment issue and continued to provide the support she had been providing. She then chose to share a story where she felt she had to 'fight' on the URC's behalf to access money for the solicitors to be paid. It seems that Violet would not let social care waive their responsibility, therefore she fought for the URC. She reported going beyond her means to fight for the URC; this may have been due to revenge for not being adequately compensated for her time.

Sometime am feeling I'm doing extra job, should have extra but you know, they say they know this is the limit ... and also once I have to fight with social service about his court money you know that he once he didn't get.. ummm... didn't get ummm errr legal aid... solicitor asked for three thousand something you know he needed for going to court. And I wasn't sure who is going to pay this ... And I was chasing this person that person you know and last day, last day before deadline and I went to the social service office and I said, No, you have to pay him now.

Violet moved on and shared another dilemma the URC faced and stressed her predicament.

I don't know if the social, social service gonna pay for him or not he I don't think he has much saving. I don't know what I cannot pay whole amount. Maybe I can support it a little. This is another worry

Here it is evident how much Violet was willing to support the URC financially even though she is aware that she may not be reimbursed. Thus, implying the strong relationship she had formed with the URC as she has invested in their future and was prepared to continue helping. Violet seems to keep her feelings of being undervalued by social care separate to her relationship with the URC, suggesting that she was devoted to help the URC.

Subtheme 2: Support network

The foster carers highlighted that looking after URC was often challenging yet most described finding it manageable due to the support they received from their personal support network. The stories below share how the foster carers used their support network to aide them in their role as a foster carer for URC.

Dahlia

Dahlia shared her sources of support outside of social care but felt that all foster carers would have access to such support. Perhaps Dahlia was not aware of foster carers who did not have the same level of support as she has always had support available. She articulated how her support network offered her a space to problem solve difficult decisions in relation to the foster caring role. Potentially making her care-giving role easier for her to manage.

Also will have my support network, My my two boys. Every foster carer got lots of support network. And those support network could be within your family or your brother, sister, friend

She also referred to the Refugee Council as a major support for her in looking after the URC. The rich cultural information that was shared via the Refugee Council supported her to understand the URC further. Moreover, throughout Dahlia's story she has described in detail the challenges she faced with the URC's immigration process. Here she acknowledged the Refugee Council's role in helping the URC gain asylum. I noted that I was struck by her dedication particularly as she independently found support from the Refugee Council which seemed to depict her problem-solving nature.

We went to the Refugee Council they took us to the home office. Not many not many times I travelled to Croydon but still I get lost. So it was nice the man from the Refugee Council he took us.

Dahlia's narrative provides a positive experience of receiving help from others, suggesting that she may have found it more difficult to look after the URC without her support network in place, thus highlighting her stories of support and appreciation.

Jasmin

Jasmin shared her journey of becoming a foster carer and reflected on how her children supported her to apply for the role. Her story shared a sense of pride that maybe she naturally was a good mother and could therefore be available to 'mother' others when her children had grown up.

My children they said why not look after child yourself., You can do it mama. We can help you as well.

Because my kids very helpful as well. Any child come they straightaway they accept him like a part of the family

Her narrative also suggested that having a more accepting family allowed the URC to feel welcomed and enabled them to settle into the foster home quicker. She noted that it is due to the amount of support she received from her children that she can provide a welcoming home environment for the URC. It seemed her families' abilities to accept URC allowed her to support them without any conflicts in her family. Thus, making her role easier to manage.

Theme 3: 'I was thinking he could be a man underneath; how do I know? Adult or child; Feeling safe

This theme focused on the issues the foster carers raised concerning feeling safe whilst looking after the URC. The stories shared the difficult situations the foster carers were in whilst attempting to care for the URC. Prior to carrying out the interviews I had an assumption that URC's safety was a concern due to the physical journey they have experienced in order to reach the UK. I was also aware of the age assessments that the Home Office has been conducting and I empathised with the URC as the process seemed distressing for them. However, I had not considered the affect this would have on the foster carers and the risk they are exposed to. Whilst this theme was unexpected, it has brought to light some important issues. The following subthemes emerged from their narratives: age discrepancy and feeling safe.

Subtheme 1: Age discrepancy

All the foster carers interviewed were female and the majority of the URC they looked after were male. Some of the URC required age assessments with the Home Office due to uncertainties related to their age and concerns that some may be classified legally as adults. These age discrepancies resulted in moral dilemmas for some of the foster carers and the different narratives shared below highlights how they made sense of this.

Dahlia

Dahlia on multiple occasions intertwined the issue of age discrepancy with concerns of safety. She associated them together and expressed her vulnerability as she felt she was exposing herself to harm by allowing the URC into her home. Her narrative implied the lack of safety foster carers have when they allow URC into their homes which did not seem to be considered by social care. Moreover, Dahlia's concerns were extended to the other people that live in her home, such as her children and other LAC.

One of them had the age assessment done. So they were older than their age. So, it was quite tough so when... uh first... for when they said age assessment, and then you get a bit worried isn't it? You just think like no, okay, because I'm a single woman.

And then his life story was different than what he was saying...So I had lots of I had to be very carefully around him because I in a way I was just thinking he could be a man underneath, how do I know?

Dahlia's speech implied that she was more vulnerable as she is a single female and did not have a male figure to protect her in the home if any issues were to arise with the URC. I noted that this was a great concern and an issue that I had not considered. This potentially left Dahlia in challenging situations as her central narrative implied her desire to

help the URC to the best of her abilities but this issue led to her being unable to trust the URC's intentions.

She went on to describe the URC's behaviours which led her to believe he was older than he had disclosed. Dahlia's story then focused on her suspicions around the URC but also her concerns around him potentially being exploited. This potentially created conflict for Dahlia as she was concerned about the URC welfare as well as her own safety.

He changed his age anyway from 14 to 16 immediately... with him I had lot of... to like I had to be very careful and who he was meeting. Like lots of people because the way it was, I was very, very worried for him... Because like not, obviously he came from somewhere and somebody brought him here. They didn't do it for free, they would need something from him.

She shared a story which expressed her concerns about the URC's previous involvement with extremist groups. Especially as the narrative around the Taliban is very dangerous and the URC was closely linked with being involved with them. This implied Dahlia's understanding of the Taliban to be dangerous and therefore she may have assumed the URC could also be as dangerous as them. Thus, she may struggle with her desire to help the URC if she is fearful of what the URC is capable of.

Yeah, because he was talking about Taliban all this so it was quite heavy.

There are moments in her narrative when she discussed the age discrepancy but also reflected on the URC's perspective and difficulties highlighting her conflict.

So no matter how old they are, they missed child, child they never been a child so you just I just saying that. [...] they deserve to be mothered, they deserved to be looked after.

Dahlia shared her awareness of the potential trauma the URCs may have experienced and focused on how she can protect them. She used the word ‘mothered’ when referring to how they should be looked after; this indicated that she took on a maternal role when looking after the URC. This notion of the ‘mother’ identity was also seen in Jasmin’s narrative which suggested a similar identity. Therefore, it seems that Dahlia used this identity to make sense of her role as their foster carer.

Rose

Rose shared her concerns about not having had any information about the URC’s background. She compared URC with LAC in the UK. She identified the different signs that signified that the URC were over 18 years old. She noted that dealing with over 18s is different and potentially more dangerous as they are adults. From her speech it appeared that Rose did not consider the journey the URC had been on and how this may impact on the age-discrepancy. She also did not take cultural differences into consideration when she referred to their mannerisms and content of their conversations.

Children who born in this country, we know the real age, and you can talk to them, we can treat them according to the age. But the asylum seekers, because they come from abroad it’s hard to know the age.

... their behaviours adult behaviours. Sometimes when have a conversation with them, even through google translator you can gather that no child this is not how a child will talk

Rose continued to compare the URC with LAC, this suggested that she was unable to understand the different life experiences they have encountered. She held the view that LAC and URC would present the same.

So I've seen the difference between him and the other two.

Rose shared a story of another URC who was in her placement for a very short period. She expressed how the incident made her feel insecure as the URC's history was unknown. She also stated she would have been able to manage the challenges if she had been informed, as this would allow her to be prepared, similar to LAC as they are given a detailed history. She noted it was the unknown that caused her concern and this may potentially fuel her narrative around feeling unsafe in their presence.

Yeah, that doesn't make my role as a foster carer any difference of that. We feel they are not a child otherwise you know by eating, cooking and all this looking after them. I don't feel yeah there's a difference in that.

Despite sharing a narrative that portrays how unsafe she felt, and how wary she was of the URC in her home, she simultaneously expressed her dedication to her role. She noted her intention to continue to meet their basic needs of food and shelter. This seems to contradict her narrative of anger and frustration, thus indicating a tension between managing her role as a foster carer and being concerned for her safety.

Subtheme 2: Feeling safe

This subtheme raised other issues pertaining to the foster carers feeling unsafe with the URC. The majority of the stories within this sub theme focused on the people involved in migrating

the URC into the UK. The foster carers shared concerns regarding the URC's debt to the traffickers and how this in turn may affect both their safety. There are also references to how to vet the URC prior to their placements within foster homes.

Dahlia

Dahlia compared the URC with LAC and acknowledged that URC arrive without a medical/criminal history which meant their past was unknown and therefore the URC could be dangerous. However, she recognised that her previous acceptance of potentially more dangerous LAC also put her at risk, but it seemed the unknown entity made the URC appear more dangerous. She stated that she is able to safeguard herself from LAC because she is aware of their history which potentially made her feel less scared.

You don't know what they're coming in with, their date of birth, their baggage, luggage, whatever, they're coming up with the no medical done. Like, the background, we don't know their history, how violent they are, things like that. So that would be uhh but again like we take more challenging children born in this country.

She described the initial period as the 'honeymoon' period which suggested that she thought the URC may be displaying behaviours they want her to see before they reveal their true nature.

Dahlia described her worries regarding the people and the organisations that brought the URC to the UK and their motives in doing so. This was reflected in her speech as she displayed fear and genuine concern for the URC and their safety. Below she shared a story of how traffickers kept in touch with the URC and how she protected the URC.

Whoever put them here, they might know where they are. They were not ready for anybody to find them...

I said, I'm gonna have this phone. He's not allowed to have his phone, because somebody was harassing them maybe so he was not so he gave me the phone easily. Yeah aunty Just keep it keep it. And the other one said never give never give this back.

This story indicated the fearlessness Dahlia displayed whilst protecting the URC. She seemed to focus on reducing the URC's fear and did not have the awareness of the potential risk she put herself in by getting involved with the traffickers. Dahlia provided the URC with the protection they needed from people that could potentially harm them, thus suggesting that her narrative is multi-dimensional as she showed deep concern for the well-being of the URC but also her fears about the risks to her.

Rose

Rose's narrative focused on finding methods to prove the URC are in fact children. Her tone seemed aggravated because people were posing as URCs and then were able to gain access to the support system in the UK. She drew on stories of fear and shared the vulnerability she felt whilst looking after the URC as she was unsure if they were adults or children. However, Rose's interest in the URC's criminal history was clear as she discussed this many times in her story and this may have potentially exacerbated her feelings of fear and the frustration she expressed through her narrative.

Uhh I think this, before they're placed in foster care or like all these asylum seekers unaccompanied, they should be put in somewhere where they can be assessed. They can be carried out some assessment, this should be carried out proper. So I don't

know, how safe you are in any kind of, they might have a challenging, they might have what do you call umm any behaviours back home. They could be a murderer, they could be a rapist? I don't know.

Rose demonstrated an awareness of why URC may travel to the UK but felt this desire compromised the safety of herself and her family. She attributed blame to the local authority whom she felt had a duty of care to protect her. Rose's feeling of anger due to being unprotected was evident throughout her narrative. Rose did not seem sympathetic towards the reasons behind why URC are leaving their homes which is often due to war and prosecution. Her speech suggested that the URC had a choice; this seemed to align with her narrative that the URC move to the UK intentionally.

Thats the reason they are leaving behind their family and everyone for a better life but as I said some of the duties of this country people need to do. Like so what if I'm a foster carer I am a human being too.

Rose's story suggested that the URC are given more importance than her safety which may have led to her frustrations and resentment towards the URC. This narrative seemed to be consistent throughout her story and I reflected on whether this led to her difficult relationships with the URC.

With the looking after I don't see whether they're children or an adult I feel as a charity as a goodwill as human beings. It's my duty if somebody needs some help, and somebody needs food, somebody needs to be looked after.

Rose's experience of looking after the URC seemed very complex with multiple tensions that she attempted to navigate. This can be seen here when she explained why she continued this difficult role.

Rose's narrative seemed to voice a sense of anger and feelings of unfairness in the financial support the URC received. Her narrative led me to assume that she held an untrusting narrative of all young people who seek asylum. She speculated that there are professional networks or groups of people who help others gain asylum in the UK which has led to them abusing the system.

*Yeah. I mean, recently I've seen lots of *** people are coming. Especially they're claiming they're under 17 18. So somehow we feel that, okay, one story, you can think that this is probably they've been trafficking, they've been exploited about the drugs and all these things. But sometimes you just think, how come the whole, the next story comes same things and the next person come and saying the same same stories?*

As seen in her story previously, her mistrust surrounding the URC's entry into the UK seemed to influence her opinions towards them. She reported not enough was being done to gatekeep and that more stringent measures should be in place. By holding such narratives, Rose may potentially look for more flaws in the system to reinforce her beliefs in her paranoia.

Continuing her story, she expressed her frustration with URC automatically receiving benefits without their ages being verified. This could potentially be due to her own experiences of having to work hard to have access to these services whereas the URC seem to get it for free. This could potentially result in resentment towards the URC.

There's some of them are over 18. They're staying home 24 seven, getting the food on the plate. There is no tension worries. Straight away they're getting the dentist free, optician free all sorts of things.

Where lots of children who are here working so hard, their parents working so hard. And they're trying to get bread and butter. But they don't get brand names, you know, the clothes and all the facilities.

Rose moved on to scrutinising the spending habits of the URC which may potentially further fuel her resentment. Her narrative overall tends to focus on the broken system which she suggested is being abused at the cost of British nationals, namely her and her family. Her views may be in line with the discourses she was exposed to as these may have influenced her experiences.

Theme 4: 'I'm gonna help him through past my past experience of my life' Our skills

This theme focused on the variety of skills that the foster carers displayed and were required to possess in order look after the URC. The subthemes that emerged were: legal/registration, duty foster carer, and their personal experiences. These themes that emerged from the interviews highlighted novel dilemmas that I was not aware of. For example, the majority of the responsibility of ensuring the URC's legal asylum process was the responsibility of the foster carer. Yet for some foster carers this was the first time they had experienced this process and they had received no training or guidance on the process. At this point, I noted feeling impressed by the resilience the foster carers showed.

Subtheme 1: Legal/Registration

The foster carers identified multiple agencies that they were required to register the URC with such as legal, medical, and educational agencies. This theme highlights the foster carers experience of completing these tasks.

Dahlia

Dahlia shared her journey of navigating the UK legal system with the URC. She described difficulties and barriers that both herself and the URC experienced. She noted the legal process was considerably easier during her first experience of looking after URC due to the prompt assignment of the solicitor, enabling her to manage legal affairs efficiently. Her brief account of her overall experience with this URC may be due in part to having a seamless legal experience.

The first one finding a solicitor was easy. And then after, after a year, he got some time, I think, I don't know how many years they gave him. Then he moved to another foster carer.

Dahlia went on to describe a very different experience with the second URC she looked after. She shared in detail the challenges they both faced which produced a difficult and problematic narrative.

Just before he was 18, I let him go. But what happened his application was rejected. So it was I had to do lots of running around, go with him to the home office... So I needed to chase everybody.

Dahlia's desire to help the URC was apparent throughout this story as she gave multiple examples of how she dealt with the asylum process, often sharing how she went beyond her role to support the URC.

She also recounted having heard of similar situations faced by other URC which suggested a universal issue faced by all foster carers of URC. She highlighted the financial implications of the application process particularly when it is not efficiently executed and suggested an alternative resolution.

One of them got application was rejected. He, he went through appeal. Yeah, that's, but there's other lots of other foster carer's children, they're in limbo, they're over 18 now. And their application got rejected, they have to do new application. So, there is no consistency with the what you call solicitors. So, the department social services is paying, but to somebody with maybe they're paying the same two, three times the same fees, but no work is getting done.

Her tone suggested that she was frustrated with the solicitor's firm, possibly suggesting they were not working as hard as she was to support the URC. Dahlia goes on to highlight the difficulty of repeating the URC's stories due to solicitors resigning and legal firms closing. Her speech demonstrated the struggles she faced with the lack of responsibility taken by the solicitors in ensuring the URC's story and paperwork were safeguarded. As she mentioned earlier, Dahlia perceived the solicitors to have more power, therefore their carelessness seemed to anger her.

So like, sometimes, solicitors firm got closed. So where do we go? Where is all my paper gone? Where is all the story then? I've been telling and telling the so the commitment the bonding is not there. They can destroy a lot by being silly.

Dahlia seemed to take personal responsibility for the URC and their asylum application. Her experience with the previous URC appeared to have informed her current role as a foster carer which is demonstrated by the actions she undertook to support the URC.

Lilly

Lilly shared the numerous setbacks the URC faced due to their legal status. Her story highlighted the constant anxiety and worry both she and the URC felt during the legal process.

He is applying you know two three times you know, his home office they reject two times now it's still his little he is not happy because he hasn't got any status. They didn't give any permission to work. He hasn't got any card or anything that's why he was upset about this.

Lilly's narrative highlighted the connection she had built with the URC due to this relationship Lilly seemed to be fearful that the URC's legal case would be rejected again. This highlighted the emotional turmoil she is also exposed to which showcased her story of fear.

Jasmin

Jasmin appeared to have created an established process of registering the URC at the Home Office, GP, and dentist as a priority. She seemed to refer to this process as a check list which signified the importance of ensuring these tasks were completed. It seemed that she

wanted to create a sense of order for the URC as this would facilitate their integration to society. Her tone suggested that the administrative areas seemed to be uncomplicated for Jasmin as she did not express any difficulties in this. Her responses indicated a seamless process that she has completed many times.

When they come they go straight, first they come I take them to an office a card to card the ID and then after and we're gonna do solicitors to get the to get the paperwork to live in this country. And just I need to do to take them to the to the doctors and dentists

The quote above suggested that the process had become an integral part of her role as a foster carer for URC. Jasmin did not refer to any issues with the legal status of the URC like the other narratives have suggested. This seemed to align with Jasmin's narrative throughout the interview as she presented herself as being the role model for the URC therefore any concerns that did not support this narrative were not shared.

Rose

Rose's speech noted the additional challenges she faced as the URC did not have any paperwork or identification. Her story shared her feelings of being overwhelmed by these responsibilities as she said, 'it is too much'. This experience may have added further frustration for Rose as she had previously mentioned the needs of the URC are greater than others.

Is so hard to go to register them in GP because they don't have anything, no documents with them. So, there is no birth certificate, there is not any documents nothing. So, it's so hard. You can't do online because online they ask for documents. So, you have to go physically and going and make an appointment for GP, for

optician, for dentists opening a bank account, getting a zip card for them you know it is too much.

She narrated experiencing a sense of pressure to meet the time demand for the social care and felt her skills and abilities may otherwise be questioned if she was unable to meet the deadline. It may be a combination of the pressure and the feelings of frustrations which led to Rose creating a damaging narrative of the URC.

Happen within the within four weeks, because then because they have local authority review meeting. That independent person chair will come and see what do you have done for this child. How are you progressing, even to register them in college and all this is so hard for us to do. But we don't get any extra payments or allowance for that to do as a normal child

Rose stated that despite the difficulties and extra effort required to register the URC, foster carers were not financially compensated for their work. Her tone suggested that she felt this was unfair. It seemed that not receiving adequate pay for the role potentially led to feelings of resentment which may have inadvertently hindered the relationship between Rose and URC. This can be seen below where she describes their inability to become a part of her family.

The one thing I find difficult is like, the trust any any family members, we take them as a family members. And if any family members come to your place, and you try to make, give them a family and welcoming them as a your members, family members, you talking to them openly trying to help them support them, but they still think that you're not part of them, they're no part of you, you're not their family member.

Violet

Violet shared the unmanageable expectations the social worker had placed on her which potentially created a stressful situation for her to manage. This was comparable to the pressure Rose reported in a similar situation. Thus, this suggested that the foster carers also had to manage the social workers expectations in addition to the URCs.

Social worker said you know, I need to join him a doctor and dentists and everywhere you know, just then they asked me to join him in a school.

Violet's account of the challenges she faced with the URC's legal issues are complex. She mentions the multiple occasions in which they changed solicitors and the number of trips to both the home office and court. Violet's narrative is unique as she started looking after the URC from a very young age and their asylum process did not begin until they were sixteen years old. From her speech it is clear that Violet is very concerned about the outcome, and she has tried her best to support the URC throughout their asylum process.

First asylum they refuse and they gave him time, but they refused his asylum. And this is there was one mistake there and when solicitor he knows better than me when I was new to the home office and those stuff in asylum.

Violet acknowledged that as this was the first URC she looked after she was unaware of the process and due to this may have made errors. Her story of the URC's asylum process

was difficult due to a lot of uncertainty, and this may have led her to believing that the process is always this complex and time consuming.

Despite this, Violet seemed more capable of managing the legal process and potentially sees this as a skill she has learnt through her past experiences. She reflected on her ability to manage this better now and perhaps would have no issues in the future, despite finding the initial process a scary and difficult time.

Subtheme 2: Duty foster care

Duty foster care is an emergency list that foster carers voluntarily nominate themselves for. By adding their name to the list, they have agreed to accept a placement at any time during the duty period. It is important to note that all the foster carers interviewed were on duty when the URC was placed in their care. Their decision to be on duty highlighted their dedication to the role and indicated their higher level of skill, as not all foster carers are placed on duty.

Dahlia

The following story focused on Dahlia's experience of being the duty foster carer which she often referred to throughout her narrative. She reflected on the importance of accepting any person for the initial placement regardless of her concerns around their age or her safety. She shared her feelings around the URC's vulnerabilities and the journey that they had been on, whilst noting the guilt she would feel if she rejected the placement. This feeling of guilt was prominent throughout her story.

*Once you get the phone call they will tell you what to like ... we've got a young young young man like he's from ***. He's an asylum seeker. He just came in from the lorry today. Like he is at the police station and all this. He is this age that age. How do you*

*feel with the language? That I will ask for, what I need to ask my ask my basic things.
And then then if I have to say yes, I'll say yes.*

Dahlia shared the pressure she felt to accept placements as she raised concerns around the repercussions if she declined the placement. Dahlia seemed to be committed to the responsibilities of being on duty and noted that there should be no reason to reject any placement. It seemed that Dahlia chose to share this with me to signify her commitment to the role and her desire to follow the policies set out by social care.

Like all the boys from asylum background I never said no to them because this is the first home home they came to. And for me to say after we'd say no that's not nice. They've been through so many things like jungle, rough sleeping things like this. If I say I can't I'm too tired or you're too was too hard for me to look after you. That's not nice I would feel bad and I'll feel guilty rejecting the child. I will feel guilty.

Dahlia's narrative seemed to suggest that her feelings of guilt led to her agreeing to accept the URC's placement. She seemed to reflect on her values of supporting those who are more vulnerable and needy, and thus potentially felt compelled to look after the URC due to their vulnerabilities.

Jasmin

Much like Dahlia, Jasmin demonstrated her preparedness to look after any child by making herself available when others may not.

The reason I put my name in most of time in emergency list and to help to that kids what problem especially in easter or holiday time. I put a listing placement anytime Eid, Ramadan wherever I put my name in a list if I have placement.

Jasmin's narrative throughout her story focused on her being available and ready to support those in need. She seemed to take on the role of a 'provider' and this may potentially be due to her experiences of being a refugee who did not have support. Therefore, it seems Jasmin has chosen to fill the gap in the support system and be available to help.

Lilly

Lilly shared her story and said she was not given much time to prepare for their arrival. Her speech suggested that she must always be prepared for a potential URC placement which may cause anxiety as she is not able to plan for their arrival. She also described feeling like she did not have a choice and was compelled to accept the placement which may have led to some apprehension when she is on duty.

Phone call me because at that time, I was booked in emergency. I have no any option to say no. He came in very quickly because in the evening time they called me and they get it. Bring him brought him in night time... maybe you know two, three hours after the discussion he came in and that was it, he was there.

Lilly then shared a unique preference in her choice of placements. As Lilly does not live in the borough, she requested to look after URC as she thought it would be easier to manage their expectations compared to a LAC.

I am on the duty that's why I accept and also you know that I am living in a little bit far from Tower Hamlet. I don't ummm.... I told them because if you've got something like this you know no contact and refugee child and that's why they put my name as the first option. And I can't run you know his school child. I running only the baby and if any of them is refugee is better for me because I can't go you know contact every five days a week something.

This narrative was contrary to the other foster carers who have shared their difficulties with looking after URC and reported it being more challenging. It can be suggested that Lilly was willing to manage these challenges as travelling may be a greater challenge for Lilly.

Rose

In Rose's speech she acknowledged that she had the space and capacity to accept multiple placements, whereas other foster carers may be unable to provide the same in the case of an emergency setting. This highlighted that her placement may be more desirable for the social care. Her awareness of being in demand may lead to her power to be more critical of the social care team.

uuuummm for emergency we don't get much notice because the department even they self they don't have much information. So yeah, we don't get much notice for that.

Because you are on the emergency list, you can't say no, because you have willingly said I want to be on the emergency list. So they come and then following day, all these social worker come they have the care planning as normal child, they will do.

Rose appeared sympathetic towards the social care team as she acknowledged they are also not given much notice in these situations and agreed that not much can be done to prevent this issue. Rose also shared that by placing yourself on the duty list you agree to take on any child regardless of their situation. Her speech highlighted her empathy towards the social care team and the difficulties they face.

Rose shared the repercussions of not accepting a LAC and the difficult position this puts the social services in. Rose suggested that refusing a placement may lead to her losing credibility and may result in not being offered future placements. Rose's narrative around assigning herself to the emergency list reflected her confidence in her abilities as she shared her understanding of her responsibilities of being on duty.

You will be taken off the list of course. And it's just you you know you committed something then you are not. And for me you know I've committed. I said ok

Rose indicated that she had to follow her moral obligation and due to this she continued looking after the URC.

Subtheme 3: Personal experience

This subtheme focuses on the personal experiences that the foster carers drew from when looking after URC. Their personal experiences seemed to be vital narratives which aided the foster carers' relationships with the URC.

Dahlia

Within her reflections, Dahlia shared stories of the passion she felt towards her role and her identity as a foster carer. Dahlia's personal experience and values are demonstrated in her stories as she navigates the complexities of managing challenging behaviours. Thus, her story portrayed her commitment to her role regardless of the challenging and difficult

behaviours. From her speech it can be assumed that she manages the challenging behaviours because she always assumes they will be present. Thus, she is always prepared to deal with the challenges.

Yeah all the children are same, isn't it? Like after after a while you forget. You forget that you just see that just being naughty teenagers and I'm mainly looking after teenagers. So teenagers, they're in a different planet, they do their own thing anyway, they'll tell you one thing, go do something else. And if they're not doing something, something like that, then I guess. What's wrong with this one?

Here she seemed to normalise the URC's behaviour suggesting that they are the same as other teenagers and therefore should be treated as such. Dahlia moved on and shared a reflection of her own life and noticed that perhaps her role as a foster carer filled a void in her life.

Maybe I'm too lonely. I worked with other two but these two I put more effort because I was not working. I left my work. I gave up my work about two years ago

From her tone and speech, it can be assumed that her passion for this role led to her giving up employment and becoming a full-time foster carer, enabling her to be more proactive in her support of URC and other LAC. Dahlia seemed to be committed to understand the URC and work together to achieve a better outcome. Thus, it can be assumed that she places the needs of URC higher than her own employment needs.

Jasmin

Jasmin narrated feeling proud of her refugee identity as this skilled her for her role as a foster carer for URC. Jasmin recognised that she may have a unique perspective to offer

and thought the URC that are in her care will be better able to integrate into the British culture. Her sense of pride continues throughout her narrative and her confidence in her abilities are clear.

I'm gonna help him through past my past experience of my life... I myself I came arriving this country as refugee that's why I can help

Jasmin's speech suggested that her past experiences of identifying as refugee had enabled her to understand the journey the URC are going through and through this experience she offers support to those who are in a similar situation as her. Her story suggested that she was the ideal 'role model' for the URC due to her experiences and encouraged them to follow her guidance.

Jasmin also shared the pride she felt when discussing her family values as her father also aimed to support those from difficult backgrounds.

Even my childhood my father he does get from the countryside that's helping me this one. And then help them in the city and find out for them job and let them go. That's my father... I would seen them my family they do help others.

It appeared that Jasmin's family values shaped her actions as she decided to continue supporting others in her current role as a foster carer. Thus, sharing her family values seemed to be paramount for Jasmin as she reflected on this throughout her narrative.

Theme 5: 'it's in my heart' Duty to help

The theme of duty to help highlighted the narratives of the foster carers who felt that they were compelled to support URC and were bound to a duty to help. Some specifically identified foster caring URC was a way to give back to their community and reported that this alleviated a sense of guilt. Therefore, they provided URC with the highest level of care within their means. There were also references towards a motherly relationship which was novel and not something I expected to uncover.

Jasmin

Often throughout Jasmin's narrative she described a duty to help the URC. She also shared a sense of pride when seeing the URC happy and settled.

Yeah, I love it. Yeah, I enjoy it. When make me happy, all children, they can change. They go out for my place like my kids. They not living with me. And people they asked me when they left you they know you're not being sad, why I can't be sad I be happy because they already their own self. They kind of manage themselves.

This potentially reflected a sense of achievement, as Jasmin had taken a vulnerable URC and supported them to become an independent young person. This may have contributed to her idea of being a 'role model' as she chose to share multiple success stories.

The narratives shared suggested that the bond she developed with the URC signified her achievement and nurturing these relationships indicated her attachment to the URC. She reported providing support to problem solve issues for the URC even though they had left her placement. This suggested that the notion of a duty to help extended beyond the timeframe of the placement. When summarising this story, she shared an interesting reflection:

I have got this in my heart to be honest. I have to be foster mother to my heart

Jasmin referred to herself in this instance as a mother rather than a foster carer, this highlighted the significance Jasmin gave to her role. It can be assumed that she evolved throughout her story, and this resulted in her becoming a mother. This narrative seemed important to her story as it presented the level of dedication she has towards the URC.

Lilly

Lilly recalled a sense of duty to help the URC as they appeared to be young and vulnerable. This may create a desire for Lilly to make the URC feel safe as she connected with the potential trauma they were experiencing. It can be assumed that she fulfilled this desire by being empathic to the URC's needs and by creating a welcoming environment.

Because I think you know I can help him anything is the situation because he was very upset and a little bit you know he was scared that time... I gave him comfort. I support whatever he needed. I tried my best, making him happy... Yeah, he thinking this is like his own house. And we I am thinking and look like it's my one more child.

Lilly's' relationship with the URC also mirrored a maternal role as seen below.

But, she said, No, I want to call you mom

Lilly shared this story with a sense of pride as she demonstrated how she was able to create this bond with the URC. Her narrative of becoming a mother seemed important to her as she chose to share their evolving relationship.

Summary

This chapter shared the analysis of each participant utilising NTA principles. The themes outlined the way in which the participants made sense of their experience. Quotes

taken from the verbatim transcript were used to demonstrate my arguments and interpretations of the data. In the following chapter the analysis will be discussed overall and the implications for CoP will be considered.

Chapter Five: Discussion

The aim of this chapter is to review the findings of the analysis in relation to the literature review and to respond to the research aims. My personal reflections on the study will be shared with reference to epistemological underpinnings. The clinical implications of the current research will be explored in relation to Counselling Psychology as well as recommendations for future clinical practice.

Summary of findings

The aim of the research project was to understand the lived experience of foster carers who have looked after URC by exploring the research question: how do foster carers make sense of their journey of looking after URC? The analysis attempted to highlight the common narratives that the foster carers shared in their stories, finishing with the ‘uncommon’ narratives that were uncovered for one or some but not all participants. The analysis chapter emphasised how the research findings can be applied to understand how foster carers make sense of looking after URC. The common themes that highlighted the foster carers experience were shared.

Theme 1: Understanding Culture

Narratives were shared around cultural issues that included stories around language and food. Foster carers communicated the challenges they faced whilst looking after URC who were from a different cultural background. This finding is similar to Lee et al. (2010) study where cultural conflicts were found to cause difficulties in the relationship between URC and foster carers. The findings in this study noted there were variations in culture, but most foster carers showed a drive to understand the URC further and shared unique communication methods. Some also sourced food the URC’s home country to allow them

access to the food they would enjoy eating. Overall, this emphasised the importance that the URC gave to their cultural needs and how the foster carers chose to meet those needs. It is important to note that in Lee et al. (2010) study the foster carers were all from a mid-western state in America and were not foster carers by profession whereas the foster carers in this study were all British nationals from South Asian and African ethnic backgrounds. Due to this they may have been able to appreciate the importance of culture as they themselves have had to adopt the British culture.

Most of the narratives talked about how understanding the URC's culture further allowed foster carers to understand the URC more and resulted in a better understanding. Participants, however, commented on the benefits on communication when cultural and ethnic backgrounds were similar. Many indicated how in these instances there was better communication and understanding. This also aligns with the conclusions from Ni Raghallaigh and Sirriyeh's (2015) study, who found placements where foster carers shared the same cultural background were reported to have higher value. Further support for this comes from Lee et al., (2010) study which suggested pre-selected foster carers who have specialised training on how to manage cultural differences. Subsequently, the URC have to navigate and assimilate into different cultures holding on to their own: the one of the foster carers, and also the culture in the UK. This aligns with Ni Raghallaigh and Sirriyeh's (2015) finding where URC felt their culture was significant and having a foster carer with a similar cultural background allowed for continuity of culture. Thus, emphasising the importance of understanding cultural differences and how to manage them as this helps the foster carers make sense of their role.

Theme 2: Accepting help

Similar to the theme highlighted in Van Holen et al. (2019) study, foster carers shared the importance of feeling supported by others. Most narratives emphasised the importance of

having a good support network as the foster carers were able to rely on them when they needed emotional and practical support. The foster carers also shared the support they received from the local authority, with some valuing the input of an allocated social worker. This finding is comparable to the findings of Hudson and Levasseur's (2002) study where practical and emotional support and having a good relationship with the fostering agency was reported as a necessary support in order for the foster carers to continue their role. However, some participants' narratives focused on the shortcomings of the local authority which served as a counter narrative compared to the literature review. Hence, foster carers used their support network to help them make sense of their role.

An interesting discourse that arose from the 'accepting help' theme was the lack of perceived power the foster carers felt. In Dahlia's narrative she articulated how she felt foster carers had no power compared to the solicitors appointed to manage the URC's asylum process and the social workers or local authority who are responsible for placing the URC in the foster carers care. The perceived power may be due to the agencies' abilities to make decisions about the URC's future. She went on to compare foster carers as parents who have no power compared to the state. Another narrative shared by Rose confirmed the pressure foster carers are under to complete the registration process for the URC. If they are unable to complete this within a particular timeframe the foster carer can be questioned by the social worker or local authority further. This process perhaps conveys the power held by social care and the local authority. This also reflects the political discourse that the state holds the power and makes decisions about the URC's future in the UK as the general narrative is that that state makes the process challenging.

Reflecting on the literature review, this discourse uncovered was novel and not seen in the previous research studies carried out. This could be due to majority of the studies being conducted in other countries where the URC asylum process differs, highlighting the

importance of this study as it has allowed the foster carers a voice and aims to share their stories.

Theme 3: 'How do I know? Adult or child?'

This theme highlighted the issues around feeling safe whilst looking after URC. It was seen in the analysis that foster carers drew on prevailing discourses of feeling safe in the company of the URC. The social discourses that refugees are 'dangerous' were highlighted in the narratives which led the foster carers to share the issues surrounding the age discrepancies and the lack of safety in their home due to this. Some participant's narratives highlighted the fear and concerns around their and their family's physical safety as there were suspicions that some URC were adults not children. However, Dahlia's narratives shared a different discourse of acknowledging the age discrepancy but understanding that they may be functioning like a child due to the difficult experiences URC may have encountered on their journey into the UK (Luster et al., 2009). Seemingly URC are simultaneously expected to grow up and in some respect remain in childlike states. All the foster carers accepted that despite issues surrounding their age it was their duty as a foster carer to look after the URC. Due to this, their responsibilities were not compromised when the URC were in their care. I noted that this was an important theme throughout the discourses as it shared nuances around the foster carers putting their safety to one side and focusing on their role. However, when reflecting on the research studies included in the literature review, the narrative around feeling safe and the issues surrounding the age discrepancy were not raised previously, thus identifying an important discourse that has not been shared previously.

In addition to this, gendered discourses were also highlighted by the foster carers who were all women; with some being single women. As most of the URC the foster carers looked after were teenage boys some narratives highlighted the foster carers concerns around looking after the opposite gender. This was further emphasised during the stories around age

discrepancies as some foster carers felt they were looking after men rather than boys. Perhaps if male foster carers were interviewed a different narrative would have emerged from the stories.

Theme 4: Skills

This theme focused on the unique skills that the foster carers possessed which they felt led them to be better equipped to look after URC. This narrative was shared amongst most of the foster carers' stories and supports the literature and the findings from Brown's (2008) study which found that having the right skills led to a more successful placement. Stories were shared describing the management of multiple URCs and the skills learnt through this journey which highlights the evolution of their role and emphasises how an individual's past can influence their future. Similarly, personal experiences of being a refugee were also shared, suggesting that lived experience of being a refugee provides a better navigation of immigration processes.

The findings found a similar discourse as found in Hudson and Levasseur's (2002) study where foster carers' pay rates did not meet the foster carers' expectations due to the higher demand of care required. The current study also found that some foster carers felt they were not given adequate pay for their level of skill. The foster carers expressed that the level of support the URC required was said to be higher than LAC, but the pay scale continued to remain the same. They articulated how they have voiced this with the local authority but have been told they were receiving the maximum available. Thus, sharing an unappreciated narrative may lead to foster carers choosing not to look after URC.

Theme 5: 'it's in my heart'

This theme focused on the foster carers' reporting a duty to help URC. Most narratives shared a sense of guilt and a need to help the URC due to their values whilst Jasmin's story focused on the joy she felt when the URC were seen succeeding and becoming

stable in the UK, emphasising the importance the foster carers gave their role and the relationship they had built with the URC. In addition to this, the foster carers showed empathy and sadness for the URC when they faced difficulties and reported feeling obliged to help them resolve their problems. Discourses around the foster carers taking on a motherly role with the URC was highlighted; this suggested the strong bond and connection they had made with the URC. This discourse was unique to the research, but similar findings were found in the Van Holen et al. (2019) study. They reported that the foster carers felt having good parenting skills and a good fit of the URC in their family was required for the placement to be a success. Thus, it can be implied that a positive relationship, where the foster carers are empathic, nurturing, and motherly towards the URC is essential when looking after URC. However, it is important to note that the foster carers interviewed in this study were all woman therefore the attributes mentioned above and the stories shared may differ if male foster carers participated in the research.

Summary

In summary, the research uncovered some new and unique findings whilst also reaffirming some of the findings previously found in existing literature. Culture was emphasised in most stories but some foster carers shared the importance of attending to URC's cultural needs as it helped develop rapport and their relationships with the URC. Receiving support from others was also prominent throughout the stories with some foster carers identifying their lack of perceived power and their need to be support by more powerful agencies. Furthermore, feeling underpaid for their level of skill was also raised as some foster carers specifically requested for more payment for their role but were not given this. Despite this, most foster carers shared a desire to want to help the URC which resulted in positive relationships with their URC which was described in previous literature. One of

the narratives shared concerns around financial exploitation of the asylum system and proposed alternatives for this to be minimised.

Personal reflexivity

Narrative inquiry focuses on stories told by individuals to another individual at a specific time, historical and cultural context. It also proposes that the story, its construction, and performance are all reflexively inter-related (Gubrium & Holstein 1997). It is important for the researcher to acknowledge their role in the narratives and how their presence may have affected the discourse.

Reflections on researcher's position

To contextualise the current research study, it is important for me, the researcher, to highlight the position I hold. I am aware that this position can be seen as a knowledgeable and powerful position as I am choosing to conduct the research. However, it is important to note that I am not a foster carer and I have not directly engaged with the URC community before; due to this I may be unaware of certain nuances and discourses. Nevertheless, I have worked as an assistant psychologist with foster carers and social workers who are responsible for looking after URC which has given me some exposure to the work involved in working with them. Following on from this, my position as a trainee counselling psychologist has allowed me to begin understanding the URC community and has led to conversations which have sparked my interest in the research topic. Due to this, there are certain narratives such as: the lack of resources available, the difficult and traumatic journey the URC may have experienced, and the difficulties the URC face integrating into British society, which may influence my role as a researcher.

Researchers have often found themselves in a difficult position where they are seen as the 'expert', which can lead to a potential conflict as the researcher may feel they are more

knowledgeable. This may then lead to problems where participants may not use the space to narrate their stories for themselves (Sciarra, 2011). Due to this, whilst conducting the interviews I ensured that I allowed the participants space to share their stories with the aim that this will reduce the 'expert researcher' narrative. I have also reflected on my relationship to the research study as I initially I felt like I had no knowledge in relation to URC and I felt lost in the complicated affairs relating to URC. However, over the course of the CoP training I have become more aware of my abilities, and I have learnt to feel confident in my position as a researcher. I am also aware that if I conducted the research at another time in my life, I may not have heard the participant's stories in the same way I have heard them at this time (Fowles, 2015).

Researcher's personal connection

An important discourse I wanted to reflect upon is the disparity of how refugees are viewed depending on their race and ethnicity. The social and political discourses I have been exposed to in Britain suggest that all refugees arrive from third world continents, mainly from African or Asian countries, who are also often ethnic minorities and identify as African, Caribbean, or Asian. However, towards the completion of the research study the war began in Europe and led to Ukrainian refugees arriving in the UK. The stark contrast in the discourse between the European refugees and the non-European refugees was astonishing to me. This brought up feelings of anger and frustrations in me, as it was only months ago that Afghanistan was invaded (BBC, 2021), and refugees were fleeing for safety, but the nuances were different due to race and ethnicity. The social and political narratives shifted to a more welcoming and empathetic story where British nationals were offered money if they allowed Ukrainian refugees into their home (Telegraph, 2022). The typical narrative where refugees are seen as dangerous and are stealing resources appeared to change based upon the ethnicity and race of the refugees. I wondered whether the narratives of the foster carers in this

research study would have differed if the URC being looked after were of White European ethnicity.

Representing individuality

A tension that I have been reflecting on throughout the course of the research is how to represent the participant's subjective experience alongside my ideological position. I noticed this tension became more difficult to manage during the analysis stage. I attempted to keep the individuality of each narrative whilst also assimilating key themes as the analytic method suggested. This proved to be a conflicting process as sometimes their stories were cut short and then categorised into the appropriate themes.

The process of the analysis was to immerse myself in the data and to separate the stories into common narratives and themes. However, categorising and comparing the stories with other stories felt insensitive to the participants and the interview experience. Following this dilemma, I reflected on my social constructionist epistemological position and the purpose of NTA, and I was reminded of the power of shared narratives (Shay, 2014) and what could be gained rather than focusing on keeping each story intact. Moreover, Letherby and Williams (2012) also discuss this tension as an unavoidable aspect of research where the aim of the research is to make a difference rather than concentrating on wholly representing the participants.

I was able to manage this tension by accepting that I would not be able to provide an exact account of the participants' experiences as my critical position was aimed at understanding the re-telling of their stories and their collective story.

Researcher or therapist

Reflecting on my experience of the interview process, I am aware that this is the first time that the foster carers have shared their personal narratives. There were moments when the foster carers explicitly spoke about the mental health and wellbeing of the URC and the

journey they had taken through multiple countries to gain access into the UK. They often shared narratives of guilt if they did not help them as they reflected on the trauma the URC have experienced. Furthermore, issues around their safety and concerns that they could be harmed were also shared throughout the narratives. There was then a dilemma of how to provide a space for participants to voice their story but also being mindful that this did not cause them too much distress. Despite my initial concerns, during the interviews all the participants were open and shared their stories as they hoped for better outcomes in the future but did not become overwhelmed by distress.

Throughout the interview process I was aware that as a CoP in training we are taught to engage in people's narratives from a psychological standpoint, whereas during the interviews I had to engage with the narratives from a researcher standpoint. In this way, I attempted to ensure that I was aware of my own biases and researcher position, which was particularly important as the co-production of the narratives meant that my own subjective standpoints could shape the process (Willig, 2012).

Reflections on researcher's potential bias

I am aware that I have my own biases and that the nature of narrative analysis accepts that narratives are a meaning making process between the researcher and the participant (Butina, 2015). To ensure that my own biases did not affect the research too much I utilised research supervision from my supervisor. This space allowed me to reflect on my own thoughts and preconceptions regarding URC and the systems supporting them whilst holding the participant's stories in mind.

By engaging in the research, I was able to understand a perspective that I had not been aware of specifically when referring to the age discrepancies of the URC. I have always been aware of the potential traumatic and difficult process the age assessments may have on the URC but I had not thought about how these assessments may affect the foster carers looking

after the URC. During the interviews when this topic was raised, I noticed that I became defensive and felt a need to protect the URC. By keeping a reflexive journal and utilising supervision, I was able to reflect on this issue in an attempt to reduce my bias during the analysis.

Limitations of this research study

It can be argued that the small number of participants (five individuals) that took part in the study does not allow for the researcher to report on the breadth and variability of this topic. However, by using a small number of narratives, the researcher was able to explore the nuances of the complex stories that the foster carers shared. In addition to this, the recruitment strategy I employed limited the participant pool to Tower Hamlet's foster carers, as I was mindful of the time constraints and was able to access participants quicker through the Tower Hamlet's fostering team. As the recruitment was only sought through one London Borough and the process of identifying suitable participants was via Tower Hamlet's social workers biases such as suggesting participants with whom they have a good relationship with, may have been present. However, gaining access to approved foster carers who have looked after URC would have been challenging if it was not done through this channel and therefore I utilised my work connections to gain access to the participant pool. Tower Hamlets hosts a diverse population, all the foster carers that participated were non-white and some had experience of being a refugee and migrating. Therefore, the ethnicity and race of the foster carers may have impacted the narratives as they may have also experienced similar situations in their past. To develop the research further, it may be interesting to have participants who live in different geographical locations in the UK and identify as a different ethnicity or race, to understand if there are common narratives. Additionally, different boroughs in London may have access to different resources and therefore the discourses may differ.

Clinical implications of this study

This research has looked at the complexities of looking after URC in a fostering capacity. It is clear from the findings that managing URC like LAC is not sustainable and therefore policies and procedures should fit more in line with meeting the URC's needs (Van Holen et al., 2019). Furthermore, the BPS (2018) acknowledges the importance the psychology discipline has in supporting the URC and the agencies who look after them as they are able to offer holistic, therapeutic support.

The study found that often foster carers are not given specialised training to understand the specific needs of URC and this may lead to difficulties in managing their placements. Therefore, foster carers should have adequate training programmes to manage the issues around culture. Training that also equipped them with the skills to successfully register the URC in their care with all the appropriate agencies in the UK such as: health, education, and legal services. In the USA, a programme was created specifically for foster carers who look after URC (Evans et al., 2018), which focused on equipping the foster carers with the skills they require to integrate the URC into US society. Therefore, a comparable programme for the UK would be beneficial.

As the findings suggested that the foster carers were unprepared and did not have the required training; it can be suggested that a pool of foster carers who are already trained and have agreed to take on URC is created. This would reduce any issues with foster carers feeling overwhelmed with the additional challenges of URC as they would have received adequate training and be prepared for the placement.

The findings also uncovered a lack of support from social care. It was noted that the transition between fostering teams was problematic and did not provide enough explanation to the foster carers or the URC which often resulted in the initial period of the placement becoming challenging. This was also highlighted in Brown's (2008) study where foster carers

felt more information around policies and procedures for looking after a URC was required. The stories shared discussed the lack of support around the emotional wellbeing of the foster carers as they dealt with the added challenges of looking after the URC. The foster carers felt that they were not getting recognition for the added challenges they are facing whilst looking after URC. Therefore, a clinical intervention would be to introduce more peer support, more access to social care support and access to therapy for foster carers who would like further support.

Furthermore, the study highlighted the issues around age discrepancy and suggested that better assurances must be made on safety where age and criminal background is concerned. The issue raised was unique to the findings of the study and was not found in the literature review suggesting it may be a difficulty only in the UK. As the URC are entering foster carers' homes, more care should be taken to prevent any serious harm to foster carers. A potential intervention would be to introduce safety checks to be carried out prior to the URC placed within a foster carer's home. However, it is also essential to be aware of the challenges the URC face when their age is questioned and how this can be managed in an appropriate way, limiting any further harm as URC are found to present with multiple different mental health concerns (Bates et al., 2005). CoPs have a responsibility to create more humanistic ways of conceptualising distress, especially when supporting marginalised groups (BPS, 2018).

Relevance to Counselling Psychology

The findings of this research study highlighted the experience of foster carers who are responsible for looking after URC. The narratives highlighted the lack of power the foster carers felt therefore this study aims to provide the power to this group with the hope that their marginalised voices are heard and therefore, it is essential that this research is disseminated appropriately. One particular participant, on a number of occasions, requested that the

difficulties and concerns she voiced should be shared with central government and there should be individuals lobbying to bring this to the attention of the government. Similarly, all the participants who took part in the research wanted their stories to be shared publicly in the hope that it would lead to awareness of the difficulties and create potential change within the profession and in clinical practice. Therefore, the research findings will be shared with the Tower Hamlet's fostering team.

As CoP work with marginalised populations within the public health and social care sector, they are able to use these findings to shape and implement change within the institutions that have responsibilities of looking after URC. CoPs can utilise their leadership roles to promote change through sharing their research findings (BPS, 2018). CoP aims to share the voices of those who are often unheard, as these insights can be used to inform others (Greenhalgh, 2016).

Conclusion

In conclusion, examining discourses that construct URC and how they are looked after demonstrates how social and political context can influence how foster carers make sense of their role. Discourses around cultural differences, lack of support and safety were found to affect the subjective experience and created narratives of fear and hardship. With the social and political discourse around URC being dangerous and a burden, foster carers are navigating a relationship and attempting to integrate the URC into British society. Despite this, the findings identify resistance to these disempowering nuances where foster carers share a desire to help, nurture, and protect the URC.

The findings also highlighted the clinical implications and how CoPs can help support this community to challenge social justice and harmful discourses. It is hoped that the

research study adds to the wider research base, as it focused specifically on the experiences of this marginalised group.

Overall, this research process has allowed me to learn, understand, and engage in inspiring conversations with foster carers whose voices have not been heard. I am honoured that the foster carers were able to open up and share their stories which has resulted in my understanding of their narratives. I hope that this research draws attention to this under-researched area and allows for further discussions around the experience of looking after URC.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Participant Invitation Letter



PARTICIPANT INVITATION LETTER

You are being invited to participate in a research study. Before you agree it is important that you understand what your participation would involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully.

Who am I?

I am a post graduate doctorate student in the School of Psychology at the University of East London and am studying for a professional doctorate in counselling psychology. As part of my studies I am conducting the research you are being invited to participate in.

What is the research?

I am conducting research into the foster Carer's narratives of looking after unaccompanied refugee minors.

My research has been approved by the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee. This means that the Committee's evaluation of this ethics application has been guided by the standards of research ethics set by the British Psychological Society.

Why have you been asked to participate?

You have been invited to participate in my research as someone who fits the kind of people I am looking for to help me explore my research topic. I am looking to involve Foster Carers who have looked after unaccompanied refugee minors.

I emphasise that I am not looking for 'experts' on the topic I am studying. You will not be judged or personally analysed in any way and you will be treated with respect.

You are quite free to decide whether or not to participate and should not feel coerced.

What will your participation involve?

If you agree to participate you will be asked to engage in a interview to discuss how you make sense of looking after unaccompanied refugee minors.

- I will ask you meet with me and engage in a semi-structured interview where we will talk about your experience of looking after unaccompanied refugee minors.
- These interviews will take place at Tower Hamlets' Town Hall with Halima Chowdhury (trainee Counselling Psychologist)
- The interviews will last for 1 hour approximately
- The interviews will be an informal chat however the interview will be audio recorded

I will not be able to pay you for participating in my research, but your participation would be very valuable in helping to develop knowledge and understanding of my research topic

Your taking part will be safe and confidential

Your privacy and safety will be respected at all times.

- Participants will not be identified by the data collected, on any written material resulting from the data collected, or in any write-up of the research.
- Participants do not have to answer all questions asked of them and can stop their participation at any time.
- If at any point I am concerned about your safety or others I will need to tell someone. Whenever possible I will let you know first that this is happening.

What will happen to the information that you provide?

- Only I will listen to recordings and transcribe (i.e. type up) your interviews. The typed transcript may be reviewed by my supervisor at UEL, who will also be under an agreement to keep any information confidential
- Any information you give which might identify you (e.g. names, places etc.) will be changed when I type up the interview.
- The transcripts and any recording will be encrypted and password protected. After my thesis has been examined, the audio files will be deleted
- The written transcripts will be kept and destroyed after three years. The anonymised transcripts may be used to write up research in the future for publication, including a few quotes

What if you want to withdraw?

You are free to withdraw from the research study at any time without explanation, disadvantage or consequence. Separately, you may also request to withdraw your data even after you have participated data, provided that this request is made within 3 weeks of the data being collected (after which point the data analysis will begin, and withdrawal will not be possible).

Contact Details

If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me, Halima Chowdhury at U1821140@uel.ac.uk.

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted please contact the research supervisor Dr Claire Marshall School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ,
Email: c.marshall@uel.ac.uk

or

Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: Dr Tim Lomas, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.
(Email: t.lomas@uel.ac.uk)

Appendix B: Consent form



UNIVERSITY OF EAST LONDON

Consent to participate in a research study

Foster carers' narrative; Looking after unaccompanied refugee minors.

I have read the information sheet relating to the above research study and have been given a copy to keep. The nature and purposes of the research have been explained to me, and I have had the opportunity to discuss the details and ask questions about this information. I

understand what is being proposed and the procedures in which I will be involved have been explained to me.

I understand that my involvement in this study, and particular data from this research, will remain strictly confidential. Only the researcher(s) involved in the study will have access to identifying data. It has been explained to me what will happen once the research study has been completed.

I hereby freely and fully consent to participate in the study which has been fully explained to me. Having given this consent I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without disadvantage to myself and without being obliged to give any reason. I also understand that should I withdraw, the researcher reserves the right to use my anonymous data after analysis of the data has begun.

Participant's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....

Participant's Signature

.....

Researcher's Name (BLOCK CAPITALS)

.....

Researcher's Signature

.....

Date:

Appendix C: Interview schedule

1. How did you find out you would be looking after a URC?
Did you feel prepared?

2. Can you tell me when you started looking after a URC?
 - Can you tell me more about your experience?
 - How long did you look after the URC for?

3. How do you see your career as a foster carer for URC developing?
 - If you had the opportunity would you continue looking after them

4. Can you tell me more about your experience?

5. What support did receive?

6. Is there anything you would like to add?


Appendix D: Ethical approval Tower Hamlets

CERGF 251 approval letterHalima Chowdhury — Saved to my Mac

ences Mailings Review View Zotero Tell me

A AaBbCcDdEe AaBbCcDdEe AaBbCcD AaBb AaBb

Normal No Spacing Heading 1 Title S



Halima Chowdhury

[Redacted]

Intelligence and Performance Service
Strategy, Policy and Performance Division
Governance Directorate
6th Floor
Town Hall, Mulberry Place
5 Clove Crescent
London E14 2BG

Tel 020 7364 4238
www.towerhamlets.gov.uk
Email: rgf@towerhamlets.gov.uk

17 May 2022

Reference: [Redacted]
RGF Application Approval

Dear Halima

Research Title "Narrative analysis of foster carers who have looked after unaccompanied refugee minors"

This is to confirm that your research proposal has been approved by the Research Governance Framework Panel.

Upon completion can you please submit a copy of your report or an extract from your conclusion to the above postal or email address. We may then publish details of your research on the National Social Care Research Register or equivalent.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you need any further assistance.

I wish you well in your research study.

Yours sincerely,
[Redacted]

Focus

Appendix E: Ethical approval UEL

School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee

NOTICE OF ETHICS REVIEW DECISION

For research involving human participants

BSc/MSc/MA/Professional Doctorates in Clinical, Counselling and Educational Psychology

REVIEWER: Shashika Vethanayagam

SUPERVISOR: Claire Marshall

STUDENT: Halima Chowdhury

Course: Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology

Title of proposed study: Foster Carers' Narratives; Looking After Unaccompanied Refugee Minors

DECISION OPTIONS:

1. **APPROVED:** Ethics approval for the above named research study has been granted from the date of approval (see end of this notice) to the date it is submitted for assessment/examination.
2. **APPROVED, BUT MINOR AMENDMENTS ARE REQUIRED BEFORE THE RESEARCH COMMENCES** (see Minor Amendments box below): In this circumstance, re-submission of an ethics application is not required but the student must confirm with their supervisor that all minor amendments have been made before the research commences. Students are to do this by filling in the confirmation box below when all amendments have been attended to and emailing a copy of this decision notice to her/his supervisor for their records. The supervisor will then forward the student's confirmation to the School for its records.
3. **NOT APPROVED, MAJOR AMENDMENTS AND RE-SUBMISSION REQUIRED** (see Major Amendments box below): In this circumstance, a revised ethics application must be submitted and approved before any research takes place. The revised application will be reviewed by the same reviewer. If in doubt, students should ask their supervisor for support in revising their ethics application.

DECISION ON THE ABOVE-NAMED PROPOSED RESEARCH STUDY

(Please indicate the decision according to one of the 3 options above)

approved

Minor amendments required *(for reviewer):*

Major amendments required *(for reviewer):*

Confirmation of making the above minor amendments *(for students):*

I have noted and made all the required minor amendments, as stated above, before starting my research and collecting data.

Student's name *(Typed name to act as signature):*

Student number:

Date:

(Please submit a copy of this decision letter to your supervisor with this box completed, if minor amendments to your ethics application are required)

ASSESSMENT OF RISK TO RESEACHER *(for reviewer)*

Has an adequate risk assessment been offered in the application form?

YES

Please request resubmission with an adequate risk assessment

If the proposed research could expose the researcher to any of kind of emotional, physical or health and safety hazard? Please rate the degree of risk:

HIGH

Please do not approve a high risk application and refer to the Chair of Ethics. Travel to countries/provinces/areas deemed to be high risk should not be permitted and an application not approved on this basis. If unsure please refer to the Chair of Ethics.

MEDIUM (Please approve but with appropriate recommendations)

LOW

Reviewer comments in relation to researcher risk (if any).

Good plan in place

Reviewer (*Typed name to act as signature*):

Shashika vethanayagam

Date: 7/17/20

This reviewer has assessed the ethics application for the named research study on behalf of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Committee

RESEARCHER PLEASE NOTE:

For the researcher and participants involved in the above named study to be covered by UEL's Insurance, prior ethics approval from the School of Psychology (acting on behalf of the UEL Research Ethics Committee), and confirmation from students where minor amendments were required, must be obtained before any research takes place.

For a copy of UEL's Personal Accident & Travel Insurance Policy, please see the Ethics Folder in the Psychology Noticeboard

Appendix F: Data management plan

UEL Data Management Plan: Full

Completed plans **must** be sent to researchdata@uel.ac.uk for review

If you are bidding for funding from an external body, complete the Data Management Plan required by the funder (if specified).

Research data is defined as information or material captured or created during the course of research, and which underpins, tests, or validates the content of the final research output. The nature of it can vary greatly according to discipline. It is often empirical or statistical, but also includes material such as drafts, prototypes, and multimedia objects that underpin creative or 'non-traditional' outputs. Research data is often digital, but includes a wide range of paper-based and other physical objects.

Administrative Data	
PI/Researcher	Halima Chowdhury
PI/Researcher ID (e.g. ORCID)	
PI/Researcher email	U1821140@uel.ac.uk
Research Title	Foster carers' narrative; Looking after unaccompanied refugee minors.
Project ID	N/A (UEL ethics)
Research Duration	Start date: 16/04/20 End date: 31/08/22
Research Description	The proposed study aims to use narrative thematic analysis to understand the experiences of London based foster carers who look after unaccompanied refugee minors (URC). Foster carers have an important role in helping the URC adjust to their lives within the UK. The aim of this research is to take into account the foster carers journey of looking after URC.

Funder	N/A
Grant Reference Number (Post-award)	N/A
Date of first version (of DMP)	16 th April 2020
Date of last update (of DMP)	28th April 2020
Related Policies	e.g. Research Data Management Policy
Does this research follow on from previous research? If so, provide details	No
Data Collection	
What data will you collect or create?	Qualitative data will be collected through semi structured interviews lasting approximately an hour. Anonymised transcripts .docx Audio recordings .mp3
How will the data be collected or created?	The data will be audio recorded onto an electronic recording device; the audio files will be transferred to UEL H: Drive and on to OneDrive. Approximately 3 to 5 participants will be recruited for the study. Participants will be invited to participate through a recruitment letter. Individual interviews will be conducted with participants which will be audio-recorded and then transcribed. Narrative analysis will be used to generate themes. Personal data will be collected on consent forms (names) and prior to the interview (email address and/or telephone number for purposes of arranging the interview, via the researcher's UEL email address). No sensitive data will be collected

	No further data will be created in the process of analysing the transcripts.
Documentation and Metadata	
What documentation and metadata will accompany the data?	Participant information sheets, consent forms, list of guide interview questions and debrief sheet.
Ethics and Intellectual Property	
How will you manage any ethical issues?	Each participant will be given a participant number (in interview chronological order) and all identifiable information (e.g. names, organisation name, locations, identifiable scenarios) anonymised in the transcripts.
How will you manage copyright and Intellectual Property Rights issues?	N/A
Storage and Backup	
How will the data be stored and backed up during the research?	<p>The encrypted electronic device with the audio tapes (to be collected) in MP3 audio will be kept in a locked cupboard in my house. The recordings will also be saved in UEL H; Drive. Another copy of the recordings will be saved on UEL OneDrive., This data will be shared with the principle researcher and supervisor.</p> <p>The consent forms (to be collected) in a .docx format will be saved on UEL H: Drive and the paper copies will be kept in a locked cupboard in my house. Only the researcher will have access to this information.</p>

	<p>Anonymised transcripts (to be collected) in a .docx format will be stored in UEL OneDrive it will backed up on a personal password protected Macbook. This data will be shared with the principle researcher and supervisor.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Data type</th> <th>Format</th> <th>Storage location</th> <th>Backup location</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Consent forms</td> <td>.docx</td> <td>UEL H;Drive</td> <td>UEL OneDrive</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Audio recordings</td> <td>Mp3 audio</td> <td>Encrypted recorder [transfer to UEL storage as soon as possible] and H:Drive</td> <td>UEL OneDrive</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Anonymised transcripts</td> <td>.docx</td> <td>Password protected laptop, UEL H;Drive</td> <td>UEL OneDrive</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Data type	Format	Storage location	Backup location	Consent forms	.docx	UEL H;Drive	UEL OneDrive	Audio recordings	Mp3 audio	Encrypted recorder [transfer to UEL storage as soon as possible] and H:Drive	UEL OneDrive	Anonymised transcripts	.docx	Password protected laptop, UEL H;Drive	UEL OneDrive
Data type	Format	Storage location	Backup location														
Consent forms	.docx	UEL H;Drive	UEL OneDrive														
Audio recordings	Mp3 audio	Encrypted recorder [transfer to UEL storage as soon as possible] and H:Drive	UEL OneDrive														
Anonymised transcripts	.docx	Password protected laptop, UEL H;Drive	UEL OneDrive														
How will you manage access and security?	<p>The researcher will transcribe all interviews (removing identifiable information in the process) and only the researcher, supervisor and examiners will have access to the transcripts.</p> <p>Recordings from the audio recorder will be uploaded onto the researcher's password protected personal laptop immediately after the interview has ended. Recordings will then be deleted from the device. Audio files will be saved on OneDrive from the laptop. The file will be titled as follows: 'Participant initials: Date of interview'.</p>																
Data Sharing																	
How will you share the data?	<p>Anonymised transcripts will be shared with the research supervisor via UEL email. File names will be participant initials and unique code including participant number and date of interview (e.g. HC01 – 05082020). Extracts of transcripts will be provided in the final research and any subsequent publications. Identifiable information will not be included in these extracts.</p>																

Are any restrictions on data sharing required?	<p>The researcher, DoS and examiners will be the only people who will have access to transcripts and consent forms.</p> <p>In order to protect confidentiality, anonymised transcripts and consent forms will not be deposited via the UEL repository.</p>
Selection and Preservation	
Which data are of long-term value and should be retained, shared, and/or preserved?	Transcript will be retained for up to three years, for future analysis for publication. After 3 years' transcripts will be deleted. The transcripts will be stored on password protected MacBook.
What is the long-term preservation plan for the data?	<p>Audio recordings, transcripts and electronic copies of consent forms will be kept until the thesis has been examined and passed. They will then be erased from both the personal laptop and UEL servers.</p> <p>Anonymised transcripts will be kept on researcher's personal laptop for 3 years but will be deleted from UEL servers once the thesis has been examined and passed.</p>
Responsibilities and Resources	
Who will be responsible for data management?	Halima Chowdhury (Principle Investigator)
What resources will you require to deliver your plan?	Audio recorder, Macbook and access to OneDrive
Review	
	<p>Please send your plan to researchdata@uel.ac.uk</p> <p>We will review within 5 working days and request further information or amendments as required before signing</p>

Date: 29/04/2020	Reviewer name: Penny Jackson Research Data Management Officer
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Guidance

Brief information to help answer each section is below. Aim to be specific and concise. For assistance in writing your data management plan, or with research data management more generally, please contact: researchdata@uel.ac.uk

Administrative Data

Related Policies

List any other relevant funder, institutional, departmental or group policies on data management, data sharing and data security. Some of the information you give in the remainder of the DMP will be determined by the content of other policies. If so, point/link to them here.

Data collection

Describe the data aspects of your research, how you will capture/generate them, the file formats you are using and why. Mention your reasons for choosing particular data standards and approaches. Note the likely volume of data to be created.

Documentation and Metadata

What metadata will be created to describe the data? Consider what other documentation is needed to enable reuse. This may include information on the methodology used to collect the data, analytical and procedural information, definitions of variables, the format and file type of the data and software used to collect and/or process the data. How will this be captured and recorded?

Ethics and Intellectual Property

Detail any ethical and privacy issues, including the consent of participants. Explain the copyright/IPR and whether there are any data licensing issues – either for data you are reusing, or your data which you will make available to others.

Storage and Backup

Give a rough idea of data volume. Say where and on what media you will store data, and how they will be backed-up. Mention security measures to protect data which are sensitive or valuable. Who will have access to the data during the project and how will this be controlled?

Data Sharing

Note who would be interested in your data, and describe how you will make them available (with any restrictions). Detail any reasons not to share, as well as embargo periods or if you want time to exploit your data for publishing.

Selection and Preservation

Consider what data are worth selecting for long-term access and preservation. Say where you intend to deposit the data, such as in UEL's data repository (data.uel.ac.uk) or a subject repository. How long should data be retained?

Appendix G: Debrief form



PARTICIPANT DEBRIEF LETTER

Thank you for participating in my research study on Foster carers' narrative; Looking after unaccompanied refugee minors. This letter offers information that may be relevant in light of you having now taken part.

What will happen to the information that you have provided?

The following steps will be taken to ensure the confidentiality and integrity of the data you have provided.

- Your personal data will be stored on a password protected laptop and uploaded onto a password protected cloud system.
- All data will be anonymised, any identifying data will be removed and clients will be given a pseudonym. This data will be seen by my supervisor and examiners. There may be some quotes that will be published in academic journals.
- Following the study, the contact details of participants and the recording of the transcript will be deleted immediately. The transcripts will be stored securely for up to 3 years.
- You can withdraw your data within 3 weeks of your interview. This can be done by emailing me your request to remove your data.

What if you have been adversely affected by taking part?

It is not anticipated that you will have been adversely affected by taking part in the research, and all reasonable steps have been taken to minimise potential harm. Nevertheless, it is still possible that your participation – or its after-effects – may have been challenging, distressing or uncomfortable in some way. If you have been affected in any of those ways you may find the following resources/services helpful in relation to obtaining information and support:

The Fostering Network- <https://www.thefosteringnetwork.org.uk>
Mocking bird mentoring initiative - mockingbird@fostering.net

Mind- <https://www.mind.org.uk>

Samaritans- <https://www.samaritans.org> or call 116 123

You are also very welcome to contact me or my supervisor if you have specific questions or concerns.

Contact Details

If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me, Halima Chowdhury U1821140@uel.ac.uk

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted please contact the research supervisor Dr Claire Marshall. School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ,
Email: c.marshall@uel.ac.uk

or

Chair of the School of Psychology Research Ethics Sub-committee: Dr Tim Lomas, School of Psychology, University of East London, Water Lane, London E15 4LZ.
(Email: t.lomas@uel.ac.uk)



School of Psychology Ethics Committee

REQUEST FOR TITLE CHANGE TO AN ETHICS APPLICATION

For BSc, MSc/MA and taught Professional Doctorate students

Please complete this form if you are requesting approval for a proposed title change to an ethics application that has been approved by the School of Psychology

By applying for a change of title request, you confirm that in doing so, the process by which you have collected your data/conducted your research has not changed or deviated from your original ethics approval. If either of these have changed, then you are required to complete an 'Ethics Application Amendment Form'.

How to complete and submit the request

1	Complete the request form electronically.
2	Type your name in the 'student's signature' section (page 2).
3	Using your UEL email address, email the completed request form along with associated documents to Dr J�r�my Lemoine (School Ethics Committee Member): j.lemoine@uel.ac.uk
4	Your request form will be returned to you via your UEL email address with the reviewer's decision box completed. Keep a copy of the approval to submit with your dissertation.

Required documents

A copy of the approval of your initial ethics application.	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Details

Name of applicant:	Halima Chowdhury
Programme of study:	Professional Doctorate in Counselling Psychology
Title of research:	Foster Carers' Narratives; Looking after unaccompanied refugee minors

Name of supervisor:	Dr Claire Marshall
Proposed title change	
Briefly outline the nature of your proposed title change in the boxes below	
Old title:	Foster Carers' Narratives; Looking After Unaccompanied Refugee Minors
New title:	Foster carers' narrative; Looking after unaccompanied refugee children in the UK.
Rationale:	Requested by examiners post viva

Confirmation		
Is your supervisor aware of your proposed change of title and in agreement with it?	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Does your change of title impact the process of how you collected your data/conducted your research?	YES <input type="checkbox"/>	NO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Student's signature	
Student: (Typed name to act as signature)	Halima Chowdhury
Date:	29/09/2022

Reviewer's decision		
Title change approved:	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>
Comments:	The new title follows a request made by the examiners at the viva. It will not impact the process of how the data are collected or how the research is conducted.	
Reviewer: (Typed name to act as signature)	Dr Jérémy Lemoine	
Date:	05/10/2022	



UEL Risk Assessment Form

Name of Assessor:	Halima Chowdhury	Date of Assessment	10 th June 2020
Event title:	Foster Carers' Narrative; Looking after Unaccompanied Refugee Minors research interviews	Date, time and location of activity:	June – October 2020 Mon- Fri 9-5pm Tower Hamlets Town hall
Signed off by Manager (Print Name)			

Please describe the activity in as much detail as possible (include nature of activity, estimated number of participants, etc)
If the activity to be assessed is part of a fieldtrip or event please add an overview of this below:

- One to one face to face interviews with participants/ virtually on Microsoft teams
- Face to face interviews will be conducted in confidential rooms in Tower Hamlet's Town Hall. Virtual interviews will be from home in a confidential space
- The interview will focus on the participant's journey and understanding of their experience of looking after an unaccompanied refugee minor
- Interviews will be recorded with an audio recording device
- 3-5 participants will be recruited for the study and one participant will be recruited for the pilot
- The interviews will be transcribed by the researcher and then analysed using narrative analysis

Overview of FIELD TRIP or EVENT:

Interviews with foster carers who have looked after unaccompanied refugee minors to understand their narratives.

Guide to risk ratings:

a) Likelihood of Risk	b) Hazard Severity	c) Risk Rating (a x b = c)
1 = Low (Unlikely)	1 = Slight (Minor / less than 3 days off work)	1-2 = Minor (No further action required)

a) Likelihood of Risk	b) Hazard Severity	c) Risk Rating (a x b = c)
2 = Moderate (Quite likely)	2= Serious (Over 3 days off work)	3-5 = Medium (May require further control measures)
3 = High (Very likely or certain)	3 = Major (Over 7 days off work, specified injury or death)	6-9 = High (Further control measures essential)

Which Activities Carry Risk?

Activity / Task Involved	Describe the potential hazard?	Who is at risk?	Likelihood of risk	Severity of risk	Risk Rating (Likelihood x Severity)	What precautions have been taken to reduce the risk?	State what further action is needed to reduce risk (if any) and state final risk level	Review Date
Safeguarding risk disclosed	The participant discloses a safeguarding risk	Young person/ foster carer/ member of the community	1	2	1	Explain confidentiality to participants prior to starting interviews. The researcher will explain that if they share any information that puts themselves or others at risk, confidentiality will be broken. This is outlined in the participant information sheet they will receive. Follow Tower Hamlet's safeguarding procedure which is to report any safeguarding concerns to the duty team and/or the safeguarding team.	Ensure a list of support services are available to provide further follow up support to the participant and the person who is at risk of harm. If the person at risk is a young person or the foster carer their allocated social worker will be notified of the risk. If the person at risk is a member of the community the researcher will contact the relevant professional e.g. social care/police to ensure their risk has been recorded. Risk Level 2	01/08/20

Fire	Fire risk at Tower Hamlets location/virtual location and fire alarm has been set off	Researcher and participant	1	2	2	<p>Ensure researcher and participant has signed into the visitor log book in reception when coming to the Tower Hamlets location.</p> <p>If the interview is virtual the researcher will explain if the fire alarm has been set off in their location or the participants location then the interview will be stopped and rescheduled.</p>	<p>The researcher will be aware of what day the fire alarm is being tested. The researcher will also be aware of the fire procedure and meeting point.</p> <p>If the interview is virtual the researcher will telephone the participant following the fire alarm to ensure they are safe.</p> <p>Risk Level 2</p>	01/08/20
Distress during the interview	Participant is upset and distressed during the interview	Participant	1	2	2	<p>The researcher will explain to the participant that they do not need to answer a question they do not want to answer.</p> <p>The participant will also be informed that they can choose to pause the interview or stop the interview at any time.</p> <p>The participant will also be informed that they can withdraw their data up to three weeks after their interview.</p>	<p>Support groups have been identified and their contact details have been provided in the debrief letter.</p> <p>Risk Level 2</p>	01/08/20

A comprehensive guide to risk assessments and health and safety in general can be found in UEL's Health & Safety handbook at <http://www.uel.ac.uk/hrservices/hs/handbook/> and a comprehensive guide to risk assessment is available on the Health & Safety Executive's web site at <http://www.hse.gov.uk/risk/casestudies/index.htm>. An example risk assessment is also included below.

Appendix J: Example of analysis process from Nvivo

DATA

- Files
 - Inter.
 - File Cl...
 - Extern...
- CODES**
 - Nodes
- CASES**
 - Cases
 - Case C...
- NOTES**
 - Memos
 - Annota...
 - Memo...
- SEARCH**
 - Queries
 - Query...
 - Node...
 - Sets
- MAPS**
 - Maps

OPEN ITEMS

- Dahlia
- Culture

0 item selected | DATA > Files > Interviews > Dahlia

Transcript:

I: Did you find him especially vulnerable

P: Sorry Yes because

I: quite vulnerable?

P: Yeah. Because like, you know, it's just runned off from the van and he's here and if he is going out of the free weeks few days and mosque out of the blue or nothing is gonna be in the mosque to do morning prayers not in I don't see him pray the other time. There's four other times, right. So just just children.

I: So that was your second young person.

P: with him Because we had to it was well and we had to like appeal. so when... yeah we had to appeal. They rejected his application For some reason, because he came through so many countries.

I: ohhh I see

P: Yeah, because he was talking about Taliban all this. So it was quite heavy, sometimes I used to get worried is he one, like, you know, like you get worried for your children, boys. because I've got two boys so you get worried and other foster children coming in and out of my house placement because I can take three children at a time. So I used to be worried about that the vulnerable children like and especially girls, because he was into girls so quickly because he was man inside saying hes 16 I think a 16. So by the time just before 18 I attended his he would appeal it was quite far. I forgot where it was. It was very far. I don't even know it was somewhere. I don't know very quite far

I: Okay

P: so everybody had to go there. So it was nice. Nice.

I: Yeah. So he lived with you for two years, right?

Coding Density:

- Support from social care
- Skills
- Family support
- External support
- Duty Foster carer
- URM
- Registering
- Safety