HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECUIRTY AND STATUTORY NEGLECT AMONGST UNDOCUMENTED MIGRANT FAMILIES IN BIRMINGHAM

By

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Abstract

Undocumented migrant children and families face exclusion from most state welfare provision in the UK through the no recourse to public funds rule and the 'hostile environment'. They are therefore vulnerable to destitution and other forms of extreme poverty. Although there has been a renewed academic and policy interest in the rise of food poverty and insecurity in the UK in recent years, there has been little analysis of how food insecurity and immigration status interact with each other. This gap is particularly acute when considering access to local authority social care for undocumented migrant children under Section 17 of the Children Act (1989).

This thesis uses an exploratory mixed methods approach to explore and understand the experiences of food insecurity amongst undocumented migrant families in Birmingham, using the themes of '(in)adequacy'; 'abandonment'; 'access'; 'abundance'; and 'agency'. These themes are then analysed using four explanatory theoretical frameworks of the 'Air Jamaica generation'; 'statutory neglect'; 'reverse panopticism'; and 'hospitable environments'.

Findings indicated that the numbers of undocumented migrant families in Birmingham were likely to be in the low thousands, and more than nine out of ten families who participated in the study were food insecure. This insecurity was rooted in the way that legislation neglects and abandons undocumented migrant children through a process of 'unseeing'. Despite this exclusionary process and the insecurity that it reproduced, families experienced times of 'abundance', made possible by the networks of 'hospitable environments' and mutual aid they were part of.

Acknowledgments

Finally, I would like to thank both of my parents, Peter and Carolyn, for your love and help; for your unfailing understanding and indulgence in your son refusing to get a proper job and deciding to spend a significant chunk of his 30s going back to university; most of all for instilling in me both a curiosity about the world, and a conviction that the ways things are, are not the way they will always be - it is to you that this thesis is dedicated.

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List of Acronyms

BASW – British Association of Social Workers

CAP – Church Action on Poverty

CASS - Children's Advisory Support Services

DBS – Disclosure and Barring Scheme

EWCA - England and Wales Court of Appeal

EEA –European Economic Area

FAO –Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations

FSA – Food Standards Agency

FSM – Free School Meals

HBAI – Households Below Average Income

HFS – Household Food Security

IFSW – International Federation of Social Workers

IMCA - Independent Mental Capacity Advocate

IMHA - Independent Mental Health Advocate

ISTAT - Istituto Nazionale di Statistica

JRF – Joseph Rowntree Foundation

LASPO – Legal Aid Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2012

MASH – Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub

MIS – Minimum Income Standard

NHAS – National Housing Advice Service

NASS – National Asylum Support Service

NGO – Non-Governmental Organisation

NELMA – North East London Migrant Action

NRPF – No Recourse to Public Funds

OISC – Office of the Immigration Services Commissioner

SCIE – Social Care Institute for Excellence

USDA – United States Department of Agriculture

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Introduction

"The aim is to create, here in Britain, a really hostile environment for illegal immigrants." (Theresa May, Kirkup and Winnett, 2012, online).

"The overarching principles of social work are respect for the inherent worth and dignity of human beings, doing no harm, respect for diversity and upholding human rights and social justice." (IFSW, 2014, online)

Positionality

This thesis had its origin in the experience of coordinating a voluntary sector advocacy project for undocumented migrants who were at risk of destitution. Specifically, the difficulty of, on the one hand, encountering large numbers of families experiencing destitution and hunger; and on the other, the struggle to persuade stakeholders that the experiences of migrant families were an urgent safeguarding concern. These difficulties were exacerbated by the absence of a research literature which explored, explained and 'visibilised' the issue.

Therefore, while the research has been designed, conducted and analysed according to standards of academic rigour, it is not intended to be understood as neutral or 'value-free' (Mies 64-82), but rather has a conscious positionality. It is rooted in the concerns of social work practice, and draws on the ethical principles of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW), and the Global Definition of Social Work as:

> *A practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work.* (IFSW, 2014).

Changing Contexts

When this thesis was started in October 2014, the term 'household food security' was little used in UK social science outside of the discipline of international development. There were no peer reviewed studies of household food security in the UK, and although Lambie-Mumford et al., (2014) had recently published their rapid evidence assessment of UK household food security, and the exponential growth of emergency food aid in the UK had started four years previously, the growth of food banks was only just beginning to be mentioned in the UK news media (Hanson, 2013).

Although the civil war in Syria was already entering its fifth year, the flows of displaced people seeking to enter Europe were not yet the source of 'moral panic' (Cohen, 1973) that they later became, and the tragic death of Aylan Kurdi, which did so much to change public perceptions of the 'migrant crisis' in the UK was still a year in the future (El-Enany, 2016). Similarly, the scandal of the deportation of members of the so-called 'Windrush Generation' had not yet entered the public consciousness, and the remarks of the then Home Secretary Theresa May to the *Daily Telegraph* that her intention was to: "create here in Britain a really hostile environment for illegal migration" (Kirkup and Winnett, 2012) were seen as merely another example of the populist hostility to undocumented migrants which had been common to frontbench politicians of both parties since the 1990s. Aside from the criticisms from the refugee and migrant sector (Refugee Action, 2013; ILPA, 2013), there was little hint of the controversy to come, and the Labour Party went on to abstain in parliamentary votes on the subsequent Immigration Bill 2013, which legislated for some of the provisions of the hostile environment in the Immigration Act 2014 (Dexter et al., 2016; Pinter, 2012, (BBC News).

Finally, the use of section 17 of the Children Act by local authorities to support undocumented migrant children who had no access to any other form of welfare provision was a largely obscure branch of social work, which, unlike other areas of social work practice, lacked statutory guidance, articles in the UK social work journals and, with the exception of reports from the Children's Society (Dexter et al., 2016; Pinter, 2012) little interest from children's charities or the refugee and migrant sector.

However, over the past four and a half years, there have been developments in all of the above areas, and at the time of writing in February 2020, the political and academic environment relating to food insecurity, social work and undocumented migrant children has been entirely transformed from the situation in 2014. There has been an abundance of new scholarship relating to food security in the UK; the establishment of the ENUF food security network; and a successful campaign for a new national measure of household food security in the UK. Immigration has been a continued source of political debate, with the 'Brexit' referendum and its aftermath dominating political discussion in the UK, and phrases relating to regularisation and welfare conditionality such as the 'hostile environment' and 'Windrush Generation' entering popular vocabulary. Even the issue of social work with undocumented migrant children, while less dominant, has become a more widely recognised issue in the child welfare field. The British Association of Social Workers (BASW) has released a statement outlining their concern with the use of section 17 to support children with no recourse to public funds (NRPF), and there has been national media coverage of the decision of some local authorities to remove embedded immigration officers from children's services' NRPF teams (Busby, 2019). There are two campaigns about access to services for undocumented migrant children (NELMA, 2018; Project 17, 2019), and

a number of peer reviewed articles relating to social work and undocumented migrant children have been published (Anitha, 2010; Dudley, 2017; Farmer, 2017; Jolly, 2018a).

Social Work

Social work is defined globally by the IFSW as:

> *A practice-based profession and an academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, and the empowerment and liberation of people. Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities are central to social work. Underpinned by theories of social work, social sciences, humanities and indigenous knowledge, social work engages people and structures to address life challenges and enhance wellbeing* (IFSW, 2014).

There is no universally acknowledged definition of care in the social work literature, and the IFSW global definition of social work does not mention care as a concept (IFSW, 2014). Indeed, care is sometimes seen as what the 'care sector' does, needing no further elaboration. However, the BASW code of ethics includes the statement that social workers should: "act with integrity and treat people with compassion, empathy and care" in their principles of ethical practice (British Association of Workers, 2012). Skills for care, which describes itself as "the strategic body for workforce development in adult social care in England" endorses the 6 c's of the 'Compassion in practice' strategy (Skills for care, 2012, online), and in this strategy, care is described as:

> *Our core business and that of our organisations…the care we deliver helps the individual person and improves the health of the whole community. Caring defines us and our work. People receiving care expect it to be right for them, consistently, throughout every stage of their life.*

This work seeks to address two gaps in the broadly define social work and care literature around migration and around food poverty. Social work with refugees and migrants has sometimes been viewed as a new or 'emerging' field of practice in the global north (Nash et al., 2006), and has been particularly associated with the activities of refugee resettlement and integration (Nash et al., 2006; Drolet et al., 2017; Valtonen, 2001; Wroe et al., 2019). In the UK in particular, the social work literature has tended to focus on work with unaccompanied asylum seeking children (Chase, 2010; Devenney, 2019; Kohli, 2006). There has also sometimes been an assumption in the social work literature that the successive Acts restricting immigration between the Commonwealth Immigrants Act 1962 and the British Nationality Act, 1981 "effectively brought primary immigration from the Caribbean, the Indian subcontinent and Africa to an end" (Hayes, 2004, p.14), and that therefore the priority for social workers should be on supporting asylum seekers. However, this assumption does not take into account either the growth in immigration from A2 and A8 accession countries, or of the increase in undocumented migrants in the UK, which now hosts the second highest population of undocumented migrants in the EU (Connor and Passel, 2019). This thesis therefore focuses on the latter group of migrants who have been neglected in the social work literature.

Burgess and Shier's comprehensive review of articles on social work and food security found that there had been a "rapid and steady" increase in publications about social work and food insecurity over the past three decades (2018, p.831), but despite this, there was a relative lack of visibility of the issue in social work education and practice (p.838). Similarly, despite attempts by Boone et al. (2018) and Saar-Heiman and Gupta (2019) to articulate a poverty aware social work practice, the rise of foodbanks and other forms of emergency food aid has not been widely seen as a social work issue.

This invisibility in the social work literature therefore particularly impacts on undocumented migrant children and families who are experiencing food insecurity, and by using insights from social policy and migration studies, this thesis aims to provide new empirical data on the experiences of food poverty amongst undocumented migrant families. It also seeks to provide a theoretical basis for social work with undocumented migrant families and to draw out the links between experiences and practices amongst undocumented migrant families in Birmingham, UK, and the policies and structures which underpin them.

Research Aims and Objectives

The research applied a mixed methods approach, with the overarching aim of exploring the experiences of undocumented migrant families with NRPF in Birmingham, using household food security as a framework for understanding the extent of deprivation faced by this population. There is limited literature about the numbers of undocumented children in the UK (Sigona and Hughes, 2012) and despite the large grey literature about refused asylum seekers at a local level (see discussion in Chapter One), none estimating the size of the population of undocumented children (including visa overstayers, and the UK born children of undocumented migrants) at a local level in the UK. There are indications of the existence of widespread migrant destitution (Pinter, 2012; Ready, 2016), although the extent of this is not known, particularly for children. Finally, little is known about the day to day life experiences of undocumented migrant children and families, and so this research employed a critical realist approach to explore the 'actual' behind these 'real' experiences (Bhaskar, 2008).

The research was conducted in three sequential stages, each corresponding to a related research objective:

1. To elicit an expert consensus of the likely numbers of undocumented migrant families currently residing in the city of Birmingham.

   - RQ1A: What is the expert consensus on the likely number of undocumented children and families in Birmingham?

   - RQ1B: What are the main demographic characteristics of this population (country of origin, destitution status, district of residence)?

   - RQ1C: Who are the main agencies in Birmingham who support undocumented migrant families?

2. To understand the extent of household food insecurity amongst undocumented migrant families in Birmingham.

   - RQ2A: How many households are food insecure as measured by the United States Department of Agriculture household food security module?

   - RQ2B: What are the differences in food insecurity between adults and children within households?

3. To explore the experiences of undocumented migrant families.

   - RQ3A: How do families experience food poverty and insecurity?

   - RQ3B: What coping strategies do they employ?

   - RQ3C: What are the likely exacerbating and mitigating factors relating to food insecurity?

The research took a sequential exploratory approach where quantitative data from structured questionnaires informed semi-structured interviews and photo elicitation techniques (Creswell) applying a theory building approach, derived from grounded theory, using inductive reasoning to derive post factum theory from the data (Vaus, 2009).

Structure of Chapters

In this constantly changing policy context, with a renewed policy interest in both food poverty and security and the existence and experiences of undocumented migrants in the UK, and a rapidly emerging scholarly and policy literature, this thesis can only offer a snapshot of the state of the field at the time of writing. Therefore, the introduction briefly introduces the social work literature on poverty and migration. Chapters One and Two survey the literature, with Chapter One focusing on migration and policy in the UK, and Chapter Two outlining the literature around poverty, destitution and food insecurity, and how these concepts have related to immigration both historically and in the present day. Having positioned the thesis within the literature, Chapter Three outlines the methods used in the research, explaining the fieldwork and the analytical processes which draw both from critical realism and grounded theory. Chapter Four focuses on research objective 1, giving the context of the undocumented migrant population in Birmingham, and outlining the findings about the likely numbers in the city. The following six chapters focus on research objectives 2 and 3, and each is organised using a different thematic lens to discuss the findings. Chapter Five discusses '(in)adequacy' – triangulating the findings from the household food security questionnaire with the experiences of families of having inadequate food, and contextualising it with their other experiences of living with inadequate resources. Chapter Six explores further into the experiences of exclusion, by looking through the lens of 'abandonment' as a way of understanding the ways in which the families felt excluded from services. Chapter Seven looks at 'access', and the extent to which families were able to access services, food and other essential needs. Chapters Eight and Nine present the paradoxical experiences which families also experienced, which appeared to be in tension with the other exclusionary processes outlined in the preceding chapters.

Chapter Eight examines the feelings and experience of 'abundance', and how families chose to present their living situations, and Chapter Nine examines the 'agency' which families exercised even within the structures which governed their lives.

Chapter Ten offers four explanatory theoretical perspectives drawn from the data, the 'Air Jamaica generation' is offered as a way of understanding the common experiences of the group of research participants in this study, and 'statutory neglect'; 'reverse panopticism' and 'hospitable environments' are introduced as explanatory frameworks to understand the apparently contradictory experiences of the families in this study.

Finally, Chapter Ten concludes by reviewing the aims and objectives, drawing out some of the implications of the findings for social work practice, and offering policy and research recommendations based on the findings.

Chapter One: Review of Migration Policy and Literature

This chapter briefly sets out some of the definitional issues with the commonly used terms relating to irregular migration before exploring the complex ways in which the concept of 'illegality' has been constructed and changed overtime, and the interplay between public opinion and legislation before discussing the different ways in which the numbers of undocumented migrants in the UK have been estimated.

1.1 Terminology

The language used to describe migration and categorise migrants is both controversial and contested, signifying deeper conceptual and epistemological assumptions (De Genova, 2002). The vocabulary has been heavily influenced by the shifting concepts of legality and illegality, but there is no universally accepted term to describe the status of people who live or work in a state without the state's legal authorisation (Carens, 2008). Terms such as 'illegal alien', 'illegal immigrant', 'undocumented migrant', irregular migrant', 'sans papiers', and 'clandestine migrant' have all been used in different contexts. Whilst the pejorative language of the Aliens Act 1905, with its desire to exclude 'undesirables' (Pellew, 1989)(Pellew 369-385) is rarely seen in current literature, due to its dehumanising overtones, there are those such as (Ngai, 2014) who would defend the historical term 'illegal alien' on the basis that in its original sense, it had a specific legal meaning of 'a person who is not a citizen' and who is 'illegally present' or has committed a 'deportable offense.' (2014, p.xix). Ngai (2014) argues that the currently more acceptable 'undocumented migrant' is rooted in a particular point in history and implies a context where documents are needed to cross borders or to be lawfully resident in a country, a situation associated with contemporary immigration controls.

Since the 1970s, the descriptor 'alien' has largely been replaced in the literature by other terms. The term 'illegal immigrant' remains the preference of both the European Commission and the UK Government (European Commission, 2001; Home Office, 2013) - although the phrase does not appear in the Immigration Act 2014, and is no longer used in the Associated Press style guide (Andersson and Nilsson, 2011). Aside from the pejorative tone, the phrase is inaccurate as it implies criminality and illegal entry, neither of which necessarily apply (Andersson, 2014). Indeed, Dauvergne (2008) observes that the trend towards describing people, rather than their immigration status, as 'illegal' has the effect that "it circumscribes identity solely in terms of a relationship with the law: those who are illegal have broken (our) law. Discourse about illegals gathers together a shred of common meaning, some pejorative connotations and a fixed idea of the law" (2008, p.16). Triandafyllidou (2010) contends that 'illegal migrant' technically only refers to the flow of those who cross a border, rather than the stock of those who remain in the country, such as those who overstay a temporary visa. A more precise term would be 'unauthorised immigrant', which whilst being factually accurate, is based on the state perspective rather than the migrant themselves, framing the subject as a problem to be solved rather than a person with agency of their own (De Genova, 2002). It can therefore serve to legitimise the removal of rights for those migrants who are labelled as 'unauthorised' justifying an Arendtian denial of 'the right to have rights' (Krause, 2008).

A more commonly used current description in the literature is 'undocumented migrant' (Bloch et al., 2014; Dorling, 2013) although, as Marquadt et al. (2011) discuss, there is some ambiguity associated with this phrase as it suggests that a person lacks any kind of official documentation, whereas many "undocumented migrants have passports from a country of

origin, or other official ID such as a driving licence" (2011, pp.8-9). Furthermore, undocumented migrants have heterogeneous experiences. Migrants experience more to life than just 'illegality' and may have close interactions in work, education, family, or neighbourhood with those who are citizens. For De Genova (2002), this poses ethical questions for how scholars frame their research with undocumented migrants: "To conduct research on undocumented migrants as such—conceptualised in isolation—is therefore to perpetuate a rather egregious kind of epistemic violence on the social reality of everyday life for those migrants" (2002, pp.422-223).

Other scholars (Medova and Drbohlav, 2013; Vogel et al., 2011) use the term 'Irregular migrant' in preference to 'illegal immigrant' to imply a violation of immigration rules, but without the suggestion of criminality (Triandafyllidou, 2010, pp.2-3). Bloch et al. (2014) prefer the term 'undocumented' as the least pejorative of all the options, although acknowledge that it does not capture the complexity and variety of immigration status, or the differing routes into them (2014, pp.22-23).

More fundamentally, though, the 'common sense' dichotomy of legal/authorised and illegal/unauthorised immigration is itself problematic, in that many migrants change immigration status over time, moving from authorised to undocumented and back again (Koser, 2010). In fact, Schuster (2005) argues that geographical mobility is often matched by a "status mobility" where it is common to experience a number of different statuses over time, and to even slip back and forth between them (2005, p.758).

Another factor which confounds easy binary approaches to authorised and unauthorised migration is that in the UK, increasingly even 'authorised migrants' have restricted access to the social protection programmes available to citizens. For instance, the NRPF rule excludes

most foreign nationals in the UK from entitlements to provisions such as Universal Credit, council housing and local authority homelessness assistance (UKVI, 2016) irrespective of the legality or otherwise of their immigration status. Even EU citizens who at the time of writing have free movement to and from the UK face restrictions on access to social security benefits. Since 2014, there has been a three-month residence rule for new Job Seekers Allowance (JSA), Child Benefit and Tax Credit claims and exclusion of EU JSA claimants from claiming Housing Benefit, as well as more indirect discrimination against migrants who speak English as a second language by removing interpreting services from Job Centres (O'Brien, 2014).

In this context of increasing restrictions on migrant access to social protection, there is a liminality (Torres and Wicks-Asbun, 2014), or precariousness, which is wider than traditional categories of 'undocumented' or 'unauthorised', and encompasses many regular or authorised migrants who are non-citizens, and even returning emigrants with British citizenship (Sriskandarajah and Drew, 2006). Goldring and Landolt (2013) talk of "precarious non-citizens" (2013, p.4) whilst others have discussed the 'civic stratification' of rights experienced by those with differing immigration statuses within Europe (Kofman, 2002; Morris, 2001), and Vertovec (2007) identifies the 'hierarchy of entitlements' experienced by differing groups of migrants, and the challenges that differing immigration status brings to integration. He notes that varying categories of immigration status and levels of rights and entitlements to services and employment "comprise an additional – indeed, fundamental – dimension of today's patterns and dynamics of super-diversity" (2007, p.15). Most radically, Feldman (2015) disputes the division between 'citizen' and 'migrant' entirely, arguing that

the atomisation and disempowerment of contemporary Western societies makes the 'condition of migrant-hood' ubiquitous, irrespective of a person's immigration status.

The complexity of different immigration statuses, with their differing entitlements to services, make defining who is an undocumented migrant problematic, particularly because there are a number of routes into 'illegality'. Gordon et al. (2009) identify three distinct groups of undocumented migrants: illegal entrants; those who stay in a country longer than authorised; and the UK born children of undocumented migrants (2009, p.6). In contrast, Pinkerton et al. (2004) do not include UK born children in their definition, but do include those who initially entered the country illegally, but subsequently regularised their status; on the other hand, Woodbridge (2005) includes "anyone who does not have valid leave to remain in the UK" (2005, p.1), and sees refused asylum seekers who have not left the UK and are not appealing their asylum decision as a separate category of undocumented migrant to overstayers. A further layer of complexity is added by the fact that, as Vollmer, (2017) explores, the UK, in contrast to many other EU states, does not officially distinguish in law between 'illegal entry', 'illegal residence' and 'illegal work' making defining migrant illegality even more difficult. It is this ambiguity between entry, residence, and work that leads Finch and Cherti (2011) to settle on a particularly broad definition of undocumented/irregular migrants: "We define an irregular migrant as every immigrant who is breaching any immigration rule" (2011, p.3), a decision which means an additional "165,000 or so can be added to this number if various forms of illegal working by otherwise legal migrants are taken into account" (2011, p.20).

For the purpose of this research, the concept 'undocumented' is used in preference to other terms because it is closest to the way in which participants themselves described their

status – as 'not having papers' or 'waiting for their book [passport]'. This is understood to include the three categories described by Gordon et al. (2009).

1.2 The Construction of Migrant Illegality

1.2.1 Media and Public Opinion

There is an extensive literature exploring print media reporting on the issue of immigration, and the way that this shapes popular discourses - particularly the use of metaphor to represent anxieties about immigration and immigrants (Cisneros, 2008). Bauder's (2008a) Topoi analysis of discourses around immigration in Canadian newspapers found that the most common framework for discussing immigration was 'danger'; similarly, in Germany, whilst stories were less frequently framed around the theme of 'danger' than economic utility, discussions about 'danger' spiked in the second quarter of 2004 at the time of the Madrid bombings on 11th March (Bauder, 2008b). In the UK, Baker et al.'s (2008) critical discourse analysis using corpus linguistics techniques established that 86% of consistent collocates over the ten years studied could be classified under only eight reference categories. They found that:

> *A first impression is that the discourses of RASIM[1] in UK newspapers revolve around a small number of topics/categories and employ a limited number of topoi, most of which denote a negative stance. A large number of topoi/topics/ categories is shared by refugees, asylum seekers and immigrants, but less so by migrants* (2008, p. 288).

Rasinger (2010) critical discourse analysis of a smaller corpus of regional newspaper reports of Eastern European migrants in Cambridgeshire at the time of EU expansion also found

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[1] Refugee, Asylum Seeker and Immigrant

strongly negative associations with migrants. In newspaper headlines, the word most commonly associated with migrants was 'police' and migrants were commonly presented negatively, often associated with crime and contrasted with other actors – MPs, police and others – who were presented as trying to stop them. Stewart et al. (2011) use the example of the way that regional US newspaper discourse construction around illegal immigration contributes to shaping fear and negativity between in and out groups.

Certainly, newspaper rhetoric on this issue of immigration bears the hallmarks of a 'moral panic' (Dauvergne, 2008), and Cohen (1973) includes refugees and asylum seekers as one of his seven clusters of social identity associated with objects of moral panics. Cohen argues that this area differs from the other six in his typology, because, firstly, unlike other intermittent panics, hostility to refugees and asylum seekers is a "single, virtually uninterrupted message of hostility and rejection" (Cohen, 1973, p. xx) and secondly, because of the way that the narrative is overtly political in nature. Cohen notes the narrow lexicon of the rhetoric and metaphors used and the repetition of water metaphors comparing those seeking asylum as a human tide – flood, wave, deluge or swamp (Cohen, 1973), a tendency also noted by Baker et al. (2008), and Rasinger (2010). Others have noted the repetition of dehumanising metaphors of migrants being 'animals' (Ana, 1999), and as a 'toxic pollutant' (Cisneros, 2008).

For Cohen, moral panic about immigration is exacerbated by the fact that British governments have both "led and legitimated" this hostility and "spoken with one voice alongside the tabloid press" (Cohen, 1973, p.xix). For instance, Matthews and Brown's (2012) analysis of a campaign by *The Sun* newspaper against asylum seekers suggests that the construction of asylum seekers as figures of fear and danger was accompanied by a

condemnation of authority figures such as the then Prime Minister and Home Secretary as 'out of touch', 'unable to manage', and 'betraying' voters. This suggests that, far from tabloid representations of immigration and asylum repeating the views of political elites, tabloid discourses represent a 'reactionary popularism' with rhetoric justified as being on behalf of the public, and the use of petitions, frequent references to popular support, and the use of 'vox pop' interviews with readers. The effect is therefore one of 'up-spill' where the agenda set by *The Sun's* campaign was then discussed in the broadsheet press and responded to by the political elites (Matthews and Brown, 2012).

Whilst it is difficult to establish a causal direction between government and tabloid hostility to immigration and popular hostility to migrants, Frost (2007) suggests that:

> *The popular racism contained in parts of the media fuels fear and outrage against asylum seekers and provides justification for the government's strategy of getting tough on asylum. More alarmingly, these processes perpetuate feelings of resentment and hatred against asylum seekers in British society on the part of those who feel equally disempowered and alienated* (2007, p. 242).

However, this analysis relies on an essentialist and racialised view of the 'white working class'. For instance, Frost argues that: "Thus, typically white working-class males articulate the bulk of 'race hate' as expressed through racially motivated crime" (2007, p.228), a perspective which ignores the prejudices of elites.

Whilst government measures to 'crack down' on immigration are often framed as responding to public opinion, preliminary evidence from the Mapping Immigration Controversy Project (Jones et al., 2017) suggests that government attempts to respond to

public concerns about immigration can actually increase those concerns, creating a feedback loop of immigration enforcement measures. A representative sample of 2,424 people were asked about the Home Office's so-called 'go home' vans which were commissioned to drive around ethnically diverse boroughs of London with advertising hoardings encouraging 'illegal immigrants' to return to their country of origin. 15% reported that the vans made them "concerned that irregular migration was more widespread than they had realised." Similarly, 14% reported increased concern about 'illegal' immigration after seeing signs warning about restrictions on migrant access to the NHS; 18% after seeing local news stories about Home Office immigration enforcement; and 22% after seeing tweets from the Home Office (Mapping Immigration Controversy, 2015).

1.2.2 Legislation

Whilst 'common sense' understandings of immigration controls see restrictions on immigration as fixed and inherent in the concept of the nation state, in reality, immigration controls are elastic and constantly changing. Rather than being an inherent feature of the nation state, the current system of compulsory passports for international travel did not become commonplace until the time of the First World War (Meyer, 2009) and the first peacetime legislation on immigration control at the point of entry to the UK was not until 1905 (Wray, 2006).

In the US, 50% of undocumented migrants are Mexican, but until the 1960's there were no restrictions on numbers of migrants to the US from Mexico, and it was not until immigration quotas were introduced in 1965 and 1976 that many migrants from Mexico were 'illegalised' (De Genova, 2002). Similarly, in the UK, the Commonwealth Immigrant Act 1968 removed the right of Ugandan and Kenyan Asian British Passport holders to settle in the UK, a

measure which was criticised at the time as being a breach of the UK's international obligations to its own citizens (Hepple, 1968).

As well as controls on immigration, the geography of national borders themselves is contingent. Hispanic citizens of the states of Texas and California in the 19th century would contend that "We didn't cross the border, the border crossed us" as previously Mexican Territory became part of the United States (Cisneros, 2013), whilst Feldman (2015) gives the more recent example of ethnically Russian former Soviet citizens in the Baltic states who became stateless after the breakup of the USSR. The system of immigration control in the UK has been repeatedly amended, reconstructed and reformed, a process that has accelerated over recent years, with ten Immigration Acts passed over the past twenty years (see Table 1).

Table 1: UK Immigration Acts 1996-2016

Name of Act	Year
Asylum and Immigration Act	1996
Immigration and Asylum Act	1999
Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act	2002
Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants) Act	2004
Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act	2006
UK Border Act	2007
Criminal Justice Immigration Act	2008
Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act	2009
Immigration Act	2014
Immigration Act	2016

In the 2015 Queen's Speech, the then newly elected Conservative government promised to introduce another Immigration Bill to "clamp down on illegal immigration and protect our public services" with the stated benefit of "Dealing with those who should not be here, by rooting out illegal immigrants and boosting removals and deportations"(Cabinet Office, 2015). Amongst the six proposed main elements were: 1) provision for the wages of those working illegally to be seized; 2) a national roll out of the landlord scheme to make it easier to evict 'illegal immigrants'; 3) action by banks on existing bank accounts in the name of 'illegal immigrants'; and 4) an extension of the "deport first, appeal later" principle in criminal cases to human rights claims (Cabinet Office, 2015, pp.36-37).

1.2.3 Illegalisation and Enforcement.

Dauvergne (2008) observes the process of illegalisation or criminalisation whereby a judgement about the morality and worthiness of migrants is made – previously infringements of migration rules were not seen as criminal, whereas those who enter a country now without authorisation are often seen as criminals, identified by their criminality first, and status as migrants second. Indeed, Ackerman (2012) argues that in the US, whilst immigration laws were first introduced in the early 20th century, it wasn't until the late 1970s that concepts of 'illegality' became a feature of public debate in relation to immigration. Whilst Chacon and Davis (2006) see this late 20th century emphasis on illegality as reflecting a grassroots movement by right wing organisations, Ackerman (2012) suggests other causes. Using a textual analysis of popular newspaper articles between 1924 and 2007, Ackerman analyses the emphasis on illegality in discourses about migration, concluding that the new emphasis on illegality is reflective of two discrete processes. Firstly, attempts within federal agency bureaucracy to emphasise illegal immigration to justify and secure budget increases; and secondly, moves by 'progressive' organisations to highlight illegal

immigration. In the case of trade unions, to safeguard member's jobs, and in the case of 'ethnicity-based organisations' to "fight discrimination by emphasising a differentiation between hyphenated Americans and immigrants" (2014, p.182).

An extensive immigration enforcement and control industry has developed to police this new illegality, variously described as the 'Immigration industrial complex' (Golash-Boza, 2009), the 'Illegality industry' Andersson (2014) and the 'Border industrial complex' (Chacon and Davis, 2006, p.223) and defined as "the confluence of public and private sector interests in the criminalization of undocumented migration, immigration law enforcement, and the promotion of 'anti-illegal' rhetoric" (Golash-Boza, 2009, p.295). Immigration enforcement regimes are lucrative, and Andersson (2014) notes the apparent disconnect between the money spent on the issue of clandestine immigration as compared to the reality of the problem. Whilst much political rhetoric has focused on the issue of migrants entering the southern borders of Europe clandestinely by sea crossings from North Africa, Andersson points out that only 1% of migrants entering Spain since 1990 have done so by illegal sea crossings. This industry, far from stopping illegal immigration:

> *Produces what it is meant to eliminate, curtail, or transform – more immigrant illegality. In this loop, more funding is assured in a vicious cycle reminiscent of the 'war on terror'; the more spectre like the threat at the border, the higher the potential gains from this phantom menace* (2014, p. 8).

Indeed, whilst trends towards criminalisation of undocumented migrants started before the events of 9/11, in the wake of the attacks: "immigration law reform and border enforcement were quickly positioned as frontline defences against terrorism, as they had following the 1993 World Trade Centre and 1995 Oklahoma City bombings" (Coleman, 2008).

Chacon and Davis (2006) see the events of 9/11 as allowing "right-wing forces to regain the initiative against an advancing immigrant rights agenda" and which "created an opportunistic wedding between pro-war hawks and anti-immigrant destructionists" (2006, pp. 215-216). Gholash-Boza (2009) notes that immigration enforcement in the US is now situated within the Department of Homeland Security, and funding for immigration enforcement increased dramatically after 9/11, whilst in the UK, NGO activists in the North of England have observed a continuity between tools used in the 'Prevent' counter terrorism agenda and Home Office Immigration enforcement: "Tools and rhetoric designed to combat terrorism and serious crime are being deployed against asylum seekers and people who work with them" (Grayson, 2015).

Yuval-Davis et al. (2018) discuss the way that technologies of control have been utilised not just at physical geographical borders, but in everyday interactions where 'ordinary' citizens have become co-opted as border guards, or as suspect undocumented migrants. The provisions of the government's hostile environment being a major example of this process, where private landlords, employers, and banks are obliged to check clients' immigration status before offering a service. However, as Yuval-Davis et al. (2018) point out, processes of everyday bordering, and the privatisation of state roles in immigration can be traced to much earlier, with the 1971 Immigration Act obligation for ship and aircraft captains to share names and nationality of passengers and to detain and return those who are refused entry (p. 233). The implications of the extension of everyday bordering under the hostile environment for undocumented migrants in the UK are a fracturing of the traditional informal recruitment of friends and family members in what Yuval-Davis et al. (2018) describe as the 'ethnic enclave economy' , which has pronounced gendered effects, and a

greater burden on women and on people of colour, irrespective of immigration status, which threatens to disrupt the multi-ethnic conviviality of British cities such as London. Tervonen and Enache (2017) apply an 'everyday bordering' analysis to welfare provision for precarious Roma migrants in Helsinki, noting the liminal space which they occupy, where they are not removed from the country, yet are excluded from social rights through gatekeeping processes. Similar exclusion from social protection can be observed in the UK, where Guentner et al. (2016) consider the chauvinistic bordering practices in the welfare system using the examples of exclusion from social housing and from access to social services. At the level of local social work practice, social workers have been described as 'everyday bureaucrats' by preventing access to those who are constructed as 'unworthy' on account of their immigration status (Farmer, 2017; Jolly, 2018a). The impact of the hostile environment and other bordering practices has been to increase the risk of destitution for undocumented migrants who are excluded from both employment and access to social rights, as evidenced by numerous third sector reports on destitution both at a citywide level (Clarke and Nandy, 2008; Dickson, 2019; Lewis, 2009; Randall, 2015) and nationally (Pinter, 2012; Smart, 2009).

1.2.4 Racialised Hierarchy of Undocumented Migration

Even within those groups who have become illegalised due to immigration control, there is a racialised hierarchy of deservingness and othering (Goldring et al., 2009). Asad and Rosen (2019) note the residential selection behaviours of undocumented Latinx residents in the US, noting that white majority areas are avoided in favour of African American or Latinx majority residential areas because of the perceived threat of visibility and law enforcement behaviour, which is a racialised self-electing behaviour to blend in which is not experienced by non-visible minorities. Similarly, Longazel (2013) explores the racialised moral panics in

the USA where allegations of Latino on white homicide led to crack downs on illegal immigration and state and local laws such as the Illegal Immigration Relief Act in Hazleton, Pennsylvania, which amongst other provisions punished landlords who rented to undocumented immigrants, employers who employed undocumented migrants, and made English the official language of the town. In this case study, the moral panic is seen as an example of racial hoarding, where the power and prestige of the white majority group is protected and secured through an othering and racialising action of undocumented migrants. Some migrants are more likely to experience racialisation than others. Massey (2008) outlines the process of racialisation of Mexican migrants in the US since the 1970s to render them as both exploitable and excludable, and Aranda and Vaquera (2015) discuss the ways that despite the 'colour-blind' nature of immigration enforcement, disproportionally affect Latinx and other racialised groups.

In the UK, there is a long history of racialised othering of those from the Caribbean and Indian subcontinent, which is exacerbated by gendered othering (Evans and Bowlby, 2000) whereas migrants from groups who are constructed as 'white' such as migrants from the 'Old Commonwealth' may face a different context. Migrants who are identified as white do not face the same extent of racialised othering, as illustrated in the different language used towards them, for instance, the use of the term 'ex-pat' rather than 'migrants' (Kunz, 2019).

In contrast, Rzepnikowska (2019) argues for the malleableness and conditionality of whiteness, where Polish migrant women in Manchester and Barcelona are sometimes constructed as privileged white Europeans, while at other times, can be victims of racism.

Fox et al., (2015) note the ways that, despite facing sometimes racialised discrimination, Eastern European migrants in Bristol assured their place in the racial hierarchy by

emphasising their Europeanness and whiteness. This is a privileged place in the racial hierarchy which has been challenged since the Brexit referendum (Botterill and Burrell, 2018), and which may change after Brexit if more people become undocumented (Thomas, 2018).

1.3 Estimating the Undocumented Migrant Population in the UK

There are some who are sceptical of the utility of counting numbers of undocumented migrants, both due to the tendency to undercount hidden populations, and the conceptual difficulties involved, such as the danger of oversimplifying the complexity of different immigration statuses by using an imprecise umbrella term such as 'undocumented' (Koser, 2010, p. 182). International comparisons of numbers of undocumented migrants are even more problematic as there is no global definition of undocumented migrants, and whether a person is considered to be undocumented is largely due to national immigration law rather than international standards (Dauvergne, 2008). However, in the absence of accurate, reliable data on the experience of undocumented migrant families, it becomes difficult to make evidence-based policy decisions, to inform campaign and advocacy groups, or to help to plan and deliver support services (Koser, 2010).

Whilst the numbers of undocumented migrants in the UK is unknown, it is likely that the most common route to becoming undocumented is overstaying on a visa, rather than entering the country illegally (Vollmer, 2011). This is in contrast with both popular perceptions, and the preconceptions of enforcement agencies. Vollmer (2011) cites an interview with an immigration officer who estimated that 75% of all 'illegal border crossers' did so with the assistance of smugglers (2011, p. 17). A number of attempts have been made to estimate numbers of undocumented migrants in the UK, with the most methodologically rigorous using a residual method to establish a de facto figure of the total

population who are likely to be undocumented. This methodology was first suggested as valid for estimating the UK population of undocumented migrants in Pinkerton et al.'s (2004) Home Office funded scoping study of the various methodologies used internationally. Woodbridge (2005) was the first to apply this methodology in the UK, arriving at a central estimate of 430,000 undocumented migrants in the UK in 2005. However, this estimate was not disaggregated by age. Gordon et al. (2009) used similar methods, updating Woodbridge's figure to account for the effect of EU enlargement and the British born children of migrants, estimating a central figure of 618,000 irregular migrants with 85,000 UK born children resident in the UK in 2007. Most recently, Sigona and Hughes (2012) revised Gordon et al.'s estimate to conclude that there were 120,000 undocumented migrant children in the UK at the end of 2011.

Despite the relatively small number of academic empirical studies about undocumented migrants in the UK, there is a large 'grey literature' (See Table 2) predominantly produced by NGOs, mainly concerned with the issue of destitution as a result of being subjected to immigration control, with a particular focus on refugees and asylum seekers (Allsopp et al., 2014). The majority of these studies attempt to estimate numbers of refused asylum seekers facing destitution either nationally, such as Smart's (2009) tally of asylum seekers accessing one stop drop-in services, or locally, such as Prior (2006); Lewis (2009, 2007), Brown (2008) or Lever (2012). With the exception of Dexter et al. (2016), these studies tend to use a methodology based on surveys of those accessing destitution drop-ins and support services for refused asylum seekers, and therefore underestimate the numbers of other categories of undocumented migrants, such as visa overstayers.

Table 2: Grey literature on numbers of undocumented migrants in UK

Year	Author	Title	Findings
2005	Woodbridge, J.	Sizing the unauthorised (illegal) migrant population in the United Kingdom in 2001	Central estimate of 430,000 undocumented migrants in the UK at end of 2001.
2006	Prior, J.	Destitute and desperate: A report on the number of failed asylum seekers in Newcastle-upon Tyne and the services available to them	There is an estimate of 300 destitute asylum seekers in Newcastle. 20 to 30 are estimated to be sleeping rough.
2006	Green, M.	They think we are nothing: a survey of destitute asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland	At least 154 asylum seekers, Refugees and their dependents were destitute in Glasgow between 30 January and 26 February 2006. 25 destitute children under the age of 18. 46.5% had been destitute for more than 6 months. 76.6% of people interviewed had been destitute because they were refused asylum. 26.5% were destitute despite the fact that their claim was still active.
2007	Lewis, H.	Destitution in Leeds	Survey counted 251 people who visited refugee agencies in Leeds. The people surveyed came from 21 countries. 38% were destitute for one year or more. 84% were refused asylum seekers. 6% were awaiting an asylum decision. 5% had a positive decision.
2008	Brown, D.	More destitution in Leeds	Destitution had increased since 2006. 331 individuals were counted as destitute, including 51 dependent children. The destitute people came from 35 different countries, with 21% coming from Zimbabwe, 16% from Iran, 12% from Eritrea, 8% from DRC and 7% from Iraq. 75% were refused asylum seekers. 27% were waiting for Section 4 support to begin. 26% had not applied for Section 4 support.
2008	Centre for Social Justice	Asylum matters, Restoring trust in the UK asylum	Numbers cited include 2000 asylum seekers were estimated to be

		system	destitute in Manchester (source: evidence to CSJ from Boaz Trust).
2009	Gordon, I., Scanlon, K., Travers, T. and Whitehead, C.	Economic impact on the London and UK economy of an earned regularisation of irregular migrants to the UK	618,000 (including 85,000 UK-born) undocumented migrants in 2007.
2009	Lewis, H.	Still destitute: A worsening problem for refused asylum seekers	Over a four-week survey period: - 273 destitute clients, with 30 children. - 80% refused asylum seekers/12% asylum seekers; 5% refugees' 3% unknown. - 33% waiting for section 4 support - 515 visits during four weeks. "Destitute individuals may not be able to get enough to eat and are reliant on friends or charitable provision for survival" p.20
2009	Smart, K.	The Second destitution tally: An indication of the extent of destitution among asylum seekers, refused asylum seekers and refugees	October 2008 survey of asylum support services. 4093 visits - 48% of visits were by people who had been destitute for more than 6 months. 13% of destitute people had dependent children.
2012	Sigona, N. and Hughes, V.	No way out, no way in. Irregular migrant children and families in the UK	"An estimated 120,000 irregular migrant children live in the UK. A large majority of these are either born in the country or migrated here at an early age. These children were brought up in the UK, educated in British schools and many speak English as their main language." (p.1) "Finding the money to pay the rent, bills, food, clothing and most importantly to provide for their children is a prevalent theme running through the narratives of parents." (p.20). "For many interviewees, networks of friends, family, faith and community organisations were important means of support,

			making up for the lack of formal, institutional support. These were largely used to provide the essentials: a place to sleep or money for rent, food, clothes and travel, but also for help with childcare arrangements" (P.22)
2012	Lever, J.	No return, no asylum Destitution as a way of life? The extent and impact of destitution amongst asylum seekers in Bradford	Survey of refused asylum seekers visiting seven agencies in Bradford between 11th June and 13th July 2012. 66 people destitute in Bradford (including 10 children).
2016	Dexter, Z., Capron, L., and Gregg, L	Making life impossible: How the needs of destitute migrant children are going unmet	144,000 undocumented migrant children in the UK. "Over 50,000 individuals with dependents in the last two years were given 'no recourse to public funds' even though they have a legal right to remain in the UK" (p.5)
2019	Connor, P. and Passel, J.S.	Europe's unauthorized immigrant population peaks in 2016, then levels off: new estimates find half live in Germany and the United Kingdom	There are between 800,000 and 1.2 million undocumented migrants in the UK, one of the largest undocumented populations in Europe, second only to Germany.
2020	Jolly, A. Thomas, S. and Stanyer, J.	London's children and young people who are not British citizens: A profile	397,000 undocumented individuals in April 2017. In comparison, Gordon et al. (2009) estimated that there were 442,000 undocumented individuals in London at the end of 2007, which would suggest that there has been a slight decrease in both the total number, and the proportion of undocumented individuals in the UK who live in London since 2007. In 2007, Gordon et al. indicate that 72 percent of undocumented individuals in the UK lived in London, but we estimate that this figure is now closer to 59 per cent.

These studies provide valuable insight into an area which has historically been neglected by academic research in the UK. However, Allsopp et al. (2014) note that these studies often

have little methodological discussion, are sometimes based on information from the organisation's own service users and are produced for campaigning and advocacy purposes, and as such should be approached with caution.

This is particularly apparent when considering the almost exclusive focus on refused asylum seekers. A refusal of an asylum decision is not the only route into undocumentedness; other routes include being born to undocumented migrants, overstaying on a visa, or entering the country clandestinely. This focus on asylum seekers is perhaps because refused asylum seekers can be constructed as 'good migrants' who have been forced to flee for political reasons, in contrast to 'bad migrants' who have migrated for economic reasons. See, for instance, the British Red Cross poster featuring a picture of a woman in front of a wall pockmarked with bullet holes, stating: "Don't label me. A migrant moves for work or study. An asylum seeker flees when they face persecution" British Red Cross (2015a), or the statement that: "If an economic migrant hides from authorities or overstays their visa, they break UK law. But an asylum seeker has the right to stay in the UK while we process their claim" (British Red Cross, 2015b). In contrast to the way that those seeking asylum in the UK are presented as legitimate beneficiaries of international conventions, undocumented migrants are presented as 'illegal immigrants' and people "whose entry into or presence in a country contravenes immigration laws" in contrast with refugees and asylum seekers who "are law abiding people" (Refugee Council, 2012). However, despite these caveats, these NGO reports provide valuable insight into 'on the ground' experiences of irregular migration and the response of the NGO sector, especially in the light of the methodological and practical difficulties of research with hidden populations (Vollmer, 2011).

Most of the NGO-produced reports which seek to estimate numbers of destitute migrants with NRPF use a different method to the residual approach favoured by Pinkerton et al. (2004) onwards. Instead, there have been a number of studies which use a direct method, surveying undocumented migrants accessing drop-in support services over a set period of time. The advantage of this is that they represent actual numbers of people, rather than a statistical estimation; however, as the total size of the population is unknown, there is no attempt to create a representative sample, and it is therefore not possible to extrapolate or make claims about the total population of undocumented migrants. They also are based on those already accessing drop-in services so represent a partial picture of the likely total population. The Asylum Support Partnership has produced two 'Tallies' of the numbers of destitute asylum seekers accessing their one-stop support services. The second Destitution Tally in 2009 found that 13% of people presenting at one-stop asylum support services as destitute had children, and half of these had been destitute for 6 months or more (Smart, 2009).

In the West Midlands, the earliest attempt to scope out the numbers of children and families facing destitution due to their immigration status was a survey in July 2007 by the West Midlands Destitute Asylum Seekers Steering Group, made up of advocacy and advice organisations in the local NGO sector. The survey found that over a two-week period in July 2007, 104 destitute adults accessed voluntary sector services for destitute migrants in Birmingham, 14 had children, and there were 21 destitute children and young people in total (cited in Clarke and Nandy, 2008). In the same year, The Children's Society commissioned a small-scale qualitative research study in Birmingham, interviewing 11

destitute adults who were pregnant or with children, and two unaccompanied minors (Clarke and Nandy, 2008).

Although undocumented migrant children and families are ineligible for most welfare benefits, local authorities retain a responsibility to safeguard the welfare of children in their area under section 11 of the Children Act 2004, and therefore another method of quantifying numbers of undocumented migrant children present in the UK has been to survey local authority children's services. The only national estimate of undocumented migrant children supported by local authorities is based on a survey by the NRPF network who surveyed 83 local authorities with social services responsibilities and found that 2,919 undocumented children were supported as children in need under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to prevent destitution (NRPF Network, 2017). This figure is incomplete as it only corresponds to a minority of the total Local Authorities with social services responsibilities, but it is considerably lower than estimates of total numbers of children with an irregular status in the UK using the residual method. Given that undocumented migrant families have NRPF, and no right to legal employment, this suggests that there are likely to be large numbers of undocumented children who are living in families with no secure regular income source and may be experiencing high levels of food insecurity.

1.4 Conclusion

There is an extensive research literature on migration, and it has also been one of the most frequently legislated areas within the UK, with a complex interplay between public opinion and immigration policy. Illegality is a fluid concept which has changed over time according to legislation and public opinion, a reality which is reflected in the findings below (Chapters Five and Six) where households moved in and out of regularity.

Although there is an extensive literature on irregular migration, there has been less research about the number and experiences of undocumented migrants in the UK, and to date no peer reviewed research relating to numbers of undocumented migrants in Birmingham. This gap in the literature is addressed by Objective 1 of this research. Having outlined the key existing themes relating to the definition and measurement of undocumented migration in the UK, Chapter Two considers the other key theme of this thesis.

Chapter Two: Poverty

Alongside immigration, poverty is the second key theme which runs through this thesis. This chapter outlines how poverty has been defined and measured both historically and in the present day. It then discusses how poverty as a concept and welfare have related to migration, before discussing the recent 'rediscovery' of food poverty, insecurity and malnutrition in the UK since 2010.

2.1 Defining Poverty

As Lister (2004) notes, understandings of poverty are rooted in cultural and historical contexts, and as such there is no one single definition of poverty, the concept being highly contested, not least because definitions of poverty have implications for how resources are distributed, and it is therefore an inherently political concept. Lister (2004) distinguishes between concepts, definitions and measures of poverty, with concepts referring to the meanings of poverty; definitions being 'more precise' statements "distinguishing poverty from non-poverty"; and measures, practical indicators that operationalise definitions (2004, p. 5). She contends that each offers a slightly different way of framing poverty with each representing a narrowing of focus.

Concepts of poverty range from structural understandings of what poverty is and how it is reproduced (Holman, 1978; Mooney, 2008; Novak, 1988), to more individualist and pathological understandings (Murray, 2008). Novak (1988) brings a Marxist analytical framework to understanding the concept of poverty. For him, poverty in Britain was created with the end of feudalism when, for the first time, people were separated from the land and became dependent on selling their labour for wages. Poverty is therefore a result of capitalism with its requirement for surplus labour, where some people have employment

and adequate wages, and some not.

Mooney (2008) also takes a Marxist approach, contending that the way that people experiencing poverty are talked about and labelled obscures the real causes of poverty, and stigmatises and excludes by ignoring the way that society produces and reproduces poverty and inequality. A collective, but explicitly non-Marxist, approach to conceptualising poverty is offered by Holman (1978), who sees poverty not so much as integral to the struggle between capital and labour, but as a function of income stratification in unequal societies.

In contrast, Murray (2008) offers a more individualised understanding of poverty, where poverty is caused by individual pathology of those experiencing poverty. Murray's underclass thesis views the poor as a separate, deviant class whose existence is created by the welfare state, and where the solution to poverty is therefore to reduce welfare to encourage thrift, hard work and independence.

2.2 Development of Poverty Measures in the UK.

Taking Lister's threefold distinction between concepts, definitions and measures of poverty, it is difficult to separate definitions of poverty from the ways that poverty has been measured. Measures to record the extent of poverty follow from the definition used to understand it. It is therefore necessary to briefly survey the development of research into poverty in the UK to understand the way that poverty research has changed over time.

Empirical study into the nature and extent of poverty has a long history in the UK, which both predated and influenced the development of the welfare state. Booth's multi volume study of the 'Life and Labour of the People in London' between 1889 and 1903 is perhaps the earliest attempt to conduct an empirical study of poverty in the UK (Booth, 2018) and

along with Rowntree's investigation into poverty in the city of York in 1899 (Rowntree, 2000) popularised the concept of the 'poverty line' (Fraser, 2009). As Page (2015) notes, both studies did much to discredit the then dominant individualistic concepts about the causes of poverty, popularising the notion that poverty was caused by inadequate income from employment.

Rowntree's subsequent studies applied a slightly amended method of poverty measurement, but sought to delineate a subsistence level of income below which it was impossible to live, and to survey the extent of households living below this poverty line (Rowntree, 2000). Rowntree repeated his research between 1935 and 1936 to assess the effect of social reforms since his first study (Rowntree, 1941), and again in 1950, following the establishment of the post-war welfare state (Rowntree and Lavers, 1951).

Although Rowntree's later research began to move beyond a basic subsistence poverty line, introducing a 'human needs' model which included enough resources to allow for social participation (Gazeley, 2003), Rowntree's poverty line has been criticised for being arbitrary and pseudo-scientific. Sen (1981) objects to Rowntree's 'biological' approach on the basis that nutritional requirements vary according to different people at different times in different contexts, and that there is little nutritional rationale for a universal minimum nutritional intake. Indeed, as Alcock (2006) notes, Rowntree includes tea in his basic subsistence diet – culturally appropriate to the context of a working-class family in early 20th century Britain, but not nutritionally essential. Conversely, Vernon notes that Rowntree's 1901 study (although not subsequent ones) excluded both alcohol and meat from the basic subsistence diet, based perhaps on a Quaker aversion to alcohol rather than scientific

principle (Vernon, 2007).

Veit-Wilson (1986) applies a revisionist approach to Rowntree's research, contending that the extent to which Rowntree was committed to an absolute view of poverty has been overstated, creating a false dichotomy between the assumed absolute and physiological conception of poverty advocated by Rowntree and later more relativistic approaches. Indeed, Rowntree's supposedly 'absolute' measure of poverty was adjusted over his three studies, so by 1936 it included enough to cover the cost of a radio, newspaper, children's presents and a holiday (Alcock, 2006). However, it remains the case that post-war approaches to poverty analysis in the UK have moved away from Rowntree's essentialist approach based on minimums, towards a broader understanding of relative poverty and life chances.

2.3 Poverty and the Development of the Welfare State

An explicit aim of the British post-Second World War welfare state was to eradicate Beveridge's 'giant of want' (Fraser, 2009, p. 257). Central to this policy aim was the 1948 National Assistance Act which replaced the Poor Law, forming part of a comprehensive system of social protection to prevent destitution. Although levels of National Assistance were set below the minimums recommended in the Beveridge report, and suggested in Rowntree's evidence to the Beveridge committee, the concept of a minimum income below which no person should be able to fall was accepted and the State, rather than private philanthropy, was seen as the agent responsible for delivering this (Gazeley, 2003).

To some commentators at the time, rather than being a break with conventional social policy orthodoxy, the National Assistance Act was the culmination of a series of reforms to the

Poor Law since the 1906 Poor Law Commission recommendations were adopted (Chambers, 1949). However, for the incoming Labour Government, their manifesto commitments to welfare reforms represented a very different direction to the Poor Law. Indeed, the preamble to the National Assistance Act explicitly referenced the Poor Law by stating that the legislation was:

> *An Act to terminate the existing Poor Law and to provide in lieu thereof for the assistance of persons in need by the National Assistance Board and by local authorities* (National Assistance Act, 1948, Chapter 29; 11 and 12).

Despite the low levels of the National Assistance and social security benefits, Rowntree was confident that the new provisions would eradicate poverty, writing in 1942 that once the war was over a system of social protection and minimum wages would be introduced and that "There is no need to be seriously concerned about the continuation of extreme poverty" (Fraser, 2009, p. 253). In the immediate post-war period, research into the extent of poverty was limited, but the few studies which were conducted into the extent of poverty in the immediate post-war period seemed to support this assumption. Gazeley (2003) observes that Schulz's (1955) longitudinal studies into poverty carried out by the Oxford Institute of Statistics appeared to confirm the eradication of poverty thesis during the 1950s, concluding that "Poverty, in the sense in which the term was understood before the war, has been abolished for families of the types considered" (1955, p. 232).

Rowntree himself in his third York study found that only 2.77% of working class people were experiencing poverty, compared to 31.1% in 1936 (Rowntree, 1951, p. 40). Rowntree attributed this primarily to the introduction of the welfare state, and whilst this was a widely accepted conclusion at the time, it is likely to have been overstated (Gazeley, 2003). Indeed,

the 1950 Labour Election manifesto confidently, and perhaps naively, stated that: "Labour has honoured the pledge it made in 1945 to make social security the birth right of every citizen. Today destitution has been banished" (Kavanagh and Dale, 2015, p. 69).

This assumption was underpinned academically within the social policy discipline by social democratic scholars such as Titmuss (2018), and politically by the cross-party consensus on the desirability of the welfare state which lasted broadly from the 1951 election until the 1979 election (Fraser, 2009).

2.4 The Rediscovery of Poverty

The 'smug' consensus (Sen, 1983, p. 154) of the immediate post war period was first challenged during the 1960's by Abel-Smith and Townsend's critical work on poverty in the welfare state (Townsend and Abel-Smith, 1975), in a development described as 'the rediscovery of poverty' (Lowe, 1995). Abel-Smith and Townsend's work used Family Expenditure Surveys to estimate that 17.9% of households in 1960 were experiencing poverty, that these households included 2.25 million children and, most controversially, that levels of poverty had actually increased during the 1950s. Abel-Smith (1992) revisited the fact that post-war social security benefits were set at a third less than advocated by Beveridge, noting that seven million people became reliant on National Assistance for subsistence support. This resulted in poverty becoming particularly prevalent in certain groups, such as large families and older adults (Gazeley, 2003). The early work of Townsend and Abel-Smith influenced the formation of the Child Poverty Action Group in 1965 (Lowe, 1995), bringing poverty once more onto the political agenda with a well-publicised letter to the Prime Minister pressing him to take action to alleviate family poverty for those reliant on National Assistance (CPAG, 1965).

Key to Townsend's critique was scepticism towards the then dominant 'objective' scientific

measures of subsistence, influenced by Rowntree. Instead, Townsend advocated using a relative definition and measures of poverty, based on indices of relative deprivation, rooted in the context of changing societal expectations:

> *Human needs arise by virtue of the kind of society to which individuals belong. We can therefore consider such needs meaningfully only in relation to various social groups and systems – ranging from households, families, local communities and national societies to, finally, international society. Any rational definition of poverty must be relative. Consequently, if it is to be applied at different points of time during periods of economic and social growth it must be upgraded, and not merely repriced* (Townsend, 1967, p. 4).

Townsend proposed an alternative understanding of poverty where "Individuals can be defined as in poverty when they lack or fall seriously short of the resources commanded by the average members of the society" (1967, p.5).

However, just as Rowntree's idea of a poverty line can be critiqued for its arbitrariness and pseudo-scientific nature, Townsend's retention of the idea of a poverty threshold even though his idea of deprivation is more related to inequality than traditional conceptions of poverty, makes him vulnerable to the same charge of arbitrariness as Rowntree himself. Indeed, Piachaud maintains that in contrast to Townsend's claim, the data do not illustrate that there is a poverty threshold 50% above supplementary benefit levels below which levels of deprivation increase exponentially:

> *There is a continuum from great wealth to chronic poverty and along that continuum a wide variety of patterns of living. The poor in Britain are worse off than others; but for the most part, they are members of society not outcasts* (Piachaud, 1981, p. 420).

Furthermore, not only can Townsend's poverty line be criticised, but he does not solve

Rowntree's problem that measures of deprivation are subjective. Many of Townsend's measures of deprivation, such as whether to have a cooked breakfast, or a Sunday roast, could be considered subjective lifestyle decisions, and in particular may be less relevant for households who are not white British. Therefore, as Piachaud notes, Townsend's measure effectively punishes cultural diversity by counting difference as deprivation. This drawback has the consequence of stigmatising and overestimating the deprivation in new migrant communities, who for instance eat different food to the basket of groceries which Townsend assumes. Nevertheless, Townsend's new understanding of poverty has been widely influential in both the UK and internationally, influencing the indices of material deprivation developed since the 1970s. For instance, the Townsend Index is based on four variables:

- Unemployment (as a percentage of those aged 16 and over who are economically active);

- Non-car ownership (as a percentage of all households);

- Non-home ownership (as a percentage of all households);

- Household overcrowding.

  (Townsend et al., 1988).

Similarly, the official UK Indices of Multiple Deprivation build on Townsend's understanding of relative deprivation (Noble et al., 2006).

2.5 The New Right

Although reductions in public expenditure had already started under the previous Labour government (Hills, 2004), the election of the Thatcher government in 1979 brought a new direction in welfare and poverty policy, including reducing spending on social security by breaking the link between social security and earnings in 1981 (Hills, 2004), and a change in

philosophical direction towards more individual explanations of poverty, influenced by Murray's underclass theory that welfare provision encourages dependency (Murray, 2008). This also coincided with scepticism towards the relative measures of deprivation favoured by Townsend. This suspicion of the usefulness of relative measures of poverty is exemplified by the comments of the then Social Security Secretary that using relative poverty to argue that there was widespread deprivation in the UK was 'false and dangerous' and because poverty lines rose with national prosperity, it was 'the end of the line for poverty' (Timmins, 1995, p.342).

2.6 New Labour

Despite a renewed emphasis on anti-poverty measures and on social exclusion under the New Labour Government, New Labour's approach to poverty did not represent a return to the pre-1979 welfare consensus. Blair declared in the 1999 Beveridge Lecture:

> *In the last 60 years the world has changed dramatically. It would be surprising, lazy even, to believe that the solutions that suited a post-war Britain could work just as well in today's global economy* (Blair, 1999, p.1).

Neither were there moves to prevent the enforced destitution of people who were subject to immigration control and excluded from mainstream welfare provision. In contrast, restrictions in access to welfare for people subject to immigration control were increased in the Immigration Acts passed in 1999 and 2002.

However, Piachaud and Sutherland (2001) argue that the election of New Labour in 1997 did represent a decisive break with the way poverty was defined. By 1997, the numbers of children living in poverty in the UK based on relative income was three times the 1979 level, representing a third of British children, the highest rate of any EU country. The incoming

government announced a new approach in March 1998, committing to eradicate child poverty in the UK by 2020, with milestones of a quarter reduction by 2004/5 and by half in 2010/11 (Ridge and Wright, 2008) a commitment which was legislated for in the Child Poverty Act (2010). The Act introduced four measures of child poverty with associated targets, combining relative and absolute definitions of poverty.

Some see a continuity between the post-1979 Conservative governments of Thatcher and Major and New Labour. Jones and Novak (1999) argue that since 1979 there have been consistent moves towards a 'disciplinary state' with a punitive approach to welfare and those who are reliant on it, where those in poverty are held responsible for their own poverty, and are constructed as an underclass who are undeserving of support.

This has perhaps been seen most acutely in the interplay between immigration controls and welfare, and where the current Conservative Government has sought to introduce a 'hostile environment' for migrants (Kirkup and Winnett, 2012).

2.7 Measuring Poverty in the UK Today

Since 2010, the concept of relative poverty has increasingly been challenged by the Coalition and current Conservative governments, with the current government announcing plans in 2015 to change the statutory definition of child poverty, with Work and Pensions Secretary Ian Duncan Smith criticising the 60% below median income threshold of child poverty as "deeply flawed and a poor test of whether children's lives are improving." (BBC News, 2015, online).

Niemietz (2011) criticises relative poverty as a concept, on the basis that although consumption decisions are contextualised within the society, and social norms change with increased economic development, there is no reason to believe that a minimum income

standard grows in a linear relationship to average income. For Niemietz, relative and absolute poverty measures contradict each other, and policies advocated to promote them are counterproductive, as redistributive policies to improve child poverty reduce work incentives. Instead, Niemietz advocates a measure of poverty that combines the strengths of the consensual method advocated by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, and a Budget Standard approach drawn from Rowntree's now unfashionable attempts to ascertain the true minimum cost of living.

In contrast, measures of poverty which class families as being in poverty if they are on less than sixty percent of median income can mask stratification within the cohort of those below the poverty line, rendering those experiencing the highest levels of poverty invisible. For instance, Mitlin and Satterthwaite (2013) note the ways in which measures of poverty in the global south underestimate the true extent of poverty by failing to include those living in informal settlements. In the same way, in the UK, measures of poverty do not include undocumented migrants who are excluded from welfare and formal employment and who are disproportionately likely to be living informally in houses of multiple occupation because of the right to rent restrictions in the Immigration Act 2016.

2.8 Poverty and Food

Over recent years there has been a growing interest in the problem of food poverty in the UK. NGO's such as the Trussell Trust, Oxfam and Church Action on Poverty have released a number of reports on the issue (Cooper and Dumpleton, 2013; Loopstra and Lalor, 2017) and there has been widespread media attention on both food poverty (see, for instance, Cocozza, 2018; Channel 4 News, 2019; BBC News, 2019), and there is now a small but growing academic literature on food poverty and the rise of emergency food aid

(Garthwaite, 2016; Garthwaite et al., 2015; Lambie-Mumford, 2017; Loopstra and Tarasuk, 2013).

Definitions of food poverty vary, it is defined by the Food Ethics Council as when: "an individual or household isn't able to obtain healthy, nutritious food, or can't access the food they would like to eat" (Food Ethics Council, 2013), but O'Connell also notes, taking a Townsendian view, that as well as the material aspects of food poverty, there is also a contextual social dimension to food poverty (O'Connell, 2018). In contrast, Douglas et al. (2015) do not define food poverty directly, but instead identify the population who are at risk of food poverty using the Households Below Average Income (HBAI) measure of household income below 60% of equivalised median income (Douglas et al., 2015). Finally, Baines et al. (2016) use factors including economic access, quality, quantity, duration and social dimensions to define food poverty as "the insufficient economic access to an adequate quantity and quality of food to maintain a nutritionally satisfactory and socially acceptable diet" (2016, p.429).

Data on the extent of food poverty in the UK are scarce, and much information comes from the grey literature. The Trussell Trust reported in 2013 that 500,000 people were reliant on their food parcels (Cooper and Dumpleton, 2013), and Oxfam and Church Action on Poverty (CAP) suggest that there was a 54% increase in the number of emergency food parcels given in 2013/2104 on the previous year (Cooper et al., 2014). Garthwaite et al. (2015) estimate that there are 4.7 million people living in food poverty in the UK. Moreover, food insecurity is increasingly used in the UK and other industrialised countries (Loopstra and Tarasuk, 2013) in preference to the concept of food poverty, as a way of conceptualising the situation of not having enough resources to provide for a balanced diet.

2.8.1 Household Food Security

The two concepts of household food insecurity and food poverty are sometimes used interchangeably (see, for instance, Dowler and O'Connor, 2012; Lambie-Mumford et al., 2014). However, Baines et al., (2016) contend that this lack of precision in terminology impedes international comparison between developed and developing countries. Food Security is defined by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) as a situation where "all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life" (FAO, 1996). Baines et al. (2016) argue that although food security has similarities with food poverty in that both concepts relate to food access; availability; utilisation; and stability. They differ in the sense that food insecurity can develop from pressures on one of the four concepts, but food poverty is a situation where economic access is the dominant component. In other words, food insecurity can exist without food poverty, but food poverty cannot exist without food insecurity.

Nonetheless, food security has increasingly been used in preference to food poverty or 'hunger' by scholars in the US (Poppendieck, 1998), due to the fact that food security is understood to be less about sensations, and more about the "social situation and psychological distress of people who do not have a reliable and secure source of food for themselves and their children" (1998, p. 38). Although there is a stronger consensus in the literature around the definition of food insecurity than food poverty, there is still little evidence about the extent of the issue in the UK. However, the UK government announced in February 2019 that they would introduce a UK measure of food insecurity (Butler, 2019), and the Food Standards Agency (FSA) recently included a measure of household food security in the fourth wave of the 'Food and You' panel survey, based on the widely used

USDA 18 Item Household Food Security module (Bickel et al., 2000). The survey found that 8% of the population of England, Wales and Northern Ireland lived in low or very low food security households, and that women were more likely than men to be food insecure - 10% of women and 6% of men were food insecure (Bates et al., 2017). This is less than the estimated 11% of US citizens who were food insecure in 2017 (Coleman-Jensen et al., 2018). In the UK specifically there is evidence that some groups are more at risk of food insecurity than others. Older adults are one group at risk of household food insecurity (Purdam, 2018), and large and lone parent families are also more likely to be food insecure (O'Connell, 2018). Women of Pakistani origin are more likely to be food insecure than white British women, and benefits sanctions have been shown to increase food bank use (Loopstra et al., 2015). However, to date there has been no academic research about the food insecurity amongst migrant families in the UK, and writing from an international development perspective, Crush argues that food security and migration have been separate in the literature about development (Crush, 2013).

2.8.2 Health and Nutrition

There is a well-documented association between food insecurity and obesity in adults, but the evidence for an association in children is more mixed (Dinour et al., 2007), although a longitudinal study of families accessing the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program in the US found an association between food insecurity and obesity in pre-school children (Metallinos-Katsaras et al., 2011). This 'food security obesity paradox' (Dietz, 1995) is particularly pronounced in women who are food insecure (Franklin et al., 2012), and amongst older women (Hernandez et al., 2017), and there is also greater prevalence in particular minority communities such as Native American children (Himes et al., 2003).

There are also a variety of physical and mental health impacts of food insecurity, such as increased risk of type 2 diabetes (Abdurahman et al., 2018) and anaemia amongst infants, toddlers and adult women (Moradi et al., 2018).

2.9 Migrants and Poverty

2.9.1 Poverty, the Welfare State and Immigration

Parallel to the development of and changes in understandings of poverty in the post-war period, there have been changes in approaches to access and entitlements to welfare for migrant families. The extent to which punitive approaches to welfare for those such as undocumented migrants who are deemed as undesirable, represents a new development, or whether ideas of eligibility, race and nationhood represent a common thread in the development of welfare in the UK is contested within the literature. Lambert and Ormrod, (2015) suggest that the earliest link between explicit rights for foreigners in England dates back to the 14th century letters patent of denizenry, issued by the Crown. On the other hand, Mynott (2002) argues that, although links between immigration control and access to welfare go back to the 1905 Aliens Act, it was in the late 1970s and early 1980s that this link became explicit – which he argues coincided with a sustained neo-liberal attack on the welfare state. Jones and Novak (1999) also would see significant change from Thatcher onwards in the demonisation of certain groups – such as undocumented migrants. Nonetheless, the principle of access to state welfare, irrespective of nationality has a long heritage, with the legal principle of the 'Law of Humanity' dating from the early 19th century when destitute refugees fleeing the Napoleonic wars applied for parish relief under the Poor Law. In response to reluctance of local parishes to provide relief to the refugees, the then Lord Chief Justice ruled that:

> *As to there being no obligation for maintaining poor foreigners… the law of humanity, which is anterior to all positive laws, obliges us to afford them relief, to save them from starving* (Lord Chief Justice, R v. Inhabitants of Eastbourne, 1803, cited in Webber, 2012, p.12).

The principle was cited by Lord Justice Simon Brown in a 1996 case against the Social Security Regulations which denied asylum seekers access to welfare benefits (Webber, 2012). However, the principle has always been applied inconsistently, and has been increasingly eroded over the past twenty years as the principle of No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF), and more recently the so-called 'hostile environment' for undocumented migrants has been extended.

In contrast, some make the case that exclusionary policies towards migrants go to the very beginnings of state welfare provision in the UK. Paul (1997) contends that far from liberal-minded governments reluctantly responding to an anti-immigration British public, successive politicians and civil servants have actively sought to "foster a climate of public hostility" to immigration amongst a general population who were not sufficiently aware of the "problem of uncontrolled 'coloured' immigration" in the post Second World War period (1997, pp.132-3).

As early as 1813, the East India Trade Act had introduced restrictions on accessing poor law assistance for migrant sailors, following public concern about the perceived high numbers of destitute sailors from Asia in port cities of the UK. The Act obliged the East India Company to provide support for sailors whilst in the UK to prevent them claiming poor law relief, and concern about destitute migrants becoming a burden on parish relief under the Poor Law

was again a concern during the late 19th century (Feldman, 2003).

The Aliens Act 1905 is often cited as the beginning of modern immigration controls in the UK, and Hayes (2002) notes that the context to the legislation was public concern about the migration of Polish and Russian Jews fleeing persecution in eastern Europe during the late 19th century, and the potential cost to the public purse of supporting them with organisations such as *The Association for Preventing the Immigration of Destitute Aliens* active in east London, even including Members of Parliament in its membership (Panayi, 2010), and the work of the Select Committee on Alien Immigration which was set up in 1888 with a remit to:

> *Inquire into the laws existing in the United States and elsewhere on the subject of the immigration of destitute aliens, and as to the extent and effect of such immigration into the UK, and to report whether it is desirable to impose any, and if so, what restrictions on such immigration* (Select Committee, 1889a; i. Cited in Hayes, 2002, pp.31-2).

The Aliens Act 1905 introduced four categories of undesirability for steerage passengers arriving in Britain: disease; insanity; criminality and those likely to become a burden on the public purse. Of the 935 refusals of entry in the first year of the Act, the vast majority – 733 - were on the grounds of being unable to prove means of self-support (HM Inspector of Aliens, 1906, cited in Hayes, 2002, p. 34). In the same way, both the 1908 Old Age Pensions Act, and the 1911 National Insurance Act contained eligibility requirements based on residency and citizenship (Hayes, 2002).

By the end of the Second World War, the context of immigration had changed, and the post-

war welfare state was created at a time of net emigration. Migration from British colonies to the UK never exceeded 2,000 per year between 1948 and 1952. In contrast to 136,000 in 1961 (Paul, 1997, p. 132), and as Spencer (1997) acknowledges, in the decade following the Second World War, the size of the 20-44 year old population was falling by 100,000 a year (1997, p. 21), and emigration was encouraged through UK Government schemes to encourage settlement of "British stock" into the Commonwealth countries (Paul, 1997, p. 25).

Despite this, concerns had been raised about the falling birth-rate in the UK, even prior to the war. The Beveridge report alluded to concerns about falling birth-rate, suggesting that an increase in the birth-rate was essential to the survival of the "British race"(Paul, 1997, pp.3-4). Towards the end of the war in 1944, Churchill appointed a Commission on Population to examine the issue. When the Commission reported in 1949, it concluded that population levels could only be maintained by immigration or an increase in the birth-rate – recommending the latter through a series of policies to reduce infant mortality and increase numbers of live births, including increasing Family Allowance levels; tax incentives for larger families; child-care in hospital and doctor's surgeries; aid for family holidays; building children's playgrounds; larger house building; and encouragement of painkillers during child birth (Paul, 1997). Whilst these policies could be seen as progressive paternalism, Paul maintains that they were in fact driven by a nationalist desire to increase healthy 'British stock', explicitly developed to avoid the need for immigration, in the context of an expressed fear that the "The white population of the Empire" would soon be "overtaken by the Asiatic" due to differences in birth-rates (Paul, 1997, p. 128).

Labour shortages in the early post-war years were such that in February 1946 the Government appointed a Foreign Labour Committee to investigate the possibility of attracting workers to the UK to help increase the labour supply (Paul, 1997). In this context, fears of mass immigration, or restrictions on the use of the welfare state were not of major concern. Nonetheless, Paul argues that there was a racial element to British post-war immigration policy which predates the later public hostility to immigration. This can be illustrated by the fact that the immigration encouraged in the early post-war period to mitigate labour shortages was of white Europeans – initially in 1946 from Polish exiles living in the UK, and later from Eastern European refugees and displaced people in the occupied territories of Europe (Paul, 1997). Whilst there were no attempts to restrict access to the welfare state, members of the various schemes to recruit workers from Europe were carefully selected to ensure that they were physically and mentally healthy, of a "strong physique", not disabled and able to work. Dependants were only accepted if there were two economically active adults within the family, and the Government reserved the right to deport workers who showed "ineptitude or general low mental capacity" or were of "undesirable character" (1997, pp. 79-81). It was therefore not thought necessary to restrict access to health, social insurance or pensions, or to restrict wages, although 'aliens' were only able to be employed where 'British' workers were unavailable. The racialised thought behind these schemes was betrayed by Ede, the then Home Secretary, in his hope that "the intake could be limited to entrants from the Western countries, whose traditions and social backgrounds were more nearly equal to our own" (1997, p.83). Indeed the Government sought to assimilate these guest workers, requesting that "newcomers must be readily assimilable" so they could learn English, intermarry and become British, in a way that would have been inconceivable at the time for non-white Commonwealth subjects due to prejudice

about miscegenation (Paul, 1997).

In contrast to racialised attempts to encourage white immigration to the UK, the British Nationality Act 1948 introduced the category of 'Citizen of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth' giving rights to enter and settle in the UK to migrants from the New Commonwealth. However, the Act wasn't necessarily based on liberal desire for a multi-racial Britain. As Hansen points out, at the time of the 1948 British Nationality Act, large-scale immigration from the Commonwealth was not even thought possible by those framing the Act (Hansen, 2000). The Act was conceived as a response to the Canadian Government's unilateral attempt to define Canadian citizens as British subjects independently of the British Government, and Paul (1997) contends that the Act was an attempt to reassert the pre-war imperial status quo, rather than an attempt to introduce a new multi-ethnic definition of British citizenship (Paul, 1997).

Neither public opinion, nor the UK Government initially viewed the Act as having implications for immigration – or for migrant access to welfare services. The moral panic came later, following the Notting Hill and Nottingham 'race riots' in 1958 (Panayi, 2010, p. 63). However, whilst these disturbances were unprecedented in both their scale and consequences, there had been previous examples of riots based on ethnicity or nationality, such as anti-Irish riots in the 19th century, and hostility to Germans living in the UK during the First World War. Panayi (2010) also notes the anti-Black riots of 1919, following which the Government introduced repatriation committees in urban areas with significant Black populations – mostly port cities such as Hull, Glasgow, Cardiff, Liverpool and London.

Contemporary commentators such as Notestein (1949) were more concerned about emigration to the colonies, and the effect that this would have on supply of labour to certain industries within the UK, than immigration from the Commonwealth.

Indeed, Spencer maintains that it was a point of pride in the immediate post war period that, whilst 'foreigners' were subject to the conditions of the Aliens Act, Britain maintained freedom of entry to the UK to all British subjects irrespective of race (Spencer, 1997). Whilst there are some such as Paul (1997) who argue that successive post war British Governments have actively encouraged a process of racialisation, where immigrants to the UK from the Commonwealth have been constructed as 'coloureds' who are a problem to be solved (Paul, 1997, p. xiii). Others such as Hansen (2000) argue that this thesis is flawed, and does not take into account attachment to the Empire in the Conservative Party, the emerging concept of the Commonwealth within the Labour Party, or the principled opposition to racism by figures within the British elite, such as Alan Lennox-Boyd, the pro-immigration Colonial minister in the 1950s, or the strong condemnation of racism in the Smethwick election campaign by the incoming Labour Prime Minister, Harold Wilson (Hansen, 2000). However, it is also significant that Wilson had campaigned on a manifesto commitment in 1964 to limit the number of immigrants entering the UK and to retain the 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act (Paul, 1997). Hansen argues that whilst racism and hostility to immigration was prevalent within society, at the level of the state, politicians remained far more liberal than the general public (Hansen, 2000). Indeed, Aneurin Bevan, the architect of the National Health Service vehemently opposed attempts to restrict access to the NHS to British nationals, despite attempts by some Conservatives to oppose the principle. Bevan argued that:

> *One of the consequences of the universality of the British Health Service is the free*

treatment of foreign visitors. This has given rise to a great deal of criticism, most of it ill-informed and some of it deliberately mischievous. Why should people come to Britain and enjoy the benefits of the free Health Service when they do not subscribe to the national revenues? … The fact is, of course, that visitors to Britain subscribe to the national revenues as soon as they start consuming certain commodities, drink and tobacco for example, and entertainment. They make no direct contribution to the cost of the Health Service any more than does a British citizen (Bevan, 1978, p.56).

Bevan argued for access to NHS healthcare for foreign nationals on the basis of the intrusive effect of having to prove eligibility every time a person accessed NHS health care, the negligible cost of visitors from abroad, and the potential development of reciprocity when other countries set up similar healthcare systems. This principle lasted until the introduction of the 1982 NHS charges to Overseas Visitors regulations when the right to free healthcare from those not ordinarily resident in the UK was withdrawn.

There are those, such as Mynott (2002) who argue that Bevan's inclusive ideals for the NHS were atypical of the rest of the welfare state, in which nationalism was "built into welfare provision" (2002, p. 23) with the aim of producing more efficient workers for the nation to better compete with other nations. Paul (1997) notes that a Government working party investigating migration to Britain from the Commonwealth decided against a work permit system of immigration control for fear that it would result in migrants relying on National Assistance, and suggested that deporting the 'habitually unemployed' could act as a disincentive to people coming to the UK to claim National Assistance. The then Colonial Secretary, Oliver Lyttelton argued that new immigration legislation would be necessary "if there is to be any means of controlling the increased flow of coloured people who come

here largely to enjoy the benefits of the Welfare State" (cited in Paul, 1997, p.136).

Indeed, Paul (1997) suggests that a 1955 draft Bill requiring British Subjects from the Commonwealth to prove that they would not be a burden on public funds before being granted entry to the UK was never put to Parliament, partly for fear that there was insufficient public support for immigration controls (Paul, 1997). However, it remains the case that eligibility for support under the National Assistance Act, for instance, was based on residency rather than nationality or immigration status (Patterson, 2002). Although it is perhaps significant that when the first Race Relations Act was passed in 1965, neither housing nor employment were included within its scope (Paul, 1997).

Nonetheless, Paul (1997) contends that British Government racism is illustrated in the contrast between the reception of the European 'alien' workers encouraged to come to the UK to assimilate as British in the late 1940's, and the British subjects who arrived from Jamaica on the Empire Windrush in 1948, and were constructed as a problem, which could not legally be stopped, but was not to be encouraged, and who were described as 'Jamaican Unemployed' by the Colonial Office – emphasising both their status as a burden and their foreignness (Paul, 1997). Meanwhile, the Ministry of Labour, despite proclaiming the need for 60,000 extra workers in the year following June 1948, claimed a lack of suitable work and accommodation for the newly arrived British Caribbean subjects, even arguing that "the moral standards of the young women in the Isles are quite different from those that prevail in this country" (Paul, 1997, pp.12-13).

The 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, far from representing a continuity in immigration

policy, represented a stark break from the approach to British citizenship in the 1948 Act. It was not until 1962 that automatic rights of entry to the UK for Commonwealth subjects were withdrawn, and work vouchers were introduced – restricting numbers of unskilled migrants without jobs to go to (Paul, 1997), whilst the 1968 Commonwealth Immigrants Act removed British passports from citizens of 'new Commonwealth' countries, in an attempt to prevent Kenyan Asians from entering the UK (Paul, 1997). These Acts undermined the concept of a common identity of Britishness across the Commonwealth and freedom of movement within the Commonwealth, but did not restrict access to welfare.

Whilst restrictions on people entering the UK increased through the 1960s and 1970s, the 1980s to the present day represented a move towards greater restrictions on migrants already living in the UK, including restrictions on accessing social protection. The 1981 British Nationality Act repealed the right of British citizens born outside the UK to automatic rights of residence established in 1948, as well as eroded the 'jus solis' principle that children born in the UK were British, irrespective of their parents' immigration status (Panayi, 2010). In social security, in 1993, the Government restricted access to 'Urgent Case Payments' which previously allowed people to access temporary support even if they were subject to the NRPF rule, such as foreign spouses waiting to hear back from decisions on Indefinite Leave to Remain, or survivors of domestic violence (Patterson, 2002). In 1994 rules on 'Persons from Abroad' were introduced into Housing Benefit and Council Tax rules (Patterson, 2002), and in 1996 Disability Benefits, Child Benefit and Family Tax Credit were added to the list of social security benefits considered as public funds for the purposes of Immigration Control - and it was made a criminal offence to claim them illegitimately (Patterson, 2002). The effect of this was to shift responsibility for the support of migrant

families away from the nationally administered mainstream Social Security system, and on to Local Authority Social Services Departments under the National Assistance Act 1948 for adults, and Children Act 1989 for families with dependents. Whilst there is little research into the effect of this on poverty for migrant children, the likely effect was to increase food poverty for migrant families, illustrated by anecdotal evidence from a number of refugee and children's charities (See for instance, Clarke and Nandy, 2008; Smart, 2009; Pinter, 2012; Dexter et al., 2015; Dickson, 2019).

As late as 1980 there was no defined list of what constituted a public fund for immigration purposes. Instead, decisions were made on an ad hoc, individual basis as to what constituted public funds, and whether a person would be entitled to claim them (Webber, 2012). It was left to the Divisional Court in 1981 to rule that:

> *Matters such as unemployment benefit, supplementary benefit and pensions' were recourse to public funds, whereas access to state-aided education and use of the National Health Service were not* (Webber, 2012, p.48).

When surveying the development over time in approaches to access to social security and other welfare state provisions for non-British nationals, it is difficult to find one overarching pattern of principle. There appears to have been no single direction in policy, and Government responses have often been ad hoc and reactive, and based on case law rather than nationally directed policy (for instance the 'law of humanity' principle, and the original definition of NRPF). Responses have often been based on the short term needs of the Government at the time, and have illustrated a tension between a Whiggish concern for ´British fair play¨; Imperialistic paternalism, and natural justice on the one hand, and a narrow view of nationhood and concern about both racial purity and avoiding 'undeserving

freeloaders'. Nevertheless, the consistent trend from the 1905 Aliens Act to the 2015 Immigration Act has been towards an increase in immigration controls and a reduction in the entitlements to welfare and social security for migrants.

2.9.2 Poverty and Undocumented Migrants

The combined effect of reduced entitlements to social protection for non-British citizens, and measures of poverty which assume both relative definitions and access to social security and the welfare state is that many of the social policy interventions aimed at reducing child poverty actively exclude undocumented migrant children. Policies which use the tax and benefit system to lift children out of poverty – Child and Working Tax Credits, or Child Benefit, for instance - or measures to reduce worklessness (Piachaud and Sutherland, 2001) exclude families who have NRPF, or who are excluded from the formal labour market because they are subject to immigration control. Nevertheless, attempts by successive governments to meet targets for reductions in child poverty by bringing more parents into paid employment by targeting services at families, and creating cash transfers through tax credits explicitly - but perhaps inadvertently - excluded migrant families. The current attempts by the UK Government to redefine child poverty, and the Child Poverty Act, by moving away from purely income based measures of poverty, have the effect of focusing attention still further away from undocumented migrant families, by introducing indicators which would only be meaningful in a context in which all people have equal access to services, and are not excluded according to immigration status. For instance, worklesssness as an indicator of poverty is only comprehensible if there is a right to seek and take up paid employment; similarly, the parental health indicator is only meaningful if parents have access to NHS care to improve health. Other proposed indicators are also likely to underrepresent undocumented migrant poverty. In the case of debt, whilst the contribution

of payday loans and predatory lending to poverty has been well documented (Dearden et al., 2010; Gibbons and Vaid, 2015). Many families who have no regular income at all would exist below even the reach of payday loan agencies – too poor even to be targeted by the so-called 'loan sharks'. In the same way the housing indicator excludes undocumented migrants because of the Immigration Act 2014 restricting access to privately rented accommodation – many undocumented migrant families exist even below the concerns about private landlords and poor housing by not being able to rent at all.

Townsendian measures of relative poverty also exclude migrant families by the tacit assumption that there is no absolute poverty in the UK. Similarly, minimum income 'headcounts' of poverty such as those developed by Rowntree only record how many people are in poverty, not the extent of that poverty (Gazeley, 2003). By not taking account of the 'poverty gap' between those only slightly below median income and those living at subsistence level, head count methods disguise the extent and depth of poverty (Alcock, 2006). So, whilst relative approaches to poverty represent a useful way of conceptualising continuing deprivation in welfare states, they are inadequate for those who are excluded from Social Security and other social protection mechanisms within those states. Sigona and Hughes found in their study of undocumented migrant families in the UK that:

> *Family income is often insecure and destitution is an everyday reality for many. Lack of legal immigration status affects access to the job market and the capacity of migrants to react to exploitative working conditions.*

(Sigona and Hughes, 2012, p. viii)

The situation in which undocumented migrant families are excluded from the mainstream social and welfare provision of the wider society bears some similarities with 19th century ideas of the ´residuum´, or the underclass (Murray, 2008) However, whereas with the

examples above the exclusion is perceived as pathological, the exclusion of undocumented migrant families is deliberately and consciously created by government policy, as acknowledged by the Parliamentary Joint Committee on Human Rights (Joint Committee on Human Rights, 2007). Indeed, the Poor Law concept of destitution is frequently used in relation to those who are subject to immigration control, and is defined in section 95 of the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act in the following terms:

For the purposes of this section, a person is destitute if—

(a) he does not have adequate accommodation or any means of obtaining it (whether or not his other essential living needs are met); or

(b) he has adequate accommodation or the means of obtaining it, but cannot meet his other essential living needs (Immigration and Asylum Act, 1999).

The term destitution is therefore widely used by the Home Office to assess extreme poverty and eligibility for asylum support (Home Office, 2019), but is also used extensively by many NGOs who work with refugees and migrants (Crawley et al., 2011; Dexter et al., 2016; Smart, 2009). Confusingly, the term has also begun to be used more colloquially in the UK press to refer to those who have fallen into poverty as a result of austerity cuts or benefits sanctions (Gregory, 2018; Ryan, 2018). The Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) have also recently attempted to redefine the term to mean a state where people lack two or more basic essentials over the past month because they could not afford them (Goulden, 2018). However, by redefining destitution away from a phenomenon experienced by people who do not have the legal right to access social protection due to their immigration status, towards a definition based around a consensus of what being 'very poor' in a given context is, JRF blur the distinction between those who are poor because of temporary economic shock or austerity, but who have the right to social protection, and those who are destitute

because they have no right to work or access social protection (Jolly, 2017).

Allsopp et al., (2014) reviewed both academic and grey literature, and submissions from organisations working with refugees and asylum seekers to explore the link between asylum status and poverty. They found that there were large numbers of small, local qualitative studies. However:

> The quantity of research in this field is not always matched by quality of evidence. Much of the research is small scale and fails to explore or outline methodologies. Much research also stems from NGOs who produce research based on their own practice and client base, leading to inevitable, yet rarely acknowledged biases
>
> (Allsopp et al., 2014, p.9).

Despite these shortcomings, Allsopp et al. found that there was agreement in the literature that there were high levels of poverty and destitution amongst this cohort, and there were frequent references to hunger, an inability to buy enough food for a nutritionally balanced diet, high infant mortality, and low birth weights in the existing literature (Allsopp et al., 2014). This included asylum seekers who were still in the asylum process and receiving financial support from the Home Office (Allsopp et al., 2014).

The apparent prevalence of poor health outcomes for asylum seekers in the UK appears to contradict the 'healthy migrant effect' (Fennelly, 2007), where migrants as a whole have comparatively better health outcomes than the host population. However, the migrant experience is stratified, with some migrants experiencing worse health outcomes than others (de Waure et al., 2015). Undocumented migrants in particular face institutional barriers to accessing services (Cuadra, 2012), and have high exposure to dangerous and low paid work which contributes to poor health, due to their reliance on 'illegal' employment in

the informal economy (Rechel et al. 2011), and are also particularly vulnerable to maternal and child ill health (Ottersen et al., 2014). In addition, even for documented migrants, research from the UN Development Programme across a number of OECD countries indicates that the initial good health of new migrants tends to reduce over time, with children and young people showing significant reductions in health. One of the aggravating factors being changes in diet and eating habits since coming to the host country and the negative effects this has on health and wellbeing (Thomas and Gideon eds. 2013). Although, changes in diet are known to be an aggravating factor in changes in health outcomes for migrants, little is known about the eating habits of the most vulnerable, and least settled, group of migrants - those who are undocumented.

Whilst the effect of the NRPF rule and other restrictions is punitive and deliberate, it is in effect the opposite of the Elizabethan Poor Law, to the extent that the purpose of the Poor Law was to provide punitive levels of relief, with the intention of encouraging self-sufficiency and gainful employment through the principle of 'less eligibility' (Alcock, 2006, p. 9). In contrast, the NRPF rule restricts access to employment in an attempt to encourage people to 'voluntarily' leave the UK. To frame it differently, it could be argued that the purpose of the Poor Law system was to use incentives to prevent pauperism, whilst the NRPF rule's purpose is to create pauperism as an incentive.

2.9.3 Migrant Food Poverty

As with the numbers of undocumented migrants, there is a wide grey literature relating to migrant poverty in the UK dating from the early 2000s (see Table 3). None of them refer in detail to food insecurity as a concept, but there are frequent references to lack of food and reliance on food aid or support from friends and family (Clarke and Nandy, 2008; Dumper et al. 2009; British Red Cross, 2010; Thriepland, 2019).

Table 3: Grey Literature on Migrant Poverty

Year	Author	Title	Findings
2005	Refugee Survival Trust	What's going on? A study into destitution and poverty faced by asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland	Refugee Survival Trust received over 1,000 applications for help between January 2000 and May 2004: 52% due to administrative errors and procedural delays, 95% of them attributable to the Home Office. A further 17% were for travel grants to go to claim asylum in Liverpool.
2005	Leicester Refugee and Asylum Seekers' Forum	A report of destitution in the asylum system in Leicester	253 visits were made to the 7 organisations. 168 people were surveyed as being destitute in the month of the survey. 70% of people were destitute because their asylum claims had ended or they were unable to continue their asylum case. 37% of people were assessed as being highly vulnerable, in poor health and difficult personal circumstances.
2006	Refugee Action	The destitution trap. Research into destitution in the UK	A total of 125 asylum seekers were interviewed. 49% had been destitute for up to a year. The majority had been destitute for one or two years. The average time people had been destitute was 21 months.
2006	Dumper, H., Malfait, R. and Scott-Flynn, N.	Mental health, destitution & asylum- seekers: A study of destitute asylum-seekers in the dispersal areas of the South East of England	64% of destitute asylum seekers are being housed by friends and acquaintances. 83% refused to sign up for Section 4 support because they did not agree to return voluntarily to their country of origin. About 55% had been destitute for more than a year. 23% admitted they felt depressed. 20% had other health problems.
2007	Asylum Support Appeals Project	Failing the failed?	ASAP examined 117 Section 4 refusal decision letters. 88% contained a misapplication or misinterpretation of the law. 17% of decisions correctly assess destitution based on the law and the evidence provided by the applicant. Over a third, or 38%, did not address the issue of destitution at all.
2008	Clarke, N. and Nandy, L.	Living on the edge of despair: Destitution amongst asylum seeking and refugee children	9/13 interviewed were refused asylum seekers, so destitute because unable to work or claim benefits. "Children in the families we interviewed were growing up in dirty, unsafe overcrowded conditions, moving frequently. One family of six in our study were living in a single room, many

			families were in hostels where they were afraid of the other residents' behaviour and their property and food were stolen and some had no heating or electricity." P.15 "Children were frequently hungry. Some children were only able to eat once a day, for example at school, and sometimes their parents did not eat for several days on end. For example, one mother told us that children's services only gave her child food, not her." (p.17) "Families got money for food from a variety of places. Some people were loaned money by friends, churches or voluntary agencies to get food. A mother said whether she and her child had enough food depended on the money she had at any given time. For those without vouchers because they would not take Section 4 support, it was unclear where food had come from." (p.18)
2009	Refugee Survival Trust and British Red Cross	21 days later: Destitution and the Asylum System	527 asylum seekers received grants to travel from support agencies because they were destitute.
2009	Doyle, L.	"I hate being idle": Wasted skills and enforced dependence among Zimbabwean asylum seekers in the UK	Issues of poverty and exploitation were observed amongst refused asylum seekers without the right to work: "I have sometimes resorted to prostitution to get money for food and clothes not out of choice. I was never a prostitute in Zimbabwe. But life is tough here. I want to be granted asylum here and work legally."(p.27)
2009	Dumper, H., Hutton, C. Lukes, S., Malfait, R. and Scott-Flynn, N.	The destitution trap: Research into destitution among refused asylum seekers in the UK.	Destitute asylum seekers were reliant on food parcels from churches and other faith communities. Many destitute asylum seekers pooled resources and shared food to support each other. Had to eat unfamiliar food which was not part of their usual diet.
2010	The Children's Society	Destitution amongst asylum-seeking and refugee children	Found that: "Thousands of children who have done nothing to deserve being thrown into destitution are growing up in households without adequate food, heating or toys" (p.2)
2010	British Red Cross	Not gone, but forgotten: The urgent	Destitution was widespread amongst refused asylum seekers, food and voucher

		need for a more humane asylum system	distribution was common: "Giving food to destitute asylum seekers here is not very different from handing out food from the back of lorries in the Sudan. The humanitarian need is the same." (P.5)
2010	Lindsay, K. Gillespie, M. and Dobbie, L	Refugees' experiences and views of poverty in Scotland	"At present, community organisations and community members plug the gaps in refugee support, in effect providing an alternative welfare system to support destitute asylum seekers and refugees by providing them with food, shelter and, where possible, money." (p.10) "Despite living on a low income most participants spoke of sharing food with other refugees and asylum seekers." (p.13).
2010	Valentine, R.	Hope costs nothing: the lives of undocumented migrants in the UK	Problems with accessing food, relying on vouchers from Red Cross or other charities, but difficult because can only use supermarkets and not ethnic food shops.
2011	Crawley, H.; Hemmings, J. and Price, N.	Coping with Destitution Survival and livelihood strategies of refused asylum seekers living in the UK	Refused asylum seekers experienced day to day struggles with finding food and shelter (p.17). Relying on cheap food (p.18), relying on Section 4 vouchers or vouchers from churches or other faith-based organisations, which only allowed supermarket food (p.32)
2012	Pinter, I.	I don't feel human: Experiences of destitution among young refugees and migrants	Found that a destitution support project in the West Midlands was helping destitute families to buy food and other basic essentials. "They have to rely on friends for food and a place to stay, and move around constantly. The young people we spoke to were sometimes forced to sleep rough, on buses, in libraries or on park benches." (p.17). Working informally in exploitative conditions as a means of survival for food or shelter; parents gong without food so children could eat; buying cheap, calorific food which was low in nutritional value.
2012	Gillespie, M. (RST; British Red Cross; Scottish Refugee Council)	Trapped: destitution and asylum in Scotland	"Once destitute, interviewees had few opportunities to get money. One man tried informal work, but did not get paid. Some who were accommodated by friends or volunteers also had meals with the families, but others only had somewhere to sleep

			and needed to find food for themselves. It was mainly churches and charitable organisations that provided food and clothes." (p.x) One woman who was 8 months pregnant and without shelter or food. Agencies providing food to destitute asylum seekers. Lack of food and transport made it difficult to attend college.
2013	Pettitt, J. (Freedom from Torture)	The poverty barrier: The right to rehabilitation for survivors of torture in the UK	Survey of torture survivors in the asylum system: "More than half of the questionnaire respondents said they were never or not often able to buy enough food of sufficient quality and variety to meet their needs for a nutritionally balanced diet. Thirty-four were either never or not often able to buy enough food of any quality to prevent them from being hungry" (P.7).
2013	British Red Cross	A decade of destitution: Time to make a change	3,000 people helped by destitution partnership since 2003 – including food parcels, and supermarket vouchers.
2015	Price, J. and Spencer, S.	Safeguarding children from destitution: Local Authority responses to families with 'no recourse to public funds'	Found that children being supported by section 17 were living in houses with lack of cooking facilities, families were eating fast food instead of cooking their own which used up a large proportion of their subsistence allowance, and using food vouchers and foodbanks.
2019	Thriepland, C.	A Place to call home: A report into the standard of housing provided to children in need in London	64% of properties for children in need were unsuitable including limited access to cooking facilities. This was a particular problem for section 17 supported families because they couldn't afford ready-made meals and relied on foodbanks.
2019	Dickson, E.	Not seen, not heard: children's experiences of the hostile environment	Local authorities refusing help to families approaching them because they didn't have enough money for food.

The academic literature has also discussed both the prevalence of food poverty and insecurity amongst particular migrant populations, and the wider impacts that lack of

adequate food has on health and wellbeing. Gallegos et al.'s (2008) research into household food security amongst refugees accessing early intervention services in Western Australia found that 71% of participants had run out of food in the past, compared to only 5.2% across the whole population.

Hadley et al. (2007) found that hunger was associated with poorer physical and mental health amongst undocumented Mexican migrants in the USA (Hadley et al., 2007), and amongst Bengali families in the UK and Bangladesh, health, nutrition status and physical exercise in the early years was shown to impact on later life physical function, prevalence of ill health and early death (Bogin et al., 2014).

The reasons for the higher prevalence of obesity and ill-health in certain communities are complex and contextual, relating not just to individual behaviour or genetic predisposition, but to a variety of environmental, cultural and policy related factors (Kumanyika, 1994; Thompson et al., 2002). Effective interventions to promote nutrition, food security and health amongst migrant and minority communities address these wider environmental factors (Fitzgibbon & Stolley, 2004), and use frameworks which take account of cultural context such as Kumanyika et al.'s Community Energy Balance Framework (Kumanyika et al., 2012). Similarly, there is a need for research into food security to take account of community experiences within the local context to be able to be effective (Greenaway and McDowell, 2017). Minkoff-Zern and Carney (2015) note the way that many models of nutrition intervention rest on assumptions about migrants which stigmatise, or take a paternalistic view which does not take account of migrants' knowledge about diet. Hayes-Conroy and Sweet (2015) argue that the significance of food goes beyond mere nutrition, critiquing a narrow focus on 'food security' in favour of a critical recentring of the concept to

take account of social and environmental imaginaries which are constantly shifting and contested.

Others have theorised migrant food security. Carney (2014) uses a 'political ecology of the body' approach to understanding and analysing the experiences of migration and food insecurity amongst migrant women, arguing migrant women's pre migration decisions are governed by food availability and scarcity, and that their post migration experiences of food provisioning processes can be seen as a form of disciplining within neoliberal capitalism where migrant women's bodies are governed by where they can be, and what 'trepasses the body' in terms of food.

There is, however, anecdotal evidence that refugees in the UK are particularly vulnerable to poor nutrition and food insecurity (Sellen and Tedstone, 2016), and that the asylum system itself contributes to poverty (Allsopp et al., 2014). Research from both Australia and the USA indicates that there is a higher incidence of household food insecurity amongst the refugee population than the host population (Gallegos et al., 2008; Hadley and Sellen, 2006). Kasper et al.'s (2018) study of low income Latinx and Asian 'legal' migrants in the USA found that 81% were food insecure, and Hadley et al.'s (2007) study of undocumented Mexican migrants in New York City found that 28% were experiencing hunger. This seems to be corroborated by studies in other national contexts, such as Omidvar et al.'s (2013) study of Afghan migrants to Iran which found that 60% were moderately or severely food insecure. Finally, Hadley and Sellen 's (2006) study of recently resettled Liberian refugees in the US found that 85% of households were food insecure, and 42% experienced child hunger.

2.10 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the difficulties of defining and measuring poverty and how poverty measurement and definitions have developed over time in the UK, including, most recently, to encompass deprivation due to a lack of food and undernutrition. However, most ways of conceptualising poverty tend to ignore or 'invisibilise' the experiences of undocumented migrant families because they do not acknowledge the complex interplay between migration and welfare, both historically and in the present day. Specifically, measures which ignore the impact of welfare chauvinism on the ability for undocumented migrants to access adequate food do not account for the experience of these families. This thesis seeks to address this key gap in the poverty literature by seeking to understand for the first time the extent of food insecurity amongst migrant households in a given area (Objective 2) and to understand the experiences of families themselves in the absence of access to employment or social security rights (Objective 3).

Chapter Three: Research Methods

This chapter introduces the research instruments used and how they meet the research objectives outlined in the introduction. This is followed by an outline of the ontological and epistemological basis for the research before the process of research and data analyses are explained in more detail. The chapter ends with an explanation of some of the ethical considerations which were encountered throughout the process.

3.1 Objectives and Methods

Table 4 below outlines the three stage design of the research with the objectives for each stage and the methods and sample size for each one.

Table 4: Research Objectives and Methods

Stage	Research Objective	Method	Sample Size
1	Elicit expert information about the numbers of undocumented migrant families in Birmingham	Delphi Panel	18
2	Understand the extent of household food insecurity amongst undocumented migrant families in Birmingham	USDA HFS Questionnaires	74
3	Explore the experiences of undocumented migrant families	Semi-structured interviews/ Photo Elicitation	15/2

The first stage of research involved a Delphi panel with participants who were drawn from the main voluntary and local government agencies working with undocumented migrant families in Birmingham. Initial recruitment took place through a presentation to the West Midlands Destitution Steering Group, and subsequent participants were identified by members of this panel. Potential participants were approached via an email explaining the details of the research project – the sample size for stage one was 18. The aim was to elicit

expert information about the numbers of undocumented migrant families in Birmingham (Objective 1).

Stage two involved completion of the USDA Household Food Security Questionnaire (Objective 2). The final sample size for stage two was 74 families. As traditional probability sampling techniques are often ineffective with undocumented migrants (Hernández et al., 2013), in the research design stage, an alternative sampling strategy was planned. It was anticipated that initial 'seed' participants would be identified by the Delphi panel members, and subsequent participants would be peer recruited through a process of respondent driven sampling (RDS), where an initial seed sample of six participants recruited up to three further participants in a snowballing process until a maximum total of 70 was recruited. The method is particularly useful in sampling groups which are considered as 'hidden' or 'hard to reach' (Goodson and Grzymala-Kazlowska, 2017). However, this proved to be less successful than anticipated, with peer recruitment failing to produce 'chains' of more than two participants. A secondary recruitment plan was then instituted.

Delphi panel participants were asked: "Which are the main organisations who work with undocumented migrants in Birmingham?" and asked to name up to five organisations. In total, panel members named 21 organisations, with eight being named by five or more participants. These eight services were approached and in total six allowed recruitment of participants to take place at their organisation. In addition, one allowed access to their service users through their partnership with another service.

Two of these services were immigration advice drop-in services run by local community groups, one was a drop in for undocumented migrants run by an international NGO, one was a specialist advocacy project for a national charity, two were local charities providing

support to destitute migrants, and the final one was a local 'community leader' who was providing informal support to asylum seekers, and had links to the undocumented migrant community.

Stage three participants were interviewed using a topic guide (see appendix 3), and were chosen as a purposive sample of 15 families representing the main nationalities, family composition and immigration statuses of respondents from stage two (Objective 3). Stage three participants included both adults and children. Children were asked if they would like to take part in a photo elicitation exercise (see 3.10) to elicit their own understandings of food insecurity. This entailed borrowing digital cameras and taking pictures of their lives, which were then printed and used as the basis for a structured discussion about their experiences of food and nutrition.

The research and data analysis processes are discussed more fully in sections 3.7 and 3.8 below; however, first the ontological and epistemological basis for the research design is discussed.

3.2 Ontological Basis and Epistemology

Critical realism is a philosophy of knowledge developed by Bhaskar (2008), which provides a critique of both positivist, and constructivist understandings of the social world. Bhaskar understands reality as operating on three levels, the, 'real', the 'actual' and the 'empirical' (Collier, 1994). Fletcher (2017) explains this through the metaphor of an iceberg. The tip of the iceberg represents the 'empirical' level, the small area of reality which is visible and observable; beyond this is the 'actual' level of events which occur but may not be observed, and beyond that, the real level of the causal mechanisms and structures which are behind empirical events. Critical realism acknowledges that ontology cannot be reduced to

epistemology because there is a wider reality beyond current human knowledge (Fletcher, 2017). The task of the critical realist is therefore to examine beyond the empirical level to uncover the causal structures behind observable reality.

On the one hand, critical realism stands in contrast to what Bhaskar describes as 'actualism' (Collier, 1994, p. 7), or 'naïve realism' (Bryman, 2015) - the denial of structures which underlie and influence events in the social world. For critical realists, the cause of an event is not the event itself, rather there are underlying explanatory structures to events and social phenomena, and the purpose of research is to reveal and understand them (Bhaskar, 2008).

On the other hand, critical realism stands in contrast to constructivist approaches which only see reality as constructed through human knowledge, because, for Bhaskar (2008), they are inadequate to provide a framework which moves beyond merely understanding people's perspectives, to analysing and critiquing the underlying social structures in which they are contextualised. If all knowledge is subjective, then there is no basis for evaluating the relative merits of different explanations of reality. For critical realists, both positivist and constructivist positions, while appearing to be opposing positions, are similar in the sense that they both see reality as the same as human knowledge, either as a 'lens' for reality for positivists, or as a 'container' for reality for constructivists (Fletcher, 2017).

Critical realism provides a different paradigm for explaining reality and our understanding of it, and by allowing for the possibility of external social realities, enables them to be identified and challenged. This perspective has particular utility when conducting research with excluded groups, as Oliver (2012) notes from her perspective as a social work academic:

Bhaskar would see the poverty, disability and violence experienced by our clients not merely as part of their narrative or a function of our beliefs about them, but as present whether or not we and our clients choose to acknowledge them (2012, p. 374).

A constructivist perspective was inadequate for this research because, like Oliver's clients, the participants in this research experienced tangible structures and realities influencing their lives – for instance, being subject to immigration control or the NRPF rule. These structures dominated and shaped their lives and could not be overcome through the construction of alternative narratives about their lives. Non-realist approaches which are sceptical of the possibility of anything knowable independent of one's own subjective experience can be problematic when undertaking research with undocumented migrants, firstly because such approaches can fail to acknowledge the real restrictions which undocumented migrant families experience due to their liminal, precarious status, and secondly because focusing solely on the subjective understanding of individuals within the status quo does not provide a framework for challenging it. In contrast, Collier (1994) argues that a critical realist epistemology is 'transformative' and has 'emancipatory potential' (Collier, 1994, p. 12). Within this epistemological framework, knowledge can be counter phenomenal and make claims independent of existing theories or practices (Collier, 1994, pp. 15–16); this can in turn raise the possibility that knowledge can be used, not only to understand, interpret and evaluate the social world, but to actually be applied to changing existing material conditions and power structures (Marx, 1845).

It is perhaps not possible to understand the situation of undocumented migrants without understanding the existence of social structures affecting their lives, particularly the system of immigration controls. The task of critical realist research with undocumented migrants is

to expose and uncover these structures to analyse whether they promote human flourishing. As Fay acknowledges: "A critical theory wants to explain a social order in such a way that it becomes itself the catalyst which leads to the transformation of the social order" (Fay, 1993).

A critical realist perspective is particularly helpful in exploring the issue of household food insecurity amongst undocumented migrant households for three reasons. First, little is currently known empirically about this population, and traditional methods of empirical academic research may not be easily applied due to the hidden nature of this group of households. However, a critical realist approach would acknowledge a reality which is independent of our ability to fully empirically understand this reality: households with an irregular migration status exist irrespective of our ability to effectively identify them, and households may be food insecure irrespective of our ability to measure that food insecurity.

Second, the critical realist embrace of 'fallibilism' acknowledges that we may perceive that reality with varying degrees of clarity, and research which attempts to explore this issue using the imperfect tools and information available to us is more valuable than no evidence at all (Collier, 1994). A critical realist approach therefore recognises that explanations of reality are fallible, and that even if it is possible to only talk with degrees of confidence in findings, some theories or explanations might be closer to reality than others and are a valid exercise in better understanding the social world.

Finally, critical realism's commitment to trying to understand the underlying causal mechanisms behind social phenomena in order to promote human flourishing resonates with social policy as an applied academic discipline, which pertains "both the activity of policy-making to promote well-being and to the academic study of such actions" (Alcock,

2012, pp. 7) – in the discipline of social policy, the task of research is therefore not just to create theory, but to apply these insights to practice and relate them to welfare policy.

3.3 Grounded Theory Principles

Data were analysed using an iterative approach which was influenced by grounded theory (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). The approach was chosen because there is currently little empirical research into the social care needs and household food security of undocumented migrant families in the UK, so there was little existing theory to draw upon, and a systematic way of generating theory was useful in the absence of an extensive research literature. As an under-theorised area, there was a need to generate theory to explain what was happening, rather than test existing theoretical approaches.

The process of grounded theory described by Glaser and Strauss (1967) consists of a series of stages of theory generation: identifying an area of interest; identifying some features, or concepts related to the phenomenon; deciding on initial data collection based on this initial understanding; and using theoretical sampling. This form of sampling lends itself particularly well to research with undocumented migrants where probability sampling is not possible (Staring, 2009).

Transcripts were analysed using a process of coding described by Corbin and Strauss (2008), which builds on the earlier work of Glaser and Strauss (1967). First, data is first categorised, examined and compared using line by line 'open coding' to identify initial concepts and recurring themes; second, using 'axial coding', connections between categories are identified; and finally, through 'selective coding', core categories are identified and related to other categories (Corbin and Strauss, 2008, 1990). Data were analysed inductively using content analysis (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008; Hsieh and Shannon, 2005) and once this process of

coding was completed, 'demi-regularities' - emerging tendencies, trends or patterns in the data, a key concept in critical realist analysis, were identified (Holton, 2008). Interviews were transcribed as the fieldwork was being completed, and memos were written on the top of transcription pages, which in turn informed subsequent interviews in an iterative, abductive process of theory building. While the principles and process of coding into categories using open, axial and selective coding and the use of memos to generate theory from the data were drawn from grounded theory, data were not fully coded as soon as they were collected due to limitations of time, and the difficulty of predicting when participants would be interviewed due to the respondent driven sampling strategy which relied on peer recruitment. The use of memos rather than full coding at the time was a concession to the limitations of time, and memos were used to draw out potential themes, which then informed subsequent lines of enquiry in later interviews. For instance, in early interviews the issue of paid employment in the informal economy was mentioned as a means of maintaining a living in circumstances where legal employment or access to social security benefits were denied, and questions about employment were added in future interviews. Similarly, early participants made reference to times when they were living without any income at all, which appeared to resonate with the growing literature examining the issue of migrant destitution (Farmer, 2017; Petch et al., 2015; Price and Spencer, 2015). Therefore, later interviews also incorporated questions about destitution. Finally, it became apparent that households who were receiving support from children's services also reported very high levels of food insecurity, so a question was added to see how long they had been supported by children's services, to attempt to analyse whether food insecurity was a cause of being supported by children's services, or whether support by children's services had improved their food security.

3.4 Grounded Theory and Critical Realism

The use of grounded theory alongside critical realism is contested - Fletcher suggests that grounded theory is not compatible with a critical realist epistemology, because while grounded theory is inductive, data driven and avoids engagement with existing theory during data analysis, critical realism is abductive, engages with existing theory, and is researcher driven (Fletcher, 2017). However, grounded theory has been utilised in many different ways, and within many contrasting theoretical perspectives, so the methodology is perhaps best seen as "an umbrella covering several different variants, emphases, and directions— and ways to think about data" (Charmaz, 2009, p. 128). Grounded theory has been extensively used by critical realists in a variety of disciplines, in human geography (Yeung, 1997), leadership studies (Kempster and Parry, 2014), economics (Lee, 2012) and social work research (Bunt, 2016; Oliver, 2012) and has not been associated solely with any single method, being described as 'a philosophy in search of a method' (Yeung, 1997). It is therefore possible to apply a number of methods within a critical realist paradigm. Yeung views grounded theory to be "probably be the most practically adequate method in the practice of critical realism" (Yeung, 1997, p.57), and Oliver argues that the two are highly compatible as they share focuses on abduction, and the interconnectedness of theory and practice, and both accept fallibilism (Oliver, 2012). Additionally, Lee (2012) sees the advantage of using both perspectives as stemming from the fact that grounded theory is the most useful research strategy to uncover the structures and causal mechanisms which are so key to critical realist theoretical analysis (Lee, 2012). "Critical Realism may thus be considered compatible with Grounded Theory, since both CR and interpretivism examine the interface between theory and practice while positing that the theory derived is an interpretation of events" (Bunt, 2016, p. 5)

3.5 Use of Mixed Methods.

According to Cresswell and Plano-Clark (2011), mixed methods research is "a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analysing, and integrating (or mixing) quantitative and qualitative research (and data) in a single study or a longitudinal program of inquiry" (2011, p.213). For Cresswell and Plano-Clark "The purpose of this form of research is that both qualitative and quantitative research, in combination, provide a better understanding of a research problem or issue than either research approach alone" (2011, p.214).

Mixed methods research appears to be growing in popularity particularly in applied research fields where practical necessity is seen as more important than theoretical difficulties (Fielding, 2010), and recent research with postgraduate researcher students in the US found that mixed methods studies were regarded as being more rigorous and providing a deeper understanding of the phenomenon being studied than single method research (McKim, 2017). Although mixed methods research has had particular prominence since the 1980s, it has been used since the earliest social research in the 19th century – notably being used in research into poverty by Charles Booth and Seebohm Rowntree (Hesse-Biber, 2015; Maxwell, 2016).

While the use of both quantitative and qualitative research methods within one piece of research has been at times controversial because of their different epistemological underpinnings, Bryman contends that the extent to which quantitative and qualitative methods are discrete, non-overlapping research strategies is overstated. Many qualitative strategies contain elements of quantification, conversely many quantitative studies explore meaning (2015, pp. 614–5, 620). For Bryman, the assumption that quantitative methods are purely concerned with testing hypotheses fails to acknowledge the creativity inherent in

analysing and interpreting findings (2015, p. 621). Similarly, Onwuegbuzie and Leech make the case for a pragmatic, methodologically pluralist approach where: "all graduate students learn to utilize and to appreciate both quantitative and qualitative research. In so doing, students will develop into what we term as pragmatic researchers" (2005, p. 376).

Gorard (2010) takes a more combative view, seeing the use of a variety of methods as a natural response to real world research questions, and that it is only when "contaminated by the nonsense peddled in mainstream methods resources" (2010, p. 238) that novice researchers would think otherwise. For Gorard, a consequence of viewing quantitative and qualitative methods as 'incommensurable paradigms' is that researchers are trained to see a dichotomy between methods, and if hesitant to work with numbers will work with qualitative data only, and instead of addressing this weakness, will see this as a strength. Gorard views "The Q word approaches" as not separate Khunian paradigms at all. Instead, he proposes a way of selecting methods which starts with research design, before selecting the best method to understand the data, programme or treatment being considered.

However, the use of mixed methods is not without its difficulties. Bryman (2015) notes that there are some who make an 'embedded methods' argument that different methods come with inherent epistemological and ontological commitments or that they represent different 'incommensurable paradigms' (Morgan, 1998), and that it is therefore problematic to mix quantitative and qualitative approaches. For instance, quantitative methods have been particularly criticised by some feminist academics for their perceived sexism and false objectivity (Epstein Jaratyne, 1993), although other feminists have argued for the use of quantitative methods such as randomised controlled trials (Oakley, 1999). Qualitative

methods have been criticised for their subjectivity, lack of generalisability and the difficulty of appraising the quality of research (Dixon-Woods, 2004; Hammersley, 2007; Mays, 2000).

In contrast, there are those who take a 'pragmatist' approach, where any method can be used, depending on 'what works' according to the research questions (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Bryman suggests that in practice there is an inevitable element of overlap between qualitative and quantitative approaches and that the different methods can be put to a variety of uses. Rejecting the epistemological nature of the debate, and instead focusing on the technical nature of the problem, Bryman sees research methods as autonomous and able to be used in different contexts to which they were initially developed (Bryman, 2015).

Finally, there are others who take a 'conditional incompatibility' position where, while it is possible to use methods drawn from different philosophical positions, some methods are not "philosophically neutral since they prescribe a priori ontological and epistemological commitments" (Hathcoat and Meixner, 2017, p. 434). Morgan acknowledges that mixing different paradigms can be problematic, but concludes that mixed methods can be helpful as long as methods are combined whilst having an understanding of the differing paradigms, and the project is underpinned by a clear paradigmatic framework (Morgan, 1998). This perspective can be particularly helpful when mixed methods are underpinned by a critical realist paradigm, and Sharp suggests that critical realism presupposes methodological pluralism (Archer et al., 1999).

3.6 Advantages of a Mixed Methods Approach.
A critical realist epistemology is one way of consistently combining both quantitative and qualitative methods, as it rejects the extremes of both positivism and postmodernism – for

the critical realist, entities can exist independently of our knowledge of them, but the social world is both mediated by our senses, and therefore subjective (Bryman, 2015).

Critical realist studies have tended to use mixed-method approaches, typically using statistical analysis to ascertain patterns or regularities in empirical phenomena, and then qualitative inquiry to probe for in-depth explanation (Kazi, 2003 cited in Oliver, 2012), and the approach has been used in migration studies (Iosifides, 2017). A second advantage of using mixed methods is the use of triangulation (Campbell and Fiske, 1959), where data from different sources are compared to corroborate data and test findings. This can also support sequential research design, where the analysis and interpretation of each stage of research informs the research strategy for the following stage. In this research, the results of the expert consensus on undocumented migrants in Birmingham in stage one informed the sampling strategy for the household food security questionnaire in stage two, and in turn the results of the household food security questionnaire informed the sampling and topic guide for the qualitative approach of stage three.

Using this mixed methods approach, the quantitative data exploring the size of the undocumented migrant population and the extent of food insecurity are contextualised and illustrated by semi-structured interviews, exploring the meanings that migrant families ascribe to food insecurity. The danger of anecdotalism in qualitative research is avoided by situating the interviews within a wider understanding of the population provided by the quantitative component, and the risk that particular statements by individuals may have undue significance attached to them is reduced if statements are triangulated with quantitative data (Bryman, 2015).

Morgan discusses the utility of mixed research in seeking 'cross-validation' between methods (Morgan, 1998, pp. 364–5). However, he notes that a more recent advantage, which goes beyond this more limited and labour-intensive goal, is to seek complementarity – where "the strengths of one method [are used] to enhance the performance of the other method"(Morgan, 1998, p. 365). Bryman found in his research into justifications for using mixed methods that "enhancement" was the most common rationale and practice motivation for mixed methods research (Bryman, 2015, pp. 633–4) where one method builds on the other, providing greater insight or depth of research understanding.

Enhancement is the primary purpose of using mixed methods in this research. By using semi-structured interviews, it is possible to gain rich data that illuminate the statistics on numbers of families who are food insecure, and find out more about how families experience this. It also provides guidance for the direction of the interviews and make sure that the interviews are responding to evidence rather than preconceptions. As Epstein Jayaratne (1993) notes, qualitative data can be used "in conjunction with quantitative data, to develop, support and explicate theory" (Epstein Jaratyne, 1993, p. 109).

3.7 Research Instruments
The research used a number of research instruments, reflecting the three-stage, sequential design of the research. These have been outlined briefly in section 3.1 above, but here they are discussed in greater detail, including the rationale for why they were chosen.

3.7.1 Estimating the Size of the Undocumented Migrant Population (Objective 1)
The residual model has been the most widely used method of estimating the undocumented migrant population in the UK (Gordon et al., 2009; Pinkerton et al., 2004; Sigona and Hughes, 2012; Woodbridge, 2005). This method subtracts estimates of the lawfully resident foreign-born population from the total foreign-born population using census data in order to get to a de facto 'residual' number of the undocumented population.

However, it is not possible to calculate the residual at a local authority level because the data is not disaggregated to that extent. For instance, whilst there is data on the size of the foreign-born population in the UK to the level of local authorities, in order to calculate the residual, it is necessary to know the numbers of foreign born population living in Birmingham who have settlement in the UK, the numbers of European Economic Area (EEA) citizens in the city, as well as figures for emigration, death and births for the foreign-born population in a local born population (Woodbridge, 2005).

An alternative means of estimating population size at a local authority level is the Delphi model - which is one potential method discussed by Pinkerton et al. (2004) and considered by Gordon et al (2009). In the Delphi model, a panel of expert respondents are invited to participate in a series of three short questionnaires. Respondents are anonymous and known to the researcher but blind to the identity of other respondents. The open questionnaire in the first-round acts as a survey instrument for the second round of structured questionnaires which consist of summarised information from the previous rounds in facilitate the emergence of a consensus. The results can then be used to triangulate with other estimates.

Pinkerton et al. (2004) discuss the many studies that have utilised the Delphi method to estimate the size of undocumented migrant populations. These include research in a number of different European contexts, such as in Switzerland (Piguet and Losa, 2002); the Czech Republic (Research Institute for Social and Labour and Affairs, 1997), Italy (ISTAT, 1991) and the Netherlands (Zandvliet and Gravesteijn-Ligthelm, 1994). Whilst Pinkerton et al. acknowledge that the method could be applied in the UK, they question how it would be verified, and recognise that its efficacy would rely on the knowledge of participants. Similarly, Gordon et al. (2009) recognise Delphi as one of the three 'extensively investigated'

methods of quantifying the undocumented migrant population. Whilst a panel with expert knowledge of the undocumented migrant population across the whole of the UK presents difficulties, for a smaller local area, the method becomes more feasible due to the smaller size of the population in question and the local knowledge of the panel.

Data collection took place between March and September 2016, questionnaires were hosted online using an encrypted site, and the round one survey was piloted with three volunteers to ensure that it was understandable and the questions were clear. All participants were given a participant information sheet either by email or in person, and informed consent was indicated through an online tick box. Eighteen people took part in the panel, and attempts were made to recruit the people with the widest knowledge of undocumented migrant families in Birmingham – including practitioners, policymakers, and undocumented families themselves. Two thirds of the panel were employed by a charity, either locally or nationally (see figure 2).

Figure 1: Members of Delphi panel
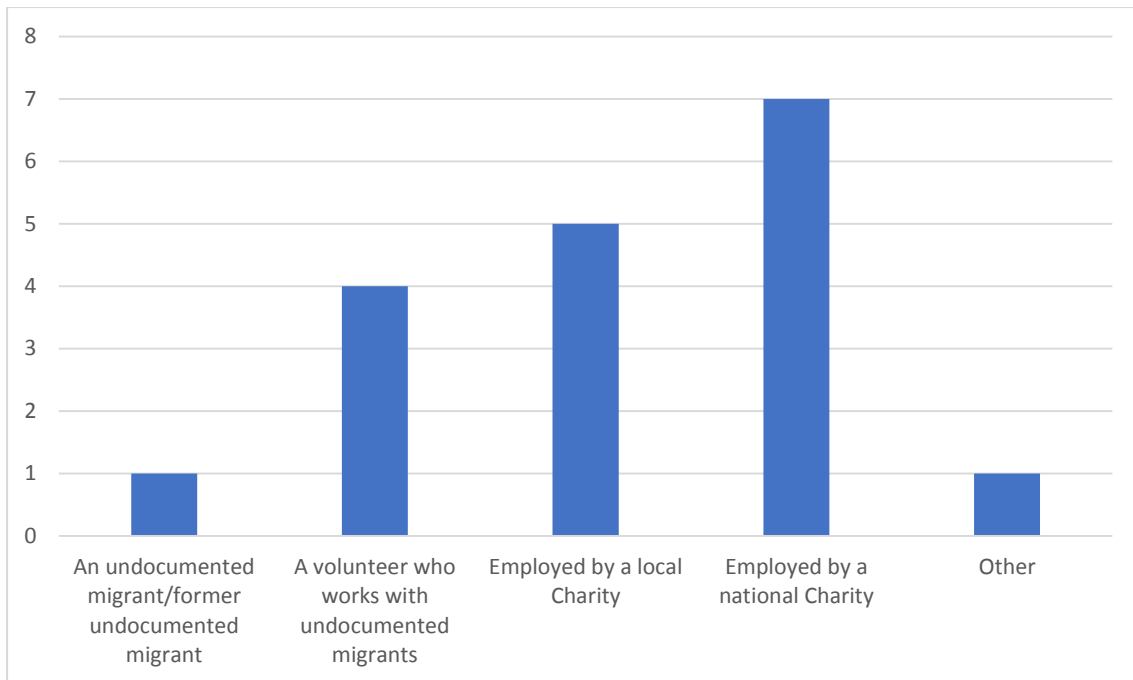
The majority of the panel were recruited through a steering group of the key voluntary sector agencies in the city working with undocumented migrants. Participants were asked if any others might be interested in taking part, and these, in turn, were contacted with an invitation to participate. The final panel was predominantly drawn from the voluntary and community sectors, and so additional attempts were made to recruit representatives from the local authority (both officers and elected members), although none decided to take part in the panel, which given the number of undocumented migrant families supported by the local authority was a key weakness of the sample. This is perhaps not surprising due to the controversial nature of the issue, public hostility to irregular migration, and the fact that the local authority would have a safeguarding obligation to any undocumented migrant children who are identified in the research, with potentially significant financial implications for the local authority (Birmingham City Council v Amalea Clue Secretary of State for the Home Department v Shelter, 2010). This lack of local authority representation on the panel was a weakness in the composition of the panel, which meant that a valuable local perspective

was not included in the estimates. However, unlike other areas of social work practice, local authorities are not the sole or even the largest agency working with undocumented migrants. The total number of families supported by the local authority at the time of the panel was 163 families, but panellists reported receiving an average of 15 new referrals a week for undocumented migrant families. Even accounting for staff leave and holiday closures, panel members were in contact with a significantly higher number of families than the local authority. Nonetheless, efforts should be made in future research to involve local authority representatives to ensure that all relevant local perspectives are included.

In order to broaden the perspectives included in the panel, three 'experts by experience' who had themselves been undocumented were also recruited (two of whom were also employed by a charity). Half of those in employment were involved in direct work with children and families, either as a practitioner or in a managerial role (See figure 2).

Figure 2: Panel members by job role
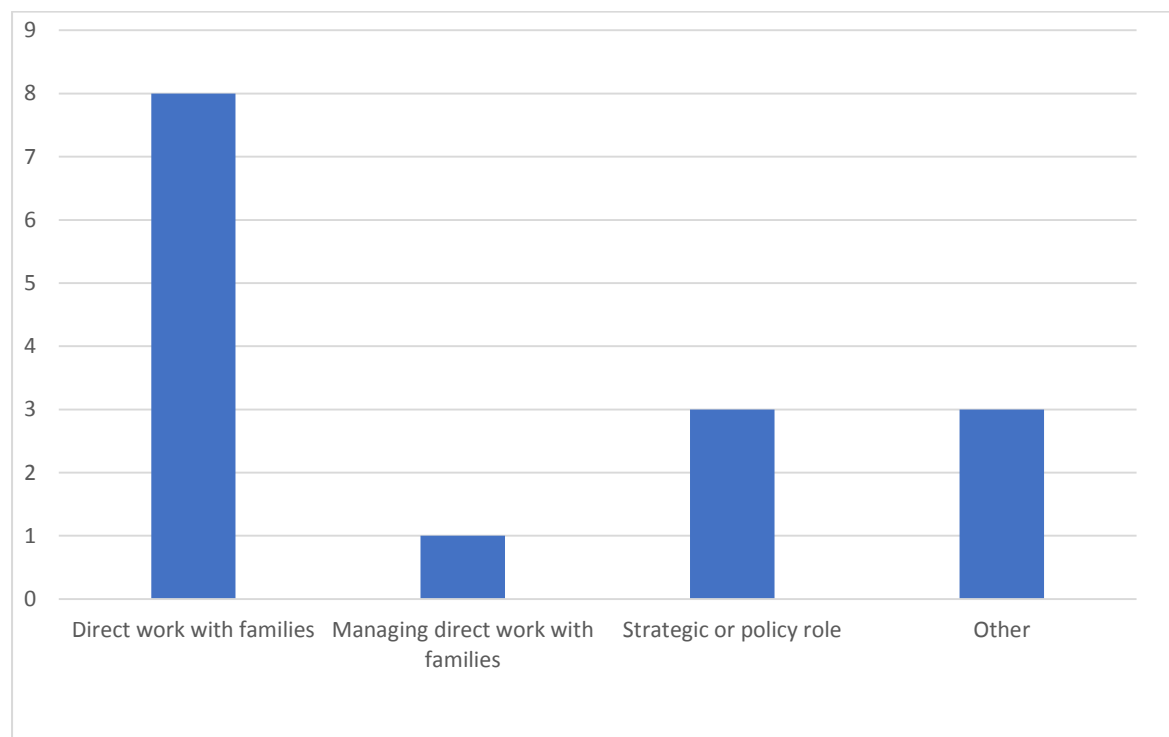
When respondents did not reply to an initial email, two follow-up reminders were sent, two weeks apart, before closing the round. Despite these attempts, there was significant attrition each round. Of the eighteen participants in round one, fourteen participated in round two, and ten in round three. Half of the eight participants who dropped out between round one and round three described themselves as undertaking direct work with undocumented migrant families, three described their role as other, and one didn't respond to the question. This meant that the final panel consensus had proportionally fewer people whose role was direct work with children and families, and those who remained also had significantly higher first round estimates than those who left the panel (See table 5).

Table 5: Population estimates by panel leavers and remainers

	Mean Families estimate (round 1)	Mean Children estimate (round 1)
Panel leavers	1092	1054
Panel remainers	2705	3870

3.7.1.1 Issues of Attrition and Engagement

A compromise was made between the need for the maximum number of participants to take part, and the need to keep the rounds close together to ensure that participants remembered their answers in each round. Nonetheless, in rounds two and three, five respondents needed prompting to remember the answers they had given in previous rounds. The process of recruitment and of ensuring that the maximum number of participants took part in each round was time consuming, taking six months from the first recruitment meeting to the end of round three. Millar et al. (2007) suggest that the process should take four months, including planning, but with only five days for each of the rounds. However, significant delays were experienced due to panel members not responding within this timeframe. The difficulty of sustaining engagement is most likely a reflection of how

busy participants were in their jobs, as some participants acknowledged. Finding the time to complete a questionnaire took considerable thought and engagement (including reviewing case files and other internal data sources). Delays in responding were not necessarily an indication of a lack of interest in the subject, as 13 out of 18 participants asked to be kept informed of the research results and left email contact details to do so. In future Delphi panels more active ways of engaging with participants could be used, such as offering face-to-face interviews and telephone conversations rather than asking participants to click on a link in an email. Another factor which might improve retention is the use of incentives. In this research there was no financial reward for completion of each round, but a small cash incentive might be a way of acknowledging the time and effort of contributing to a Delphi panel, and of ensuring continued engagement.

3.7.1.2 Quality and Validity of Data

By its nature, the Delphi method can only offer a partial perspective, giving an overview of the opinion of experts in the field. Most participants gave estimates based on their own experience, using casefile data and information about the numbers of people accessing their own service. This was useful information which had not been previously shared outside their own organisations, and which, without the guarantee of anonymity that the Delphi process provided, they might have been reluctant to share publicly. Nonetheless, despite the insider knowledge that panel members possessed, most expressed a lack of confidence in their answers. In the final round, a supplementary question was introduced to assess participant confidence in their answers using a four-point Likert scale. The intention was to better evaluate the reliability of individual estimates in the event of a clear consensus failing to emerge (Millar et al., 2007, p. 21). Participants were very uncertain of their responses, reflecting the difficulty of estimating a hidden population, even amongst those who were

knowledgeable about the issue. None said they were very sure of their answer, and only two were slightly sure. In contrast, the majority were unsure, either slightly (three), or very (four). One participant explained "It's very difficult to know or even guess the answer to the question as my personal experience teaches me that a lot of people only seek help when they are not able to cope at all. I can't be at all sure" (undocumented migrant). Another commented "[It is] very difficult to gauge the amount of undocumented families living in Birmingham, so most of it based on experience and guesswork" (charity employee).

One of the difficulties with the Delphi method is that it is not possible to externally verify the validity of the answers given. It was, therefore, important to build in checks and opportunities for reflection within the process. This was done through asking why people had given particular responses and how sure they were of each answer, and feeding these responses back in subsequent rounds in order to better inform panel members. It was also helpful to introduce outside information to panel members in order to compare their own estimates with external evidence. In this study, this was introduced in the final round, but it could also have usefully been introduced earlier on in the process, which may have helped to reassure participants about their answers.

There is no explicit agreement in the Delphi literature about defining consensus, and this is open to interpretation by the researcher. As the information above shows, it is difficult to reach consensus on a contested and under researched issue. However, while it is challenging to reach consensus, and a degree of divergence remains after three rounds, there does seem to be a tendency for estimates to converge around a figure of the low thousands for children in Birmingham who are undocumented. Furthermore, there was a stronger consensus amongst panel members that numbers of undocumented migrant

children and families are increasing; that a minority of families are known to local authority children's services; and that a majority of these families are experiencing destitution. These findings are not a definitive estimate of the situation of undocumented migrant children and families in Birmingham, merely an indication of the collective knowledge of people who are familiar with this particular group of children and families. The result should, therefore, be treated with caution and not viewed in isolation from other information. But it does provide new knowledge of a previously under researched issue. Given these findings, and despite the limitations of the method, it can, therefore, be cautiously concluded that the Delphi method is a useful way of eliciting new information about a hidden issue (Millar et al., 2006). If used thoughtfully, it can be helpful in informing debate and supporting practice at a local level. If the learning points described in this pilot study are applied, the method could be productively used in other geographical areas to explore the same issue or, more broadly, any research issue that is hidden and where traditional data sources are not available.

Data on estimated numbers of undocumented migrant children and families for each round were converted into bar charts and uploaded to the Bristol Online Surveys platform for feedback by panel members. Means were calculated for each round and converted into a clustered bar chart to allow for comparison across the three rounds.

3.7.2 Household Food Security (Objective 2)

The USDA 18-item household food security questionnaire was used to measure the extent of food insecurity amongst families who participated. There is no standardised measure of food poverty in the UK; furthermore, measures of poverty tend to be relative (see discussion in Chapter Two). Similarly, there is no internationally recognised measure of food security, and a number of tools have been used worldwide (Carletto et al., 2013). Explorations of household food security in the UK have tended to use qualitative methods, such as

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interviews with practitioners involved in charitable food distribution, rather than attempt to measure levels of food security quantitatively (Lambie-Mumford et al., 2014). The USDA questionnaire is perhaps the most widely used measure of food security (Bickel et al., 2000; Coleman-Jensen et al., 2018), and the advantage of using an existing, internationally recognised instrument is that it allows for comparability, both internationally and now with the fourth wave of the FSA 'Food and You' survey in the UK (Bates et al., 2017).

The disadvantage of a perceived international 'objective' measure of food security is that it does not take into account the different cultural and contextual factors in which food security experiences are embedded and the different cultural meanings on which people place food experiences. For instance, Minkoff-Zern and Carney (2015) acknowledge the ways in which concepts of healthy food can be part of racialised othering by not accounting for the experiences of people of colour and other minorities, while Power (2008) notes that food security concepts developed in other countries do not account for the experiences of Canadian aboriginal people. Hayes-Conroy and Sweet (2015) have criticised the way in which food security has been used in a depoliticised way which does not take into account the shifting and contested meanings of food which go beyond mere nutritional minimums, which can sometimes be viewed in a reductionist and apolitical way. They give the example of Colombia, where as a result of the longstanding conflict, many rural groups of indigenous groups have been displaced and found themselves in urban contexts with very different food ecologies and cultural understandings of food.

In the same way, a tool which was developed in a US context cannot be uncritically relied upon to completely represent the experience of undocumented migrants in the UK. Ready (2016) notes that the USDA HFS module is of less efficacy in cultures and rural areas where

there is widespread access to hunted food (Ready, 2016). Neither can it be assumed that, for instance, migrants from rural Jamaica will have the same understanding of the cultural value of food and nutrition. For instance, the question in the USDA HFS module about whether there was enough food to eat proved to be more subjective than intended, because one participant suggested that if she had sugar and water in the house, she had enough to eat (see 5.1.1). In the same way, the question about losing weight has very different connotations in different contexts, as weight has cultural meanings in a white European context that differ to those within a Black African context, for example. In addition, the food security obesity paradox suggests that in certain contexts gaining weight is associated with food insecurity (Tanumihardjo et al., 2007), but when the question of whether participants had lost weight was asked, this led to a common reaction of laughter. There is also evidence that there is a gendered difference in how certain concepts are interpreted, such as 'household,' 'balanced meal,' and 'worry' (Foster et al., 2018), and that women tend to report higher food insecurity than men within similar households (Matheson and McIntyre, 2014). These difficulties in interpretation highlight the importance of triangulating data with semi-structured interviews. The findings from the USDA HFS Module are therefore interspersed throughout with findings from the interviews with participants (see Chapter Five)

It is therefore essential to properly contextualise and problematise the findings from the USDA HFS module with data from interviews with families themselves in order to draw out the wider cultural and ecological meanings of their food and how they are embedded within wider structures such as the system of immigration control and everyday bordering (Yuval-Davis et al., 2018). Although there are limits to how far the instrument can be used in different cultural contexts, in comparable industrialised countries with an urban population,

the measure is of use in understanding the extent to which households are experiencing food insecurity, and as a basis for deeper, richer follow up conversations with participants.

The USDA measure uses an 18-item questionnaire to rank household food security on a four point scale from i) high food security; ii) marginal food security; iii) low food security; and, iv) very low food security (Economic Research Service, 2012).

To take part, participants had to meet the following three criteria: 1) live in a household with children under eighteen years old; 2) have had an irregular status over the past year; and 3) be living in Birmingham. The final restriction proved to be hard to define because many participants had no fixed abode and were moving addresses frequently. Additionally, families who were supported by Birmingham City Council under section 17 of the Children Act 1989 were often placed out of the city in other areas of the West Midlands conurbation, most commonly in shared 'bed and breakfast' type accommodation in Sandwell or Walsall. In situations where there was ambiguity about whether participants were resident in Birmingham because they had spent recent time staying outside of the city, families were asked if they had an existing link to Birmingham (such as GP registration, school registration or financial support from Birmingham City Council) or if they had spent time living in Birmingham over the previous year (the same time period specified in the USDA questionnaire).

All households who attended the immigration advice drop in sessions at the gatekeeper agencies who met the three criteria were given a participant information sheet and invited to take part in the questionnaire. Response rates were high, with 91% of eligible participants taking part (n.74 out of 81 eligible) – a surprise, given the previously documented difficulty of access to undocumented migrants for research (Staring, 2009). To sample the widest

number of eligible households, participants were also asked to recruit other eligible households through a process of respondent driven sampling (Johnston and Sabin, 2010). However, response rates were far lower for the respondent driven sampling method. Out of the 74 participants, only 15 were recruited by other participants, and the longest referral 'chain' was five, with the majority of chains only having two links. This could be for a number of reasons. Simmons and Wilmott (2004) suggest that, while incentives are effective at improving response rates on social surveys, 'unconditional, pre-paid incentives' are more effective than conditional incentives based on completing a task (such as recruiting other participants). Alternatively, the incentives might have been too low. Participants were offered a bus pass and £5 supermarket voucher as an incentive for taking part, with further vouchers for every additional household they recruited. While this was an adequate incentive to encourage those already accessing a service to stay for an additional twenty minutes to complete an interview, it may have not been enough to overcome the effort and inconvenience of recruiting others and getting them to the venue, or of mitigating the stigma of discussing immigration status with friends and neighbours.

The relatively low numbers of participants who recruited others to the research was not due to lack of contacts with other undocumented migrants, and households were well networked with others with similar immigration statuses. Participants were asked their 'personal network size' (PNS) - the number of people they knew personally with the same status (see table 6 below). Of the 62 participants who answered the question, 83.9% knew other households who were undocumented, and 55% knew three or more. Both the median and mode PNS was 10, and the mean was 8.

Table 6: Personal network size (PNS)

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	unknown	10	13.5	16.1	16.1
	Zero	9	12.2	14.5	30.6
	1	7	9.5	11.3	41.9
	2	2	2.7	3.2	45.2
	3	6	8.1	9.7	54.8
	5	3	4.1	4.8	59.7
	6	2	2.7	3.2	62.9
	7	2	2.7	3.2	66.1
	8	1	1.4	1.6	67.7
	10	9	12.2	14.5	82.3
	12	1	1.4	1.6	83.9
	18	1	1.4	1.6	85.5
	20	6	8.1	9.7	95.2
	35	1	1.4	1.6	96.8
	60	2	2.7	3.2	100.0
	Total	62	83.8	100.0	
Missing	**System**	**12**	**16.2**		
Total		**74**	**100.0**		

The composition of the 74 households was 98 adults, and 138 children. The vast majority of the households were headed by a lone female parent, and only 19 had two or more adults in the household. Only 8 men completed the questionnaire, although a further 4 households chose to complete the survey together, with all adult household members completing the survey at the same time and comparing answers.
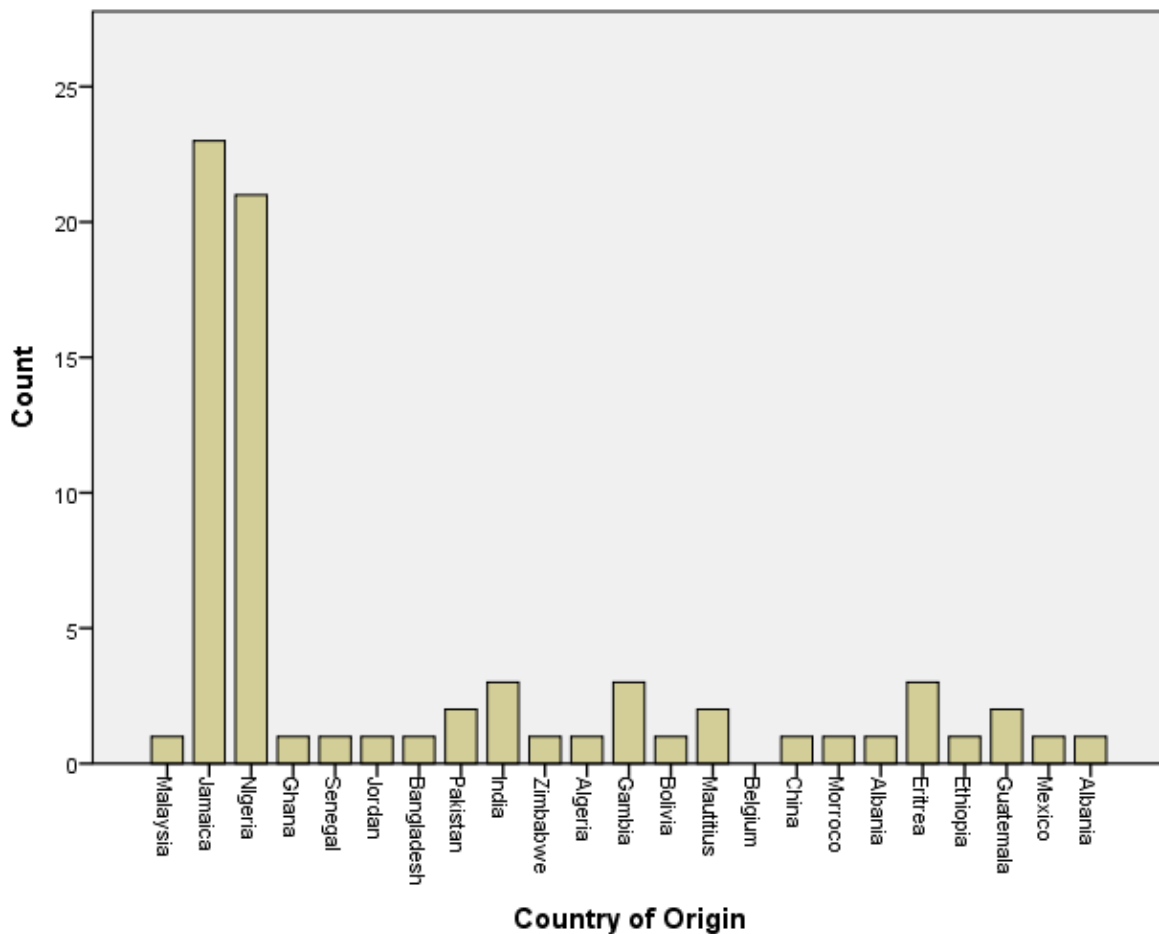
Participants were drawn from 23 countries (See figure 3). Over half were from just two countries – Jamaica and Nigeria. It is difficult to know how representative this is of the total undocumented population, but this corresponds closely to the results from the Delphi panel. When Delphi panel members were asked the three most common countries of origin for undocumented migrant families in Birmingham, 12 countries were mentioned, with Nigeria and Jamaica the most commonly cited, mentioned 6 and 4 times respectively. Of the countries mentioned by the Delphi panel, 7 were represented in the USDA questionnaire sample. Similarly, Price and Spencer's (2015) survey of local authority support for families with NRPF found that 51% of undocumented families supported by local authorities were

from Jamaica and Nigeria, and of the top ten countries of origin in Price and Spencer's survey, six were represented in the sample of household food security.

The length of time participants had been in the UK varied widely, from between just a few weeks, to over 20 years, with the mode being fifteen years, and the mean number of years in the UK nine.

Table 7: Immigration status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Visa Overstayer	43	58.1	58.9	58.9
	Refused Asylum Seeker	17	23.0	23.3	82.2
	Illegal Entrant	3	4.1	4.1	86.3
	other	7	9.5	9.6	95.9
	EEA National	3	4.1	4.1	100.0
	Total	73	98.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.4		
Total		74	100.0		

There was a wide range of immigration statuses represented in the sample (See table 7 above). The most common status was visa overstayer, and over half of participants had become undocumented through this route. This is similar to the findings of Price and Spencer's (2015) survey of local authorities, who found that 63% of families with NRPF who were supported by children's services had overstayed on a visa.

Questionnaire responses were given a unique identifying code and uploaded to SPSS. Scores were calculated for Household Food Security, Adult Food Security and Child Food Security. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics such as cross tabulation of source of support and household food security, and tables were created for each of the 18 items of the survey to allow comparison and triangulation with the semi structured interviews.

A limitation of the research was the fact that the USDA Household Food Security Questionnaire was written in English and the author did not speak other community languages. At times, two volunteers were available to translate (A Spanish speaker and Urdu speaker), however, the language barrier placed a practical limitation on who could take part, as participation was limited to people who were able to speak English (or were comfortable with using the volunteer translator).

In the event, most participants spoke fluent English, this is perhaps because of three factors. First, many had been in the UK for a significant amount of time (see table 9), and many children who had been born in the UK. Sigona and Hughes (2012) estimate that half of undocumented children are UK-born. Second, the majority of participants were from countries of origin where English was an official language (e.g. Jamaica and Nigeria alone accounted for more than half of participants). These countries are indicative of the countries of origin observed in other studies, such as Price and Spencer (2015). Finally, the fact that participants were recruited through gatekeepers from agencies working with undocumented migrants in the city, and later from people attending drop in services, meant that the sample was drawn from people who were able to speak English well enough to engage with services which were both delivered in English, and where there was sometimes limited access to translators. This meant that communities which were under represented in attendance at immigration advice services were under represented in the sample – there were no Chinese participants for instance, despite there being evidence of a sizeable population of undocumented Chinese workers in the UK (Pai, 2008). This suspicion was confirmed by conversations with immigration advice and advocacy workers at the fieldwork sites who confirmed that they rarely saw service users from the Chinese community at their drop in sessions.

Children were sometimes present in interviews with parents, especially in school holidays or younger children and babies. Parents were given the choice when a child was present, and play activities were available in some locations, and other family members who could take care of babies and children while the interviews happened. On a number of occasions parents chose to have children in to the interview, and this limited the discussion that was able to take place, especially when the child did not know about the immigration status of their parents. In most cases older children were in school or looked after themselves while the interview went on, and in two cases consented to have a follow up photo elicitation interview.

3.7.3 Undocumented Migrant Families' Experiences of Food Insecurity (Objective 3)

A maximum variation sample of fifteen families was chosen for semi-structured interviews following completion of the USDA Household Food Security Questionnaire. Seventeen semi-structured interviews with fifteen families (including 24 children) took place between October and December 2016. The sample size corresponded to just over 9% of the 163 families with NRPF who were supported by children's services in Birmingham at the

end of 2013 (Birmingham City Council, 2013). Families were initially identified through gatekeepers working with undocumented migrant families and were screened to ensure that they were currently undocumented or had been in the previous 12 months. The sample was chosen to ensure that participants were included from all three categories of routes into an undocumented migration status: Overstaying on a visa; having an asylum claim refused; clandestine entry (Gordon et al. 2009).

All had experience of being supported by children's services under section 17 of the Children Act (1989) to prevent destitution. Table 8 illustrates some basic demographic

information about participants. A plurality of families was from West Africa, and a third from the Caribbean. Over half had been in the UK for more than ten years, and had children born in the UK, and more than two thirds had originally come to the UK on a visa and overstayed. All but one of the interviewees were living in female headed lone-parent households. It is difficult to construct a sampling frame for a 'hidden population', but although the sample is purposive, rather than random, the sample was demographically similar to other sources. Birmingham City Council estimates that the majority of those they support are single parents with one child (Birmingham City Council 2013, p. 15). Nationally, Price and Spencer (2015) estimate that 63% of supported families are visa overstayers, and 51% Jamaican and Nigerian nationals (Price & Spencer, 2015, p. 27).

Table 8: Participants in semi-structured interviews

Pseudonym of interview participant	Notes
Akin	Ghanaian father with wife and two sons. Family claimed asylum but were refused. Currently living in 'section 4' Asylum Support accommodation. Wife was HIV positive and had recently had a miscarriage which the family thought was down to the stress of their situation. Initially living in London, but rehoused by Home Office in Birmingham.
Alvita	Jamaican mum with two school age children. Currently supported by children's services, and was previously undocumented but had recently been given limited leave to remain with NRPF.
Chandice	Originally from Jamaica, had a British born child. Destitute for ten years, working in the informal economy in order to survive before eventually getting section 17 support from children's services. Had tried to get into college, but was unable to because of her immigration status. Heard about section 17 support from family members, and spoke positively of the support provided by children's services.
Chibundo	Previously working in the UK legally, but overstayed her visa and lost her job. Was relocated from London to the West Midlands by local authority after applying for section 17 support. Had subsequently been granted limited leave to remain, but with NRPF.
Delyse	Jamaican mother with one boy and one girl. Delyse had overstayed her visa and had been destitute for 12 years, and living in dirty, dilapidated accommodation. Delyse suffered from depression and, had

	survived through a transactional sexual relationship. The family were seeking to regularise their status but had not heard back from the Home Office.
Ella	Jamaican mother with two preschool children. Fled an abusive ex-partner and was given food vouchers by a local authority in London. Rehoused in Birmingham.
Eralia	Previously given financial support from her cousin, was evicted by her landlord while pregnant with her first child, who was later registered as a British Citizen. Tried to get section 17 support from local authority but was refused for six months. Survived by 'cash in hand' from helping at day entre run by church she attended.
Fabienne	Guinean mother with two children. Recently given limited leave to remain but was previously undocumented. Initially came to the UK as a student, but married a British man and became destitute after fleeing an abuse in the relationship. Was initially refused support from children's services.
Gabrielle	Jamaican mum with two school aged daughters, one primary, one secondary. Applied for leave to remain from Home Office but application was refused and the family were currently appealing. Younger daughter was referred to children's services because of concerns about malnourishment. Eventually received section 17 support after appealing.
Grace	African mum with two children. Was receiving section 17 support from the Local authority, which she sometimes supplemented by going to food banks.
Ife	Nigerian mum with one school age girl and one pre-school boy. The family were supported by children's services.
Ionie	Originally from Jamaica, was vulnerably housed and moving from place to place; previously supported by sister and working informally, but sought help from local authority after becoming pregnant.
Khadijah	Jordanian, widow with two children, one was disabled. Was relocated from London to Birmingham by children's services
Memona	A mum with a daughter, Fahmida, both born in Pakistan. Came to the UK to claim asylum but were refused and had been destitute for 12 years, previously living with family, but had to leave, and were now being supported under section 17.
Tambara	Was housed by children's services, but daughter's school was nine miles away in a different borough. Tambara had been trafficked into the UK for domestic servitude and had escaped by moving in with an acquaintance in the West Midlands

Table 9: Demographics of participants in semi-structured interviews

Region of origin		Years in UK		Children in household		Immigration Status	
West Africa	7	0-5	5	One	7	Refused Asylum Seeker	2
Caribbean	5	6-10	2	Two	7	Visa Overstayer	11
Southern Asia	1	11-15	7	Three	1	Illegal Entrant	1
South-Eastern Asia	1	16-20	1			Other	1
Western Asia	1						

Maximum variation sampling was chosen because of the method's ability to uncover difference, and variety within groups as well as commonalities (Goodson & Grzymala-Kazlowska, 2017). Interviews triangulated with the household food security questionnaires to explore experiences of food poverty and insecurity in greater detail, and to find out the coping strategies used by families. A topic guide (see Appendix 3) was used to guide the conversations, which included sections on background; food and diet; exacerbating factors; and access to services.

Interviews were transcribed and uploaded to Nvivo for analysis. Transcripts from the children's photo elicitation interviews were also transcribed and analysed in the same way as the semi structured interviews with parents, and where the photograph is relevant to the code, it is reproduced in the findings chapter alongside the text. 47 codes were identified from the transcripts in a process of open coding. These were then grouped into nine axial codes which were in turn selectively coded into five overarching themes: (in) 'adequacy';

'abandonment'; 'access'; 'abundance'; and 'agency' (see appendix 5 for coding tree). These five themes form the basis of the following discussion chapters.

In order to ensure that children's perspectives were included, where a family had children over the age of ten years old, and there was consent from the parents and children, a photo elicitation method was used to explore the experiences of the children in each family (Barker and Weller, 2003). In this model, participants are given photographic equipment and instructions to take photographs around their experience of a particular theme – in this case 'food'. Photos are then printed and the images used to guide the conversation, taking the place of a topic guide. Photo elicitation has been widely used in research with children, predominantly in the discipline of human geography (Barker and Weller, 2003; Burke, 2008), and visual methods more broadly have been used to elicit young people's attitudes to Brexit (Pearce and Fox, 2017). Visual methods of research – such as photo elicitation, are sometimes referred to as 'visual ethnography' although, as Bryman points out, this terminology is misleading as it does not necessarily imply the sort of 'sustained immersion in a social setting' associated with conventional ethnography. Photo elicitation differs from other forms of visual research methods in which the researcher is the photographer, and consciously constructs the image through their technical photographic choices such as framing of the image, lenses length, depth of field, shutter speed and so on, crafting the photographs into a visual narrative (Harper, 2002). Instead, the images are 'research generated' and constructed by the participant themselves. This reduces the temptation to uniquely ascribe merit to photographic images, or to see them as unmediated objective images of reality, but rather use them as a reflexive tool to provoke discussion. Visual methods of research have been increasingly used in qualitative research with children, on the basis that traditional methods have failed to identify or examine children's lived

experiences (Burke, 2005), and therefore do research 'on' rather than 'with' children (Barker and Weller, 2003).

Another advantage of visual research methods is that they enable an element of reflection on the part of the participants to allow the everyday, implicit, taken for granted reality of life to be uncovered, discussed and analysed in a way which merely talking and asking questions is less effective at (Rose, 2014). By allowing the participants to generate the images themselves, photo elicitation subverts the power imbalance of the relationship between photographer and photographed, where participants are presented as 'academic subjects' rather than actors with agency in their own right who can shape their own narratives (Harper, 2002). It allows greater participation and higher involvement of participants, as they are seen as getting something from the research (Rose, 2014).

In contrast, methods of research which do not take into account the way that children communicate run the risk of being seen by participants as intimidating and alienating, or simply boring (Barker and Weller, 2003). The use of photographs is particularly helpful for undocumented migrant children as visual methods do not privilege the ability to be able to write in English, and are therefore more inclusive of those who speak English as a second language (Barker and Weller, 2003). However, Harper (2002) notes that whilst visual methods are more inclusive and participatory, it is important to recognise their limitations and uneven nature:

> *Photography embodies the unequal relationships that are a part of most research activities. I can enter into the worlds of the poor by living temporarily on the street, and I can photograph the worlds I encounter there, but a homeless person cannot infiltrate and photograph the life of my university president* (Harper, 2002, p.728).

As undocumented migrant families are a marginalised group, the use of an empowering method is ethically valid as it allows them to tell their own stories, reducing distance and power imbalance between researcher and participant. However, children as individuals experience the world differently, even children with similar socio-economic circumstances, and therefore the concept of a unified 'children's voice' is misleading (Lomax, 2012). Indeed, Gallacher and Gallagher (2008) critique the prevalence of participatory approaches to research with children, challenging the assumption that children are the 'experts in their own lives', which they claim rests on an 'epistemology of self-knowledge' that:

> *Leads to the belief that each person is best placed to know him- or herself; after all, even children of the same age, ethnicity, gender, ability, sexuality and nationality may be very different from one another. An epistemology of this kind assumes that people are transparently knowable to themselves, and privileges their 'voices' as the most authentic source of knowledge about themselves and their lives* (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008, p.502).

There is therefore a need to be honest about the limitations of participation and ownership of the research, even participatory approaches can be didactic, privileging some forms of participation over others (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008). This research maintains (although disrupts) the researcher-participant distinction, with the researcher asking research questions and interpreting results. While it is important to understand the child's world, the assumption that child-led research methods automatically produce a superior understanding of a child's life is untrue. As Lomax (2012) points out:

> *The evidence presented in this paper challenges this, suggesting instead that it offers different rather than superior knowledge. As the paper explored, this is exemplified in the ways in which child interviewers could be seen to limit and close down*

opportunities for other children to narrate their lives (Lomax, 2012, p. 115).

In the event, it proved difficult to recruit for the photo elicitation component. Out of the fifteen families who took part in the semi structured interviews, only two children took part in the photo elicitation exercise. This was due to the difficulty of finding children who were old enough be able to operate the digital cameras, to understand the instructions, and whose parents gave consent to take part. Taking part in the photo elicitation exercise also entailed the extra burden of time for families to attend a second interview to discuss the pictures, and this may have also had an effect on recruitment. Although the sample size was smaller than anticipated, a decision was taken to include the photo elicitation material for three reasons. First, children were not included in the semi-structured interviews, so these materials included the children's voice. Second, they were used to triangulate with the findings from the semi-structured interviews. And third, they were used to draw out contrasts and nuance and shade (such as the feasting and abundance). This provided a slightly different perspective, which I was therefore able to go back and recode to see if it was replicated in other aspects.

3.8 Ethics

Once the research received approval from the University of Birmingham research ethics committee (ERN_15-1390) prior to the start of the fieldwork, participants were given a participant information sheet (Appendix 1), and informed consent was sought and given by all participants. However, a number of ethical questions arose during the fieldwork itself which are discussed below.

Research participants were doubly socially excluded – as undocumented migrants, and as people who were food insecure, and so care was needed to ensure that participants in the

research had their interests protected (Social Research Association, 2003) and were protected from harm (British Association of Social Workers, 2012). There is an extensive literature which considers the ethics of research with people who have an irregular migration status, and there are a number of issues which arise from the liminal status of the participants. In common with all research with people who are socially excluded, it was important to consider whether the benefits of the research outweighed the potential harms of the research (Duvell et al., 2010). There are additional dangers for people whose immigration status renders them at risk of deportation, and who might not want to be identified by the Home Office, and so precautions were therefore made against the findings being used in a way which harmed participants; for instance, transcripts were anonymised and separated from consent forms to make it more difficult to identify participants, and data which could allow participants to be traced such as addresses were not written down on consent forms.

Some would argue against research with undocumented migrant families at all, particularly work which involves quantification. Black (2003) critiques the partiality and reliability of much research which seeks to quantify numbers of undocumented migrants, although argues that 'well-executed research, could do much to correct the myths on which European public policy around refugees are based (Black, 2003). Similarly, Anderson and Ruhs (2010) note that approaches which seek to estimate numbers of undocumented migrants are of particular interest to states. This can pose an ethical problem when states have agendas which conflict with the interests of research participants such as welfare conditionality or deportation.

One way of negotiating the ethical difficulties of research with undocumented migrants is through the lens of 'vulnerability', and some, such as McLaughlin and Alfaro-Velcamp (2015) would argue that undocumented migrants are particularly vulnerable. However, while there are undoubtedly particular needs and struggles which arise from immigration status, there is a danger of a paternalistic attitude which patronises those who are subject to immigration control. Therefore while these vulnerabilities were acknowledged, an attitude which 'othered' participants was consciously avoided, by treating participants as capable, competent actors who were able to exercise their own agency (Lahman et al., 2011), and that even children, while again having unique vulnerabilities, were able to exercise agency (Lind, 2017) and could exercise strength and resilience (Jolly, 2018b). This is also seen in Lammers' (2007) critique of the view of power as a simple binary, which sees participants as powerless, and the researcher(s) as having all the power. Lammers suggests, rather, that: "Ultimately, people decide what to tell, how to tell it, what to hide or when to be quiet" (Lammers, 2007).

This perspective was particularly helpful during the fieldwork, where it became apparent that far from being 'vulnerable' people who needed protection by the researcher, participants possessed strengths and resiliency which were necessary to negotiate their position as undocumented migrants, and which made them able to articulate clearly and firmly whether they wanted to take part in the research, and how much to share. The onus of ethical behaviour was therefore less on the researcher protecting the participant from vulnerability, but rather exercising agency as an ethical researcher by not acting in a way which would make life harder than it would otherwise be. As Lammers (2007) writes of her research with refugees in Uganda:

In the grand scheme of things, the way we carry out our fieldwork hardly makes a difference of life and death to the people we study. To us anthropologists that one experience may potentially change our lives. However, to most people we meet we are merely another passer-by, judged in terms of 'is she helpful, funny, kind, does she keep her promises, does she make an effort to understand?' This is not to say that one's attitude does not matter. Treating people with respect and integrity is crucial: humiliation can stay with a person a lifetime (Lammers, 2007, p. 74).

3.8.1 Participant Consent and Feedback

Written informed consent was obtained at each of the three stages of the research after verbal explanation of the study and a review of the participant information sheet was conducted with the participants (van Liempt, 2012). After written consent was obtained, participants were given a copy of the written participant information sheet (Appendix 1) for their records. For participants who were under 18 years old, formal written consent was obtained from the parent or guardian and consent was obtained verbally from the child in a form that was age appropriate. The consent form explained that all participant data would be anonymised and no names or identifying information would be included in the thesis or subsequent publications. All participants were given the option to withdraw their consent at any point in the process without penalty, and up to ten days after the completion of the interview. Participants were also given the opportunity to see and comment on the transcripts of their interview if they wished (no participants requested this). This was also explained verbally and on the informed consent form (see attached). If a participant decided to withdraw from the study, their data and contact information were destroyed and they were not included in the research dissemination list (unless they specifically requested to be included). All participants were asked if they would like to receive feedback on the research

findings, and a dissemination event which will include a presentation about the research findings is planned for after the submission of the thesis. This is to avoid the reality of 'tourist researchers' who participants see during the research but never again, once the fieldwork is completed (McLaughlin and Alfaro-Velcamp, 2015).

3.8.2 Incentives

Participants in stages two and three of the research were able to access a free hot meal at the community centre where the interviews and questionnaires took place; participants in stage two also received a small incentive in the form of a £5 supermarket voucher, and a daysaver bus ticket on the day of their participation to enable them to get to the interview. However, the addition of incentives proved to be controversial and the ethics committee requested further information before approval. It was decided to include them because of the likelihood that participants would be food insecure, or completely destitute, and so it was felt that to interview families and use their time but not provide some sort of financial incentive was unethical (Lammers, 2007). However, there is a danger that if incentives are set too high, they could become coercive for economically deprived populations (Hernández et al., 2013). This, and the lack of funding for incentives (some funding was provided by the Social Work Education Trust, but the majority was self-funded by the researcher) meant that the incentives were set at £5 (plus the bus ticket). However, the lack of development of long referral chains during the respondent driven sampling suggests that the incentives were perhaps too low to act as an inducement to take part.

3.8.3 Deprivation and Sharing

As Garthwaite (2009) observes, the challenges of accepting hospitality from people suffering extreme deprivation can create ethical difficulties, such as whether to accept the offer of refreshments from people who might not be able to afford to share (2009, p. 119). In the

case of this research there was an added dimension of intercultural communication. Frequently, contextual ethical decisions had to be made 'ad hoc' during interviews. On more than one occasion food was offered, and accepted – while this presented ethical dilemmas and reflection, it was decided that the sharing of food and cultures of hospitality were particularly important for some cultures in particular, and to not accept food would be understood as a sign of disrespect and a snub. On later reflection on the uncomfortableness of this situation, the contribution of care ethics was considered, whereby reciprocity is key to developing 'care' (Noddings, 2013). In order for the interviews to work there had to be a rapport, respect and understanding between the interviewer and participant. Although there were power imbalances between researcher and participant, and between British citizen and undocumented migrant, the development of mutual sharing and exchange was also important, so that the flow of information, knowledge and incentives was not just one way.

3.8.4 Position of Researcher

As a white, male, British researcher, interviewing predominantly BAME women who did not have British citizenship there were clear differences and power imbalances. This made some subjects more difficult to talk about than others. There is anecdotal evidence (Dexter et al. 2016) of the prevalence of sexual exploitation amongst undocumented migrants, but this was only alluded to once during the interviews, and this only in passing despite including a prompt question (see Appendix 3). This is possibly because of the awkwardness of disclosing such information to a male stranger, and the researcher's reluctance to push the subject to make participants uncomfortable or unsafe.

Previous researchers have spoken about the role of researcher as "educator or giver of advice and/or information" (Garthwaite, 2009, p. 121), and of the difficulty of not feeling

they know enough about the subject. However, in this research, the researcher's background in social work and previous employment in an advice role with undocumented migrants necessitated a conscious stepping back from the role of advisor and into the role of researcher to create a sense of distance. On one occasion, a participant directly asked for advice, which caused confusion as it was not possible to offer the advice that the participant was looking for, an ambiguity about role which was exacerbated by the interview taking place in an advice agency office. The participant was referred to an advisor who could help. As a result, future interviews were held in different offices and a verbal explanation of the role of the researcher was added as part of the discussion of the participant information sheet. There were also other occasions when the researcher's own positionality came into tension with that of participants. As a former social worker, some of the descriptions of social work practice were disappointing and elicited an internal response of anger about poor professional standards and discrimination. However, while this feeling was articulated by some participants, more than one participant expressed satisfaction with their social worker, despite what was perceived by the researcher as egregious poor practice. The tension between understanding and exploring the participants' understanding of their experiences, rather than the perspective of social work ethics, was never fully resolved in the research, and was a tension which the researcher continued to hold.

3.8.5 Conclusion

This chapter has explained the three-stage mixed methods research design employed and the critical realist theoretical basis which underpins the design. It briefly highlights areas where the research did not proceed as planned – for instance sampling – and discusses the ethical dilemmas which were envisaged in the planning stage and which emerged

throughout the fieldwork. The following three chapters discuss the findings from each of the

three stages in turn, starting with the Delphi panel in Chapter Four.

Chapter Four: Context – the Undocumented Migrant Population in Birmingham

4.1 Characteristics of the Population Accessing Services.

Delphi panel participants were asked how many undocumented migrants they saw each week. Answers ranged from 5-35 families (mean: 12), and 5-40 children (mean: 16). The percentage of families seen each week who were destitute ranged from 8-100% (mean: 64%), and the percentage who were supported as children in need by the local authority was between 0 and 80% (mean: 40%). In order to ensure that the primary agencies working with undocumented migrants in the city were represented on the panel, participants were also asked who the leading agencies are working with undocumented migrant families in the city. Representatives from each agency were then contacted.

When asked if they thought that, in their personal or professional experience, numbers of undocumented migrant families had increased, decreased, or stayed the same over the previous twelve months, none thought that numbers had decreased, twelve (67%) believed that numbers had increased, one (6%) thought numbers had stayed the same, and five were unsure (28%). When asked if destitution had increased, participants were even more definite – fifteen (83%) thought destitution had increased over the previous twelve months, one thought they had stayed the same (6%), and only two were unsure (11%).

Delphi panel members thought that undocumented migrant families were unevenly distributed around the city – none thought that Northfield, Sutton Coldfield or Selly Oak constituencies were among the top three most common districts where undocumented migrant families lived. In contrast, the central districts of Ladywood and Perry Barr were most frequently mentioned by panel members (see Table 11). These two areas encompass

both the city centre, and areas of high density housing bordering the Black Country boroughs of Sandwell and Walsall. There are large areas of deprivation in the constituencies, with 54% of the population of Ladywood constituency living in the 5% most deprived Super Output Areas (SOA) in England. Perry Barr contains the more affluent wards of Handsworth Wood and Oscott, but also Lozells and East Handsworth Ward, in which 53% of the population live in the 5% most deprived SOAs (Birmingham City Council, 2015).

Table 10: Delphi panel members' estimation of most frequent district of residence for undocumented migrant families

Constituency	Count
Edgbaston (Including: Bartley Green Ward; Edgbaston Ward; Harborne Ward; Quinton Ward)	3
Erdington (Including: Erdington Ward; Kingstanding Ward; Stockland Green Ward; Tyburn Ward)	5
Hall Green (Including: Hall Green Ward; Moseley & Kings Heath Ward; Sparkbrook Ward; Springfield Ward)	8
Hodge Hill (Including: Bordesley Green Ward; Hodge Hill Ward; Shard End Ward; Washwood Heath Ward)	3
Ladywood (Including: Aston Ward; Ladywood Ward; Nechells Ward; Soho Ward)	13
Northfield (Including: Kings Norton Ward; Longbridge Ward; Northfield Ward; Weoley Ward)	0
Perry Barr (Including: Handsworth Wood Ward; Lozells & East Handsworth Ward; Oscott Ward; Perry Barr Ward)	12
Selly Oak (Including : Billesley Ward; Bournville Ward; Brandwood Ward; Selly Oak Ward)	0
Sutton Coldfield (Including: Sutton Four Oaks Ward; Sutton New Hall Ward; Sutton Trinity Ward; Sutton Vesey Ward)	0
Yardley (Acocks Green Ward; Sheldon Ward; South Yardley Ward; Stechford & Yardley North Ward)	1

When asked to list the main organisations that worked with undocumented migrants in Birmingham (see table 12), panel members listed 22 organisations from small local charities

- such as the SIFA Fireside homeless drop in, and the Immigration Advice charity ASIRT – to large national and international charities such as the Children's Society and the British Red Cross. However, the most two most commonly mentioned organisations were the Children's Society who at the time ran a destitution support service for undocumented migrant families, and the British Red Cross who run a destitution drop in service.

Table 11: Delphi panel members' estimation of the main organisations who work with undocumented migrants in Birmingham

Children's Society	12
Birch	5
Hope Housing	9
NRPF Team (Children's Services)	2
Asian Resource Centre	3
British Red Cross	10
Narthex	2
Brushstrokes	4
Restore	7
Lifeline Options	1
St Chads Sanctuary	6
Places of Welcome	2
ASIRT	8
Birmingham Law Centre	5
Birmingham Refugee and Asylum Association (BARA)	1
Elim Church Handsworth Wood	1
Women's Aid	1

Migrant Help	2
Refugee Action	2
Churches	2
Refugee Council	1
Sifa Fireside	1

Finally, panel members were asked which were the most common countries of origin for undocumented migrants in the city (see Table 13). Thirteen countries were mentioned, with the two most common being Nigeria and Jamaica, closely mirroring the countries of origin for families who took part in the questionnaire (See figure 3 above).

Table 12: Delphi panel members' estimation of the most common countries of origin for undocumented migrants in Birmingham

Iran	1
Eritrea	2
Syria	2
Nigeria	6
India	1
Afghanistan	3
Sudan	1
Jamaica	4
Ghana	3
Somalia	1
Pakistan	2

| Iraq | 1 |
| Zimbabwe | 1 |

4.2 Estimates of Numbers

Figure 4: Estimated Numbers of Families
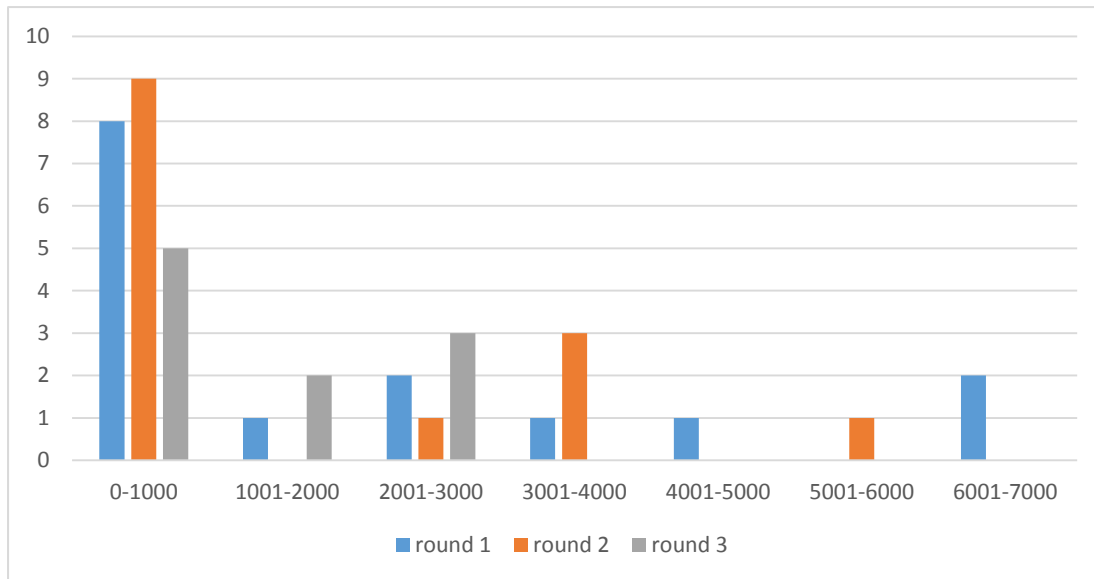
Figure 5: Estimated Numbers of Children
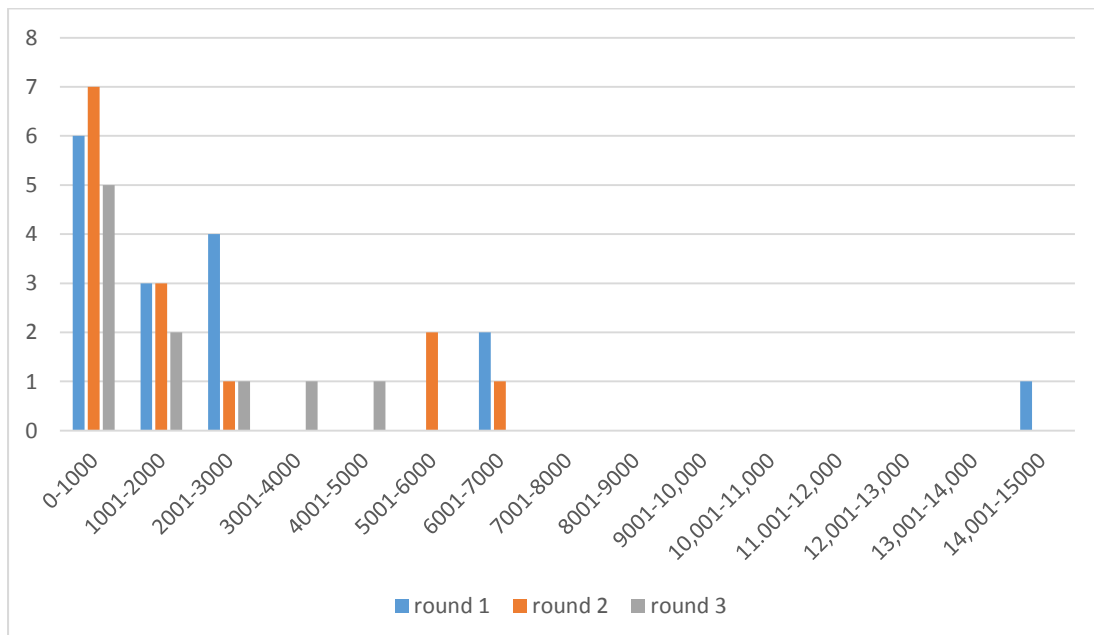
Participants were asked to estimate the total numbers of undocumented migrant families living in Birmingham (See figure 4). In the first round, of the sixteen who answered,

responses ranged from 200-7,000 (mean of 2,100). Answers clustered towards the extremes, but half of answers were of 1,000 or below. Estimates of numbers of children ranged from 200 to 15,000 (mean 2,698), answers were again clustered towards the extremes, with larger numbers of participants tending towards the lower estimates, however, the mean was adjusted upwards by the inclusion of a single outlier of 15,000.

There was no apparent link between people's personal situation or role and the answer they gave. The three highest responses were by an employee for a national charity in a strategic position, an undocumented migrant, and an employee of a national charity doing direct work with families. Conversely, the lowest estimates were from an employee of a national charity doing direct work with families, a manager of direct work in a national charity, and an employee of a local charity and a volunteer, both doing direct work, who both gave the same estimate.

When given opportunity to amend their answer having seen other responses, nine out of fourteen participants changed their answer. This considerably narrowed the range, with fewer outliers. However, estimates were still widely divergent, ranging from between 300 and 5,001 for families. The mean was 1,872 - less than in round two and results continued to show a positive skew. Similarly, the range had reduced for children and was now 400 to 7,000, and the mean had fallen to 2,232.

Despite the reduction in the mean compared to round one, nine participants (81%) increased their estimates, with only two (18.2%) reducing their estimate. This anomaly is accounted for by the fact that there were so many answers clustered in the 0-1,000 category, and by the outlier of 15,000 in the first round.

In the final round, nine out of ten participants had changed their answer from round two. Again, a majority chose to increase their answers, but by a smaller margin - six increased their estimate, and one decreased it (two chose not to respond to the question).

The range of estimates of numbers of families had narrowed to between 400 and 3,000 with a mean of 1,460, a further reduction as the higher outliers adjusted their assessments downwards and the standard deviation was 1,008. Similarly, estimates for children ranged from 600 to 5,000, and the mean had fallen to 1,890, and the standard deviation was 1,443.

This means that, based on the standard deviation, the aggregated panel response for the final round was for a low range estimate of 452 families, a high range estimate of 2,468, and a mid-point of 1,460. For children, the low-range estimate was 447, the mid-range 1,890, and the high estimate was 2,898.

4.2.1 Reliability of Estimates.
 In the final round, a supplementary question was introduced to test participant confidence in their answer using a four-point Likert scale from 'very sure' to 'very unsure.' The intention was to better evaluate the reliability of individual estimates in the event of a clear consensus failing to emerge (Millar et al., 2007). Participants were very uncertain of their responses, reflecting the difficulty of estimating a hidden population, even amongst those who were knowledgeable about the issue. None said they were very sure of their answer, and only two were slightly sure. In contrast, the majority were unsure, either slightly (three), or very (four). One participant explained that:

> *It's very difficult to know or even guess the answer to the question as my personal experience teaches me that a lot of people only seek help when they are not able to cope at all. I can't be at all sure* (Undocumented migrant).

Another commented that it was:

> *Very difficult to gauge the amount of undocumented families living in Birmingham so most of it is based on experience and guesswork* (Charity Employee).

Despite their reticence about making an estimate, participants were well-informed about the issue, all had contact with undocumented migrant families either personally or through their organisation, and they drew on both their personal experience and the responses of others in making decisions:

> *Having previously amended my estimate based on the figures provided after round one, I do not believe that my experience of working with destitute families with children and the estimates of others indicates that my estimate should be decreased, but I have no first-hand experience which indicates that it should be further increased* (Frontline worker for national charity).

Others drew on their knowledge of previous research to triangulate with numbers of users of their service, and the responses of others:

> *I think the answers to the majority in the first round made me reconsider my initial figure and I lowered it. However, I have reviewed numbers of undocumented families accessing our service - which is only open to certain people - and extrapolated them while taking into account Nando Sigona's research conclusions (120,000 undocumented children in the UK). In light of this, I have decided to raise my estimate again* (Frontline worker for local charity).

4.2.2 Comparison with Other Estimates

Of the 62 participants who answered the question, 83.9% knew other households who were undocumented, and 55% knew three or more. Both the median and mode PNS was ten, and the mean was eight (See table 6).

There are no comparable estimates of the total number of undocumented migrants in Birmingham. However, as discussed in the literature review (Chapter Two) there is a large grey literature which discusses numbers of refused asylum seekers both nationally (Refugee Action, 2006; Green, 2006; Smart, 2009), and at a local level (Brown, 2008; Dumper et al., 2006; Lewis, 2009, 2007; Prior, 2006; Leicester Refugees and Asylum Seekers Forum, 2005). In Birmingham, a survey conducted by a local immigration advice agency, ASIRT, found that 105 adults sought help because of destitution resulting from their immigration status, and 14 of these had children (Clarke and Nandy, 2008). However, this number only relates to those accessing services, and over a two week period, rather than the larger 'stock' of undocumented migrants in the city as a whole.

However, the Delphi estimate can be cross-referenced with other data sources. Panel member's believed that Birmingham had the same (or higher) proportion of undocumented migrants as the UK as a whole. If this is true, the proportion of undocumented migrants and the number of those who are children can be estimated using other sources. For instance, Gordon et al. (2009) estimated that in 2007, out of the 6.6 million migrants in the UK, there were 618,000 undocumented migrants, approximately 9.36% of the foreign born population in 2007, and that 25% of the undocumented migrant population were children. If this proportion is applied to the most recent available figures from the 2011 census, there would be at least 6,554 undocumented migrant children in Birmingham, a figure which is considerably higher than even the highest estimate in round three of the Delphi panel.

Similarly, if Sigona and Hughes' (2012) central estimate of 120,000 undocumented migrant children living in the UK at the end of March 2011 is used as a benchmark, there would be 3,590 undocumented migrant children if the assumption is made that the proportion of documented to undocumented migrants is the same in Birmingham as nationally. Finally, if Dexter et al.'s (2016) estimate of 12,000 undocumented migrant children in the West Midlands region in mid-2014 is disaggregated to the city level, Birmingham would have had 3,008 undocumented migrant children. The three alternative figures for numbers of undocumented children derived from Gordon et al. (2009), Sigona and Hughes (2012) and Dexter et al. (2016) are compared with the Delphi estimate in figure 6 below.

Figure 6: Projections of undocumented migrant children in Birmingham
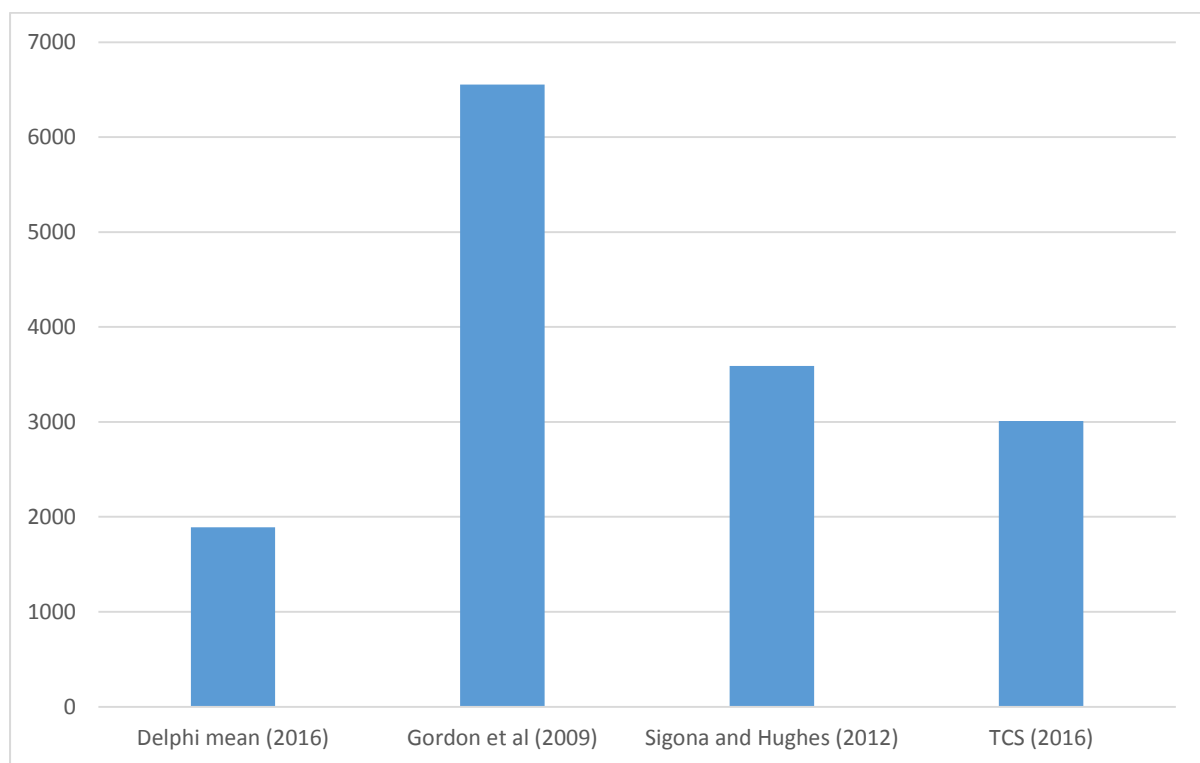
If these four projections are collated, the aggregate mean is 3,761, with a standard deviation of 1,991. Interestingly, each of the other figures are within the range of all but round three of the Delphi panel, and all but the projection based on Gordon et al. (2009) are in the range of all three rounds of Delphi.

Therefore, while it is challenging to come to a consensus, illustrated by the lack of certainty expressed by panel members, and the large standard deviation in answers, there does seem to be a tendency for estimates to converge around a figure of the low thousands of children in the city who are undocumented. There is no explicit agreement in the Delphi literature about defining consensus, which is open to interpretation by the researcher. However, the method does provide a way of focusing debate and estimations in a structured way, allowing controlled feedback and reflection in an anonymous environment. The Delphi method is a useful way of raising discussion and of informing debate about a previously hidden issue (Millar et al., 2007).

4.2.3 Numbers Turned Away From Children's Services

Another way of estimating the potential size of the undocumented migrant population is to compare with the numbers of families supported by children's services under section 17 of the Children Act 1989. Not all undocumented migrants will seek support from children's services; however, it can give an indication of minimum numbers – the number of families who are undocumented cannot be less than the number approaching social services. A freedom of information request to Birmingham Children's Trust (See Appendix 4) indicates that the number of families with NRPF supported by children's services in Birmingham (at 13th September 2018) was 156, containing 299 children. However, to know the true number of families who contact children's services, it is necessary to know the number of families who approach for support, but do not receive it. Dexter et al. (2016) suggest that 60% of families with NRPF who approach children's services get support (Dexter et al., 2016), and one agency in the NRPF Scrutiny Enquiry in Birmingham said that only 8% of their referrals were supported without intervention from a solicitor (Birmingham City Council, 2013).

4.3 Conclusion

It is not possible to know for sure how many undocumented migrant families there are in Birmingham, and due to the 'hidden' nature of this population, all methods of estimating are flawed or based on assumptions and missing data. However, the Delphi method does at least work on the basis of experts who work in the area, and so is helpful in understanding the perspective of people who are well informed about the issue. It is striking that the expert consensus was lower than other projections based on census data. This is surprising given the limitations of the panel in terms of lack of representation from representatives from the local authority, and the large numbers of panel members from voluntary sector advice and advocacy organisations. It could therefore be expected to be much higher than other estimates, as advocacy organisations have an interest in highlighting the issue of undocumented migrant families. Therefore, the fact that the final consensus appeared to be a conservative estimate makes the estimate harder to dismiss than if it was obviously higher than other estimates.

Despite this difficulty of assessing the reliability of the data, based on triangulating information from the data on numbers of families accessing social services, the Delphi expert elicitation process, and projections from census data, numbers of undocumented migrant families in Birmingham are likely to be not less than in the low thousands.

Chapter Five: (in)Adequacy

Undocumented migrants in the UK are at particularly high risk of poverty (Allsopp et al., 2014; Pemberton et al., 2014; Rutter, 2010). This chapter uses the theme of adequacy to explore the extent of poverty amongst undocumented migrant families, first considering the (in)adequacy of food, using responses from the USDA HFS survey and semi-structured interviews, before exploring wider issues of financial adequacy.

5.1 Household Food Insecurity

The USDA defines food insecurity as a situation where:

> *At times during the year, eating patterns of one or more household members were disrupted and food intake reduced because the household lacked money and other resources for food* (Economic Research Service, 2012, p.1).

The 18-item HFS module includes an initial screening question (HH1) for food security which all participant households were asked (Table 14).

Table 13: (HH1) Which of these statements best describes the food eaten in your household in the last 12 months?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Enough of the kinds of food we want to eat	7	9.5	9.6	9.6
	Enough but not always the kinds of food we want to eat	24	32.4	32.9	42.5
	Sometimes not enough to eat	34	45.9	46.6	89.0
	Often not enough to eat	8	10.8	11.0	100.0
	Total	73	98.6	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.4		
Total		74	100.0		

Only seven out of the 74 participants reported that they had enough food to eat, and over half either sometimes or often did not have enough to eat (Table 11).

Surprisingly, when the full 18-item module was completed, the rate of household food security amongst participants' households was even higher than the HH1 screening question suggested (See table 15).

Table 14: Level and frequency of food insecurity

Household food security level	Frequency	%
High food security	2	2.7
Marginal food security	1	1.4
Low food security	23	31.1
Very low food security	47	63.5

More than nine out of ten households that completed the questionnaire had been food insecure over the previous twelve months, with nearly two thirds experiencing very low food security. Only two households experienced high food security (Table 15).

When compared to other studies of household food security, this food inadequacy becomes even more stark. The USDA estimates that 11.8 percent of the US population were food insecure at least some time during the 2017, and 4.5 percent had very low food security (Coleman-Jensen et al., 2018). In the UK, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) 'Food and You' survey which includes England, Wales and Northern Ireland, but not Scotland, used the USDA Household Food Security module and found that 8% of the population lived in low or very low food secure households (FSA, 2017). Figure 7 below illustrates the difference between household food security amongst undocumented migrants in this study, and the general population. The percentage in the study who were food secure (5%), is inversely proportional to the population as a whole who were food secure (92%).
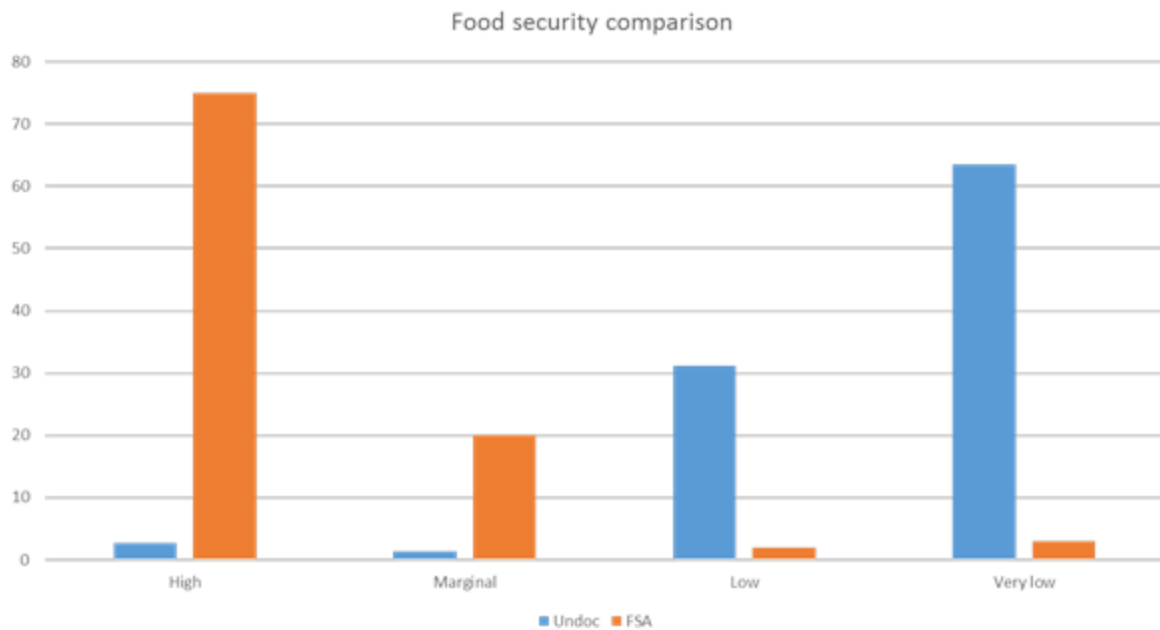
This level of food insecurity is particularly high, even when compared to other migrant populations. For instance, Gallegos et al. (2008) used a slightly different research instrument (a self-devised food security questionnaire based on the Australian National Nutrition Survey), so the findings are not directly comparable. However, 20% fewer participants in Gallegos et al.'s study were identified as food insecure. This could perhaps reflect the different research instrument, the more precarious immigration status of the participants in this study, or could perhaps be a result of the way the questionnaire was administered by staff who selected participants in Gallegos et al.'s study and may have exercised a 'gatekeeping' role, in contrast to the direct approach at drop in's in the current study. Nonetheless, in both studies the extent of food insecurity was multiple times higher than for the population as a whole.

When results were divided into adult and child food security scales, the differences within households become more apparent. Although the majority of both children and adults were

food insecure, children were nearly three times as likely to have high or marginal food security as adults in the household (see Table 16).

Table 15: Cross tabulation of adults and child food insecurity

Food security level	Adult		Child	
	Frequency	**%**	**Frequency**	**%**
High/marginal food security	6	8.1	17	23
Low food security	21	28.4	28	37.8
Very low food security	46	62.2	28	37.8

As experiences of food security differed for adults and children, where there are comparative questions in the adults and children's scales these are presented and analysed together in order to highlight the differences.

5.1.1 Food Running Out

Questions HH2 and HH3 relate to running out of food because of a lack of financial resources. Sixty-eight participants said they often or sometimes ran out of food over the previous twelve months (Table 17), and 65% said that their food often or sometimes did not last (Table 18).

Table 16 (HH2) "We worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more." Was that often true, sometimes true, or never true for your household in the last 12 months?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Often true	34	45.9	47.2	47.2
	Sometimes true	34	45.9	47.2	94.4
	Never true	4	5.4	5.6	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	4	1	1.4		
	System	1	1.4		
	Total	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

Table 17 (HH3) "The food that (I/we) bought just didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Often true	25	33.8	34.7	34.7
	Sometimes true	40	54.1	55.6	90.3
	Never true	7	9.5	9.7	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	4	1	1.4		
	System	1	1.4		
	Total	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

During the semi-structured interviews, participants expanded on the experience of running out of food, which was attributed to living without a regular income, or having an income which was not high enough to maintain a consistent supply of food for the household. Grace found that by the time she had bought the staples of rice, meat and vegetables her money had run out, and Alvita explained that when the household did get money – in her case from a charity - it had to last for an indeterminate amount of time because she did not know when the family would be able to buy food again. This had an influence on what could be provided in terms of food by households:

> AJ*: What was the typical food and beverage intake for you and your kids?*
>
> Alvita*: At that time, it's anything you know it's anything and nothing. Because then they were young I had to give them milk and all of that, so it's anything for me and anything for them I can get to give them.*

Although Alvita had been undocumented for the previous twelve months, at the time of the interview she had been granted leave to remain by the Home Office. However, this did not mean that she was now food secure. Having applied for social security benefits, she had

been waiting for eight weeks without an income, despite frequently calling the DWP. This finding resonates with other research about the experience of applying for social security benefits which has found lengthy delays in processing benefits (Howes and Jones, 2019), and that this is a major reason for food poverty and referral to food banks (Garratt et al., 2016).

Others found that the money given as subsistence support by children's services under section 17 of the Children Act (1989) was not enough to cover even essential food for the whole family (a finding that is discussed further in Chapter Six: abandonment):

Akin*: The money they are giving to us is not enough for us to have some food, what we're supposed to eat? We don't eat it because there's not enough money.*

Ife worried that her daughter was not getting enough nutrients and fresh fruit and vegetables because of their lack of food, and Grace found that the idea of a balanced, healthy diet was completely beyond her reach:

Grace*: Well I couldn't afford to buy food down the road so I would always have to cook, so just mainly what I could afford to cook, mainly probably a little rice and chicken, or canned stuff - whatever I had.*

However, even when families did not have adequate food, there was a commonly expressed view of needing to 'make do' with what was available, which Alvita expressed in particularly evocative terms:

Alvita*: I've always got food in my house. My Nan always said, if you've got sugar and water, you've got* [food] *in.*

5.1.2 Balanced Diet

The USDA 18-item module includes questions on whether adults (HH4) and children (CH2) in the household could afford balanced meals. Fifty-nine adult participants felt that they often or sometimes could not afford to eat balanced meals (Table 19), but only 43 participants said that they could not afford a balanced meal for the children in their household (Table 20).

Table 18 (HH4) "(I/we) couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Often true	22	29.7	30.6	30.6
	Sometimes true	37	50.0	51.4	81.9
	Never true	13	17.6	18.1	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	4	1	1.4		
	System	1	1.4		
	Total	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

Table 19 (CH2) "(I/we) couldn't feed (my/our) child a balanced meal, because we couldn't afford that." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for your household in the last 12 months?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Often true	15	20.3	20.8	20.8
	Sometimes true	28	37.8	38.9	59.7
	Never true	24	32.4	33.3	93.1
	DK or Refused	2	2.7	2.8	95.8
	5	3	4.1	4.2	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

Despite the difference between children and adults, the majority of participants reported that they were unable to afford balanced meals both for themselves and their children.

During follow up interviews, Akin, Fabienne and Grace spoke of eating repetitive meals of coffee, tea and porridge, or of cereals and bread.

> Grace*: I mean I would love the children to eat more food that is…. not to eat at the same pattern, basically, to maybe try new food or things that, like there's some food I can't obviously prepare by myself, I would like them to kind of be able to buy from Tesco or Asda* [inaudible] *maybe precooked or, not like the normal food they have.*

Alvita wanted to be able to buy healthier food for her children:

> Alvita*: To go to supermarket and buy these healthy food, what the money that you have still can't do it. Especially when it comes to fruit and that because if you want… my little one for instance, my little one, she love grapes, and if I'm going to buy her grape, give me a grape in the supermarket it's like two pounds something and that, and I'll be thinking, 'oh' [groan] If I pay £2 something for just a grape, what else do I spend? What do I have to spend? So with the healthy eating it's a bit expensive than doing what you can do best you can do for them.*

Ife was clear about the food she was able to buy for her household, and its deficiencies:

> Ife: *I don't eat balanced meals, I don't, I just go for what will fill me enough like, if it's junk but I know at least it will be in the stomach for some time, you know, that's what I go for more, balanced diet, for him yeah, fruit, vegetables, I always try my best and get them for him, because the open market fruit is very cheap, so I get them for him, but me, I just…. you know I'm a mother, I just manage but I make sure he's fine, so I get hungry often but it's fine.*

The experience of eating less so children in the household could eat is a primary reason why child food insecurity was lower than for adults (see section below). When parents were asked what they would change about their diet, the problems became clear:

Fabianne: *…not change, but maybe add more stuff, that we could eat, like for my baby to get healthier. Maybe some more organic food, or, yeah, I would love to have that, but we can't afford it.*

Alvita too wanted to be able to provide healthier food than she was unable to afford:

Alvita: *More fruit and vegetables! Sometimes you just try to buy basic stuff, just what you need, rather than what you would like, or what you want, just basic stuff.*

The only participant in follow up interviews who felt that they were able to provide a balanced diet for their child was Khadijah who for medical reasons had to give a specific diet to her daughter:

Khadijah: *Yes I have a child who was burned, you know, and had an operation, maybe she do three operation and for healing the wound. You need high protein diet or healthy diet and she need a lot of water to drink, so yes I cook mainly a good food, a good quality for her because you know I need.*

5.1.3 Cutting Portion Size and Skipping Meals

As with the questions about being able to afford balanced meals, there was a difference between adult responses, and the answers for children in the household. Fifty participants said that they cut their meal size or skipped meals altogether (Table 21), and 30 of these respondents did this almost every month (Table 22). In contrast, 30 participants said they cut the size of their children's meals (Table 23), 19 participants said that their children had

skipped meals (Table 24), and only five said that their children skipped meals every month

(Table 25).

Table 20 (AD1) In the last 12 months, did you ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	50	67.6	69.4	69.4
	No	21	28.4	29.2	98.6
	DK	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

Table 21 (AD1a) How often did this happen - almost every month, some months but not every month, or only in 1 or 2 months?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Almost every month	30	40.5	61.2	61.2
	Some months but not every month	15	20.3	30.6	91.8
	Only 1 or 2 months	4	5.4	8.2	100.0
	Total	49	66.2	100.0	
Missing	5	23	31.1		
	System	2	2.7		
	Total	25	33.8		
Total		74	100.0		

Table 22 (CH4) In the last 12 months, did you ever cut the size of your child's meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	30	40.5	41.7	41.7
	No	37	50.0	51.4	93.1
	DK	1	1.4	1.4	94.4
	5	4	5.4	5.6	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

Table 23 (CH5) In the last 12 months, did any of the children ever skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	19	25.7	26.4	26.4
	No	49	66.2	68.1	94.4
	5	4	5.4	5.6	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

Table 24 (CH5a) How often did this happen - almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Almost every month	5	6.8	27.8	27.8
	Some months but not every month	10	13.5	55.6	83.3
	Only 1 or 2 months	2	2.7	11.1	94.4
	DK	1	1.4	5.6	100.0
	Total	18	24.3	100.0	
Missing	5	54	73.0		
	System	2	2.7		
	Total	56	75.7		
Total		74	100.0		

Cutting the size of, or skipping meals altogether was experienced by adults in the majority of households and was most commonly every month. However, the majority of those who responded to the question did not cut the size of their children's meals or skip their children's meals. During the follow up interviews, many were adamant that they would not allow their children to not eat, even if they occasionally reduced portion size. Ife's response was typical:

> Ife: *I would never let that happen, if it gets to that I would rather take a bag and go beg in the market, I would never let that happen, I'm not shy, I'm not a shy person, I beg any time if I don't have. I don't have a bus ticket? I beg, I beg, I'm not shy for him. It's not all about me, for him.*

As observed by Pinter (2012), parents missing meals in order for their children to be able to eat was a common tactic in households with too little money to buy adequate food, which explained the difference in responses between questions AD1 and CH4/CH5:

Gabrielle: *Yeah. Sometimes I try to make sure they eat other than me, you know* [inaudible] *not go to bed hungry.*

Fabienne explained that she did not cook for herself, but bought her daughter food first due to concerns about her daughter's health:

Fabienne*: I cook for her because when she was young she used to have* [pause] *so I cook for her and just buy something cheap for myself.*

Grace made a direct link between money in the household running low, and not eating:

Grace: *Yes, I knew that you had to make that choice where you had to give them what they want, and then just, you know, do without.*

AJ: *Yeah, ok, and that was, how often was that?*

Grace: *Basically when money was running low.*

Alvita felt that going without food for the sake of her children was part of her parental duty:

Alvita*: I think you'll sacrifice as an adult to go without rather than have the kids go without because you'd rather them be full, while you run a bit dry... you sacrifice for that.*

Alvita saw it as a source of parental pride that her children were not food insecure:

Alvita*: Nah, I always provide my child food, if I even don't provide mine, I always let my baby got her food. I've never left my baby empty, nah.*

Ife explained why:

> Ife: *For a child is eating the same meals every day which is not really good. So, it's like sometimes, fruit, all these kind of things which is supposed to be like something they can get easily in the house, sometimes it's hard to get it in my house.*

Gabrielle felt that when the fact that food was scarce was explained to her children, they understood and accepted the situation:

> *Gabrielle: Well, meat is expensive, so I have to cut back and eat more tinned mackerel or saltfish, you know, which is cheaper, yeah, so once in a while we try to have a bit of mutton or, I can stretch, yeah, and you know I've got good grounds, you know they* [the children] *understand you, they might want things, and I say, well I can't afford it, so they're satisfied, they understand.*

5.1.4 Not Eating Enough

Table 25 (AD2) In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	55	74.3	76.4	76.4
	No	16	21.6	22.2	98.6
	DK	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

Table 26 (CH1) "We relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed our children because we were running out of money to buy food." Was this often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 12 months?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Often true	25	33.8	34.7	34.7
	Sometimes true	32	43.2	44.4	79.2

	Never true	11	14.9	15.3	94.4
	DK	1	1.4	1.4	95.8
	5	3	4.1	4.2	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

Table 27 (CH3) "Our child was not eating enough because we just couldn't afford enough food." Was that often, sometimes, or never true or you in the last 12 months?"

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Often true	11	14.9	15.3	15.3
	Sometimes true	27	36.5	37.5	52.8
	Never true	28	37.8	38.9	91.7
	DK or Refused	2	2.7	2.8	94.4
	5	3	4.1	4.2	98.6
	11	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

In the adult food security scale, three-quarters (55/74) of participants said they had eaten less than they felt they should because there wasn't enough money for food (Table 26):

AJ: Thinking back again to that time, is there anything that you would like to change about your food and drink intake?

Alvita: Yeah. I just wish I had more money to provide essential stuff a bit more.

However, when this was broken down into children within the household, the response was more complex. Although there is no direct comparative question in the children's household food security scale, nearly eight out of ten (57/74) participants said that it was often or sometimes true that they relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed their children because they were running out of money to buy food (Table 27). During the interviews,

Grace remarked that: "We would just have to eat the same thing over and over and over, basically." Similarly, Fabienne expressed regret about the lack of choice in food she was able to offer:

> Fabienne: *I mean I would love to be able to prepare these proper meals every day for my kids to eat, I would have loved that, but because of the financial constraint, then you couldn't afford to do that, you just had to work with whatever was in the house to be honest.*

However, just over half of participants (38/74) said that it was often or sometimes true that their children were not eating enough because they could not afford enough food (Table 28). Although these figures are lower for children than for adults, they are higher than for previous questions, suggesting that the prevalence of children not eating enough was higher than the prevalence of children skipping meals completely. Nonetheless, this could take its toll on children's health. Gabrielle's daughter had been undernourished to the extent that a health visitor got involved to make a referral to children's services.

5.1.5 Hunger

Just over half (36/74) of participants said that they had gone hungry because there was no money for food (Table 29), but only a quarter (18/74) of children went hungry (Table 30), echoing the findings above about cutting portion sizes and skipping meals.

Table 28 (AD3) "In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?"

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	35	47.3	48.6	48.6
	No	35	47.3	48.6	97.2
	DK	2	2.7	2.8	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

Table 29 (CH6) "In the last 12 months, was you child ever hungry but you just couldn't afford more food?"

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	18	24.3	25.0	25.0
	No	49	66.2	68.1	93.1
	DK	1	1.4	1.4	94.4
	5	4	5.4	5.6	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

Divergent experiences of hunger were the starkest difference between adults and children within households and while it is likely that this is an underestimate because of the shame of admitting to not being able to feed children, and fear of children's services involvement (Sigona and Hughes, 2012), it does appear to corroborate evidence from other studies that parents give food to children and go hungry themselves (Balistreri, 2018).

5.1.6 Not Eating for a Day

No one in the semi-structured interviews disclosed that they had gone without food for a whole day, but nearly a fifth of adults (13/74) who completed the 18-item module said they had not eaten for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food over the past twelve months. Of these, just under half (7/15) went without food for a whole day almost every month.

Table 30 (AD5) In the last 12 months, did you or other adults in your household ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	13	17.6	18.1	18.1
	No	58	78.4	80.6	98.6
	DK	1	1.4	1.4	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

Table 31 (AD5a) How often did this happen - almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Almost every month	7	9.5	43.8	43.8
	Some months but not every month	5	6.8	31.3	75.0
	Only 1 or 2 months	3	4.1	18.8	93.8
	DK	1	1.4	6.3	100.0
	Total	16	21.6	100.0	
Missing	5	56	75.7		
	System	2	2.7		
	Total	58	78.4		
Total		74	100.0		

Table 32 (CH7) In the last 12 months, did your child ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	5	6.8	6.9	6.9
	No	63	85.1	87.5	94.4
	5	4	5.4	5.6	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

As with other questions, fewer children than adults had gone without food for a whole day.

Only 5/74 households contained children who had gone without food for a whole day in the preceding twelve months.

5.1.7 Losing Weight

Of those who responded to question AD4, half had lost weight because of a lack of food (34/68) over the previous twelve months, with four people who did not know (Table 33).

Table 33 (AD4) In the last 12 months, did you lose weight because there wasn't enough money for food?

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	34	45.9	47.2	47.2
	No	34	45.9	47.2	94.4
	DK	4	5.4	5.6	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	
Missing	System	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

However, it was observed that when the questionnaires were being administered, it was common for participants to laugh when asked question AD4, and Alvita explained why this was:

> AJ: *Did you eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money?*

> Alvita: [laughing] *Ahh, Look at me, I'm really fat!*

This presence of obesity in situations of food insecurity can be explained by the food insecurity/obesity paradox (Martin and Ferris, 2007) where food insecurity is a risk factor for obesity, and by the poor-quality diet that households were eating (see section 5.1.2).

There were also a number of other issues which were related to food insecurity which were mentioned in the semi-structured interviews but were not covered by the 18-item module - these are discussed below.

5.1.8 Free School Meals (FSM)
Most participants were not eligible for free school meals because of their NRPF status. Although entitlement to FSM are not a 'public fund' in itself, families with NRPF will not be able to access them because they are not entitled to the 'passported' benefits such as Universal Credit which give FSM entitlement (Department for Education, 2018a). Asylum

seekers accessing section 95 or section 4 support can also access FSM, but undocumented migrants and other migrants with NRPF cannot. A situation, which Dickson's research in London found, left undocumented children feeling "hungry and socially isolated" (2019, p.29).

Having to pay for FSM was an additional burden on household budgets for families who were interviewed, and was mentioned by Gabrielle, Ife and Grace as an issue for their households. This increased the risk of child food insecurity because paying for school meals became a big household expense:

> Gabrielle: *They have given her school lunch that you have to pay for, but then sometimes she just gets what's left. She eat yesterday, she said you know, 'I'll have to start paying for it'. I say, I can't afford it, so I'll have to write a letter to the school to say that I'm on the no recourse to public funds team, so therefore I can't afford the school dinners, so any help that they can provide for me with that. It's getting hard and stressful in I'm waiting on this thing* [Immigration paperwork] *back.*

This attempt to ask schools to exercise their discretion in allowing families with NRPF to have school meals for free was also used by Leah and her support worker, but with more limited success:

> Leah*: School meals is a struggle because the money I get can't cover school meals on a weekly basis. So my support worker was helping so I think they send in a referral to the* [children's services office] *that I'm with, for some assistance to pay the school meals because I haven't paid no school meal bill since September… she's having meals because they won't stop her, because based on my situation and I'm destitute and I can't afford it from the income I'm getting so they're looking into that now, I*

went to a meeting yesterday so they're going to send a referral over to [children's

services office] *for them to get back in order for them to pay it.*

In the meantime, Leah was still getting bills for her daughter's school meals. Getting into

debt with schools for the cost of meals was also mentioned by Grace who made packed

lunches for her son, but was in arrears for school dinners:

Grace*: They keep on pressuring you for money, whatever you owe, they keep on

sending you letters, letters on top of letters that you need to sort out your clearance.*

On the other hand, there were some instances of schools using their discretion to pay for

the school meals themselves despite the children lacking eligibility, as Ife had experienced:

Ife: *The school has been really good, they know the situation, so they support us

anytime I need like letters, or they give free school meal, yeah the school is really,

really supportive, the only thing like I said, you know.*

The issue of school dinner debt has been raised by Dickson (2019) in London, who observed

that some schools did not allow packed lunches, leaving families in debt for meals, or

forcing children to skip lunch. The issue has also been taken up by migrants rights group

NELMA in their campaign for the rights to free school meals for migrant children (NELMA,

2018).

5.1.9 Making Money for Food Stretch

As a result of incomes which were too low to provide balanced meals, families discussed

making food last for long periods, and for some, this frugality enabled families to afford

things which they would not otherwise be able to. Participants were frugal, and

knowledgeable about their own food choices (Minkoff-Zern and Carney, 2015). Gabrielle

was able to use her personality to 'hustle' concessions:

Gabrielle: *You know, I'm saying I'm a lucky person, I try to pamper myself and people sort of like me, and see the way I operate, me and my kids and they try to help me as much and you know, I try, if I have £10, I know how to stretch it to get food to last.*

Ways of making money stretch varied, but included using lower-cost supermarkets (e.g., Grace) and more rarely, accessing charitable food aid (e.g., Leah):

Grace: *You get your money like fortnightly, so you have to make it stretch, you have to pay the bills, take them to school and all of that, and all of that came from whatever we were getting... I go to Aldi, or if I go to, I try to go to the reduced section to get the marked down goods, yeah, so I tend to go for that, most of the time, just sort of spread the money.*

Leah*: Oh gosh, I can't say, because what I try to do is buy low cost food, so I'll shop like in Lidl, Aldi, just to get that little money stretch along, you probably can't afford food all the time, but if you've got the opportunity to get some, you get some, but I've got, my support worker that I had, she introduced me to* [name of foodbank]*.*

Leah described how her expectations and mind set adjusted to what she was able to afford to eat:

Leah: *When you're on a low income, oh gosh, you condition your mind not to crave for something that you can't afford, so for me, I'll eat what's available, so if one particular day, like, we get that £5, that money that they gave us, I say ok then, I can't afford to buy some food that will last again, then you stretch it, you can't eat like, I can't buy like oxtail. Jamaicans like oxtail and curry goat but that income you*

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have can't buy that amount to stretch, so instead of craving for it, you try to compromise with something else.

5.2 Financial Exclusion

Households were financially excluded in multiple ways in addition to food, and extra expenses had an impact on the amount of money that was available for food purchases. As Dowler et al. (2001) note, food budgets are elastic, and if other costs increase, families respond with substitution and 'trading down' to cheaper food.

5.2.1 Easier to Get Food Than Rent or Utilities.

Although food insecurity and the lack of food was a particular concern for households, it was not the only symptom of poverty that families experienced, and in some ways was the easiest to resolve in comparison with other symptoms of poverty:

Alvita*: It was very hard. The food [insecurity] is hard, but it's more easier to get £10 or £5 to buy some food but to pay the rent, 300 odd pound a month then £400 a month* [when you] *buy gas and electric top up and all of that that's where it comes in.*

The existence of food poverty in the UK is well documented (Garthwaite, 2016; Lambie-Mumford, 2017; Loopstra et al., 2015). However, other factors which had an impact on food insecurity are perhaps less so. Briana also found transport costs difficult to afford, and in the absence of access to free school meals, school food was an added cost for the household:

Briana*: I find it very hard, because, you know, surviving off that because all three of us have to get buses, so I have to get bus pass, and food .... You know with school dinners.*

This does appear to corroborate findings that households tend to prioritise transport costs over other forms of household expenditure (Mattioli et al., 2017), and resonates with

findings that older adults who cannot afford transport to larger supermarkets tend to shop at multiple stores to obtain their preferred foods at prices they can afford, often needing to travel to different neighbourhoods and due to their reliance on walking and public transit are only able to buy food in small batches (Munoz-Plaza et al., 2013).

5.2.2 Cost of Providing Food for Nursery and Education

Other households found that although schooling itself was free at the point of use, there were extras such as school trips which they found hard to afford:

> Ife: *It is very tough honestly, I've run out of money right now, my £150* [Section 17 money] *is finished because I paid for trip on Monday for his school, I have to go with him to a place, you know, I cannot say he shouldn't go, that means I'm depriving him of a childhood, that means I have to pay that money, £25 from £150, you can imagine!*

These extra costs fell disproportionately on those who had the least money, and for the majority of families who were food insecure, relatively small sums to pay for school trips and other educational opportunities were a significant proportion of their weekly budget.

5.2.3 No Money for School Uniform

Another additional cost faced by families with school-aged children was the expense of buying school uniforms:

> Gabrielle: *Now that the older one just started secondary school it's becoming expensive because you have to buy a uniform from the uniform shop which is expensive so, and I did ask social services if they could help me to even get something, they didn't, they didn't help at all* [...] *Yeah, the younger one I didn't even get*

anything for September, she just wear it, and you know, the old one that she had, just to send the older one out.

The cost of school uniforms for families living in poverty has been the focus of campaigns by children's charities in recent years (The Children's Society, 2015), and recent analysis by The Children's Society indicates that parents on average paid £340 per year per child on school uniform costs for secondary school children, and £255 per year for primary school children - a 7% and 2% increase, respectively, since 2015 (Royston and Jacques, 2018).

5.2.4 Cannot Afford Transport Costs

As families were often vulnerably housed (staying with friends and relatives, or in temporary accommodation), and moving house frequently, it was common for children to be living a long way from their schools:

Gabrielle: Well because I used to live in Orchard Green I didn't bother to change him because they were settled in at school, so I still come back to Orchard Green [but] I live in Elm Field […] on the other side of Birmingham.

This could cause tension with children, as Akin described:

Akin*: Yeah, the first son, he's aware, he's aware because sometimes there's things that he wants to do, because now we live in Weston, and the school is at Midgreen, but we lived close to Midgreen before we came to Weston, yeah, so at times because we don't have car, we're a five person family and we don't have car, at times, my son feel angry, that we need to have a car and because we don't have our paper yet, that's why we don't have a car, so at times he feel angry, at times he say, 'Daddy, can we just leave this place and go close to my school' I say there's nothing we can do, and there's a school nearby, but he doesn't want to come here, because he*

started from nursery, and now he is year three there, so he don't want to leave

there.

For families without a regular income the additional costs of school travel were difficult to meet, so they had to rely on strategies to avoid paying unaffordable fares:

Tambara: [It was] *So stressful because I have to wake up at 5a.m. in the morning, and*

I have to catch the train to Walsall. Even catching the train, we don't pay for the train

because my friend said if you catch the early train, there's no checker, because from

seven, there's a checker. I said ok, but before we get to the train station, I believe the

checker will catch us.

For children who had special needs, such as an illness, there were additional difficulties. Khadijah's daughter had been badly burned in an accident which made public transport difficult:

Khadijah: *Two buses. She cannot go with the buses, she wear a mask. She cannot*

hold there because the burn was only in the hand, she cannot hold the [handle] *in the*

bus, and in the morning it's a lot of people in the bus.

In Chibundo's case, a voluntary sector support worker had helped with transport costs for school, an example of the ways in which support networks helped with everyday costs in addition to food:

Chibundo*: I have to buy a bus pass for myself, but my support worker managed to do*

the bus pass for her, but she couldn't help me with bus pass, out of that money that I

was receiving I got to buy a bus pass form that every week. So, now, she's like

walking distance to school, so she's in year six now, so she can walk I to and from,

but when she was in year five, and I understand that other schools she could have

travelled on her own back and forth, but they wouldn't allow her to travel back and

forth, so I have to pay, buy bus pass to take her to school.

The cost of reporting to the Home Office at Solihull for those who were liable to be deported was also a transport cost that families struggled to afford. Akin was receiving £101.17 a week from children's services, but a quarter of this was spent on transport costs:

Akin: *From reporting at Solihull, so from Dudley, it took a bus before we go to train station so and then now the [inaudible] took the baby, the child go there, and they say no, the child should be in school. So they separate us so if you spend maybe £15, now it is going to be £25 or £30. Yeah because when you go you buy tickets like a family, but now we are going to spread.*

5.2.5 Remittances

Sending remittances back to relatives abroad is a common migrant experience (Haas, 2005; Russell, 1992), and since the 1990's, the monetary value of North – South financial transfers from individuals have exceeded official development assistance, growing 12.9% a year in the decade preceding the 2008 financial crash (Yang, 2011). However, the pressure to send remittances home caused real hardship for people without a reliable income when relatives were relying on money being sent. Although this was not a commonly raised issue in the interviews, it is nonetheless likely to be an issue for undocumented migrants with extended family in their country of origin:

Akin: *My children back home, I pay their school fees, and now it's written me not to work, so I'm not working so my children drop out of school. Right. It's affecting me.*

This not only increased pressure on household budgets, but also created an added incentive to take on work in the informal economy even when a family's immigration status prevented access to the labour market.

5.2.6 Destitution

For many of those interviewed, financial hardship resulted in destitution. Only 45 of the 74 participants answered the question about destitution, but more than three quarters (38/45) of them had been destitute since coming to the UK (See Table 35).

Table 34: Destitution

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Yes	38	51.4	84.4	84.4
	No	7	9.5	15.6	100.0
	Total	45	60.8	100.0	
Missing	System	29	39.2		
Total		74	100.0		

During the follow up interviews, participants described the experience of being destitute. For Eralia, this was linked to being refused support from children's services (an experience which is discussed in more detail under 'abandonment'):

> Eralia*: When you go there, because you don't have the status, you don't have anything, you can't get any help. I was home one day, no light, no electric for the weekend. No food for the kids, and they said they can't help me.*

For most households, destitution was an experience which lasted for significant periods of time in some cases. Delyse had been destitute for twelve years. Similarly, Memona and her daughter Fahmida had been destitute for a decade, although had been living with relatives for some of that time:

> Fahmida: [We came to the UK on a] *visitor visa, and there was problems and then we done asylum, and now it's been refusing and refusing, and now it's been ten years. Yeah, I lived on my auntie's house, about nine years.*

Memona: *No support from Home Office, no.*

Fahmida: *No support or anything, only they were supporting us, and then, now they don't have space in their house, they have three kids, they have a new baby, that's why we asked the social workers.*

Memona: *Yeah, I am very* [inaudible] *and, small money, and, too much problem.*

Although being destitute for twelve years was a particularly long time, research from the Asylum Support Partnership of people accessing one stop support and advice services across the UK found that destitution was not a short-term phenomenon in most cases – 76% of those accessing the service had been destitute for more than a month, and 48% for more than six months.

As discussed above, people's immigration status was complex, and changed over time, and this impacted on the likelihood of becoming destitute – Memona and Fahmida, for example, had come to the UK on a visitor visa, had overstayed, claimed asylum, then were refused, appealed and were waiting for an outcome of the appeal at the time of the interview. In contrast, Chibundo had been given leave to remain and so was not undocumented at the time of interview, but because she had NRPF, when her income from employment reduced, she became destitute:

Chibundo*: I was a working class mum, based on my leave to remain, but not accessing public fund, but it was a struggle so when, not earning enough, and couldn't afford things, then I couldn't pay like most of the bills and I become homeless and destitute so I went onto a programme that help, housing and just little bit of income, so* [inaudible] *that help a little bit, having a roof, it's not a big roof because it's just a little bedsit, but it, it prevent you from being on the streets.*

This experience problematises the simplistic dichotomy of 'legal' versus 'undocumented migrant' in an example of Kubal's (2013) heuristic device of 'semi-legality' and illustrates the ways in which even people who are not subject to immigration control can be subject to welfare chauvinist policies which exclude them from mainstream support. However, most people who had experienced destitution became destitute before they were granted leave to remain.

5.3 Conclusion

The families in this study experienced levels of food insecurity which were higher than both the wider population, and other migrant groups in similar situations. The (in)adequacy of the diet that was available to them was exacerbated by the wider financial exclusion they experienced such as lack of money for utilities, transport, and school uniform, and this experience was summarised by the majority of participants as 'destitution'.

The reasons for being in this situation were complicated, but can be summed up by the theme of 'abandonment' in the following chapter.

Chapter Six: Abandonment

The experience of abandonment by services which were supposed to provide care or support, and in a broader sense by wider society was ubiquitous. This chapter discusses the ways in which families experienced this sense of abandonment, and the practical consequences. The most commonly expressed way in which families felt abandoned was by local authority children's services who either refused support to families, or provided support which was felt to be inadequate. However, this sense of abandonment, of lack of care, was common to a whole range of everyday activities and interactions with a range of agencies. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the consequences of abandonment for families, and the 'risky' behaviours which people engaged with in order to make ends meet.

6.1 Refusal of Local Authority Support

Half (37/74) of participants were supported by the local authority under section 17 of the Children Act - by far the most common type of support. However, this concealed the large number who had at some point been refused support from children's services. The experience of many was summed up by Eralia: "They don't give you anything, any status, you're not obliged to get any help." A Freedom of Information Act request (appendix 4) to Birmingham Children's Trust illustrates this (See Table 36).

Table 35: Referrals and assessments by Birmingham Children's Trust for families with NRPF

Number of referrals	Not disclosed
Number of assessments	153
Number supported	137
% supported	89.54%

Although nearly 90% of families with NRPF who had received an assessment of need were given section 17 support, the Trust did not disclose how many people had been referred in total, so it is not possible to know how many people were turned away from support, merely that:

We do not undertake pre-assessments screenings. All referrals are screened by our Children's Advisory Support Services (CASS) which is the first point of contact for all services for children (Birmingham Children's Trust, 2019).

It is therefore unclear how many families approached the CASS, and what proportion of those received an assessment of need, but the existence of 'robust front door' gatekeeping policies to prevent assessment of need from other local authorities suggests that this is likely to be the minority (Dexter et al., 2016; Dickson, 2019; Jolly, 2019). Indeed, the assertion that no pre-assessment screenings are undertaken is perhaps a semantic distinction, as the Birmingham Children's Trust Policies and Practice Guidance Manual states that:

There is a two stage assessment process to determine whether Birmingham Children's Trust has a duty to support the family: An eligibility test; and an assessment of need (Birmingham Children's Trust, 2019).

The manual goes on to explain that:

To satisfy the eligibility test it is necessary to establish three conditions: The need arose in Birmingham; and the family are destitute; and the Children's Trust is not prohibited from providing support under s54 and Schedule 3 NIAA 2002.

As families with NRPF are likely to be insecurely housed and frequently moving from one temporary accommodation to another (See 6.2.9 and 6.2.10), it is likely the eligibility test leaves families without support because they are unable to prove residency in Birmingham, and without the right to enter a private tenancy agreement (Immigration Act, 2016), proving residence is likely to be hard. Second, proving destitution prior to an assessment of need is difficult, causing the referral and assessment process to be circular in nature – the local authority will not complete an assessment to determine if a family are destitute unless the family can already prove they are destitute. Finally, to meet the final test, it is necessary for the local authority to contact the Home Office, which is another barrier to support for families who might not want their personal information passed on, especially if their status means they are liable for deportation.

The eligibility test therefore functions as a gatekeeping device, which prevents families from receiving an assessment of need - a process which has been described by other local authorities as "the robust front door" (Lewisham Borough Council, 2015). It is not possible to know how many people are refused during this eligibility screening in Birmingham; however, numbers are likely to be substantial. Freedom of information requests to other local authorities revealed that numbers of families refused at the screening stage ranged from between 6% of all referrals to 67% (Jolly, 2019). Research by The Children's Society on case files of referrals to Local Authorities found that 6/10 families with NRPF who were referred to children's services were refused support (Dexter et al,. 2016), and in evidence to a scrutiny enquiry by Birmingham City Council into Children and Families with NRPF, The Children's Society disclosed that only 8% of referrals were supported by children's services without some form of intervention or advocacy such as the threat of legal action (Birmingham City Council, 2013). The consequences of these gatekeeping practices became

apparent during interviews, where the assumption that many families were turned away at the referral stage without an assessment of need seemed to be confirmed. Interestingly, Eralia had been apparently refused because she had NRPF, which is surprising as section 17 support is not a public fund, suggesting a confusion about the scope of the NRPF rule:

> Eralia: *Even when I go to them for help, they wouldn't help me* […] *Yeah, they turned me away, and they say they can't help me because I don't have any recourse to public funds so they can't help.*

There is no provision for self-referral in the Birmingham Children's Trust Policies and Practice Guidance Manual, another significant barrier for those without access to services. However, even for those who were referred by another agency, this was no guarantee that an assessment of need would be completed. Gabrielle was referred by a nurse who was concerned about a malnourished child, but was still unable to get support from children's services.

The refusal of support for Gabrielle and her family was probably a reference to the Clue Judgement (2009) case law which prevents local authorities from discharging their safeguarding duty to children by offering to buy the family a ticket back to their country of origin rather than provide housing and financial support in the UK for families who have an application pending with the Home Office. Without an application pending, the local authority does not have a duty to provide section 17 support for a family. Gabrielle elaborated on her exasperation at the situation:

> Gabrielle: *But then the fact that you know, a young child and the nurse wrote a letter, I thought they would even give you a card to go to the food bank to get some food… they didn't even give me a letter, they didn't give me, so I didn't really try*

again since you know if your paper's not in. for me I just think that they wouldn't help.

Other participants who had been supported by a local authority outside Birmingham were able to get food bank vouchers from children's services, but not cash or accommodation:

Akin: *They say that we don't qualify for public fund, that time, so they give us the vouchers to get the...*

AJ: *Ok, so Croydon didn't give you any money at all. They just sent you to a foodbank?*

Akin: *Yes […] but now, when they brought us here, they give us money, yeah.*

AJ: *And they said they couldn't give you money because you have no recourse to public funds.*

Akin: *Yeah, that time they said that - no recourse to the public fund, yeah.*

This is notable because it confirms the suggestion from Gabrielle that she was refused support because of having NRPF. Akin was also not the only participant to be given vouchers for a foodbank instead of section 17 support, although for Ella this was a temporary solution while an assessment was being completed:

Ella: *Well, at first the social service they gave me food vouchers to get food that's when I they just started the paperwork [inaudible] and that's when they start, they put us in the flat where we are right now, first I have food until they sorted out the financial.*

As recommended by the Birmingham Children's Trust Policies and Practice Guidance Manual some were refused support because they failed the pre-assessment destitution test, which entails 'proving' destitution by providing six months bank statements – a near impossibility

for people with an irregular immigration status, as they are banned from opening bank accounts under the Immigration Act (2016). However, even for those who were able to provide this information, any income over the past six months could be used as evidence that families were not really destitute. Fabienne was refused support from children's services because she had been given charitable support in the past:

> Fabienne: *They said that we had some money from charity to buy myself, my daughter some furniture and this was a saving. They saw that in my bank account. I did not have any money but they said that you have to use this money. And then come back to us they even contacted my ex-husband and asked him If he wanted to take the child.*
>
> AJ: *Really? Did they know about the... why you left?*
>
> Fabienne: *Domestic violence? They know that, yeah they know* [Inaudible]. *He was shocked because children's services asked him to have the child.*

Fabienne had split from her child's father because of his physical abuse towards her, but children's services had still approached the ex-partner, apparently to see if he could look after the child instead. This procedure which is recommended by the Birmingham Children's Trust Policies and Practice Guidance Manual (2019), which states: "Could others provide the family with help? Ask about their family, friends and acquaintances" as part of its practice procedures for screening families with NRPF. This finding echoes earlier findings in the pilot project for this thesis about inappropriate responses to allegations of domestic violence on the part of children's services (Jolly 2018b), and the prevalence of abuse where the perpetrator threatens to report the victim to the authorities has been discussed elsewhere in the literature (Anitha, 2010; Jolly, 2018a). This is exacerbated by the difficulty of getting a place in a refuge for women who have NRPF (Burman and Chantler, 2005; Dudley, 2017).

For those families who did get through the screening to the assessment stage, some complained that they did not get a copy of their assessment, making it difficult to understand the decision that had been made, or to challenge it if unfair or inaccurate, and without signposting to other services, families were left without support:

AJ: *Have you got a copy of your assessment?*

Fabienne: *They didn't give me any copy* […] *no, not paperwork no letters, nothing.*

AJ: *Did they signpost you to other support elsewhere.*

Fabienne: *Not any.*

Others were excluded because having to move from place to place for accommodation reasons made them fail the local authority habitual residence test that "The need arose in Birmingham" (Birmingham Children's Trust, 2019). This was difficult to prove, and could be complicated, such as when children went to school in one local authority, but lived in another. This was the case for Tambara, who found that Walsall children's services would not support her family despite the fact that her daughter was attending school in the borough, because she was living temporarily with a friend in Birmingham after being made homeless.

For others, the need to prove that their destitution arose in Birmingham meant that they could be referred back to other local authorities many miles away. Khadijah had first become destitute when she was staying in London, and so was advised to leave Birmingham and seek help there:

Khadijah*: So I need to go to the council, I'm not. I have* [no] *recourse to public fund, I cannot go to the council, I must go to social workers in London.*

These welfare-led restrictions on people's internal movement within the UK are a little remarked on example of Yuval-Davis et al.'s (2018) concept of 'everyday bordering' which has the de facto effect of not just preventing movement across international administrative boundaries, but across internal administrative boundaries at a sub-national level. In this sense, there are clear resonances with the Vagrancy Act (1824), and with historic Poor Law restrictions on where people could claim parish relief, which go back to the Middle Ages. In the words of the Vagabonds and Beggars Act (1494): "Every beggar suitable to work shall resort to the Hundred where he last dwelled, is best known, or was born and there remain upon the pain aforesaid." (Nail, 2015).

Sometimes participants described being turned away from help for procedural or bureaucratic reasons, such as not asking for the right kind of support. Tambara went to children's services because she and her child were homeless, but mistakenly asked for support under the Housing Act (1996), which she was not entitled to, rather than for accommodation under Section 17 of the Children Act (1989), which she was, and subsequently was refused support:

> Tambara: *I spoke with the receptionist, I said 'I'm homeless, I need a place for my daughter and myself'. He said, 'No, that they can't do that'. Then I called* [advice agency] *again, he said 'No, go back to the receptionist and say to her you're here and you need help under section 17, Children's Act.' When I went back and I said that to her she now said, 'Ok, sit down, I will call you someone' so she called one of the social workers. So I spoke with that person on the phone and she said 'Ok, fine,' she will come and she ask me a few things, she ask me to wait.*

As discussed above, there is no provision for self-referral in the Birmingham Children's Trust procedure, meaning that people could only refer if they had a professional who was willing and able to make a referral for them. This was confirmed by both Tambara and Chibundo who tried to self-refer, but were turned away because they were not referred by a professional:

> Chibundo: *Yeah, they said I need somebody to refer me to them, so they wouldn't put me somewhere, so the day I became destitute, and after leaving my friend's house, he sent me back that day, and I think it was the 8th of April when they put me somewhere to live.*

The family were eventually given section 17 support, but only after arriving at the children's services office with their belongings, having been evicted from their accommodation. This unofficial gatekeeping practice where social workers waited until a crisis before responding to an assessed was commonly mentioned in interviews:

> AJ: *Ok, so you just turned up, with your belongings actually to the office?*

> Chibundo: *Yes, and my daughter, yes, and they put me in a place, that particular day they gave me a hundred and twenty pounds for two weeks to return the following two weeks to get... and I got a key, the property got two single beds, a bathroom, small kitchen, but it was, to us it's the best thing, so you haven't got a choice, so it's better being in that tiny bit than on the road.*

Others tried to access council housing, but fell afoul of the NRPF rule as local authority housing is classed as a public fund in the immigration rules, and is therefore restricted:

> Chandice: *Yeah. Couldn't get a house in a council, when he tried, so, yeah, living you couldn't get one. Also, I recall going to college, yeah, and I couldn't get in. The council*

housing you actually go and enquire and you couldn't apply if you didn't have the right papers.

These experiences of refusal of support because of misunderstandings of the meaning of NRPF, or because of procedural reasons corroborates literature from other sources, such as Dickson's (2019) report into the lives of undocumented migrant children in London which found that 60% of referrals by the advocacy organisation Project 17 of destitute families to children's services in London were initially refused support (p.12). Similarly, evidence from the Children's Society of referrals to children's services around the country found that 6 out of 10 referrals did not result in support (Dexter et al., 2016). Most strikingly though, evidence from the Children's Society to an enquiry into destitution support in Birmingham found that only 8% of referrals resulted in support after referral, but that 86% were eventually provided support after legal action (Birmingham City Council, 2013).

This approach has been described by Lewisham Borough Council as the 'robust front door' policy:

> *It ...means establishing eligibility for NRPF in a robust and fair way. Without the intervention of this successful pilot we found that costs of NRPF may have increased to as much as £15,719,000 by 2018. We support the robust front door approach that has been taken by the NRPF pilot project and recommend that the pilot approach is mainstreamed and made a permanent approach"* (Lewisham Borough Council, 2015, p. 2)*.*

This approach entails restricting access to prevent families claiming support which they would be entitled to, and the impact of the policy can be seen in the fact that only 20% of families who were referred to Lewisham in the 2017/18 financial year received section 17

support. This was the lowest percentage of all local authorities, and compares with an average of 59% across all of the local authorities surveyed. This policy has been taken up by other local authorities across London - Lambeth Borough Council is on record as wanting to:

Drive down the cost of this service through a range of measures we are taking to narrow our front door and to expedite the closure of 'open cases' through a variety of means (Lambeth Borough Council, 2015, cited in Jolly, 2019, p.10)*.*

Merton Borough Council have also taken on this 'robust' approach, coupling it with support to regularise families immigration status:

We need to maintain a robust front door response and speed up the process of families lodging their applications and case management through the legal systems (Merton, 2017, cited in Jolly, 2019, p.10).

Other local authorities such as Birmingham do not appear to have a formal policy of gatekeeping to prevent families accessing support, but the large numbers of families with NRPF who were referred to children's services but did not receive section 17 support, are perhaps indicative of similar processes at work on the level of a more informal 'street level bureaucracy' (Lipsky, 2010).

Local authorities respond with this ambivalent approach towards families with NRPF for a number of reasons. First, in the context of austerity, local authorities have increasing budgetary constraints, while facing competing priorities for support. Children with no recourse to public funds are, by the admission of some local authorities themselves, not a priority compared to more 'desirable' groups. In evidence to the Clue Judgment on support for families with NRPF, Birmingham City Council admitted that:

> *The stark reality is that costs for people with no recourse to public funds is at the expense of other services the local authority is either required or expected to provide* (R. Clue v Birmingham 2010 EWCA Civ 460).

Similarly, the Chair of the Public Accounts Select Committee for Lewisham Borough Council acknowledged that the vulnerability of children with NRPF had to be balanced against financial constraints:

> *Due to their circumstances, children from such families are particularly vulnerable. However, there is no government grant available to authorities for their support and no provision within the Council's base budget. The need to balance these issues is a considerable challenge* (Lewisham 2015, cited in Jolly, 2019, p.10).

Second, the costs to local authorities of supporting families with NRPF are increasing. The best estimates are that the numbers of undocumented migrant families are growing (Dexter et al., 2016; Jolly et al., 2020), and consequently more families are approaching local authorities for support. In one particularly striking example, Lewisham Council's overview and scrutiny report on the cost of NRPF support found that in 2008 the annual cost of support for families with NRPF was £242,000. But by 2012 the costs had increased to £2,244,000 and by 2013 had increased again to £5,368,000 (Lewisham, 2015).

Third, Home Office decisions such as granting people discretionary leave to remain in the UK without recourse to public funds (Guentner et al., 2016), and the continuing 'backlogs' of immigration applications, increase costs to local authorities considerably by passing costs which wold be met by the national social security system onto local government. Again,

Lewisham Borough Council (2015) were particularly blunt about where they considered that the blame lay for the rising costs of supporting families with NRPF:

The conclusions of this committee were clear; that Home Office incompetence directly contributes to council overspends… It cannot be right that the never-ending saga of Home Office disarray drags local councils down with it and if I were permitted to make one personal recommendation it would be that the Home Secretary make an urgent statement as to her plans for remedying this latest costly failure.

6.2 Poor Support

Even when families were receiving some form of formal support, levels were frequently too low to prevent food insecurity or destitution. Half of participants received support from children's services, but there were a variety of other sources of income also (See table 37 below).

Table 36: Sources of income

		Frequency	%	Valid %	Cumulative %
Valid	Asylum support	11	14.9	15.3	15.3
	Social services	37	50.0	51.4	66.7
	Paid employment	9	12.2	12.5	79.2
	No regular support	3	4.1	4.2	83.3
	charity	1	1.4	1.4	84.7
	family	2	2.7	2.8	87.5
	Benefits	5	6.8	6.9	94.4
	Church	1	1.4	1.4	95.8
	Foodbank	1	1.4	1.4	97.2
	Friends	2	2.7	2.8	100.0
	Total	72	97.3	100.0	

Missing	0	1	1.4		
	System	1	1.4		
	Total	2	2.7		
Total		74	100.0		

As the NRPF rule restricts many categories of migrants (including undocumented migrants) from accessing social security, few households were receiving social security benefits. For the five that were, there were a number of reasons for this - three had overstayed on a visa, but had recently been granted discretionary leave to remain in the UK on a temporary basis. Although this is increasingly given with NRPF status, they had become eligible for social security benefits after advocacy from a support worker. This illustrates the contingent nature of immigration status, and the fact that documented or undocumented migrant status is not a binary, but rather a spectrum which households can move backwards and forwards along over time, becoming regularised, before dropping back into undocumented status. The other two households who were claiming benefits were mixed households where there was one member (usually the mother) who was undocumented, and one or more members (often the father, or the British born child) who was regularised. This could either be because they are British, in one case, or an EEA national in another.

The most common means of financial support was from children's services under section 17 of the Children Act – half of all participants were receiving section 17 support. The second most common means of support was asylum support from the Home Office. This was for those who had claimed asylum but were subsequently refused refugee status. Although adults who have their asylum case refused get their support withdrawn, families with

dependent children can continue to receive support after refusal. One in eight households were working in the informal economy; seven were receiving regular philanthropic support from friends or family or a charity, foodbank or church. Finally, three households had no regular means of support at all at the time of interview.

For those who were receiving support, there were a number of concerns raised about the support available. Unsurprisingly, given the high proportion of households who were supported by children's services, it was section 17 support that the most concerns were raised about.

6.2.1 Poor Housing and Overcrowding

Without the entitlement to council housing under the NRPF rule, and with the restrictions on renting private accommodation under the Immigration Act 2016, housing was a particular exacerbating factor for many families which compounded other problems they were facing such as lack of food and money:

> Delyse: *The housing was really really bad, it was really bad, so I mean that needs improving. You know, whatever they can do to make it easier for them you know food wise, money wise, I mean, if you have the money you can afford to buy the food anyway.*

An investigation by Hackney Migrant Centre and Hackney Community Law Centre in 2015 found that housing provided by children's services under section 17 of the Children Act, was consistently substandard, with 64% of properties found to be inadequate in some way, including 74% being physically unsuitable, such as lacking access to cooking, heating or washing facilities, and more than half of properties judged to be inadequate were also

overcrowded (Threipland, 2015). Similar findings were reported by participants in Birmingham:

> Chibundo: *When we got here, it was unfortunate, the landlord, there was no electricity, there was no curtain, there was no bedding. There was nothing, we slept in the cold, we got no heat, we could not cook. There was nothing, and we came in the night, you know, so children shouldn't live like that, nobody should live like that.*

Hassanna also had poor accommodation, without enough space to play for her children:

> Hassanna: *You know he wants to play, he wants to explore, the only place he's got to go and play is the passage, the kitchen, I'm always in the kitchen so he doesn't take a knife and all that, so it's difficult for a child like this to just be fixed in this space, he's a baby, if he's grown yeah, I'd understand, but, come on. It's difficult, honestly it is.*

This lack of space for play is concerning as there is evidence that outdoor play is necessary for children's healthy development (Bento and Dias, 2017). However, more commonly, there were significant problems with accommodation including issues such as rodent infestations:

> Delyse: *Oh my God! That was a nightmare! That was the main reason I went into depression, because I had to live with rats, there was rats everywhere in the house, yeah it was really in a bad state, the house… It wasn't a shared house, but just really in a bad state. You know, there was holes everywhere downstairs, so the rats had a way to get there in the house because of the holes, and then you had a bathroom downstairs as well and you had to hurry in the evenings to have your bath before it gets dark because there would be slugs crawling everywhere, so it was just a nightmare, a complete nightmare.*

Another lived in one room with kitchenette for mother and daughter, but expressed contentment with the accommodation:

Memona (Mother): *Yeah. Microwave, fridge, and this one flat is one room, but that isn't good, and kitchen, that's small, no chair, no.... but all, this one, toilet and everything good* [talks in Urdu].

Fahmida (Daughter): *Yeah, it's all clean and stuff, so we like it here.*

Another mother living in similar accommodation expressed thankfulness that she had cooking facilities as she had heard from others that they did not have a kitchen:

Chibundo: *It's just like me and my daughter, we have just a bedsit with a bathroom and a little kitchen in it, but I've found out, some hostel don't have a kitchen in it, they've only got bedsits, so it's difficult for them to cook, they've got to share facilities that they cook stuff like food and stuff, washing machine and everything. So, but where I am now, I think it's better compared to some, because you've got access to a washing machine that you don't pay, even though it's difficult because one washing machine supply nineteen rooms, so it's first come first served with that one.*

However, living in 'hostel style' accommodation (as the majority of those supported by children's services were) with shared facilities was not easy especially for those with young children:

AJ*: What cooking facilities are there here? In the accommodation?*

Abedi: *A stove - and oven.*

AJ: *Ok, and is that here, or is it... Just in there* [pointing to kitchenette area in adjacent room].

Abedi: *Just washing machine, we don't, we all don't have washing machines in our rooms. Yeah, we are nineteen [people], and we have just one washing machine, and*

nineteen with kids, that's all together. I literally wash clothes at twelve midnight, when everybody's sleeping, and I finish 3 a.m. and I have to take my child to school in the morning, eight am, it's really crazy.

The experience of sharing facilities, or of not having enough food preparation facilities made it more difficult to have a balanced diet, and to prepare food at home. This increased the likelihood of using cheap, unhealthy food such as ready meals which were easy and quick to heat up in a microwave when there were inadequate cooking facilities.

Overcrowding was an issue which was frequently mentioned by participants, even those who were in more stable forms of accommodation - such as section 4 support for refused asylum seekers. Akin and his family of five were living in two rooms provided by G4S under their contract with the Home Office:

Akin: *It's a flat, but I've complained earlier, it's just one big room and a small room […] two rooms, and we are five in numbers, yes,* [support worker] *has written to G4S, but ever since they've not respond to us, because we are five bed, we only live in two rooms.*

Overcrowding was not a universal experience, and some participants who were in accommodation which was small were happy with their accommodation. Sometimes living in overcrowded accommodation was the trigger factor for a referral to children's services for section 17 support. Tambara went to children's services because the friend's house she was living in was too crowded:

Tambara: *I said you're not throwing me out of the house but I can see myself. The house is filled up they are a family with children for them to squash inside as well, they've tried. We need help.*

Despite this, the accommodation provided by children's services under section 17 of the Children Act was often overcrowded, usually bedsit style accommodation, as Khadija recounted:

> Khadijah: *Go and bring my children, and bring them to that studio then the social worker move me to Cedar Green, it's one bedroom, they changed the living room, that's fine. It's because we was emergency was four people in a studio. It's one bedroom because they change the living room to another room, but that's fine unless I move my children.*

6.2.2 Misleading Advice from Social Workers on NRPF

Another exacerbating factor in feelings of abandonment was when social workers did not understand, or gave poor advice on matters relating to immigration status and entitlements (Dickson, 2019). One family had been erroneously told that support from children's services was a 'public fund' and that they therefore were not entitled to it:

> Eralia: *He comes there the first time and he said he can't because I'm not eligible for that. I can't, and he was trying to tell me that everybody is coming from the government and it would be the government resource that would help me, so they can't help.*

Another was family turned away without an assessment of need because they had no immigration application pending with the Home Office:

> Gabrielle: *The nurse wrote a letter for me to go down to North Hill and the social service place to see if they could give me either a food bank paper to get some food, I explain to them but because then my immigration paper wasn't sent in to the Home Office yet, they didn't help me at all, they sent me away without no help. You know, in the fact of the child was underweight, and all that, they didn't help me at all.*

AJ: *And do you, do you remember why what they said, what reason they gave?*

Gabrielle: *Just because I didn't have any papers in the Home Office.*

As discussed above this was likely a reference to the Clue Judgement case law (*Birmingham City Council v Amalea Clue Secretary of State for the Home Department v Shelter*, 2010). However, the Clue Judgement does not prevent children's services from supporting families without an application pending, but merely dictates that the local authority cannot discharge their safeguarding duty to the child by buying a ticket back to the parental country of origin if they have an application pending with the Home Office.

6.2.3 Fear of Support being Withdrawn

One participant was nervous of their support being withdrawn if they took part in the research:

Akin*: I want to take part, but at the moment what I'm talking about is the social people are helping me now, so I don't know, will they question me or should I take another step, or?... so if you can explain that it won't be a problem or that I… because they are supporting me. So if they saw all this - know someone else is helping me, either they will stop or…*

The fear of support being withdrawn was not altogether unrealistic, as other participants mentioned that children's services had stopped support if they thought that the family had access to a secondary source of income from friends, family or charity:

Gabrielle: *"They used to give us extra £30 to top up but they cut that off so we have to take it from the £210 to top up our light and gas, so you know, it's really hard, and you know we're not allowed to work so that's out of it... and they used to pay for the school dinners and they've stopped it, and I find it very hard, I've given my youngest*

packed lunch now, and the eldest in secondary school, she's not having any school

dinners because I can't afford it."

The full or partial withdrawal of local authority support if there are alternative means of income is advocated by the Birmingham Children's Trust Policies and Practice Guidance Manual (Birmingham Children's Trust, 2019). However, the fear of support being withdrawn created a perverse incentive for families not to talk to support agencies, or to access other support if available.

6.2.4 Amount of Subsistence Support Given

The low income of undocumented migrants is well documented, and Gonzales et al. (2019) suggest that the average income for families where there is at least one parent who is undocumented is 40% lower than other households. However, even for those who had section 17 support from the local authority to prevent poverty, incomes were often particularly low. A common concern for those who were supported under section 17 was that, even when financial support was given, it was too low to be able to provide for the essential living needs of their families (Dickson, 2019), and therefore did not prevent them from being food insecure. Figure 8 illustrates the mean weekly income reported by participants by type of support. Surprisingly, given the risks of labour exploitation outlined below in section 9.4.3, the highest mean income, by quite a large margin, was from those who were in paid employment, at £278.78 per week. Mean income from section 17 support was £96.40 – just over a third of the amount that families who were in paid employment were receiving, and less than the equivalent amounts in social security benefits or asylum support. There is therefore little incentive for families to avoid paid employment in the informal economy given the difficulty of getting section 17 support, and the low amount given in comparison to other sources of income.
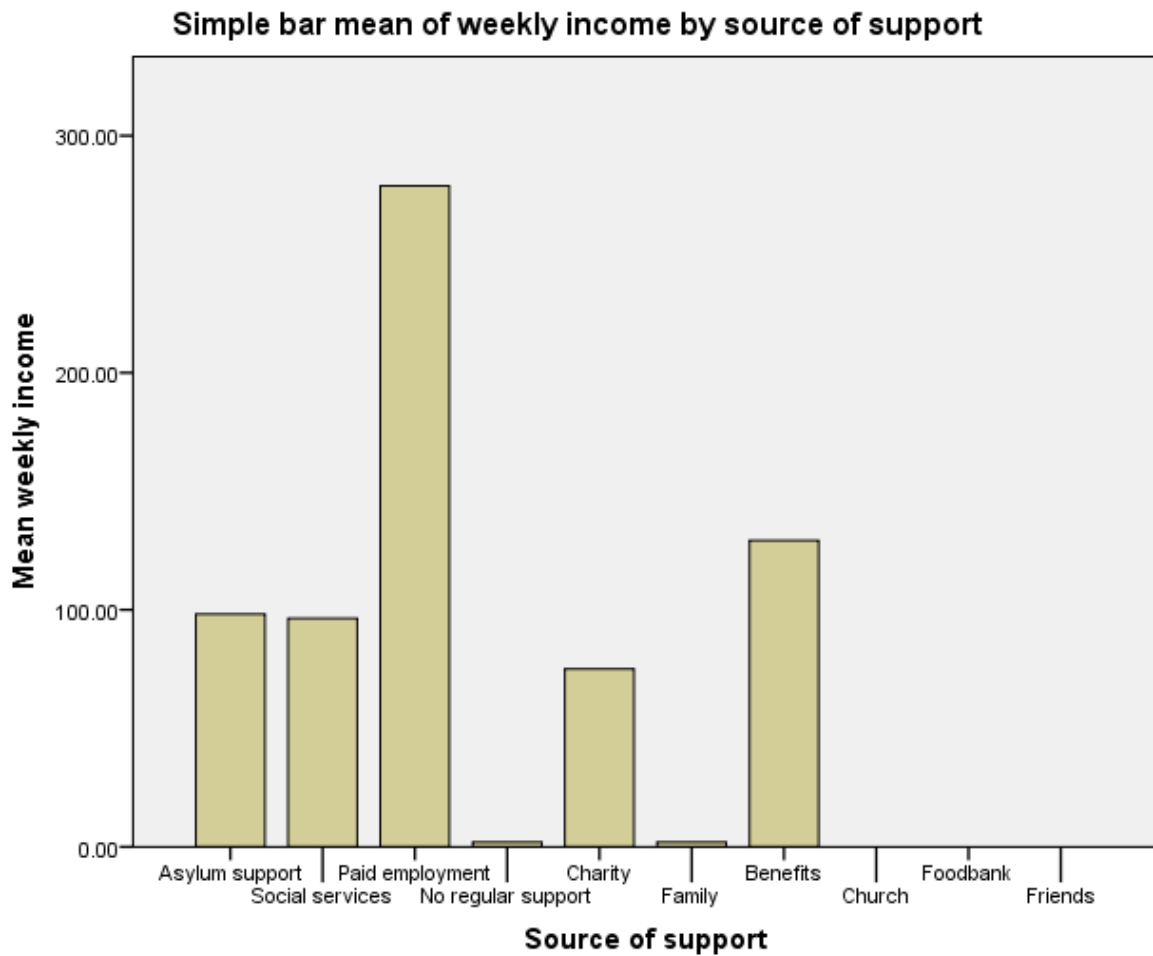
Support from church, foodbanks and friends do not show as income in Figure 8 because these were usually given in kind in the form of accommodation, food or other basic essentials.

An assessment of the extent to which support given by Birmingham children's services is sufficient to reduce poverty can be made by comparing with the amount families would be eligible under mainstream social security provisions, and by comparison with poverty lines such as the HBAI line or the Joseph Rowntree Foundation (JRF) Minimum Income Standard (MIS). Support given under section 17 varies according to the size of the family and age of the children and can be amended depending on personal circumstances in response to

assessed need. However, a freedom of information request to Birmingham Children's Trust in October 2018 revealed that the current rates (which are under review) were £35.39 for a single parent, £68 for a couple, £40 for a first child, and £30 for each subsequent child (See Appendix 4).

This can be used to compare rates for a notional family of one parent and two school age children – a family in this situation would receive £105.39 per week in Section 17 payments from Birmingham children's services under these rates. Working on the assumption of a family with no savings, in a Universal Credit area, a comparable family who were not subject to immigration control would be entitled to £225.14 per week, including £190.74 from Universal Credit and child benefit of £34.40 – more than twice the section 17 amount. A family would also be entitled to Local Housing Allowance (LHA) for housing costs. The rate quoted is after housing costs have been removed (AHC) to ensure comparability between section 17 rates, which do not include housing costs, and to more accurately replicate the actual amount that households have available to spend. The section 17 rate paid is also less than Asylum Support rates paid by the Home Office. Currently asylum support rates are £37.75 for each person in a household (or £35.39 in a voucher card for section 4 'hard case' support to refused asylum seekers). Additionally, pregnant mothers can apply for an additional £3 per week, and payments of £5 for a baby under 1 year old, and £3 for a child aged 1-3. A family in the same situation who were eligible for asylum support would receive £113.25 (£7.86 a week more than the children's services rate).

The Section 17 rates paid by Birmingham Children's Trust were below all other government welfare provisions, and Table 38 illustrates how they compare with poverty lines. The HBAI poverty line, is the most commonly used, and is based on the median income for all households in the UK. The Birmingham section 17 rate was 44.46% below this. A more

nuanced poverty line is the Joseph Rowntree Foundation MIS (Davis, Hirsch, Padley, & Shepherd, 2018). The MIS is based on a public consensus model of the amount that a household needs for a decent standard of living, and Birmingham rates were even further below this figure (See Table 38).

Table 37: Section 17 rate compared to poverty lines

Weekly section 17 payment for parent and 2 children	£105.39
Percentage below HBAI poverty line	44.46%
Percentage below MIS	53.35%

The reality of living with low rates of support became apparent through the interviews with households. Abedi found that the money was never enough to last:

Abedi: *Yeah, the people who put me here, they gave me, £150 every two weeks, which runs out anyway, it runs out… It happens every time, every time. Every time!*

This below poverty line level of subsistence support is a possible explanatory factor for the extremely high levels of food insecurity, even amongst those who had section 17 support, and why families with section 17 support appeared to be no more food insecure than other households, and resonates with evidence from voluntary sector agencies (Dexter et al., 2016; Dickson, 2019; NELMA, 2018; Pinter, 2012).

6.2.5 Intrusive Assessment Process

The process of applying for support was sometimes felt to be intrusive and demeaning by the households interviewed, and appeared to be based around proving or disproving destitution rather than assessing the welfare needs of the child (Dickson, 2019). Eralia described social workers checking through cupboards on home visits to ensure there was no

food in the house, and checking that the heating was not on before giving an emergency payment:

> Eralia: *They come there, they open my cupboard, they're looking to see if I have gas on, they're looking if I have food for the kids, and that's when they give me £30 […] for me to buy food.*

Alternatively, pressure was brought to bear on parents to rely on friends and family, which could put families in difficult situations, especially where relationships were strained, or when extended families could not afford to provide long term subsistence support for their relatives:

> Eralia: *They said I should go find the baby father. I don't know where this man is, me and this man don't have anything, we split up and all of that. Even my cousin used to help me and they rang him and said 'Oh, he can't buy gas this week?' That's my cousin they're talking about, he was just trying to help me. Sometimes he'll give me a £20 note and I'll thank him…and ring him up one day, ask him if he can't buy gas and food today. You know what I'm saying? How could you do that? Oh yeah, because you said that 'He's a help.' I said 'Yes, he does when he can' That doesn't give you the right to ring him and ask him that question.*

This process of trying to find alternative means of support before providing section 17 support could put children in danger where, for instance there was a history of domestic violence. In Fabienne's case, social workers contacted the child's father who was a perpetrator of domestic violence:

> Fabienne: [He doesn't] *have any contact with me because of police action which doesn't give him access, not talk to me, anything. We went to court because he wanted see his child, and the court established that I am having the care of the child*

but he could see him every two weeks in a contact centre but they say they have to speak to him. Apparently that's what they ask him. And they did ask that to me too, in the assessment they say 'Right we're doing that' and I explain to them why he couldn't visit us, so this was like something that really this is the hardest thing that I have experienced in this country because she is just a child. How people can go to this extent, it's because of the financial help that they are trying to separate me from my daughter. It's even worse than what happened to me with the Home Office.

Sometimes participants expressed mixed feelings, but gave social workers the benefit of the doubt:

Khadijah: *Social service, good. First time I don't like them because you know when I bring, I told them I bring my children. I feel, I don't know, maybe it's the language barrier, or I maybe put excuse for them because I feel everybody has good things in his intention. They told me who will pay for your children? How will you spend money, from where you will bring money?*

6.2.6 Refusing Support until Crisis

The pressure on families not to be a burden on the public purse was most clearly illustrated in the situations where there was a duty on children's services to support a family, but children's services waited until a crisis before exercising that duty, despite the widely acknowledged importance of early intervention in children's services (Bate, 2017). Two participants (Akin and Eralia) described being taken to court by their landlord for non-payment of rent before children's services would provide support. For Eralia, this was made worse by the fact that she was heavily pregnant:

Eralia: *Finally they said the landlord better give me some court order or something, before they can help, and I was due to go into hospital to have my next youngest one*

and they, I go in before. So I rang them and tell them that I'm in hospital. So when I

come out about a week after, then they send me out into a hotel.

Sometimes late intervention on the part of the local authority meant that families waited

for long periods for social workers to return calls:

Fabienne: *I think I have a very horrible, very hard time with them because they know*

my situation from the beginning before I even had this three-month concessions the

Home Office gave me to have access to public funds. I went to them first so they

know what was happening with my domestic abuse and everything. And then when

my application was rejected I called them, they said because your benefits [are] *still*

on you have to wait until they stop it and you need to come back to us. That's what I

did, and when I go there. They wasn't helping me they were just saying to wait,

somebody will called, but they didn't.

6.2.7 Length of Time for Assessment

A further factor in feelings of abandonment was the length of time it took for assessments

of need to be completed by social workers. Even after referral, families waited for lengthy

periods before support was provided – often many months:

AJ*: So when you went to... how long was it between first going to Newton House?*

Eralia: *Before they started to help? I went there, and about six months, about six*

months!

The longest time any of the households had waited for the outcome of an assessment was a

year (Akin). Others had to wait for shorter periods, but still struggled to make ends meet in

the meantime:

Gabrielle: *I was recommended to the* [Children's charity], *ok, and they gave me information to go to Newtown as a homeless, they gave me food bank for a few weeks, to get food, it was really a good help, and from then you know, it didn't take long, four weeks I was in a hotel in Walsall, so I only spent a month there and then they found me the house.*

The assessment process was significantly lengthened in comparison to other social care assessments because of the initial screening process to establish eligibility, which involved contacting the Home Office, and collecting and analysing bank statements, before the assessment itself started.

Although it was common to have to wait long periods of time to get section 17 support, this was not the experience for all families. For Abedi's family who were being evicted from their NASS accommodation, the process was particularly quick:

Abedi*: My son's health visitor, she's* […] *the one who, when they gave me my leave to remain, and told me no public fund, I don't know what that was, but she said, 'You will soon be kicked out from this NASS accommodation, and you will be in the streets because you are not entitled to housing benefit whatsoever, so I'm going to introduce you to someone that will introduce you to the children's centre' so that was how I got to the children's centre, and they gave me this place, yeah that was in May.*

AJ: *"ok, and how was that process?*

Abedi: *It was very quick, I was still in the NASS accommodation, still have about twenty days to move, but they've already given me money and told me that I'm coming here, but was just, yeah, very easy, and very fast.* [name of social worker] *was excellent.*

6.2.8 Precarity after Regularising Status

Goldring and Landolt (2011) describe a 'work–citizenship matrix' where precarious immigration status has an effect on employment which is long lasting and persists even after status is regularised. This was also observed in this study - even after receiving leave to remain, precarity did not end. In addition to the issue of NRPF conditions being placed on those with leave to remain, re-entering the formal labour market was a struggle because of additional barriers such as paying for uniforms or DBS checks, which sometimes made formal legal work more difficult than the informal arrangements that many had previously been involved in. For instance, Abedi had been granted limited leave to remain at the time of the interview, and so was eligible to take up paid employment. She described how she had spent £120 on a DBS and mandatory training for registering to work with a care agency, and even then, work was not guaranteed, or necessarily appropriate to fit in with her child care responsibilities:

> *I'm going for my induction very soon, which means I will start working, but I know there will be problems with my job, because they will call me, it's agency, come and work this time, who's going to hold him* [her son].

Paradoxically, the formalities and bureaucracy of low paid work in a neo-liberal economy could sometimes be even harder to negotiate by people who were used to existing in the informal economy. Previous research has identified that unemployment and underemployment are commonly experienced by refugees and asylum seekers (Phillimore and Goodson, 2006), and those who are subject to forced and other forms of 'unfree' labour can find it particularly difficult to exit. Leaving one from of unfree labour can sometimes mean exit from one form of precarious exploitative work to another along a continuum of

unfreedom (Lewis et al., 2015). This experience appeared to be echoed by the experiences
of former undocumented migrants in this study.

6.2.9 Relocation out of City

The widespread reliance on mutual aid (9.3.6) and informal support meant that having to
move to a different area (for instance when being supported by children's services) could
have a particularly negative effect:

> Akin: *They relocated me from London to Dudley… That's the problem. Sometimes you*
> *don't want to eat and because we live in London for ten years at least you know one*
> *or two people. Not a family member, just a friend to say 'hello hello', yeah. But here,*
> *nobody. I have to be indoors the whole day, that's why she* [Akin's daughter] *is not*
> *happy.*

There may be individual welfare reasons for families to be housed outside their area, such
as to protect them from the risk of trafficking or exploitation (Department for Education,
2018b). However, it does have the effect of moving families away from support networks
and has been identified as a risk factor in child welfare in the case of the death of Lynne
Mutumba who was supported with her mother out of area by Croydon Borough Council
(Smith, 2018). It is also notable that the practice of housing families 'out of area', while
common for families with NRPF, is now increasingly also used for families that are not
subject to immigration control. Under powers introduced in 2012, local authorities can
discharge their duty to homeless families by offering them a year's tenancy in the private
sector, a power which has been extensively used to move families outside London into
cheaper accommodation in areas such as the West Midlands (Independent, 2015). This
practice resonates with Guentner et al.'s (2016) observation that restrictions on welfare in

the UK have historically been trialled on migrants before being extended to other groups who are perceived as 'undeserving'.

Relocation and the isolation which it caused was a particular concern for children. Chibundo and her children were relocated from London to the West Midlands, where they were placed in inappropriate and isolated accommodation, and the transcript of her experience is worth quoting at length:

> Chibundo: *You know she misses her friends everything she knows, we had to move away. We didn't even know where. I couldn't say no, if I had the choice I wouldn't because we were not prepared. We didn't plan it …and when we got here… we came in the night you know, so children shouldn't live like that, nobody should live like that. They just gave me the address and said, you know, go to this place, and there will be somebody waiting there for you, and it was on a Friday. So when we got here, it was really late, even if I wanted to go back to London, I wouldn't have been able to. And he said to me 'If you don't like it you can go back to where you are coming from' because obviously he thought yeah, she's desperate.*
>
> AJ*: So going back to where you were coming from meaning London?*
>
> Chibundo: *That's what the landlord said to me, if I don't like it because there is no electricity, because I was really like you know we're coming so at least electricity, those things, there was no curtains, no window blind, nothing no duvet, nothing. So on Monday when I told the social worker, she obviously wasn't happy, but then, what if something had happened during the weekend? And the local authorities in here, when I phone them because I was really angry, and they said, because they're not the one you know, that they can't, their hands are tied.*
>
> AJ: *So did they give you money to get up from…*

Chibundo: *From London, yeah. Well it was a single ticket, so even if the office was still open, I would not have been able to go back.*

This was a particular problem for children when support was not available once they arrived in a new location. Nonetheless, families were resourceful and talked in terms of 'making do', often seeking out support services when they arrived in a new area:

Khadijah: *So for my child[s] benefit I came to Birmingham. I do a brave job, I google the Birmingham council. I go through the train to the Birmingham, I said this is the situation. This is the child. This is my recourse to public fund.*

6.2.10 Moving House

The need to frequently move house has been observed in previous research with precarious migrants (Clarke and Nandy, 2008). Moving house, because of eviction or relationship breakup could cause problems even when rehoused within the same city. Eralia, Ella and Ionie had all been moved from one temporary accommodation to another when supported by children's services. Ionie had been moved three times since being granted section 17 support, and Ella and Eralia were initially sent to temporary bed and breakfast accommodation before being rehoused:

Eralia: *So they put me into a hotel then from the hotel they moved me from that hotel to a next one and from the next one to a temporary home. And when I was at a temporary home they put the papers in and then they send me, they sent back to the Home Office.*

The experience of having to move house was not confined to people who were given section 17 support. Tambara escaped from a situation of domestic servitude in London by coming to stay with an acquaintance in the West Midlands:

Tambara: *I saw the place in London and said 'Ok, she knows, she have a friend in the West Midlands' but she's a student that she said she doesn't mind to give me help if I can stay with her, then [inaudible] I said I don't mind anywhere, I Just want to leave this hell house. Every day locking the house […] you can't go out, you can only go when they are going for shopping, we go together or we're going to church they kept scaring me. If you step out of the room the police will [arrest] you.*

Once Tambara had escaped her labour exploitation in London, she still had to move house on a number of occasions within the West Midlands when the informal arrangement she had been living in broke down:

Tambara: *So I have to start calling friends again. And one of my friends said 'Ok, fine, do you want to move to Birmingham?' I said 'Anywhere, I don't mind, let me just put my head with my daughter'. She said ok, she'll try to see if she can contact some friends. So she came up to me and said 'do you mind living with a man?' It's a friend of hers that he just got a three-bedroom apartment and he has custody of his child, he comes around, but one room is empty, and he's paying, so he has no reason why he can't help. I said I don't mind if it's ok with him. So when I moved out with my daughter then to Birmingham.*

Tambara's situation was atypical, but having to move across the country in order to take up offers of support from friends or family was not uncommon. Chibundo explained the problems that frequent moves caused for family life and child wellbeing:

Chibundo: *Because of the uncertainty, I haven't been, we've been moved around London, before we finally been placed here so you can't really plan anything and half the time I don't, I myself I used to help them with homework half the time I just don't*

feel like getting out of bed, I don't have the strength, so it kind of effects a lot of things. You know, sometimes you know they ask you question 'Mummy, when is this going to end?' You don't know so you can't help them, at the same time, you want to keep that happy face in front of them, but deep down, you're actually crying.

6.2.11 Eviction from Council House or NASS Accommodation

Some participants had been evicted from accommodation to which they were no longer entitled. Fabienne had been subletting a council house, but as an undocumented migrant was not entitled to council housing, so was in the process of being evicted and becoming homeless. Abedi was also facing eviction and possible homelessness. As a failed asylum seeker, she was in 'NASS accommodation' – provided by the Home Office as part of asylum support, but after submitting a fresh claim her asylum claim had been accepted, and as a result she had become ineligible for asylum support and was given 28 days to leave*:*

> Abedi: *NASS told me you have leave to remain, get out of our house, nowhere to go, I have to come to children's* [services], *and they put me here.*

Research by Lewis (2009) in Leeds found that the most common reason for destitution amongst Refugees and Asylum Seekers was removal of NASS support because they were 'end of process' and either did not qualify for section 4 support, had been refused section 4 support, or were waiting for their application to be processed.

6.2.12 Disappointment at Lack of Care

A recurring theme was of what could be described as a general 'lack of care' towards undocumented migrants, which made precarious situations worse. This feeling was particularly directed towards children's services. Eralia felt this was particularly egregious when there were children involved: "these are human beings with kids, especially with

kids." Abedi noted her frustration that, when families needed help and support it was not forthcoming, but when parents were not able to support there was the danger of children being removed:

> Abedi*: If we don't look after these kids, they will also take away the kids from us, [and say] that we are irresponsible, we can't look after the kids, but how can we look after kids when we don't have the resources to work?*

This perception was echoed by Dickson (2019) who found that clients in London were told by social workers that children would be taken into care if they were destitute, and a number of charities disclosed that families with NRPF approaching local authorities around the country were told by social workers that they would support the children but not parents (Lyons, 2017).

For Fabienne, the general feeling was of disappointment at the attitude of children's services:

> Fabienne: *I'm really shocked and disappointed about the service and how they deal with people there. I think that what must be most important for them is like the safeness of my child and its happiness and they are not taking account of them. Is this like they thinking about that people coming in this country all the time. They make them serve in this situation without asking why are they in this situation? They just think like I'm from abroad, I'm from Africa. I came here, and now overstaying. They don't care about my child and the fact that she's my child, she has to be in my responsibility. I don't do drugs, I don't drink alcohol, don't go anywhere I dedicate my life to my child, so why they* [say they will remove the child]*... even saying it is a horrible thing even if they can't do it. Saying that my daughter should go with her Dad, and they know, these are people* [exasperated noise] *himself he know that he*

cannot take care of a child. So why are they saying that kind of things? It is like now they're only thinking in the financial aspect they are not seeing people, their rights and everything. So I am really shocked to see that a developed country like the UK things like that happen.

These experiences of everyday bordering (Yuval-Davis et al., 2018) and street level bureaucracy (Lipsky, 2010) from social workers stand in stark contrast with the self-image of social work as a profession which is based on "Principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversities" (IFSW, 2014) and an activity which "In solidarity with those who are disadvantaged… strives to alleviate poverty and to work with vulnerable and oppressed people in order to promote social inclusion." (British Association of Workers, 2012). They do however resonate with other accounts of social work with migrants, such as Barberis and Boccagni's (2014) discussion of the response of social workers in Italy in a context of inconsistent migration policies and poorly coordinated institutional responses.

Although attempts were made to talk to social workers for this study, none agreed to take part, but Vandevoordt (2018) has noted the ambivalence and tensions in migration work where professionals are caught between the roles of providing social assistance, and of regulating immigration, which the experiences outlined above illustrate.

6.3 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined the gatekeeping that destitute families attempting to apply for support from children's services experienced, and the low levels of support and care that they received when given support. As children's services were the largest single agency that was providing support for families, the largest number of complaints were directed at children's services. However, this abandonment extended to almost every interaction with

'officialdom' from the Home Office, to housing departments, to education, and resulted in a network of informal support and care which was independent of the state, discussed below under the themes of 'Access', 'Abundance' and 'Agency'.

Chapter Seven: Access

This chapter outlines the theme of 'access', discussing where families were able to source food from, and some of the barriers to accessing food for a balanced diet. The chapter goes on to explore access to healthcare, immigration advice and education, and how these interplayed with access or lack of access to food.

7.1 Food Access

Access to food was observed in a variety of different ways, including as access to foodbanks and other emergency food aid, but participants more frequently referred to difficulties with buying food from shops, and of strategies of using fast food restaurants as a cheap alternative to home cooking.

7.1.1 Access to Foodbanks

It was not as common to be referred to foodbanks as might be expected given the high levels of food insecurity experienced by households - only four households had been referred to a foodbank. This was perhaps because families were not able to access familiar food in foodbanks, so resorted to other, more informal forms of food aid. More fundamentally, families who were long term destitute because of their immigration status could not fulfil the Trussell Trust 'rule of three' and due to their immigration status, were less likely to access the services who would refer them to a food bank. Interestingly, those who had been referred to foodbanks were those who were in touch with mainstream services:

> Akin: *Yeah, they do stay and play and started nursery there and they know our situation so the school centre, the children's centre over there in the school they're helping us for food, they give us a voucher then you go to foodbank, and then.... yeah,*

so and the social [services] *people before they brought us here, they used to give us a voucher to get a food.*

Similarly, for Fabienne, who at the time of referral was eligible for mainstream welfare benefits because she had been given temporary leave to remain:

Fabienne*: Right now because we have our benefits been stopped every two weeks, she gave us some money and we sometimes get a food voucher from … the children's centre next door. We've got a children's centre next to us so that's where we go when we're short of food.*

AJ: *…And did you have the types of food that you want to eat?*

Fabienne: *Not really because they just gave us conserve, and sometimes butter and sometimes I want them to give us food, like children's food or nappies, but they don't have it.*

Grace also found that going to food banks was only a last resort when she was desperate, and that there was little choice of food once she got there:

AJ*: Ok, did you ever access food banks, anything like that?*

Grace: *Yes, I think I even came to you guys at* [name of agency] *for a voucher for food, and I think bus passes, and yeah I've been to foodbanks, foodbanks in Smethwick and other places, to be honest, for food.*

AJ: *How did you find them, what was that experience like?*

Grace*: ... Didn't really like it, but had no choice, yeah didn't like it because some of the foods are out of date, some of it is, you don't get to go and pick what you want,*

they just give you whatever, you know what I mean, but it's something you just have

to work with because you have no choice - was grateful at the time though.

However, it was most common for families to not access foodbanks at all - Fahmida and Memona had not even heard of the existence of foodbanks when asked if they had accessed them. Generally other strategies for getting food were used by the families interviewed, possibly due to the stigma of accessing food banks in some communities (Power et al., 2017).

7.1.2 Shopping in Supermarkets and Traditional Shops

In the absence of access to food banks, interviewees were asked where they bought their food from. The big supermarkets dominated, and Tesco was the most commonly used food shop, although some named various independent ethnic food shops, and one travelled in to the market in Birmingham city centre.

Most interviewees named more than one food shop that they regularly visited: "We go to Tesco, we go to some of these African shops" (Akin) but it was common to shop around for the cheapest offers that week:

> AJ: *How do you choose where you're going to shop?*

> Ella: *Well, depends on my finances, I will try to see which shop has the most bargains when I go there and do shopping there.*

The process of shopping around could be particularly time intensive, as Alvita disclosed:

> Alvita*: I normally go like, I shop around every shop, sometimes I go Lidl, Tesco. I try and go to see which one is more cheaper where I can go because what I find with ALDI's, it's a bit cheaper, and sometime, when you go LIDL's you find the same things*

for a different price. You get where I'm coming from? So I'm a person that mostly likes to shop around, and see which one is cheap, and which one is not.

For Leah, this meant buying different food items in different shops each week:

Leah*: When I was working you could buy a bit of this from that store, you still shop around because Lidl got fresh baked beans and baguettes, and all that and its much cheaper but they sell it baked fresh, so you get that from that particularly one, you go to Aldi again you get another set of stuff, so I would say shop around, I can't afford Tesco's.*

Similarly, those who shopped at discount supermarkets noted that the prices were better, and this was the motivating factor:

AJ: *Where were the primary places where you got food from?*

Grace: *We had Lidl, the supermarket Lidl or Aldi…the cheapest supermarkets.*

The choice of food shops was not always a decision that families made independently, but was driven by external factors, such as the fact that one local authority gave food vouchers rather than cash, as did the Home Office for support for refused asylum seekers, which meant that they couldn't visit local independent shops and had to go to the big supermarkets, which for Akin meant they could not buy African food. Khadijah found that there was a conflict between buying cheap food and being able to buy Halal meat, leading her to buy less meat for her family:

Khadijah: *I walk 20 minutes* [to get to a supermarket]. *… But the Halal food, no, I go to buses to get the meat, but Aldi, because Aldi, it's not half price, but it's a good*

price so I buy everything from there but if I need spicy, or meat, no, I go to buses to

Beorma Road.

For Fabienne, the 'localness' of the shops was the most important factor because without a car or money for transport, travelling could be difficult. However, others such as Fahmida and Memoma travelled to get food because there were not shops within walking distance. Alvita found that even though there were local food shops near her, she had to travel to the larger supermarket because of the difference in the price of food:

Alvita: *Supermarket, yeah, I try not to rely on corner stores because I think the prices are a bit more so I try to do my shopping at least once a week.*

Those like Ife who used local ethnic food stores found that these were more expensive than supermarkets, which prevented them from shopping there more frequently. However, relying on discount supermarkets sometimes meant that it was difficult to replicate ethnic food choices:

Khadijah: *I normally like I go to Aldi, I buy like amount £20, £24, and I buy meat and chicken then I go and I ask them what they want but it's difficult our food, you can't repeat it and maybe something in you* [inaudible] *but if I need to do something new, you know I need to go to the Asian store and buy the new, the ingredient and that will cost me, so I try to do the same food, so I will not buy anything.*

Ife found that she would buy food from an African shop which was near the children's services office if she was going for an appointment. However, this was too expensive otherwise:

Ife: *They sell African food, so I get stuff there as well, or around there. Most of the stuff is expensive because if you go to buy meat, raw meat, fish, frozen ones. It's lots, and if I'm buying, like African* [food], *I'll buy not just, how will I say? Like, a big bag that will last me about three weeks of beans, raw beans, which I have - like your baked beans, but ours is raw, so dry ones, so you have to cook it, but baked beans, you just warm it for like one minute but like this one, If I'm going to cook it, it has to be boiled two hours, to cook, so…. and I have to buy some things to put in there, pepper, stuff, it all costs money.*

In contrast, Grace felt that her local shops were cheaper:

Grace: *I always go to African shops, sometimes I go to Tesco but Tesco is a bit expensive. I think because of the suppliers so I always go to all the small traders.*

However, most participants expressed some kind of compromise between smaller independent shops which were expensive but sold familiar food, and cheaper discount supermarkets which were cheap but did not sell familiar food.

7.1.3 Distance from Food Shops

A further difficulty with access to food that was expressed was the distance of food shops from where families were living:

Fabienne: *Where we live it is like down a hill. So we have to take buses to buy big shopping because some of the local shops down there it's just most of the things they get there are.... or we just walk.*

AJ: *How long does it take you to walk?*

Fabienne: *30 minutes.*

This experience was shared by a number of households both Alvita and Akin had to take a bus to get to the nearest food shop, and for Akin the cost of travel to a supermarket was a big strain on the household budget, especially when children had to be taken along as well

Ella did not have to use public transport to buy food, but could only get to the shops after a long walk with a pushchair, although she was philosophical about this reality:

> Ella*: No, they're walking distance, which I don't mind because I'm, for me to do those walking distance going to the shops and all, I find that, being exercise, and doing a bit of exercise, yeah, pushing a double pushchair with stuff on it is not like* [laughs].

Ife also walked to food shops with her child, who unlike Ella's child, was old enough to walk:

> Ife: *I take a walk, town is not far. I take a walk with him, he likes walking, yeah. He's walking and sometimes he complains, but I said 'Ok, the other side of life is sometimes paramount in our lives so we can grow stronger.' he say 'Strong, mum?' yeah, and we take a walk together, sing along and we get to town. Then when I'm coming back I pay £1* [short hop bus fare], *and I'm back… if I've got £2 free, I go £1 come back, but if I don't in the morning when it's cold we take a walk then when he gets tired walking around in town, I make sure I have... because sometimes I have 50p, I have to be on the Diamond bus* [cheaper bus company] *and beg.... because that's one they don't have National* [Express] *security, just one standing on the road to check if you've paid or not, so the blue bus I can just, you know, beg.*

Even though the distance was far, and could entail the extra cost of a bus ride, it sometimes still made sense to pay to go to a shop which was further away because the savings on food justified the distance and cost:

Leah: *From where, I'm living… Aldi is probably 2 miles? Lidl probably about the same,*

probably 2 or 2.5 miles. It's not too far, but jumping on the bus, then you're coming

back on the bus, to go to Aldi from where I live, I'd have to like walk it to catch the

number 3 or 5 or 2 bus, to go down there, stop right outside Aldi, come back then I

have to walk it a little distance to get back home when I take, go to Aldi. To go to Lidl,

the bus stop is like right outside the flat, so it's not far to walk, yet coming back it's

just crossing the road, so it's closer going Lidl than Aldi, but Aldi got bigger bottle

juice for like a pound which would last like, if you add 2 litre juice which is £1, so that

would last, you know it's a bit more drink in than going to Lidl and buying the boxes

for a pound. You get more money, more for your money, so.

7.1.4 Use of Fast Food Restaurants

None of the families ate out regularly, and Grace found that, despite her children's

enjoyment of fast food, they were unable to afford takeaways:

Grace: *Really we can't afford to eat out, you know. For example, you just want to*

take a walk and there's KFC and McDonalds, we know children love to, and they say,

mummy, can we go in there? So I have to explain to them which is really painful to let

them know I'm not working now. So we'll come back for that. So I have to make sure

every penny I spend as much as I can. I have to buy food, make sure I cook. Even days

more what they would like to eat, or what I would love to give them, but I don't have

a choice, I just have to make sure they eat.

However, three households did made reference to fast food. Alma, despite her mother's

disapproval, particularly liked McDonalds, and Fabianne noted that:

Fabienne: *We get fish and chips or McDonalds. McDonalds is like where we have to go out and we have a bus ticket so we just go to McDonalds because I won't pay buses just to go to McDonalds.*

This treat enabled them to get a toy for the child and a light, clean space for her child to play. In contrast, Ife had a preference for cooking food in the house, but felt guilty at not being able to go out for food with her son:

Ife: *The thing is that I don't have that extra resources to give him treats... I feel bad, we pass through McDonalds, we pass through KFC. He doesn't know what that is, kids keep crying, 'Mummy, I want to go in there' he keeps asking why are they crying because he doesn't know what the fast food is, because instead of me to go spend 4 or £5 there for him, I prefer to buy food in the house and cook, because if I make him get used and know what that is called, and I'm in this situation, it's going to break my heart because there might be times he want it and I wouldn't have the money on me to buy for him, so I make. I don't introduce him to such things because I don't have the resources to give it to him. So he don't know what that is, so it's what I cook.*

In contrast, for those who were living in temporary accommodation without access to cooking facilities, fast food takeaways could provide a cheap way of ensuring a child had a meal. The most common living location for participants who were interviewed was the temporary bed and breakfast accommodation that children's services placed families in. In this area there were 20 takeaway establishments within a 0.5 mile radius (See Table 40).

Table 38: Number and types of takeaway within 0.5 mile radius of local authority funded bed and breakfast accommodation.

Type of Takeaway	Number
Pizza	5
Jamaican	3
Fried chicken	3
Kebab	2
Chinese	2
Bakery	2
Fish and Chips	1
Hamburgers	1
'Sub' style sandwiches	1
TOTAL	**20**

Many of these takeaway establishments provided cheap, fatty, carbohydrate heavy meal deal offers at prices lower than would be able to be provided by families themselves. Figure 9 shows the window display in a chicken shop on the road adjacent to the accommodation.

7.2 Other Access

Access to food was difficult, which exacerbated food insecurity. However, families also disclosed other areas of life where they struggled to access support in healthcare, immigration advice, and in education and training. Although not immediately related to food, they were part of a wider context where families were not able to access what they needed to secure an adequate standard of health and wellbeing.

7.2.1. Access to Healthcare

Undocumented migrants are not entitled to NHS secondary healthcare, although are able to register with a GP and receive emergency care. Nonetheless, not every interviewee was accessing healthcare, or if they did, could not afford to pay for it, including medication that had been prescribed by a GP:

> Zekia: *For myself, I can't get any free prescriptions at all... I haven't been able to take my anti-depressant tablets, which I really shouldn't stop without doctor's advice, and sometimes you don't really feel* [pause] *I do try, I don't want him to feel like, you*

know, but you don't feel yourself, you're just like... some days I don't feel like getting up, you don't want to engage with… I struggle to get out of bed sometimes, you know, it's hard!

It was unusual for participants to be refused access to primary care, but it was more frequent to have to pay for prescription costs, meaning there was less money available for food:

Eralia: *I went to doctor, they don't refuse me, because I'm paying, I've got to pay now so they're not allowed to refuse me.*

For those with chronic illnesses this was a substantial strain on household budgets:

Akin: *My wife is on medication, blood pressure at the moment, yeah and it's a continuous taking, so every month they don't deliver, but we go and pick up there, so every... It's two medication, it's £16.80 a month, yeah so we buy from that money they give us.*

This meant that some families resorted to avoiding prescription medication, sometimes for quite serious medical issues:

Zekia: *I was experiencing chest pain, and I rang NHS direct and I had to go into A and E and yeah, when I go they did all the tests and they did all the X-ray and all that and I was asked to… I was given a prescription which I couldn't afford to collect from the pharmacist and I didn't take the medication… I still have the problem, I have to take a paracetamol instead of what I was prescribed.*

Others had conditions which were less serious, but which still had an impact on quality of life:

Chibundo: *At the moment, my glasses I need to change them, but because I'm not on mainstream benefits I can't, and I stopped taking my anti-depressant because I can't afford to be paying £8 every month to collect my prescription. So yeah, there are so many things that I can't. I don't have £20 to go for sight test, so I haven't had my eyes tested for three or four years now.*

As a result of the expense of healthcare, some preferred to use traditional remedies for physical health complaints such as toothache:

Abedi: *No, I only have to pay for dentist, but he wouldn't pay but I have to pay for dentist, so a few weeks ago, I had a problem with my teeth, but I just treated it the way I can, gargled my mouth with salt, with lemon, eat some lemon, eat some mints, you know, just like that and I felt better because I know I can't, I'm not entitled to dental services, I know that. When I was an asylum seeker, I have an exemption certificate for everything, but here no, it's just your GP and that's it.*

This blurring of the line between medicine and traditional remedies resonates with the experience of Sylheti women in Bangladesh where the division between food and traditional medicine was sometimes unclear (Jennings et al., 2015). However, for those who were able to access formal healthcare, the experience of the NHS was generally positive (unlike the experience of children's services - see 6.6.3). Tambara's perspective was typical:

It's been good, because anytime I call to book an appointment I always get it. Doctors, GP's have been fantastic, you know. Yeah. They've been good because sometimes, I was surprised.

Whether or not participants had access to health services, physical health complaints were common amongst participants' households:

> Eralia: *I have back pain, I have terrible back pain and it comes down in my leg and going up my knee.*

Sometimes these health problems were more serious:

> Akin: *My wife because she has this HIV, so they are going for the medication every month.*

Children were also affected by physical ill health. Chibundo had bronchitis, Chibundo's daughter was asthmatic, and Akin's daughter was born premature with resulting complications:

> Akin: *My child was born premature. So […] when we are in London every four months, this routine check-up.*

Research by MIND into the mental health of refugees and asylum seekers suggests that immigration policy itself creates an environment which both exacerbates existing mental health problems, and causes distress (MIND, 2009). This also appeared to be the case for this cohort of undocumented migrants. Problems with sleeping due to stress or anxiety were a common complaint for parents, even if they did not self-identity this as a health problem:

> Abedi*: Health problems, no, but me, I usually don't sleep too much because I'm thinking too much so I have medication. I'm taking the prescription from GP to make me sleep, but these days I stop taking it because I sleep too much and I don't check him at night because I'm used to checking him when he's sleeping, so I just stay awake all night sometimes, sometimes in a week I don't sleep […] yeah a whole week I won't sleep, I can just nap in the afternoon, just two hours like, nicely, or at night,*

I'm like not happy. I'm not sick, I'm young, I can work, and I have, you know the strength to do anything but I can't.

Even where insomnia was not identified as a health concern, participants attributed it to the stress of their undocumented status:

Zekia: *I think it* [the insomnia] *is just because of stress, that I was going through.*

For Akin, the stress resulted in physical symptoms and his wife's miscarriage:

Akin: *My wife is not happy as well, it affect my wife, ever since we lost that baby, still because of the stress of what we are passing through, because of the immigration issue so on the process we lost the baby.*

A lot of the stress and depressive symptoms which were described were directly related to immigration status and the experience of fearing deportation, or waiting to hear back from the Home Office about an immigration application:

Gabrielle*: It stresses me out a lot* [...] *if I see a car parked on my street in front of my house, I used to feel very scared thinking that they're watching me or, you know, somebody's going to come and get me. Yeah, it really scared me, I was in depression and one time I had to be in the hospital to get advice and all that, but I'm off it now. But I'm still worried not until they've decided what they're going to do.*

Ella also spoke about the stress of waiting to hear if she would be returned to Jamaica:

Ella: *Pretty stressful sometimes, because you don't know what's going to happen, you know? I gave up everything, my job and where I was living back in Jamaica, and for them to refuse us, that, you know, saying that we can't stay here anymore, I don't even know what I would do if they just send us back home because I'll have nowhere*

to go. And that is a bit stressing sometimes, when you think about it, you, now, for a

while, what's going to happen?

Parents worried about the psychological impact on children and so in some cases tried to

hide their immigration status from them:

Fabienne: *My daughter is fine despite all the stress I got, I've been depressed and*

being I am always in a lot of stress and anxiety but I'm not showing to her so she's

fine, she's yeah, she's...she is really fine. That's the main thing.

Wanting to protect children and keep them safe was a key motivation for carrying on, even

when under severe stress and feelings of hopelessness:

Delyse: [It is a] *really horrible situation to be in. Sometimes you just don't know what*

to do. Where to go, who to turn to? I mean, I know a lot of people in the same

situation like myself think of even committing suicide cos they just don't want, I mean

you think of going back home, but when you're stuck with the kids and all of that it's

a very hard decision to make, so you try to, you know, find a way to survive here.

The long-term impact of ongoing precarious immigration status took an emotional toll on

parents:

Tambara: *I've never had a good life. Even if there's one day when I'm enjoying myself,*

I don't think I've ever had a good life. It's been so hard, life is so tough. I've never had

a good life, it's so stressful.

Chibundo: *I just don't feel like getting out of bed, I don't have the strength, so it kind*

of affects a lot of things. You know, sometimes you know they ask you question:

Mummy, when is this going to end?' You don't know so you can't help them, at the

same time, you want to keep that happy face in front of them, but deep down, you're

actually crying.

7.2.2 Access to Immigration Advice

The closure of immigration support agencies such as Refugee and Migrant Justice and the Immigration Advisory Service, and the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders (LASPO) Act (2012) which removed most immigration work from the scope of legal aid reduced the availability of immigration advisors in Birmingham. Nonetheless, complaints against immigration advisors were rare amongst the participants in the study. However, one family did refer to difficulties with contacting their immigration advisor, which could delay access to other services:

Akin: *Yeah, actually, what we are facing now, we are not really happy because, err, the particular person this is handling our case for us is not responding to us anymore. So we try to get it confirmed with him, we're writing messages, calling the phone, being in the office, but there's no response. So, at the moment we don't really know where we're standing.*

Affordable, reliable immigration advice was essential to be able to regularise immigration status, and to gain access to other services (Petch et al., 2015). However, since LASPO, immigration work has been out of scope for legal aid, making routes into regularisation or to challenge immigration decisions difficult to access for people facing destitution and without private means. The money needed to pay for immigration advisors and applications for leave to remain was a huge burden for household budgets, especially given the large amounts involved – the cost of an application for limited leave to remain in the UK is currently £1,033 per person (UKVI, 2019).

Gabrielle's experience was typical. She could not afford the fees to instruct an immigration solicitor, so came to the only immigration advisor in Birmingham who was able to offer free immigration advice at level 3 of OISC registration. She was also unable to pay someone to represent her at her immigration tribunal.

Chibundo's experience was unusual because she was able to pay because of her friend who was a solicitor – an unusual and striking example of reciprocal support from friends and family:

> Chibundo: *My solicitor I had was my best friend from like school days, so they did my application the first time I was only able to pay for my immigration fees which my friend has sponsored that, but my friend at the time was working with a firm and he was an immigration lawyer at the time, so it was very helpful, so I didn't have to pay my first application.*

7.2.3 Access to Education and Training

In the UK, as in the USA, compulsory age schooling is an area where undocumented migrant children are not formally barred because of their immigration status, and face many of the same opportunities as their peers, and compared to adulthood is a relatively protected time, after which they 'transition' to precarity as they move through childhood to adolescence and adulthood (Gonzales et al., 2019). However, even in school they faced informal barriers such as lack of access to free school meals, and many participants described being turned away or asked for immigration documents when applying for post compulsory education:

> Chandice: *Yeah I did go to the college once and they started asking me for my immigration status. I couldn't provide that all I had was to leave.*

Although undocumented children are entitled to compulsory age schooling, accessing education could be difficult when there was competition for school places, or when families had temporary addresses:

> Khadijah: *Education I have problem because Asyah need to continue year six. I applied in three schools and they said she is number one in the list, and she didn't go year six. Year six finished and she stay in the house. Then year seven they give me two schools without names.*

For adults wanting to update their skills, having to pay college course fees was almost impossible, making it difficult to learn new skills:

> Zekia: *I love to work with children, and I did go to Walsall college, I like to do teaching assistant NVQ and I was told the funding has been cut, I can't I have to pay for it and its £1400 where will I get that from? and I have to pay for DBS, and all that, I have to look from a school, which is my problem really, there's no way I can get £1400 to pay for NVQ 2 which if it was possible for me, it would have been, you know, something when my visa comes out I would be able to go straight to work and support my children and support myself, so when my visa comes out now, I don't know where I'm going to start because I have to look for a job and be able to* [inaudible].

Whilst issues around access to education for undocumented migrants is well documented in the literature from the USA, both in terms of school age (Green, 2003) and post compulsory education (Drachman, 2006), they have been less well documented in the UK. However, the evidence from interviews suggests that there are also issues amongst UK undocumented migrants with access to education and training.

7.3 Conclusion

Families were not able to access the things they needed for an adequate standard of living. This was most striking in their ability to access to food, where emergency food aid such as food banks were underutilised, and distance from food shops made it difficult to shop. Conversely, the food that was available in their areas was often unhealthy but cheap and available fast food.

Inability to access a healthy diet was exacerbated by difficulties with accessing healthcare, and the ability to find a way out of this situation was restricted by lack of access to good quality immigration advice, which would have helped families to regularise their status, and education or training which could have provided opportunities for gaining skills and potential future employment opportunities if leave to remain was granted.

Chapter Eight: Abundance

Although food insecurity was an issue for the vast majority of participants, not all families were food insecure using the USDA 18-item scale. One household was marginally food secure, and two had high food security. This was a small minority of participants, but nonetheless an experience that was present amongst families in the study. During the interviews it became apparent that, even for those who were food insecure, insecurity was not a constant experience, but varied over time of year depending on fluctuating incomes and access to food aid; in fact despite the obvious lack of access to food, and experience of abandonment, there were also examples of families who were thriving under difficult circumstances, and examples where at times, families experienced what could be described as abundance. This was particularly apparent in the semi-structured interviews, and the follow up photo elicitation with the children in two of the families also produced some particularly striking examples of how this experience of abundance could work on a day to day basis. It is not suggested that this was the usual experience of families in the study, as the USDA HFS results and semi structured interviews in Chapter Five attest. However, a minority of families experienced abundance for the majority of the time, and a majority of families experienced this for a minority of the time. This theme of abundance could be seen in the variety of food that families could access (8.1); the ability to choose food (8.2), and the consumption of healthy food (8.3).

8.1 Variety of Food

Fahmida described a photo she had taken of a variety of food she had eaten for her evening meal (Figure 10):

Fahmida: *We've got salad and we've got chapattis, and we've got a curry and we've got drinks and water.*

AJ*: Great, and is that, what was it that made you want to take a picture of that?*

Fahmida: *I just... liked it.*

AJ*: So is that a typical kind of food, meal that you eat?*

Fahmida: *Yeah, yeah. We eat this quite a lot.*

Figure 10: Salad, chapatti and curry (Fahmida)

In another picture Fahmida again gave an example of an evening meal which showed a variety of home cooked food and large portion sizes (Figure 11):

Fahmida*: This is the potatoes and herbs and that stuff, and this is the sweet dish, this is rice, these are kebabs, this is salad, and I don't remember what that is, and that's when my cousins came.*

Memona*: …and that's curry.*

AJ*: What's in the curry?*

Fahmida*: There's chicken, some oil and herbs and stuff like that.*

Figure 11: Biryani, chicken, sweet dish and drinks (Fahmida)

8.2 Choice of Food Eaten for Breakfast

During the photo elicitation interviews, there was evidence of a variety of foods being eaten and some element of choice in the food that was eaten by children, even in families who were food insecure. This can be seen, for instance, in the following exchange when

discussing Figure 12 during a photo interview with Ama (9), where she ate breakfast everyday, and was able to have a choice of food:

> AJ: *Ok great, so what about this one? This is number two.*
>
> Ama*: Coco pops.*
>
> AJ: *Yeah, I thought so, and why did you take that one?*
>
> Ama: *It's my favourite cereal.*

Figure 12: Ama's bowl of Coco Pops

Fahmida (12) was in a family that was food insecure, and she also chose to take photographs of her breakfast (Figure 13), representing the variety of food that she ate for breakfast, even if this was not always the healthiest:

Fahmida*: This was my breakfast, and toast and egg and beans and tea, and I thought I would just take a picture of it to have something different.*

AJ*: So contrasting different meals of the day, yeah? So is that the type of breakfast you have every day, or is that a special occasion, or…?*

Fahmida: *Only sometimes, sometimes I have tea and biscuits, and stuff like that.*

Figure 13: Fahmida's breakfast

8.3 Healthy Food

Previous research indicates that the price of healthy food has increased in comparison to other food types since 2001 (Jones et al., 2014), making healthy diets more difficult to maintain for low income households. When asked about the types of food they bought, a majority (nine) of parents emphasised a preference for healthy food, and in common with

research with other migrant populations in the UK, there appeared to be a good awareness of the importance of healthy eating (Castaneda-Gameros et al., 2018):

> AJ*: What is your typical diet for you and your family? What's your typical things that you're eating?*
>
> Alvita*: What do I buy? I would buy like grocery shopping, vegetables and fruits normally, but it is not every week I go and buy the same things. I've mixed, I normally buy fruit every two weeks because she love her fruit… So you have to constantly give them vitamins to keep them going.*

Most parents said they regularly cooked at home (although it wasn't always clear whether this was a positive preference or for reasons of cost). This was corroborated by the photo elicitation exercise with children who included photographs of home cooked food and fresh fruit, vegetables and salads (Figure 14):

> Fahmida*: That's salad, and cucumber, I just thought it looked really cool* [inaudible].
>
> AJ*: Ok, and is that a food that you have often?*
>
> Fahmida*: Yeah, I eat salad a lot.*

Fabienne explained what a typical meal was for her pre-school daughter:

AJ*: What kind of things are you cooking?*

Fabienne*: Just like chicken breast, or a bit of lamb in puree, yeah, just meat and vegetables, that's what she eat. Yeah, or meat and pasta, things like that.*

These simple, low cost, healthy but repetitive meals were frequently referred to, and in both photo interviews with children, there were examples of these types of foods:

Alma*: It's* [Figure 15] *a photo of my mum's homemade rice.*

AJ*: Very nice, and so there's some salad. What's that, is that chicken?*

Alma*: Yeah.*

Figure 15: Rice, chicken and salad with portion control (Alma)

8.4 Conclusion

The theoretical implications of the apparent paradox of abundance are discussed in Chapter

Ten using the concept of 'hospitable environments' and contrast with the findings of Hayes-

Conroy and Sweet, (2015) where displaced rural women in Medellin Columbia, found the

urban foodscape to be unfulfilling and inadequate, being based on purchase of food, rather

than the more mixed foodscape they had previously experienced before migration, where

they had less experience of the modern industrialised food production system. While in the

pilot study for this research, reference was made by families to rural foodscapes in their

country of origin (Jolly, 2018b), the participants in this study instead appeared to have

brought elements of a sharing economy and participatory, mutual sharing which was

essential to maintaining nutritional input when food insecure, but also was emblematic of a

different cultural understanding of food and its role beyond mere nutrition (Hayes-Conroy

and Sweet, 2015).

Chapter Nine: Agency

Despite the structural conditions which govern undocumented migrants' lives, such as the experience of everyday bordering (Yuval-Davis et al., 2018) which prevented access to a range of services, and the abandonment by the services which could have been expected to safeguard their welfare, in other ways, families exercised agency. However, there were not examples of the formation of formalised NGO's as observed by Bailey (2012). This did not mean that families did not exercise agency in other, more subtle ways. This was expressed differently by children (9.1) and adults (9.2) within families, however, and was seen in both attitudes (9.3) to the situation in which families found themselves, and in behaviours (9.4).

9.1 Children's Agency

Children's lives were governed by circumstances beyond their control even more than adults, but the exercise of personal agency was exercised in smaller, everyday ways. Lind (2017) has written about the way in which children's political agency manifests in their lives in mundane, even banal ways. This was observed in the interviews, where minor decisions such as food choices by children represented conscious decisions to affirm their agency.

9.1.1 Children's Food Preferences

Sometimes there was friction between the types of food parents wanted or could afford, and children's food preferences. Although Alvita's daughter had a strong preference for fruit and vegetables, others preferred less healthy alternatives. When asked which foods were her favourite and least favourite out of the photographs she had taken, Alma expressed a clear preference for hot food, rather than breakfast cereals and sandwiches:

Alma: *These three are my top, but my first one will be that one and that* [points to cooked meals]. *These two are my least favourite. I do like it, but it's not really tasty, it's just breakfast* [Points to 'Coco Pops' photo].

In some households, parents found themselves compromising between their children's preference for 'English' fast food, and more healthy food:

Ella*: Well, for me, I like to drink a lot of water, I don't take much sweets, I don't eat no junk food or snack food or stuff like that, and I do the same for my son as well, the only thing I will give him is the sort of chippy thing because I know he likes it, but I make sure he have his fruits, his vegetables and other stuff as well.*

Fahmida emphasised the healthy nature of the food she was eating both at home and school, and was clearly aware of the health benefits of different foods:

Fahmida: *We eat a lot of stuff, yeah, at school, I eat fruits and healthy stuff, and at home I eat quite healthy too.*

However, when Fahmida's mother, Memona, was asked about her daughter's food preferences, there was a difference in opinion:

Memona: *Yeah, she like English food, I have a little bit of English life, but not too much, and Fahmida, every time 'Mum, no chips, err, fish fingers!'* [laughs].

One mother had tried to find a compromise between the traditional food she was used to, and the contemporary British food that her daughter wanted which was within the household food budget:

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Leah: *Yeah I would give her a bit more of my Caribbean food in her daily eating, that's the only thing, and give her a variety of like what she like, like pizza and stuff, and chips* [inaudible] *we just have to live on what we have.*

However, Alma herself expressed a clear preference for less healthy food:

AJ: *ok, and is there anything that you like to eat, that you haven't taken a picture of here?*

Alma: *Chips!*

AJ: *Ok, what do you like about chips?*

Alma*: because it's nice and it's made out of potatoes and I have the chicken nuggets* […] *I like it with mayonnaise.*

AJ: *Do you? That's nice. And when do you have them?*

Alma: *Once in a while.*

Even where food was home cooked and prepared, this dynamic can be seen in one of the photographs that Alma had taken where her mother had made food with grated carrot and salad and Alma had covered them with a large helping of mayonnaise (See figure 16):

Attempts to introduce healthy foods were sometimes met with strong opposition from children:

AJ: *Ok, and is there anything that you don't like to eat that you haven't taken picture of here? Your mum's laughing here! – is there a lot of things that you don't want to eat?*

Alma: *I don't like porridge, or oats.*

AJ: *Ok, why don't you like them?*

Alma: *They make me feel sick... I don't like going near them because the smell makes me want to throw up!*

In contrast, Alma expressed a clear preference for food from fast food outlets:

Alma: *When I was younger I always wanted to work in McDonalds.*

Mother: *She used to be like, 'I want to work in McDonalds'. And I'm like, well yeah, I can understand, 16 years old, like work experience, they probably need, waiting to go to Uni, while away some time there, but I did a bit, when I was London to while away the time, but I was trying to become [inaudible] but because she thinks she's going to work, she's going to have access to sweets, ice cream, and I'm like, if you work there you won't feel like eating because you see it every day…*

AJ: *What is it that you would like about working there?*

Alma: *If I could cook and have some chicken nuggets. I like McFlurry best.*

9.1.2 Children did not Want Traditional Food from Parents' Country of Origin

As with healthy eating, most children did not want to eat traditional foods that their parents offered them:

Alvita: *My kids? Yeah, because they don't, for them they would be eating, I cook like my Jamaican food, they don't like that. They would rather, I give them mostly bottled milk, crisps and all of that. Because that's what they want.*

AJ: *It's interesting, a lot of people have said that they have Jamaican food, or from wherever they came from, and their kids don't…*

Alvita: *They don't, I don't know why. You're trying to give them and they don't want it, and sometimes you go to nursery and they tell me that she eat this and she eat that and if I prepare it, she won't eat it. The same thing that they give her at nursery, if I give it to her she won't. So I don't know what's that, sometime I told her that. I*

don't think she eat her dinner because I give it to her and she don't. But I'd rather

cook my own food. If it's either yam, dumpling, whatever, I'd rather cook [in] my little

house, but they don't want that.

Despite Ama's mother's attempts to cook traditional African food, Ama preferred more westernised food (Figure 17 and 18):

AJ: *Ok, and why did you take that sandwich, why did you take a picture of it…?*

Alma*: I just like having sandwiches, but I've forgotten which filling was in it.*

AJ: *Ok, what's your favourite filling?*

Alma*: Butter and jam.*

Figure 17: Butter and jam sandwiches (Alma)

AJ: [Figure 18] S*o what do you have with your jacket potato?*

Alma: *I have cheese with it, my mum puts butter and then beans and then she puts salad.*

AJ: *Ok, and how often do you have that?*

Alma: *Not all the time. In my old school I don't think I tried it, I've always wanted to try it but they won't let me try it, and then one day I was like, let me try it, and then it was so nice because I like to have the beans first, then the cheese on top so then the cheese can melt into the beans, but my mum does it the other way.*

Figure 18: Jacket potato with beans and salad (Alma)

Despite having very different food preferences in most cases, parents usually expressed that they ate the same meals together with their children:

Akin: *Yeah, we eat the same things, yeah, because they're our kids, yeah, we eat the same things but at times if you give them the food [inaudible] they will not feel happy to eat, but when they're eating with their parents, they're happy to eat, so that is why.*

Ella*: So, yeah, certain things that I don't give to him, like Jamaican foods, there's certain some things that I don't give to him, in Jamaican food, I might try for him to have his British meal, as possible. Well, she's not eating yet because she's still a baby.*

The contrast between parental food options and the more westernised preferences of children was illustrated by Fahmida's lack of interest in the English names of Pakistani foods

AJ: *So what food is that?*

Fahmida: *I don't know what it's called in English, it's got, potatoes, peas, and herbs and stuff in it.*

And later:

Fahmida*: This is a sweet dish, and, it's I don't know what it's called, but it's got milk and, like brown like string things in it.* (Figure 20)

Fahmida: *This* [Figure 20] *is, I don't know why people do this, but my mum makes like yoghurt and she adds cucumber and a few other like vegetables to it, and we put it over our rice.*

Figure 20: Yoghurt and cucumber

Much has been written about the role of food in creating and sustaining cultural identities (Chapman and Beagan, 2013; D'Sylva and Beagan, 2011), and on the particular importance of food in promoting identities in diasporic communities (Mintz, 2008; Raman, 2011; Vallianatos and Raine, 2015). In one sense the exercising of food choices by children can be seen as an example of the acculturation of the (mostly) British born children, in contrast to the resistance of their migrant parents. Previous research has suggested that children's food preferences tend to be fixed at an early age (Skinner et al. 2002; Scaglioni, 2018), suggesting that children who were born in the UK (such as Alma) might be more likely to choose food which is associated with the UK than those (such as Fahmida) who spent their early years in a different country.

Where, for parents, cooking familiar food was a key marker of cultural identity, and a means of creating and sustaining a physical link with their heritage (Weller and Turkon, 2015), for children, this cultural marker was less important. In the context of a situation where most agency is assumed to be removed from children of undocumented migrants, the exercising of choice in relation to food can also be seen as a form of agency and control for children who otherwise would have little agency or control over their environment.

9.2 Parents' Agency

Parents also exercised agency, although this was shown in very different ways to their children – most often their decisions and motivations were expressed in terms of their children, rather than themselves. Concerns about children's futures and parental feelings of responsibility and of wanting a better life for them were frequently expressed. However, there was also a feeling that children, many of whom were UK born (Sigona and Hughes, 2012), had a different identity to their parents, a finding that was also observed in their food choices.

9.2.1 Holding Together for the Children

One coping strategy or means of exercising agency employed by parents was to 'keep going' for the sake of their dependent children. This can be seen in the difference between the adult and children household food security scales (discussed in 5.1 above), where parents chose to miss meals themselves to allow children to eat, but this strategy also applied to other areas, as discussed by participants in interviews. Ella was struggling with the breakup of the relationship with the father of her child, which had led to her becoming undocumented, but consciously decided to avoid thinking about it because of the impact it would have on her children:

Ella: *It hurts, but I try not to think about it because when I do, it breaks me down, you know, and, I just try to stop thinking about it, because when I do that, it will put another stress, and that's what I don't want because I want to be strong for these children, and that's what I'm doing, so.*

For Khadijah too, the choice of deferring her own thoughts and feelings in favour of a better life for her children was a part of coping with the situation she found herself in:

Khadijah: *No, I don't know. I can deal with that for now. But I maybe look for better for my children, but for this stage, no I can't be optimistic and say no everything will be okay.*

The ability to 'hold it together' was perceived to be vital for survival as a family unit. Abedi spoke about the impossibility of becoming mentally or physically ill if she was to keep the family together:

Abedi*: I'm not happy with the situation at all, but I just have to be strong because of him because if I fall sick and have some mental issues, I'm going to lose him so I just have to sometimes, I'm like, oh take it easy and be strong for him, he needs you.*

The impact on children was also given as a reason for staying in the UK. For Delyse, the thought of returning to Jamaica was not a problem for her, but she did not know how her British born children would fare:

Delyse*: That's the hardest decision to make when you have the kids, if you should go back home because, how you going to take care of them?*

Leaving the UK was therefore not seen to be in the children's best interests, despite the very real hardship which staying in the UK caused, and the impact on her mental health:

> Delyse*: You've no choice but to say, and battle it out with them, which is very frustrating when you have no income, when you can't get a job, and especially when you're a single parent - you know what I mean? I went into depression, you know after my second daughter was born, so it's been very hard.*

This parental perspective is an interesting inversion of Lind's (2019) observation of state actors in Sweden and the UK who attempt to argue for children's rights by characterising undocumented migrant parents as 'bad parents' for not returning to a country of origin. In contrast to these narratives, for many families in this study, staying in the UK with an irregular status was a rational choice to give their children better life chances. The finding from the interviews suggests that parents choose to stay in the UK, despite the hardships, and against their own interests, precisely because they believed that staying in the UK offered the best life and standard of living for their children. This also highlights the futility of 'hostile environment' policies which seek to influence migratory behaviour by in the words of one young person, 'making life impossible' (Dexter et al., 2016). For those with dependent children, hostile environment restrictions did not appear to influence behaviour, because, however difficult life was in the UK, it was seen as better for children than growing up in a low- or medium-income country which in many cases the child had never lived in.

9.2.2 Wanting a Better Life for their Children

One way that parents accessed agency was in making decisions about whether to stay in the UK with an irregular migration status, or to return to their country of origin. This was often framed in terms of what was best for the children, and the idea that children should have a better life was a big motivation for parents. It was commonly considered that children would have more opportunities growing up in the UK than in the parental country of origin.

Ella for instance used the example of access to Higher Education which she felt would have been harder for her children to access in Jamaica, where she had grown up:

> Ella: *That is very important to me for them to get educated, because I don't want them to become like me, I want them to be better than me, I want to see them, with God's grace to see them go to University, and be all that they could be. That would be a blessing to me, because I know within myself I say, yes, I did a good job, I did a good job, so yeah, that's it* [inaudible].

Gonzales et al. (2019) note the particular burden that children in undocumented migrant families face where they can be asked to take on extra shares of household burdens such as caring responsibilities for siblings and household chores in comparison to their citizen peers. For Abedi, the inability to enjoy normal children's activities such as birthdays was also mentioned as an example of the better life she wanted for her children:

> Abedi*: I would be very happy if I have a public fund, and move on with my life and you know, make my son happy, buy him all I want to buy for him, and do a better birthday for him, I've never done a birthday for him, because I don't have the resources to, it's heart-breaking isn't it?*

For others, the need to provide a better life for children was a factor in preventing them from engaging in crime or illegal working, which was seen a setting a bad example:

> Chibundo*: No. I'm not involving myself in anything that's not right, I've got to be a good example to children, then I know one day my problem will go away.*

The fact that, in many cases, children had developed roots in the UK was not lost on participants:

> Akin*: I have three kids, I came with one kid from Africa, when he was one year old, then I have two here now, and the one I came with from Africa is going to be eight years by next year, so and my second daughter, my daughter is five years, and the last brother is ten months. So, being that my case has been refused, I was thinking, if I can use any, maybe if my child is seven years in this country, then I can see it to firm up my case.*

Parents often referred to their children as having different national identities to themselves, in an example of "binational families" (Chavez, 1988), or as Lopez describes: "impossible families" (Lopez, 2015) whose mixed citizenship status illustrates the contradictions between the law and people's lived experience. For Chibundo's family the contradictions arose from the fact that although she was undocumented, her children had deep ties of identity to the UK, and had no 'home' other than the UK:

> Chibundo: *At the end of the day, they're going to get their British passports. They're going to become British. So when they're now 16, they're going to be adults, they're somehow going to contribute to the society. So what do we want from them? […] Whether the Home Office says go back to your country, if they go back to wherever their parents come from, one day they're going to be able to access British passports and they're going to come back here.*

Although Chibundo had experienced prejudice and discrimination in the UK, this was outweighed by the benefits of British citizenship which she hoped her children would one day receive. The ties of identity that the children felt to the UK transcended populist political discourses which 'othered' the children of migrants:

Chibundo: *So what the people in power are saying about children or the way they are portraying the so-called immigrants in front of the children has to change. It's really not right. They're going to be British one day, whether we like it or not.*

This was particularly acute for those with children who were UK born:

Khadijah: *Even with my children, but I'm going through bad thing with* [having] *no recourse to public fund*[s]. *I have three British children. Aliya was born here, the first one, born in this country but they have the right.*

Parents often had a different immigration status to their children, which added complications:

Gabrielle: *They* [The Home Office] *turned down my application, and I'm appealing now, my daughters, they've got their British passport, but they still, I don't know what they're doing.*

AJ: *Have the kids been to* [Jamaica]?

Gabrielle: *No, because they've just got their passport, this year, no late last year. Yeah, but I can't go because I haven't got mine and I haven't got the money because it's going to cost a lot of money for all three of us to go when the schools on holiday, it's going to be a long time before I can go.*

AJ: *And how do the kids feel about it? Do you talk to them about it?*

Gabrielle: *Yeah they keep asking me when we are going, I say well we can't go now because I haven't got my papers, and obviously you have to save up for the fare, but they really would love to take a flight to go, you know go on the plane, go see other family member, you know my grandparents, which they're not really well, you know I*

would love to get my status to see them before they pass away yeah [tearfully] *it's really really worrying at the moment.*

For those who had British children, this was seen as an eventual route to regularisation themselves:

Abedi: *Life is difficult for my son, and my son is British so I applied through my son to get the ten-year rule.*

Chibundo: *The application I made, because my daughter is British, and I apply based on parent route for the ten years parent route.*

This process could take time and expense though, and caused tension between siblings with different immigration statuses:

Chibundo: *They ask me questions. I mean, you know when I was trying to get my daughters... not just my children you know children, when I listen to them. When I was trying to get my daughter's naturalisation, and when we finally got the passport, my son said to me 'Mummy, that means I'm not British'. Then I say, 'Oh no, you are, It's just that you can't have your passport just now', and I always try to be positive, you know, tell them things that are good about the country.*

Even having British citizenship was not always enough for families to be able to access enough resources for a decent standard of living, especially when the parent(s) were still subject to immigration control. Others identified as British, but this did not always correspond to their legal status. This could come as a shock to some households:

Khadijah: *He* [her late husband] *told me, 'no, don't worry, you can enter British any time because you have children', and when the proof came, I cannot enter the country, I'm just waiting maybe one and a half month to get the visa and that.*

Khadijah: *"So not everything they say is true. Yes they said 'okay you are a Mum of British* [children], *you can enter the country' but I cannot enter the country, and it was* [an] *emergency for me, for a Mum you know, it was everything. It was* [an] *emergency.*

For those who had not regularised their status, the sense of belonging in Britain often outweighed previous national identity:

Gabrielle: *They keep saying that we can go back to Jamaica, the kids can go back, and fit in with the Jamaican life, which it would be hard, I left Jamaica* [in] *2000, and I haven't got parents that I can depend on, so I sort of fit in with this life here, you know, we can go and get cheap clothes, second hand clothes, cheap food, which you can't get that back home, you know I'm from the rural area, so it's going to be really difficult for the kids, I don't think they will cope well, and myself I think I will maybe go in depression or something, because I've been back since I've been here, and within two weeks I want to come back.*

This complexity of identification and belonging had an impact on children's wellbeing when they were old enough to understand:

Chibundo: *I could tell she's really angry sometimes, she's moody and you know my son will say 'What, you moody again? What's going on?' Sometimes she will be like 'Nothing' and sometimes she'll say 'Oh I miss my friends or 'I want to go back to London', why this or that, or 'why can't we go out?' you know, which is something, she would, children of that age would love to do. Or she wants her friends to visit her, that's what she used to do. You know, so now she really can't have that, so yeah, she is upset. The impact on the children is actually more, you know, some children don't*

actually talk about it, which I find that with her, she really doesn't want to talk about it, so that I don't get upset. So that I can't, it's something that I wouldn't want, I'm not happy that it's happening.

Children sometimes knew about their irregular immigration status, but wanted to protect their parents:

Chibundo: *"Ordinarily, she doesn't want to upset me, she wants to make sure. She knows I'm going through a lot. So she wouldn't want to hassle it, so you just see her sitting there in the corner, unhappy so she says 'Oh, I'm fine'. 'I'm ok'. She tries to distract herself. Well sometimes you just say things that you would know you can tell that she's really not happy. He has a different attitude, he knows what's going on, and I always have a very good conversation with him... He will talk about things, and the moment I explain this is how it is now, don't worry, it's not going to continue like this, he will just take it and carry on. He misses his friends too, you know, but the fact that he knows that I'm there to support him, I think that kind of suppress it more for him.*

Immigration status could impact on children in other ways, such as schooling:

Chibundo: *He's 10, so like, gosh, when we move house and got to stay with friends that was the first for her, so she drifted back, she was drifting back but I think it was like hearing things and not knowing she know, led to her not concentrating but since September she started a new school because she had to travel from East Road to North Hill for school, so it was a bit stressful...so like now she's striving, so her education is back, not where it was 100%, but I'd say a 98% improvement made since we've been in that one and she's changing school cos I went to parent evening like before the half term and everybody was, all the teachers and everybody wanted*

to congratulate me on her upbringing and her behaviours and everything and she's in the top group for everything now, in which, when she came from the other school she was lower in everything. So like now, she's like, I'd say she's 98% better, and she's awarded, what do you call it now, head captain for her school as well, so that's a little, I'd say it's a great achievement for her, that's what the head teacher said, so on that she's over the moon, so her education is not affected now..

9.3 Attitudes

An additional factor which was identified in the interviews was the attitude of the participant. It has been previously noted that families with an irregular status employed a coping strategy of resignation and resilience (Jolly, 2018b), and an optimistic attitude that improvements would happen in the future was a way of coping with difficult situations in the present which was repeatedly identified in the interviews.

9.3.1 Making the Best of Inadequate Accommodation

The problems of inadequate accommodation are outlined in 6.2.1 above, but despite these difficulties, there was sometimes a feeling of 'making do' expressed by participants. For instance, Ella was living in a flat which was noisy, and while this affected her quality of life, she resolved to concentrate on the small space which she did control, inside the confines of her flat:

Ella: I'm on the fifth floor, which is a two bedroom flat, oh gosh it's a noisy building! Very noisy building, but I try not to think about it as long as my door is closed, then I'm fine, I try to make it as child safety as possible for them. Just make sure my floor is clean, my kitchen is clean, the bathroom is... everything is… so I have to make sure it's all clean, because I'm that person where it has to be clean for them.

This acceptance of what participants felt unable to change is likely to have a positive emotional impact, as acceptance of negative emotional experiences has been associated with a reduction in negative affect, and the symptoms of depression (Shallcross et al., 2010; Troy et al., 2018).

9.3.2 Gratitude

A feeling of gratitude was commonly expressed by participants, even for those experiencing substandard services:

> Gabrielle*: Where we are supported by the no recourse to public fund team and I'm grateful that they've given us accommodation and they've given us £210 for two weeks* […] It*'s really really tough it's just lately since I've been no recourse to public funds given me this house that we can really settle down and you know, having a good lickle life, yeah, which I'm grateful, I'm just waiting.*

Chandice too expressed similar sentiments about her experience of children's services:

> Chandice: *They* [children's services] *were really helpful, which they provide a roof, and also give you money for clothes and food. I think they're really helpful for people in our situation, there's nowhere else to turn. They were like a safety net.*

Positive relationships with individual social workers were reported by some:

> Ionie*: That's what I'm saying, I'm happy with my social, and I really really adore her, honestly, and I really even tell myself, any time I get through, I'm going to give her a surprise. Yeah, I'm going to give her a surprise. Probably she not going to take it, but I'm definitely have to get her something, because she's a good, she's a nice woman. I'm really happy I don't see no problem because where I'm living now, I get three hundred, and they're paying £300 per week and I'm getting £156 every two weeks.*

Yeah, I'm really happy, honestly, I'm really happy. There's no problem. I'm really happy. Me and my social worker really get on really really well I can talk to her about anything. She's a good lady honestly, she's a good woman. That's what I'm saying, I'm really happy for the help because I can't help myself now. So, I'm really grateful for the help that they helping.

When her social worker was replaced, Abedi was forgiving of their replacement, even when they were not able to give her the help she needed:

Abedi*: My experience with them, the one I really really feel free with, that is really nice to me, is Chris, and he was changed, I don't know what happened, but he is no more social worker, so they gave me Tom. He's trying, I told him I wanted, look, I'm way up* [three flights of stairs] *I go shopping I climb up, I want to do washing... He tried, but it failed, I couldn't, so I don't know, it's difficult, but they are trying, I wouldn't say they are not trying, it's a hard job for them as well, they are really trying, I might not be the only person who put a complaint on his table, it might be up to ten, twenty, and he's got to fix everybody. For me, he's trying his best, because he's only human, isn't it? But, it's alright, it's fine.*

Others were more resigned, but still positive about what little help they received:

Tambara*: "So, I went there and they put us in a hotel hostel place, and now they gave us accommodation. They've been helpful, I have to be grateful. within two weeks I have to pay £60. It's so hard, and I have to buy them jacket, buy school uniform from this everything, sometimes it's not all what they want to eat, but what you want to eat, you can't get, so it's tough, but I don't have to complain much, you just have to be grateful. So I'm grateful for the little I'm getting from children's services. It might*

be little but it's still ok. I can't complain too much, in my country they don't give you

this. I'm ok, and I'm so grateful.

These experiences are in stark contrast to the findings in Chapter Six about the abandonment and inadequate support provided for families with NRPF, and the findings in the literature about poor support and discriminatory attitudes amongst social workers (Dexter et al., 2016; Farmer, 2017). However, this response of 'resilience and resignation' again was a factor which likely mitigated the negative impact of situations such as poor wellbeing and low food security, given the extensive literature from the field of social psychology about the positive impact on wellbeing of gratitude (Algoe et al., 2008; Emmons and Crumpler, 2000; Wood et al., 2010).

9.3.4 Budgeting

Despite popular characterisations of the poor generally, and migrants in particular, rather than being feckless, participants survived by strictly adhering to extremely tight budgets (Lansley and Mack, 2015).
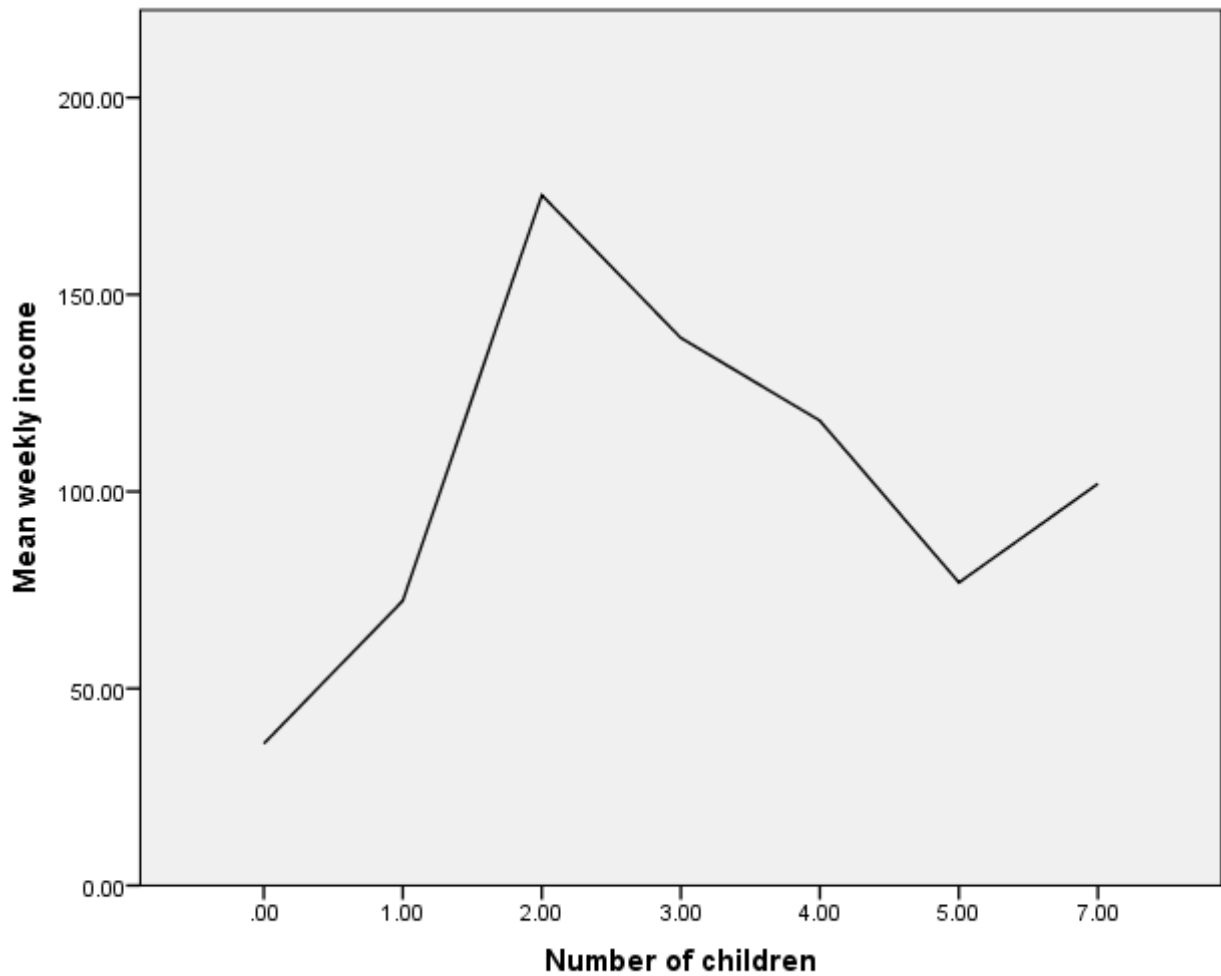
The mean weekly income for families was £120.25, and income ranged from no regular income at all (11 participants), to £500 per week (one participant). Surprisingly, the size of family was not a reliable predictor of income. While mean household income increased up to the second child, the mean income dropped for every child after that (with a slight rise for families with seven children). This is probably accounted for by local authority subsistence support policies which penalise larger families. For instance, a freedom of information request to Birmingham Children's Trust revealed that subsistence rates were £40 per week for a family's first child, but £30 for each subsequent child (Appendix 4).

In order to survive on low or in some cases no regular income at all, it was necessary to become adept at budgeting:

> Ionie: *The 10 litre rice is for about £5.60, you get where I'm coming from now? Three pampers for the baby is for £10. three pack of wipes is for £6.20, and then the rest you can go shopping, buy little tings in tin, you're still going to have tinned things on the shelf, you're not going to buy everything one time. So the next two weeks you prepare yourself, if the baby want the pants, you can buy the pants from it, you can buy the cup from it, at least you know where you're going.*

However, even with the ability to make food last, keeping to household budgets could still prove difficult:

> Ionie: *So that is a good* [inaudible] *for them to help you out with, but at one point when I was just moving and receiving that I said oh it was, it was so small. Cause you want to buy pampers you want to buy all these things for the baby and for yourself, but what, that's what I'm saying, it's to how you spend the money is received to you, you get where I'm coming from, because you're not going to buy the same thing every two weeks going because you're going to get food on top of food going. You get that where I'm coming from now. Because if you buy pampers this week the baby not going to use three pack of pampers for two weeks, so you still have pampers and carry on go to the other week until the next pay week. You get where I'm coming from?*

9.3.5 Work Ethic

A striking finding was the work ethic of participants, which as with household budgeting, differed from popular narratives about 'scroungers' (Tihelková, 2015). When asked the reason for her focus on hard work, Ella explained:

> Ella: *It came from back home, because back home we have to work we don't sit there and depend on people, oh I don't have to work because she's going to come and give*

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me suttin, no you go and get it, you go and work and you go and get, or else you starve. You go hungry if you don't go out there and get it. Work! And get it. And I'm so glad that I live in that kind of lifestyle you know, because I can pass it on to my children, you don't sit on your behind and collect [firmly] *you go to work! As long as you're able and you're not disabled go, and work, that's' me* […] *I seen my mother do it and it was just her, I mean I don't know how she did it but she did it, now I say to myself she brought up some really strong children, I made a few mistakes in the way I chose this person, and that person, you know, who knows, you never know oh that person's going to change in time, and that, you don't know.*

This work ethic was frequently contrasted by participants with others who were deemed as having less of a work ethic, a perception which caused resentment:

Abedi*: There is no way I would be given public funds and decide to stretch my hands and leg and don't do.... I don't know how those women behave, I don't know why because they made it like this for us you know, it's really difficult, I really, I'm not lazy, I want to do something I'm not lazy at all, I would be very happy if I have a public fund, and move on with my life.*

This resentment was exacerbated by the inability to work because of restrictions in the immigration rules:

Chibundo*: Yes. I'd love to work with children, and I did go to Walsall College to do teaching assistant NVQ2, and I was told the funding has been cut, I have to pay for it, and it's £1,400 so, where will I get that from? And I have to pay for DBS and all that, I have to look for a school which is my problem really. There's no way I can get £1,400 to pay for NVQ2, which if it was possible for me, it would have been you know*

something when my visa comes I'll be able to go straight to work. I'll be able to

support my children, I'll be able to support myself. So when my visa comes out now I

don't know where I'm going to start because I have to look for a job where I'll be able

to work round that.

Unlike findings from research with other groups of people experiencing poverty (Pemberton et al., 2016), there was no indication of internalising stigma or narratives of deservingness. On the contrary, participants repeated the narratives of 'shirkers and strivers', but did not perceive themselves in this role, a finding which resonates with Minkoff-Zern and Carney's (2015) findings amongst Latino migrants in the US where there was a dislike of 'freeloaders' and a work ethic; and even where migrants were entitled to welfare, there was a reluctance to claim entitlements.

9.3.6 Mutual Aid

Bailey (2012) has written about the ways that African migrant women exercise agency and solidarity through grassroots networks of support, and support for informal systems of mutual aid were a common attitude encountered in the interviews. Surviving without a regular income involved relying on support from friends and acquaintances:

AJ*: You said a bit about your experience of destitution, so when you were in that situation but before you got your papers, how did that feel?*

Chibundo*: It wasn't the end of the road, because you know it's going to get better which you tell yourself, you know what, you've got to strive for more, and I had friends at the time that used to help me, they wasn't destitute, they've got good jobs, they was British citizens, so they help out, now and again. It was* [pause] *it was ok, yeah* [reflectively] *yeah, it was.*

AJ*: Ok, did that change when you had your baby?*

> Chibundo: *When I had my baby, you know you meet people and you say, oh yes, you thought it was the right person, and they promise to help you. He didn't help, but you still didn't give up, you still fight, try, always wanting better for you and your child, because you try to give your child what you didn't have, what. Sometimes you know, Christmas comes around, you haven't got a gift, but if you can buy a little something, you know, at least that cheered them up. Yeah when I got my daughter - rough, it get better, then it get rough, it get better, then it get rough, yeah.*

9.4 Risky Behaviour

In the context of abandonment by the services which would otherwise provide support, some people engaged in behaviours which could be regarded as risky in order to survive. Although these were an example of agency, and were often regarded by participants as a necessary means of subsistence in the absence of access to other resources, they undoubtedly put participants at risk of harm to themselves which had the potential to make their situation worse.

9.4.1 Transactional Sexual Relationships

The prevalence of trafficking across international borders for sex work is well documented, and Pai's (2013) investigative journalism highlights the ease to which young women with a precarious migration status and no right to legal employment can become part of the sex industry. This was also observed by Crawley et al.'s research into the coping strategies of destitute asylum seekers (Crawley et al., 2011). However, none of the participants disclosed this during interviews, perhaps due to the stigma of disclosing this to a male stranger. However, what did emerge was a number of instances of sexual relationships which, while not described as sex work by participants, were overtly transactional in nature, with extremely unequal power relations:

> Delyse*: Yeah, you had to, so for instance, I had the boy first, then I end up having a little girl because I got involved with somebody just to make two ends meet really, you know what I mean, and really and truly you don't… You didn't want to do that, but then you find yourself doing things.*

Not being able to leave relationships because of the risk of destitution was a big factor, and for Delyse ultimately resulted in the birth of her second child. However, such relationships could end abruptly when they became inconvenient for one party, and the birth of a child was a frequent example of this:

> Tambara*: Because when I had my daughter, this guy said, it's not a relationship, it's not this it's not that. I said 'Ok, if he has paper, and he's ok. No paper, but I like him it's ok.' I don't mind if I can plan good things for myself, go back to school, but when I was pregnant with my daughter, I didn't know he was planning to* [get] *married. I didn't know he's planning that, he's getting married - in the process of this marriage. So when I called him and said I'm pregnant and he said 'Don't be stupid, how you can be dumb like that? You met me once, you say you're pregnant', then the next thing he said is, 'Sorry to disappoint you' and 'In two months I'm getting married.' To be honest, it's so tough. So then, I just, when I keep calling him, he doesn't pick the phone anymore. I just leave him to be. So when I had my daughter, that same day I had my daughter, I call him and I said I had a baby girl. I need help.*

9.4.2 Making Ends Meet

Not having enough resources to sustain a reasonable standard of living meant having to cut corners, especially when subsistence support was not enough for essentials such as transport or utility bills:

> Gabrielle*: I find it very hard, because, you know, surviving off that because all three of us have to get buses, so I have to get bus pass, and food… you know with school dinners. They used to give us extra £30 to top up but they cut that off so we have to take it from the £210 to top up our light and gas well, well if you get the help from the social services then at least you're not on the street, you're in a home where they pay your rent and all that, it's worth the wait, it's worth the wait, but you just… the money to live on is just not enough.*

Without a regular income, bills and other debt could stack up:

> Akin*: No, I was not working so any letter, electricity, water, every, I sent to the council, yeah. So I wasn't paying heating, but any letter like council tax, electricity, water, because my mobile phone is not working because I couldn't pay, so that one is my personal, so that letter, I ask them to cancel so I'm not using a contract phone.*

This took an emotional toll on families. Fahmida described it as 'not a good life' and children in particularly could be affected by this because they were not able to take part in 'normal' activities that other children were able to. Abedi talked about how she was not able to afford a birthday cake for her son's birthday, or how he cried when she was not able to buy a tree at Christmas. Even basic dignities such as hair care were not always possible because of a lack of funds, and this was a burden that fell particularly on those with African hair:

> Abedi*: It's very very very tough for me. I have to chop off my hair because I can't be making my hair and there is no point spending that kind of money when I've got hair. I, I literally look like this for my son to be happy, instead of me to buy essentials for making hair, I buy pairs of shoes so that he looks better.*

In this context, the need to maintain an income led people into a range of income

maintenance behaviours which were at the borders of criminality – 'hustling', as Abedi described it. This could be through informal work (see 9.4.3 below) or by using expired bus tickets saving costs on transport, 'dodgy daysavers' as one parent described in the pilot study for this research (Jolly, 2018b).

9.4.3 Informal Work

Lewis et al. (2015) discuss the prevalence of forced labour amongst those seeking asylum in the UK, and how labour exploitation practices are 'structured and sustained' by UK immigration policy itself. The prevalence of exploitative labour practices, which was referred to as a means of survival amongst participants in this research, suggests that the existence of forced labour and other exploitative work practices extends beyond asylum seekers to other precarious migrants. In addition, the inability of undocumented migrants who have not claimed asylum to access even section 4 'hard case' support from the Home Office makes them particularly vulnerable to labour exploitation.

As a result of being barred from formal employment because of their immigration status, many families worked in the informal economy in order to support themselves in the absence of access to mainstream social security. *"You try and work when you don't have the correct papers just to get money to survive"* (Chandice). While this was an option for single adults, working became more difficult for those with a dependent child to care for:

> Ionie*: I was working basically like cash in hand so I finish and I don't got no more, so I said you know what, because I've got the baby now, I have to slow myself down.*

As part of the iterative process of analysis, employment was identified during early interviews as a major factor in people's survival strategies, and a question was added to the questionnaire to explore this in later interviews. In total, 31 households were asked about paid employment, 26 of whom had taken informal work over the previous year (See Table

41).

		Count
Type of Employment	No work	8
	Cleaner	3
	Looking after children	1
	Writer	1
	Care worker	8
	Taxi despatcher	1
	Warehouse worker	1
	Waitress	1
	Factory worker	2
	Gardener	3
	Fast food restaurant worker	2
	Cook	1

The most common type of employment was care work, although this varied from more formalised arrangements in a care home or domiciliary care, to less formalised arrangements with friends or acquaintances. Many people engaged in activities which were not clearly distinguished from volunteering, or received payments which were sometimes difficult to differentiate from gifts or charity:

> Eralia*: So I didn't do anything that I don't want to do, anything that I did because I cooked for the church, like every Sunday, I do cooking for the church and I would get a bit of money, and because they run a day-care centre for the elderly. So I will go there and help and I will get the money, and some of the elders in the church will give me £5 or £10 or so.*

Churches and other faith communities were often places to meet allies who might be willing to take on someone to do cash in hand work such as babysitting or cleaning:

> Tambara*: So when I went to the church the only thing they do is she did it with some people that if you have anything in the house cleaning, and she can do then just give her a tip, so that is what I was doing there* [sigh] *so that's what I've been doing since.*

Others had a more entrepreneurial approach to income generation. Gabrielle was effectively running a sole trader business out of a cousin's house:

> Gabrielle*: So I rented a room and what I used to do is cook on a Friday night, sell the food, and I used to pay the rent until my, I lived with a cousin of mine, and then he sold the house, so I didn't have anywhere else to go.*

Looking after other people's children was one way of bringing in some extra cash, and was preferable to more formal working arrangements through employment agencies which could be exploitative:

> Abedi*: "Well, I've tried doing, you know taking care of, people's children when I'm not supposed to, you know go to the house and just sat down there and look after them and they give me like in an hour two pound but if it's five hours, you know, it's crazy but I just need to get something to look after him, he's growing, he's in a demanding stage, he's not finished growing when you've finished growing it's easier. But he's growing, I can put on shoes to date, the next two months it doesn't fit anymore. He's bigger than his age, if you take that thing off him, you need to see how long his legs are.*

The ability of unscrupulous employers to pay wages well below the minimum wage was possible because, without the legal right to work, it was not easy to seek legal redress.

Abedi explained her experience of working with a cleaning agency to bring in more money for her growing child:

Abedi*: It's difficult for me and I want the best for him, so I've got to hustle, I tried* [name of cleaning company] *they were giving me jobs, but the first job two hours, £17, they have to take £15 from it, and £2 they paid me, and they always give me jobs like that, that is on repeat, when I go the next time they won't take the money from me, oh you give me ten jobs like that, that means I work ten jobs, two hours, you take £15 - £15! - What am I working for? So I was upset and I stopped working, because that is a rip off. I'm trying, but it's not, it's not just working, because I've got him* [her son], *and he's paramount to me, he is paramount to me, because he made me be who I am today, why the government is looking after me is him, why I'm here, this house is not given to me, it's given to him, so he is number one in everything I'm doing, I can't just put him in a corner and go and get money. No, other mothers maybe they do that, but I can't do it because all his life has been with me, so, I have to take him anywhere I'm going, that's why I had a little job of £2 per hour, I was taking him along because I was looking after kids, so, but the pay was too small and the stress was too much, I take off pampers, clean everything, its £2 maybe.*

For others, their experience of work was even more straight forwardly exploitative. Tambara had been trapped in domestic servitude in London:

Tambara*: It's so hard, so when I was in this house it took me time to understand what I'm doing there because this is like a family house, a woman with children, I have to look after the kids. So they didn't tell me that's what I'm going to be doing there they just said, oh they're going to help me. I have to be patient. So I was living*

in the house doing everything - domestic work and everything. A few months is going

[by] *months, months, a year. I said, 'Oh. I can't be doing this all the time!' Then one*

day I asked the woman, I said, 'Oh, so when are you going, who's coming to help me?

Who's going to take me out of this place?' She said, 'Oh don't worry don't worry

[inaudible]'. *So then I keep* [kisses teeth] *something was ringing in my head that*

something is not right here.

Although Tambara had been trafficked, and subsequently found herself in domestic servitude, as Lewis et al. (2015) point out, not all who are in situations of forced labour or exploitation have been trafficked. Situations of forced or exploitative labour are 'structured and sustained' by UK immigration policy, such as the NRPF rule, the lack of right to work, and modern slavery is produced by neoliberal globalised working conditions in the global economy. This is illustrated by the large numbers of participants who were involved in 'hidden' service sector jobs such as care work or food production - jobs which are essential to societal functioning, but which face downward pressure on wages.

9.5 Conclusion

Agency was exercised by both children and adults in spite of the inadequacy, abandonment and lack of access to resources they experienced. This could be seen in the different attitudes toward their situation, which were often operationalised into practices of mutual aid (which in turn illuminates the apparently paradoxical existence of abundance which coexisted with inadequacy). However, this agency was also seen in the existence of risky behaviours in order to make ends meet. Although these posed risks to health and wellbeing, they should not be seen as examples of passive victimhood, but as rational positive actions in a context of lack of agency in other areas.

The following chapter uses the principles of retroduction to offer conceptual tools to understand the experiences identified in the previous empirical chapters.

Chapter Ten: Analysis and Discussion

In a number of ways, participants in this research had similar experiences to other families with lived experience of food poverty in the UK. Experiences highlighted in this research of making food stretch (O'Connell et al., 2018), of children sharing food and exercising agency (Knight et al., 2018) are well evidenced in the food poverty literature.

However, this thesis makes the theoretical case that, despite these commonalities, the conditions and structures which govern the lives of undocumented migrants are materially different to those who are not subject to immigration control. So while there are similar experiences in terms of '(in)adequacy' (Chapter Five), the difference lies in the twin experiences of 'abandonment' (Chapter Six) and of 'access' (Chapter Seven). Unlike families who have access to public funds, families who are subject to immigration control were subject to welfare chauvinist (Kymlicka, 2015) policies which prevented them from being able to maintain an adequate income through access to paid employment or social security benefits, leaving them at risk of destitution or exploitative and 'unfree' employment practices (Lewis et al., 2015). Paradoxically, these experiences of inadequate food, abandonment by agencies designed to protect from poverty, and lack of access to support did not prevent families from experiencing times of 'abundance' (Chapter Eight), or from exercising 'agency' (Chapter Nine).

This chapter outlines four conceptual and theoretical tools to explain the experiences of this group of families in this study. These are: 1) The 'Air Jamaica generation'; 2) 'statutory neglect'; 3) 'reverse panopticism'; and 4) 'hospitable environments'. The first, 'the Air Jamaica generation' (10.1) seeks to understand what the group of families in this research have in common, and how this differs or resonates with other categories of migrants who

have received political and scholarly attention in recent years (such as asylum seekers, A2/A8 migrants, or the 'Windrush Generation').   Second, the chapter introduces the concepts of 'statutory neglect' (10.2) and 'reverse panopticism' (10.3) as explanatory frameworks to understand the theme of 'abandonment' which lay behind the '(in)adequacy' and lack of 'access' to food and statutory support and welfare services. Finally, the concept of 'hospitable environments' (10.4) is introduced as an explanation of the paradoxical experiences of 'abundance' and 'agency' which families experienced, which were rooted in a practical, organic and reflexive ethic of care.

10.1 Air Jamaica Generation

There are a number of characteristics which were commonly shared by the families who took part in this survey. A minority had claimed asylum, and an even smaller number had entered the country clandestinely and never declared their presence to the authorities, but the overwhelming majority had come to the UK on a visa, and subsequently overstayed. In comparison to the extensive literature discussing the experiences of refused asylum seekers, visa overstayers have received comparatively little scholarly attention in the UK. This is unfortunate as they have fewer entitlements to social protection mechanisms than other categories of migrants, or the right to earn an income through paid employment (see Table 40 below).

Table 40: Access to social security and employment

	Mainstream Social Security benefits	Home Office 'Section 4' Support	Local Authority 'Section 17' support	Paid Employment
A2/A8 Migrants	Yes (with some restrictions)	No	Yes	Yes
Refused Asylum Seekers	No	Yes (with some restrictions)	Yes	No
Visa Overstayers	No	No	Yes	No

While there are some restrictions on access to social security benefits for A2/A8 migrants, they are able to access section 17 support and paid employment. Similarly, although refused asylum seekers are not able to access mainstream social security benefits or paid employment, in some circumstances they are able to access section 4 'hard case' support from the Home Office. However, the only access to state welfare provision in the form of cash transfers to which visa overstayers are entitled is support under section 17 of the Children Act (1989), as they are not entitled to mainstream social security benefits, section 4 support, or paid employment.

A second characteristic of the group of families in this study relates to the countries which they came from. The vast majority of participants had come from 'new Commonwealth' countries in the Caribbean, West Africa, and the Indian subcontinent. The single most

common country of origin was Jamaica. This profile of countries of origin resonates with

other research into destitute families with NRPF (Price and Spencer, 2015) and is strikingly

similar to the countries of origin of the 'Windrush Generation' who came to the UK between

1948 and the Immigration Act 1971. In contrast to the Windrush Generation, although most

families in this study had been in the UK for a number of years (two thirds had lived in the

UK for more than five years, and more than half had been in the UK for over a decade) all of

the participant families had come to the UK after both the changes in the Immigration Act

1971 and the British Nationality Act 1981, so were subject to immigration control, and

therefore their UK born children were not automatically British citizens. This generation of

migrants who came to the UK in the post-Windrush period could be described as the 'Air

Jamaica generation' after the former Jamaican national carrier's regular flights from

Kingston's Norman Manley Airport to London Heathrow between 1974 and 2007 on which

many arrived in the UK.

The comparison between the 'Air Jamaica generation' and the 'Windrush Generation' is

instructive, as it illustrates the trends in immigration policy over the past 50 years in the UK.

Whereas the children of the Windrush Generation initially arrived in the UK with the rights

and entitlements of British citizens to work and welfare, and subsequently became

undocumented through administrative processes of deportability, the 'Air Jamaica

generation' were always subject to immigration control, were not entitled to paid

employment in most cases, and were not entitled to social security benefits through the

NRPF rule.

As the children of the 'Air Jamaica generation' have NRPF and restrictions on the right to

take up paid employment, they do not have access to the welfare state or social security

system that children with British citizenship have. Due to the UK's *Jus sanguinis* citizenship laws after the British Nationality Act 1981, this applies to the UK-born children of the Air Jamaica generation, and to their foreign born children alike. Families therefore run an increased risk of destitution, defined in section 95 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 as lacking adequate accommodation (or any means of obtaining it), or not being able to meet other essential living needs. This has serious consequences for child welfare. There have been three serious case reviews into child deaths in England reported in the past year involving undocumented migrant children, all of which referred to their NRPF status as an exacerbating factor (NSPCC, 2018).

10.2 Statutory Neglect

Although there are many examples of conceptualising the experience of undocumented migrants and their experience and isolation from welfare services, they are often written in the language of rights, rather than in the vocabulary of everyday social work practice. They therefore do not engage with the ways in which social workers see their role, or in the individual human consequences of the lack of support for undocumented children. In contrast, the key concepts that are commonly used in social work practice – child protection, neglect, safeguarding amongst others have a tendency to be applied only at an individual rather than a structural level, and so are inadequate to describe the exclusion that families faced which was, above all rooted in policies and processes which were national in scope (such as the no recourse to public funds rule and the provisions of the 'hostile environment').

One way to understand the experience of abandonment that families faced is to use the social work concept of child neglect, but apply it in a structural way. Most current definitions of child neglect focus on individual aspects, rather than collective or structural

failures to meet the needs of children, and it is common to restrict the definition to relate to actions by a parent or carer (HM Government, 2015; US Department of Health and Human Services, 2010). However, concepts of neglect are contested, and evolve over time and in different contexts (Corby et al., 2012). Erikson and Egeland (2002) acknowledge the existence of societal neglect when there is a failure to provide support to families so parents can meet children's needs, and the World Health Organisation's report of the Consultation on Child Abuse Prevention, while focusing on the immediate family and care givers, does acknowledge that "maltreatment can occur because of wider societal systems, organisations and processes" (WHO, 1999, p.13). This point is taken up by the World Report on Violence and Health (Krug et al., 2002), and Sethi et al. (2013) who also apply what they describe as an 'ecological' perspective on neglect to a European context, including structural factors such as law and policy in their analysis of neglect. The concept of 'statutory neglect' builds on this acknowledgment of the wider societal factors which contribute to neglect, describing a situation where neglect is a direct consequence of government policy or legislation:

> *Statutory neglect occurs when children have experiences as a result of law or policy that would meet the definition of neglect if as a result of action by a parent or carer* (Jolly, 2019, p. 132)

The intention is not to provide a detailed diagnosis or individual assessment of need for the children and families who took part in the study, but to illustrate that the situations which they experienced are indicative of the neglectful child welfare implications of 'hostile environment' exclusionary polices. All families who took part in the interviews mentioned at least one factor which corresponded with the definition of neglect in England (HM

Government, 2015). However, 'neglect like' factors were not evenly distributed with some factors more commonly mentioned than others. English et al. (2005) note that some forms of neglect have a more significant impact on child development than others. Poor home safety, cleanliness and lack of shelter result in impaired language and other developmental problems in children more than other forms of neglect. During the semi-structured interviews, issues around inadequate food, clothing and shelter were the most commonly reported, being mentioned by all participants (see Table 10 coding tree). Out of these, the most commonly mentioned were concerns about diet. Nearly two thirds of families who completed the USDA HFS questionnaire reported that they did not have enough resources for a balanced diet, and issues around food insecurity were mentioned 55 times in the semi-structured interviews. Hobbs and Wynne (2002) identify hunger/diet issues as one of the significant indicators of child neglect, and Horwath (2007) identifies nutritional neglect as an area where societal factors have an impact.

When discussing the reasons for finding themselves in neglectful situations, families consistently talked about the effect of government policy. 'NRPF' was frequently mentioned in connection with the inability to access decent housing or to have enough resources to maintain a balanced diet, as was the lack of a right to paid employment. Similarly, when being denied support, families were often told by social workers that the reason was because of the family's immigration status. An acknowledgment of the structural constraints of immigration law and policy was therefore explicitly acknowledged by both families and social workers. Notably, although families reported neglectful treatment, when blame was articulated, it was not towards individual social workers, or even children's services as a corporate body, but towards "the government" or the "Home Office".

This thesis has focused on the UK, in a specifically English urban context, but the processes of governmental exclusion of undocumented migrants from welfare services, and gatekeeping by public officials is a common theme in literature from both Europe and North America, most commonly in relation to healthcare access (Cuadra, 2012; Woodward et al., 2014), and Ruiz-Casares et al. (2010) highlight the gap between international legal frameworks on the right to health, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and restrictions on access to healthcare in the US, Canada and Europe. Tervonen and Enache identify a similar process of everyday bordering experienced by Roma migrants in Helsinki, where the Finnish central government's refusal to respond to the welfare needs of Roma families is described as a "policy of no policy" (2017: p.1117), a situation which bears marked similarities to the concept of statutory neglect, and where government at a local level has been left to respond with a policy of gatekeeping and ambivalence. In an inversion of the UK and Finnish situations, Furman et al. (2012) describe the US context where in the absence of laws at a federal level, states such as Alabama have passed restrictive laws which criminalise paid employment for undocumented migrants, presenting ethical dilemmas for social workers when working with undocumented migrants, a concern that is also identified by Jonsson (2014) in a Swedish context.

10.3 Reverse Panopticism

Undocumented migrant families in the study faced the double exclusion of experiencing extremely high levels of household food security, at the same time as having low levels of entitlement to services as a result of their immigration status. The experience of families in this study was not of being 'hard to reach' where outreach services struggle to engage particularly disadvantaged service users (McDonald, 2010); on the contrary, families often encountered services which were 'hard to engage' and went to great lengths to try to

engage with them, including multiple referrals, legal action in some cases, and for Chibundo's family even arriving at the office of children's services with her family and all their possessions in suitcases. Families were deliberately and consciously excluded from services, whether at the micro level of individual interactions with social workers, and local authority 'robust front door policies'; or on the macro level of national policies such as the NRPF rule, or the immigration legislation which prevented access to welfare. Poor access to services was underpinned by legislation and policy which was intended to exclude undocumented migrants – seen most explicitly in the 'hostile environment' policy.

The abandonment experienced by undocumented migrants is a arguably crude form of social control, with the explicit intention of making life difficult in the UK as a means of encouraging undesirable categories of migrants to 'self deport'. Theresa May's statement as Home Secretary clearly articulates the intentions of the hostile environment: "What we don't want is a situation where people think that they can come here and overstay because they're able to access everything they need" (Kirkup and Winnett 2012). Similarly, it can be observed in the House of Lords and House of Commons Joint Committee on Human Rights finding that "the Government has indeed been practising a deliberate policy of destitution of this highly vulnerable group" (Joint Committee on Human Rights, 2007, p.41).

This active turning away from the needs of undocumented migrant families amounts to a process of 'unseeing', where although families are present physically, they are not 'seen' by either the state nationally (seen in the Windrush scandal in 2018) or by local authorities (in processes of exclusion such as 'robust front door' gatekeeping policies by children's services), and in the lack of a safeguarding response to prevent the death by starvation of Lynne Mutumba and her mother (Smith, 2018).

This abandonment leads to a situation where undocumented migrants are regarded as less than worthy, and exist as a kind of 'unpresence'. This 'unpresence' is necessary, because undocumented migrants perform roles, such as in the care sector, and in food production and distribution, which are essential for the functioning of the economy, but have to be unseen because the presence of migrants who are 'unauthorised' by the state undermines the very nature of the nation state as an entity which has control over its own borders. The very existence of a group of migrant families who subsist below the reach of the welfare state also undermines the social democratic ideal of universal welfare provision and social solidarity (Titmuss, 1964).

This form of governmentality exists as an inversion of the more commonly observed Foucauldian 'panopticon' where governmentality finds its expression in an ever-present sense of being watched; the exclusion faced by undocumented migrants in this study is rooted in a 'turning away' from their needs, of the experience of not being observed or seen. This is in contrast to the ways that governmentality has developed in terms of technology for citizens, where, for instance, the Chinese government has attempted to moderate microblogging through the use of real name registration in the Weibo site (Jiang, 2016), or Information and Communication Technology has been used in the field of asylum management through ID cards (Ajana, 2013). Conversely, the undocumented migrants in this study were excluded from access to commonly used identification schemes. In an ever tightening process of 'unseeing', participants were not eligible for British passports due to their irregular status, and had recently had the right to hold UK driving licenses removed by the Immigration Act 2016. In a society where the means to identify oneself through official forms of ID is essential to function in society (to open a bank account, to take up paid employment, to access credit and so on) the refusal of the means to do so amounts to a

refusal to acknowledge a person's existence in society. While other migrants experience the biopolitics of citizenship and governmentality through surveillance, detention and deportation (Gonzales and Chavez, 2012) the families who participated in this study experienced them through being 'unseen'.

10.4 Hospitable Environments

The final explanatory framework considers the apparent contradiction between the high levels of food insecurity found in the results of the USDA 18-item household food security module, and the experiences of households which emerged during the semi-structured interviews, which were much more nuanced, and which included self-chosen photographs which presented images of abundance and plenty (see Fahmida's images in Chapter Five). These images appeared to be linked to a cultural understanding of food which valued sharing, and mutual aid, so although participants were frequently food insecure over the previous 12 months, during the times when they were not, they shared with friends, family and co-ethnic neighbours. This is likely to be a result of the food landscape and shared meanings in their respective countries of origin, but whereas other studies have found that these food-based social relationships shifted following rural to urban displacement (Hayes-Conroy and Sweet, 2015), participants in this research in many cases continued with food sharing practices.

This mutual aid, and collaborative, participatory understanding of food and its role in bringing people together was made possible not just by the persistence of pre-migration relational food practices but conversely by the fact that households were often strongly rooted in their communities, and had children who in many cases were UK born, or identified as British despite their formal lack of British citizenship (as evidenced by their rejection of traditional food in favour of what was seen as 'British' food).

The children in this study who attended local schools, often had a large network of friends and supporters, and were well integrated within the community. This finding contrasts with Agamben's concept of 'bare life' of those without rights or citizenship (Agamben, 1998) and has more commonalities with McNevin's (2013) understanding of 'ambivalence', where undocumented migrants can exercise rights claims, and may not want to 'buy into' concepts of citizenship, even while they act politically within the context in which they live, and therefore acts such as securing a passport become merely an "instrumental exercise to secure certain rights" (McNevin, 2013, p. 196). However, participants in this study, while exercising giving and receiving hospitality, and engaging in active citizenship irrespective of their formal legal status, had a perspective which went beyond mere ambivalence to an active embracing of their identity – participants were unembarrassed by their immigration status or their wish for their children to become British citizens, apparently seeing no inherent contradiction between the hostility shown by the government and those who administered everyday borders, and their loyalty to their friends, neighbours, supporters and community, and by extension the country in which they lived. Although living in settings which differed in fundamental ways to the context of camps for displaced Roma people in Italy, the ability to construct informal types of citizenship and enact an everyday political membership has resonances with Sigona's (2015) concept of 'campzenship'. However, where the concept of 'hospitable environments' differs is both that the informal citizenship practices supported cultures of hospitality, and a culture of hospitality enabled informal citizenship practices and feelings of belonging in a virtuous circle that appeared difficult to disentangle.

Despite having high levels of food insecurity, families were not 'starving' and presented images of plenty and abundance. The 18-item module is based on recall over the previous

twelve months, so even for a family who experienced hunger over the previous year, it is possible to also experience times where there was enough food, or even times of plenty. It is therefore not surprising that the findings which emerged from the interviews and photo elicitation exercise were more nuanced and complicated than the stark findings of the food security measure. Nonetheless, the pictures that children chose to take, along with the interviews of families, some of whom said that they had enough due to better budgeting, indicated times of abundance and plenty, which stood in particular contrast to the level of food insecurity they were experiencing.

Families were exercising the little agency that they had to show that they were not 'poor victims', but had both pride in the food they produced and consumed, and a collective identity. It is possible that, because the photo elicitation exercise offered participants agency in how they were represented, it offered a way for them to reframe the way that they were viewed. The USDA food security scale represents the level of food insecurity within a household, rather than their experiences and self-understanding. In contrast, the photos and interviews offered an opportunity for choice to be exercised about how to be represented, through images of abundance. Poppendieck (1998) has written about the indignity of charitable food aid for those who are subject to it and this representation and positioning was a possible example of participants choosing to present themselves in a different way.

The ways in which participants chose to present themselves were not as passive victims of food insecurity or societal process beyond their control, but as people with agency, resisting the categories to which they were being placed. This 'resistance' moves the debate forward from the findings in the pilot study for this research which found that participants with an

insecure immigration status accessing a stay and play project had developed a coping strategy of 'resilience and resignation' (Jolly, 2018b). This strategy moves beyond that to the beginnings of a more political response of resistance (Lind, 2017) which shows families accessing agency as a coping strategy for dealing with their situation.

In contrast to their experience of abandonment and of trying to access services, in everyday life, participants survived through a network of mutual aid from friends and supporters which was rooted in an expression ethics of care (Bowden, 2000). In contrast to the 'othering' that they experienced, there were examples of food sharing, and of informal support mechanisms through churches and other faith groups which, in the words of Noddings were an expression of "the other's reality as a possibility for my own" (2013, p.14), with the interests of those who care for others as intertwined with those who are being cared for (Held, 2006). These networks of mutual aid were an exercise in "belonging and agency in everyday life" (Bailey, 2012, p.853) where members were able to exercise agency and self-determination as well as practical support.

Co-existing with the informal networks of mutual aid which sustained families were the supporters groups and organisations who were not (for the most part) undocumented migrants themselves, but formed part of a wider 'hospitable environment'. Delphi panel members identified 22 organisations in Birmingham who were working with undocumented migrant families, which illustrates the networks of support and hospitality that exist in the city for migrant families (See table in section 4.1). Some of these were large, formalised organisations such as the British Red Cross, but the majority were small, volunteer led organisations such as local churches, 'Places of Welcome' or local grassroots community groups such as Birmingham Community Hosting Network (Birch) or ASIRT. These hospitable

organisations were not always directly political, but often saw their role explicitly as a counterweight to hostility to refugees, asylum seekers and other precarious migrants, and their organisational literature reflected this. For instance, BIRCH emphasised the volunteer led hospitality of their ethos on their website:

> *Birmingham Community Hosting Network is a volunteer led charity working to harness the enthusiasm of local people to offer friendship and hospitality to people seeking sanctuary in the Birmingham area* (Birch Network, 2020, online).

Similarly, the Hope Projects website referred to the peer support they offered, and their use of volunteers, but explicitly linked the need for their existence with problems in the system of immigration control which caused food poverty:

> *Our flawed asylum system leaves vulnerable people street homeless and destitute. Hope gives them a roof over their heads, crisis grants for food and essentials and legal advice to get the right to live in safety* (Hope Projects, 2020, online).

The experience of other migrant receiving countries illustrates the development of both solidarity and self-organised campaigning groups, such as the Dreamers movement in the US, and the Sans Papiers movement in France (Gonzales et al., 2019). Although the UK has less of a history of these groups, there are precedents such as the anti-deportation campaigns from the 1970s to the present day, as catalogued by the Institute of Race Relations (Institute of Race Relations, 2020), and the grassroots movements to provide informal housing arrangements for destitute migrants, such as the No Accommodation Network (Lois and Smith, 2013).

These networks constructed 'hospitable environments' of mutual aid and solidarity acted as a refuge within a wider hostile society, which enabled people to exist and in some cases thrive, despite the restrictions bordering and hostility they faced in wider society. They also enabled conceptions of belonging and 'citizenship' to exist amongst children, especially those who were UK born or who had spent many years in the UK. These conceptions of belonging existed independently of formal legal measures of citizenship, and stand in stark contrast to the more familiar Marshallian understanding of social citizenship whereby citizenship is a legal status denoting full membership of a society (Marshall, 1950). Instead, the 'hospitable environments' which families navigated in parallel with the 'hostile environment' were based on kinship, solidarity, sense of place, or political affinity rather than legal status, and were underpinned through churches and other faith groups, voluntary organisations, friends and supporters rather than state services.

Nonetheless, the informal 'cultural citizenship' (Stephen, 2003) which was enabled by the hospitable environments, produced a platform on which future right claims could be built. An example of how this could develop is Nicholls' (2016) analysis of how undocumented day labourers in the US became politicised and exercised rights claims, despite facing precarity, stigmatisation and symbolic violence. For Nicholls (2016), this politicisation was possible because of the urban environment which enabled stigmatised individuals to overcome the barriers they faced, and develop a political identity. The super-diverse nature of Birmingham (Vertovec, 2007) also enabled the development of 'hospitable environments' in the city. The urban areas in which undocumented migrants lived were also home to significant numbers of co-ethnics, sympathetic churches and community projects (such as through the 'places of welcome' movement, and grassroots organisations such as ASIRT) which enabled

undocumented migrants to survive, and to develop networks of support which could enable future politicisation.

10.5 Conclusion

This chapter has outlined four explanatory theoretical frameworks, drawn from the data in Chapters Five to Nine. The first (the 'Air Jamaica generation') sought to understand and conceptualise what the families in the study had in common as a group and set that in the context of trends in immigration control in the UK since the 1950s, and in comparison to the so-called 'Windrush generation'.

The second ('statutory neglect') sought to explain the experiences of abandonment by care and support services using the language of social care to describe social structures.

The final two theoretical concepts ('reverse panopticism' and 'hospitable environments') sought to explain the contradictory and apparently paradoxical tensions in the experiences of families between '(In)adequacy' and 'abundance'; 'agency' and 'abandonment' and different experiences of 'access'.

In the concluding chapter, the implications of these findings for policy, social work practice and future research will be considered.

Chapter Eleven: Conclusions and Recommendations

This final chapter highlights the key contributions of this study. The first part of the chapter provides a review of the key research findings that have informed the three research objectives and contribution to knowledge in four distinct ways. The second part of the chapter outlines a set of evidence based recommendations for policy and social work practice before moving on to consider areas for future research.

11.1 Key Contributions

The thesis contributes to knowledge in four ways. Firstly, methodologically, by using for the first time the USDA Household Food Security module to understand the extent of food insecurity amongst undocumented migrant children in the UK. The use of this research tool enabled comparison with other studies both outside the UK, and also the wider British population, such as Wave 4 of the FSA Food and You survey (FSA, 2017) and the new measure of household food security in the Family Resources Survey (Richmond-Bishop, 2019).

Second, theoretically it contributes to the literature on everyday bordering by exploring the apparent contradictions between legal immigration status and exclusion on the one hand, and the everyday experiences of families with NRPF on the other. It provides an empirically based understanding of the experience of undocumented migrants through the thematic lens of the 5 As: '(in)adequacy'; 'abandonment'; 'access'; 'abundance'; and 'agency'. Finally, it provides four explanatory analytical tools to explain the underlying phenomena behind these themes: the 'Air Jamaica generation' (or more broadly, generational immigration status); 'statutory neglect'; 'reverse panopticism'; and 'hospitable environments'. These

tools can be used as conceptual lenses to be explored in future research to help inform knowledge on the everyday experiences of food poverty amongst undocumented migrants.

The third contribution is to policy, by exploring the everyday lives of a group of families who are not ordinarily part of the policy making process, a number of areas of policy failure are highlighted, and practical recommendations for changes to policies which would improve the lives of undocumented migrant families are suggested below (11.3).

Finally, the thesis contributes to the social work practice literature with undocumented migrant families. The thesis exposes elements of poor practice in social work with migrant families, as well as exposing and conceptualising the structural factors which contribute to this poor practice. By conceptualising this 'abandonment' and lack of access in the language of social work practice, the concept of 'statutory neglect' has potential for use as an analysis tool for social work practitioners when assessing need.

The following section reviews the key findings of this research in relation to each of the three study objective and in so doing clearly presents the evidence that underpins the key contributions of this research.

11.2 Review of Findings

This thesis has explored three interrelated research objectives. First, to elicit an expert consensus of the likely numbers of undocumented migrant families currently residing in the city of Birmingham (Objective 1), with the following three research questions:

- RQ1A: What is the expert consensus on the likely number of undocumented children and families in Birmingham?

- RQ1B: What are the main demographic characteristics of this population (country of origin, destitution status, district of residence)?

- RQ1C: Who are the main agencies in Birmingham who support undocumented migrant families?

Second, to understand the extent of household food insecurity amongst undocumented migrant families in Birmingham (Objective 2) with the following two research questions:

- RQ2A: How many households are food insecure as measured by the USDA household food security module?

- RQ2B: What are the differences in food insecurity between adults and children within households?

Finally, to explore the experiences of undocumented migrant families (Objective 3) with the following three research questions:

- RQ3A: How do families experience food poverty and insecurity?

- RQ3B: What coping strategies do they employ?

- RQ3C: What are the likely exacerbating and mitigating factors relating to food insecurity?

11.2.1 Objective 1: To Elicit an Expert Consensus of the Likely Numbers of Undocumented Migrant Families Currently Residing in the City of Birmingham.

The findings for Objective 1 were outlined in Chapter Four which presented an expert consensus of the likely numbers of undocumented migrant families currently residing in the city of Birmingham using the Delphi method. Delphi was chosen because census data are not available for the undocumented migrant population, and the more widely used residual method is not possible to use at a local level (Woodbridge, 2005).

Delphi panel members estimated the numbers of undocumented migrant families in Birmingham to be in the low thousands, and stated that numbers were increasing (RQ1a). Although the exact numbers of destitute undocumented migrant families is difficult to verify, the Delphi results suggested that there are likely to be far higher numbers of undocumented migrants than those supported by local authority children's services – the round three mean estimate of families was nearly ten times the number that were supported by children's services in 2011, and even the lowest estimates in round one were higher than the number supported by children's services. This raises safeguarding concerns about the welfare of children and families in this situation – for families who are not supported by children's services, and are not legally allowed to work or claim social security benefits.

The Delphi panel identified that the most common countries of origin for undocumented migrant families in Birmingham were Nigeria and Jamaica, and these were also the most common countries of origin for participants in the USDA HFS questionnaire. Panel members identified that the constituencies of Ladywood and Perry Barr were the areas with the largest numbers of undocumented migrants; however, participants in the USDA HFS questionnaire were from a wider variety of districts than anticipated by the Delphi panel, including people who identified as being from Birmingham, but who were staying temporarily outside the local authority boundary of Birmingham, most commonly in Sandwell, which suggests that the population of undocumented migrants in Birmingham might be more widely distributed geographically than previously thought, perhaps because of the insecurity of housing tenure that undocumented migrants faced (see discussion in 6.2.1) (RQ1b).

The Delphi panel identified 22 agencies in Birmingham who were working with undocumented migrant children. The Children's Society, ASIRT and British Red Cross were the three most commonly identified organisations. During the semi-structured interviews it emerged that not only were families accessing formal voluntary agencies in the city, but that there were also informal networks of mutual aid which enabled families to survive and in some cases flourish (RQ1c).

11.2.2 Objective 2: To Understand the Extent of Household Food Insecurity Amongst Undocumented Migrant Families in Birmingham

The second objective, discussed in Chapter Five on (in)Adequacy, was to understand the extent of household food insecurity amongst undocumented migrant families in Birmingham, using the USDA 18-item household food security module. More than 9/10 families were food insecure, in contrast to only 1/10 of the wider population in the UK (Bates et al., 2017; FSA, 2017), and of these more than 6/10 had very low food security, defined by the USDA as a situation where there were "multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake" (Economic Research Service and USDA, 2012). However, the level and experiences of food insecurity was stratified within households, with children less likely to be food insecure than adults, and less likely to eat traditional food from parental countries of origin. Food insecurity did not appear to be reduced by the provision of section 17 support, and households with section 17 support were no more likely to be food secure than those without statutory support.

11.2.3 Objective 3: To Explore the Experiences of Undocumented Migrant Families

The third objective, discussed in Chapters Six to Nine, was to explore the experiences of undocumented migrant families – how do they experience food poverty and insecurity? (RQ3a), what coping strategies do they employ? (RQ3b), and what are the likely mitigating and exacerbating factors for food insecurity? (RQ3c). It is beyond the scope of this thesis to

establish direct lines of causality, which would require a different research design. Additionally, the complexity of the multiple factors that either exacerbated or mitigated food insecurity appeared to resist the identification of straightforward causal relationships. The multilayered exacerbating and mitigating factors were therefore analysed using themes which illustrated the complexity and interrelated nature of these factors, which included '(in)adequacy' (Chapter Five); 'abandonment' (Chapter Six); 'access' (Chapter Seven); 'abundance' (Chapter Eight); and 'agency' (Chapter Nine).

The findings were then theorised in Chapter Ten using a retroductive approach of 'what must be true for this to be the case'. The four theoretical frameworks of the 'Air Jamaica generation'; 'statutory neglect'; 'reverse panopticism'; and 'hospitable environments' offered theoretical explanations for the situation where, while families were well established and networked in this country and in their local communities, hostile environment policies were experienced by families as a process of 'turning away' where, rather than being hard to reach, families were actively excluded from welfare provision and the social contract. Families coped with the food insecure situations in which they lived through intricate systems of both formal and informal mutual aid and advocacy, which mitigated the impact of the hostile environment and food insecurity.

This framework is illustrated in figure 22 below. The boxes in blue in the centre represent the themes drawn from the data. These interact with each other and either mitigated – in the case of agency, abundance and access, or exacerbated - in the case of abandonment and inadequacy. These phenomena are explained by the overarching conceptual and theoretical tools (represented by the gold ovals) which gave overarching context to the everyday experiences of undocumented migrants. These are 'legal status' (in this context the 'air Jamaica generation' but the influence of legal status could also apply to other 'generations'

of migrants to the UK); 'statutory neglect'; 'hospitable environments'; and 'reverse panopticism'.

Figure 22: Typology of household food security domains and theoretical perspective on deprivation experienced by undocumented migrant families
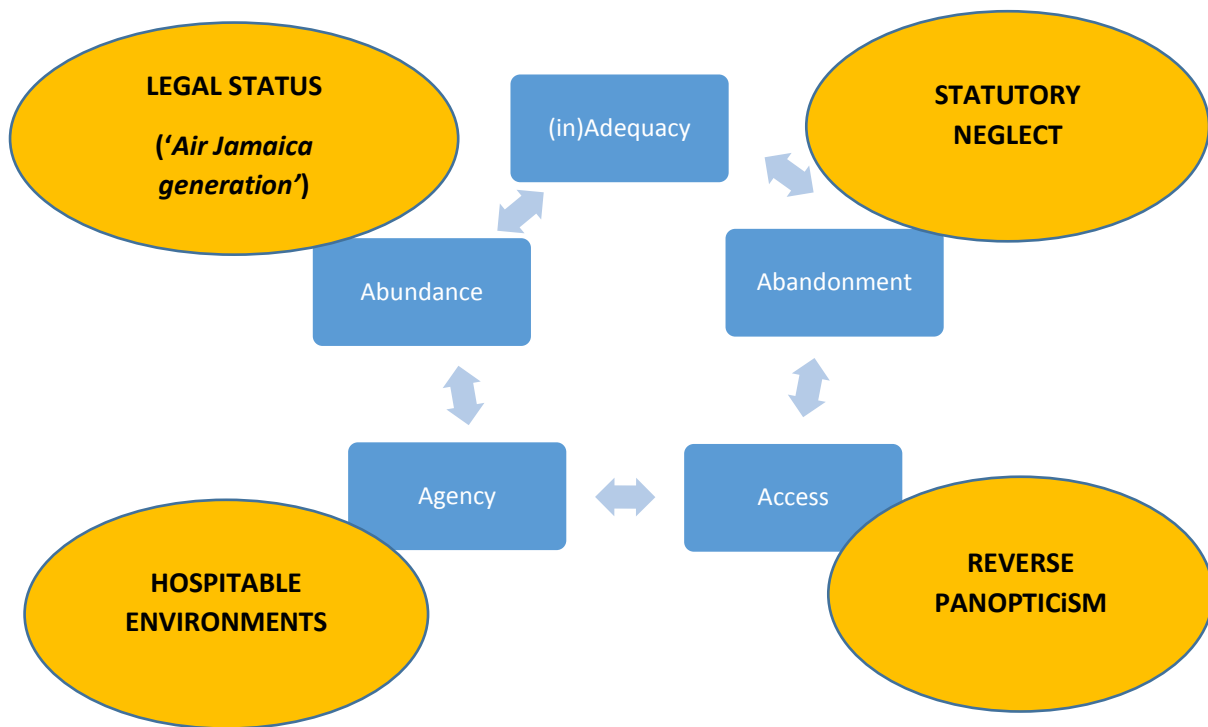
11.3 Recommendations

As set out in the introduction of this thesis, this research was born out of a specific social work practice problem of how to support the welfare needs of undocumented migrant families, and of how to promote human rights based practice. A discussion thread relating to support (and the lack of support) for undocumented migrants by social workers has been woven throughout the thesis. Therefore, in addition to the empirical findings and theory building, the thesis concludes with implications and suggestions for improving social work policy and practice, and for further research to meet this goal.

For ease of analysis and to ensure they are drawn from the data, recommendations are divided and discussed in relation to the five analytical categories set out in figure 22 (and discussed in Chapters Five to Nine).

11.3.1 (in)Adequacy

Although section 17 support from local authority children's services was one of the few statutory entitlements available to undocumented migrant families, support was not always adequate. This inadequacy was seen in two ways, first in terms of the difficulties in getting access to support in the first place, and second in terms of the level of support that was provided.

Food insecurity did not form part of the section 17 assessment and support process by children's services, and food insecurity is not mentioned in the West Midlands Safeguarding Children Procedures (Birmingham Children's Trust, 2019).

- **Recommendation 1:** Social workers and other support workers should be trained in 'Food aware practice'.

Levels of support under section 17 were too low to maintain a reasonable standard of living for children, being below both the HBAI poverty line and the JRF minimum income standards, and did not reduce household food insecurity.

- **Recommendation 2:** Section 17 support rates should be raised to the level of mainstream social security benefits to reduce the prevalence of food insecurity amongst children and families who are supported under section 17.

It was common for children's services to support families who were homeless and destitute with housing outside of Birmingham, or to move families to different districts within

Birmingham. Responses to Freedom of information requests to local authorities in other cities suggest that this policy is not uncommon across other local authorities (Jolly, 2019). However, this particularly affected families who relied on informal support networks in their local area, and was a factor that was mentioned in the serious case review into the death of Lynne Mutumba who was rehoused by Croydon Borough Council in Kent and subsequently starved to death (Smith, 2018).

- **Recommendation 3:** Out of area placements should be avoided unless there is a specific safeguarding reason, as per the recommendation from the National Homelessness Advice Service (NHAS): "As far as reasonably practicable, local authorities should avoid making out of area placements for homeless households, and use this option only as a last resort when no accommodation in the local area can be procured" (NHAS,n.d.). When it is necessary to house families out of area, the same principles should be applied as for other families who are housed by the local authority as set out in the Homelessness (Suitability of Accommodation) Order 2012.

Undocumented migrant children were not able to access free school meals in most cases, because they were not eligible for 'passported' social security benefits. This was a barrier to learning and an extra cost for families. NELMA's 'Left Out at Lunch' campaign (NELMA, 2018) has raised awareness of the difficulties of migrant children who are not eligible for free school meals, and the positive impact of school feeding programmes on attendance has been well documented (Meyers et al., 1989), as has the negative effect of malnutrition on school performance (Taras, 2005) and the impact that school meals programmes have on psychosocial functioning and academic attainment (Kleinman et al., 2002). As well as access to free school meals, other programmes which give pupils who are living in poverty access

to nutritious breakfasts could also be piloted, such as the 'breakfast after the bell' programme which aims to reduce stigma and increase uptake of breakfast amongst school children (Hunger Solutions, 2019).

- **Recommendation 4:** Children in households with an irregular immigration status should be given access to free school meals on the basis of need, rather than on immigration status.

11.3.2 Abandonment

A number of difficulties arose from the lack of joined up services both within and between the statutory and voluntary sectors. This was exacerbated by a sometimes oppositional attitude from the local authority (voluntary sector representatives were not allowed to be present at assessments, or to attend NRPF network meetings), which had its roots in the different roles of organisations tasked with providing a service based on statutory safeguarding responsibilities, and the advocacy-based approaches of many voluntary sector organisations. The way that organisational communities interact with each other was therefore crucial in responding to food insecurity.

- **Recommendation 5**: The Local Safeguarding Children's Board and Children's Trust should work with stakeholders in the voluntary, statutory sectors and undocumented migrant families themselves to develop and implement a comprehensive strategy for safeguarding the welfare of undocumented migrant children – including adoption of the Project 17 'Children's Charter' for families with NRPF (Project 17, 2019).

- **Recommendation 6**: When support is refused by children's services following a referral for a family with NRPF, clear written feedback should be given to the

referring agency and the family themselves, including suggestions for alternative support or advice.

There was a tendency for participants to view the problems that they faced in structural terms resulting from 'hostile environment' policies, rather than on an individual level, and there were a number of factors which had clear roots in policy and law formulated at a UK government level, such as the lack of the right to work or to claim mainstream social security benefits.

- **Recommendation 7**: Undocumented migrants lack access to the social rights that other UK residents have, including the right to access healthcare, the right to paid employment and the right to social security benefits. In order to reduce household food insecurity, social rights for undocumented migrants should mirror those for British citizens by abolishing the NPRF rule and allowing the right to work for undocumented migrants.

- **Recommendation 8**: The support for undocumented migrants was variable and ad hoc, and unlike other areas of social work practice, there was no statutory guidance from the Department of Education about how to work with undocumented migrant families. In order to ensure that the duty to safeguard the welfare of undocumented migrant children is met, the Department for Education should issue guidance to local authorities on the provision of section 17 support or undocumented migrant children.

11.3.3 Access

Participants reported experiences of being turned away from support when attempting to self-refer to children's services. This presented a barrier to families getting support to prevent food insecurity. The lack of clear referral routes available to people who were not

already accessing services was a clear exacerbating factor which could be easily rectified by allowing self-referral.

- **Recommendation 9:** Self-referral routes should be available and adequately publicised via the Birmingham City Council and Birmingham Children's Trust websites.

A common complaint from participants was that the assessment process and outcomes of assessments by social workers were not understood by families, that copies of assessments were not given, or that refusals of support were based on incorrect information or were unlawful. Having independent advocates in assessment meetings would minimise this risk, and the principle of independent advocacy is already established for other 'vulnerable groups' where there is a statutory right to advocacy, such as Independent Mental Health Advocates (IMHA), Independent Mental Capacity Advocates (IMCA), and Social Care Advocates under the Care Act (2014). An example of this working in practice is the accompanying work conducted by North East London Migrant Action (NELMA, 2018), where trained volunteers accompany families to assessments and guide them through the process and prevent delays in support for families, and to avoid expensive Judicial Reviews for local authorities - Birmingham City Council disclosed during a scrutiny enquiry in December 2013 that they had spent £15,000 on solicitors' fees during the previous 6 months (Birmingham City Council, 2013).

- **Recommendation 10:** Advocates from voluntary and community organisations should be allowed to attend child in need assessments, and the Children's Trust should consider commissioning an advocacy project to ensure that all participants had access to trained independent advocates.

11.3.4. Abundance

Households were well networked and this was a key protective factor in mitigating the effects of household food insecurity. Therefore, interventions which recognise and strengthen existing relational networks and which help new networks to develop could be effective at mitigating the impact of food insecurity. For instance, projects which involve group interaction such as 'stay and play' sessions for parents and children, or community kitchens where families meet and cook together could be ways of both providing a valuable service (such as increasing play opportunities for children without access to toys and outdoor play spaces at home, or providing free food) and giving opportunities for families to meet others and develop informal networks of support, which were key factors in developing 'hospitable environments' to mitigate the impact of food insecurity.

- **Recommendation 11:** Group interaction projects are likely to be an effective means of encouraging the growth of hospitable environments which mitigate the impact of food insecurity, organisations working with undocumented migrants, and those who fund them should consider resourcing projects which facilitate informal meetings, rather than merely providing emergency food aid.

11.3.5. Agency

There was no indication that food insecurity was caused by a lack of individual skills or knowledge at an individual or household level, rather that there was resilience amongst households, and an awareness of healthy heating and budgeting skills. Therefore, food security interventions on an individual level, such as provision of healthy eating information or budgeting support (Bags of Taste, 2019) are unlikely to be effective with this population.

While interventions on the individual level potentially have a valuable impact in terms of creating community and opportunities to meet others in similar situations, they are unlikely

to impact on household food security for undocumented migrants because they assume that the cause of food insecurity is on the individual level of not knowing how to cook cheaply and nutritiously, rather than on a lack of income rooted in exclusionary processes. By way of example, the Bags of Taste programme teaches participants to cook homemade meals for £1 per head. This would add up to a weekly food budget of £63 per week for a family of three, requiring them to spend 60% of their £105.39 weekly income from section 17 support on food. In comparison, the UK population as a whole spends only 11% of their income on food, and the lowest of households by income only 14% (Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, 2018).

- **Recommendation 12:** Interventions which focus solely on individual behaviour change are unlikely to be effective in reducing food insecurity for this population and should therefore be avoided in favour of interventions which take into account the wider context of neglectful policy and legislation.

11.4 Limitations of Research

There are a number of limitations to the research, which are outlined briefly below. The sample was small and drawn from one particular city, so it is not possible to know the extent to which the findings are specific to Birmingham, or if they have wider application. Certainly, the evidence from research in London suggests that there are similar problems facing families with NRPF (Dickson, 2019), although there is currently no other UK research with undocumented migrants using the USDA 18-item module to compare with.

Furthermore, due to the nature of the undocumented migrant population, randomised probability sampling is not possible, so although there is transferrable learning for other contexts, it is not possible to draw generalisable conclusions for the whole population.

Although there were efforts to make the sample as broad as possible in terms of asking experts, drawing from a number of research sites, and using maximum variation sampling for the secondary interviews, nonetheless, the sample is composed of those who are accessing services, and it is not known whether people who were not accessing services would have the same experiences. There were also difficulties in the Delphi panel because of the high attrition rate for panel members, and it is not known the extent to which this influenced the final estimate, or whether there were particular characteristics of people who left the panel. Finally, the lack of local authority engagement in the Delphi panel is a key weakness, given that local authorities are one of the few public services which support families with NRPF.

Other limitations are due to the exploratory nature of the research and could be mitigated by future research (See 11.6 below). For instance, one of the findings was that families who were supported by children's services did not appear to be less food insecure than other families, but the research design did not allow for further analysis or explanation of this apparent finding.

11.5 Future Research

This final section outlines four potential areas for future research based on the findings from this study. This research has outlined the food security experiences of families on the meso-level of one UK city. However, the same research design could be used in another city with a large population of undocumented migrant families, in order to provide a comparison with a different context. The situation in one of the other countries of the UK would be a useful comparison because, although child welfare law differs in each of the four nations, the system of immigration control is a reserved matter to the UK government in Westminster so remains constant across the UK. A comparison would therefore give an insight into the

impact that differing child welfare law has on the context for supporting undocumented migrant families. Alternatively, an international comparison in a country with an entirely different welfare and immigration regime would also be an interesting comparison. For instance, using Esping-Andersen's (1990) typology of the three political economies of welfare states, the research could be repeated in an example of a liberal welfare regime (such as the USA), a 'corporativist' welfare regime (such as Italy), and a social democratic regime (such as Sweden).

A second area for future research is to introduce the element of temporality. The current research was cross-sectional and did not seek to track how food security changed over time, particularly how food security status was related to immigration status. References to changing immigration status, and the impact on experiences of food insecurity were frequently mentioned by participants, and this could be a fruitful area for future research.

Third, the research established that the level of section 17 support was too low to maintain a balanced diet, based both on the experiences of families accessing section 17 support, and in comparison with benefits levels, the HBAI poverty line, and the JRF minimum income standards. However, more research is needed to assess the level of section 17 support necessary to reduce food insecurity, for instance by using tools such as the Save the Children cost of the diet agreement (Perry, 2008).

Fourth, more research is needed to develop a model of support for undocumented migrant families which would reduce food insecurity. This could be initially through the development of a theory of change about reducing food insecurity amongst undocumented migrant families, or through a participatory appraisal of interventions needed to support food security.

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Delphi Participant Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

Study Title

Household food security amongst undocumented migrant families in Birmingham.

Invitation

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide if you would like to take part, you need to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully, you can ask questions if anything you read is not clear or would like more information. Please take your time to decide whether or not to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?

The study is being undertaken as part of a PhD at the University of Birmingham with the aim of understanding the experiences of undocumented migrant families in Birmingham who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF). The objectives of the research are to:

1) Understand the size of population and extent of household food security amongst undocumented migrant families;
2) Explore the daily survival strategies employed by undocumented migrant families;
3) Examine the impact of food poverty on health and well-being, and its implications for health and social policy.

Why have I been invited?

You have been chosen because you work with people who have NRPF in Birmingham. This research will include 15 people who work with migrant families, and 70 migrant families themselves. To be eligible, migrants families must have dependent children (under 18 years old) living with them.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide based on the information given on this sheet, and any questions you would like to ask. If you decide to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form to show you agreed to take part. You are free to withdraw at any time, and you don't need to give a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?

- You will be asked to complete three short online surveys about your knowledge of migrant families in Birmingham, each of which will take no more than 10 minutes to complete.
- You will be asked if you know of any families who would be interested in participating in the research themselves.

Expenses and payments?

You will not be paid for taking part, but any families who you recruit will receive travel expenses and a supermarket voucher as a thank you for their participation.

What are the possible benefits or risks of taking part?

We cannot promise the study will help you individually, but the information we get from the study will help to increase the understanding of migrant poverty in Birmingham, and assist with campaigning, advocacy and fundraising activities.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researcher who will do his best to answer your questions (see contact details below).

If you remain unhappy, you can contact the lead supervisor for this PhD research: Dr Lisa Goodson at: or

Finally, if you wish to complain formally, the University of Birmingham Research Governance Team can be contacted at: researchgovernance@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

- Yes, all participant information will be anonymised after collection. Personal details will be kept in a separate codebook and pseudonyms will be used in any transcripts, and the identity of each participant will not be disclosed to other people taking part.

- Data will be stored in a passworded file on the University server, and any printed information will be kept in a locked cabinet in a locked room at the Department of Social Policy, which only the researcher will have access to.

- All Information gathered will be retained for 10 years before being disposed of securely.

What will happen if I don't carry on with the study?

You can withdraw from the study at any time whilst the research is taking place, and up to 5 working days after the data collection is completed. If you decide to withdraw from the study, your data and contact information will be destroyed and you will not be included in the research dissemination list (unless you specifically request to be included).

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the research will form the basis for a PhD thesis, and may also be submitted for publication in an academic journal. No participants will be identified in any report or publication without their written consent.

A 'dissemination event' will be held at the end of the project during 2017 for participants who would like to hear about the results of the research.

Who is organising or sponsoring the research?

The research is part of a PhD thesis in the Department of Social Policy at the University of Birmingham.

Further information and contact details:

If you have any further questions, or would like any more information about the study, please contact me at:

Andy Jolly,
Department of Social Policy,
Muirhead Tower,
University of Birmingham,
Edgbaston,
B15 2TT

Household Food Security Information Sheet

Participant Information Sheet

Study Title

Household food security amongst undocumented migrant families in Birmingham.

Invitation

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide if you would like to take part, you need to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take time to read the following information carefully, you can ask questions if anything you read is not clear or would like more information. Please take your time to decide whether or not to take part.

What is the purpose of the study?

The aim of the study is to better understand the experiences of undocumented migrant families in Birmingham who have no recourse to public funds (NRPF). The objectives of the research are to:

1) Understand the size of population and extent of household food security amongst undocumented migrant families;
2) Explore the daily survival strategies employed by undocumented migrant families;
3) Examine the impact of food poverty on health and well-being, and its implications for health and social policy.

Why have I been invited?

You have been chosen because you live in Birmingham, you have NRPF, and you have children under the age of 18.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is up to you to decide based on the information given on this sheet, and any questions you would like to ask. If you decide to take part, you will be asked to sign a consent form to show you agreed to take part. You are free to withdraw at any time, and you don't need to give a reason.

What will happen to me if I take part?

- You will be asked to complete a short survey about migrant food poverty which will take no more than 20 minutes to complete, this will be in person at a neutral venue.
- Some participants may be asked if they would like to take part in a second, one-to-one interview, which will take approximately one hour at the same venue.
- The research will take place over approximately three months from late 2015 until early 2016.

Expenses and payments?

You will not be paid for taking part, but will be reimbursed with a daysaver bus pass if your involvement involves travel, and will be eligible for a £5 supermarket voucher if you recruit other participants as a thank you for taking part.

What are the possible benefits or risks of taking part?

The study will involve discussing difficult and sensitive issues such as experiences of poverty and living without a regular immigration status. This may cause you distress by recollecting unpleasant memories and feelings.

If you do experience any distress as a result of participating, you will be given information about available support services for any difficult issues that have arisen as part of the research.

We cannot promise the study will help you individually, but the information we get from the study will help to increase the understanding of migrant poverty in the UK.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researcher who will do his best to answer your questions (see contact details below).

If you remain unhappy, you can contact the lead supervisor for this PhD research: Dr Lisa Goodson at: ██████████████████ or ███████████████

Finally, if you wish to complain formally, the University of Birmingham Research Governance Team can be contacted at: researchgovernance@contacts.bham.ac.uk.

Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?

- Yes, all of your information will be confidential and you will not be identified or linked to the study.

- Your data will be stored in a password protected file on the University server, and any printed information will be kept in a locked cabinet in a locked room at the Department of Social Policy which only the researcher and his supervisors will have access to.

- All Information gathered will be retained for 10 years before being disposed of securely.

What will happen if I don't carry on with the study?

You can withdraw from the study at any time whilst the research is taking place, and up to 5 working days after the data collection is completed. If you decide to withdraw from the study, your data and contact information will be destroyed and you will not be included in the research dissemination list (unless you ask to be included).

What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the research will form the basis for a PhD thesis, and may also be submitted for publication in an academic journal. No participants will be identified in any report or publication.

An event will be held during 2017 at the end of the project for participants who would like to hear about the results of the research.

Who is organising or sponsoring the research?

The research is part of a PhD thesis in the Department of Social Policy at the University of Birmingham.

Further information and contact details:

If you have any further questions, or would like any more information about the study, please contact me at:

Andy Jolly, Department of Social Policy, Muirhead Tower, University of Birmingham, Edgbaston, B15 2TT

Transition into Module (administered to all households):

These next questions are about the food eaten in your household in the last 12 months, since (current month) of last year and whether you were able to afford the food you need.

Optional USDA Food Sufficiency Question/Screener: Question HH1 (This question is optional. It is not used to calculate any of the food security scales. It may be used in conjunction with income as a preliminary screener to reduce respondent burden for high income households).

HH1.   [IF ONE PERSON IN HOUSEHOLD, USE "I" IN PARENTHETICALS, OTHERWISE, USE "WE."]

Which of these statements best describes the food eaten in your household in the last 12 months: —enough of the kinds of food (I/we) want to eat; —enough, but not always the <u>kinds</u> of food (I/we) want; —sometimes <u>not enough</u> to eat; or, —<u>often</u> not enough to eat?

   [1]   Enough of the kinds of food we want to eat

   [2]   Enough but not always the <u>kinds</u> of food we want

   [3]   Sometimes <u>not enough</u> to eat

   [4]   <u>Often</u> not enough to eat

   [ ]   DK or Refused

Household Stage 1: Questions HH2-HH4 (asked of all households; begin scale items).

[IF SINGLE ADULT IN HOUSEHOLD, USE "I," "MY," AND "YOU" IN

PARENTHETICALS; OTHERWISE, USE "WE," "OUR," AND "YOUR HOUSEHOLD."]

HH2.   Now I'm going to read you several statements that people have made about their food situation.   For these statements, please tell me whether the statement was <u>often</u> true, <u>sometimes</u> true, or <u>never</u> true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months—that is, since last (name of current month).

The first statement is "(I/We) worried whether (my/our) food would run out before (I/we) got money to buy more." Was that <u>often</u> true, <u>sometimes</u> true, or <u>never</u> true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

[ ]   Often true

[ ]   Sometimes true

[ ]   Never true

[ ]   DK or Refused

HH3.   "The food that (I/we) bought just didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more." Was that <u>often</u>, <u>sometimes</u>, or <u>never</u> true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

[ ]   Often true
[ ]   Sometimes true

[ ]   Never true
[ ]   DK or Refused

HH4.   "(I/we) couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." Was that <u>often</u>, <u>sometimes</u>, or <u>never</u> true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

[ ]   Often true

[ ]   Sometimes true

[ ]   Never true

[ ]   DK or Refused

Screener for Stage 2 Adult-Referenced Questions: If affirmative response (i.e., "often true" or "sometimes true") to one or more of Questions HH2-HH4, OR, response [3] or [4] to question HH1 (if administered), then continue to *Adult Stage 2;* otherwise, if children under age 18 are present in the household, skip to *Child Stage 1,* otherwise skip to *End of Food Security Module.*

NOTE: In a sample similar to that of the general U.S. population, about 20 percent of households (45 percent of households with incomes less than 185 percent of poverty line) will pass this screen and continue to Adult Stage 2.

Adult Stage 2: Questions AD1-AD4 **(asked of households passing the screener for Stage 2 adult-referenced questions).**

AD1. In the last 12 months, since last (name of current month), did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

    [ ] Yes

    [ ] No (Skip AD1a)

    [ ] DK (Skip AD1a)

AD1a. [IF YES ABOVE, ASK] How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

    [ ] Almost every month

    [ ] Some months but not every month

    [ ] Only 1 or 2 months

    [ ] DK

AD2. In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?

    [ ] Yes

    [ ] No

    [ ] DK

AD3. In the last 12 months, were you every hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?

    [ ] Yes

    [ ] No

    [ ] DK

AD4. In the last 12 months, did you lose weight because there wasn't enough money for food?

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] DK

Screener for Stage 3 Adult-Referenced Questions: If affirmative response to one or more of questions AD1 through AD4, then continue to *Adult Stage 3;* otherwise, if children under age 18 are present in the household, skip to *Child Stage 1,* otherwise skip to *End of Food Security Module.*

NOTE: In a sample similar to that of the general U.S. population, about 8 percent of households (20 percent of households with incomes less than 185 percent of poverty line) will pass this screen and continue to Adult Stage 3.

Adult Stage 3: Questions AD5-AD5a (asked of households passing screener for Stage 3 adult-referenced questions).

AD5. In the last 12 months, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

[ ] Yes

[ ] No (Skip AD5a)

[ ] DK (Skip AD5a)

AD5a. [IF YES ABOVE, ASK] How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

[ ] Almost every month

[ ] Some months but not every month

[ ] Only 1 or 2 months

[ ] DK

Child Stage 1: Questions CH1-CH3 (Transitions and questions CH1 and CH2 are administered to all households with children under age 18) Households with no child under age 18, skip to *End of Food Security Module.*

SELECT APPROPRIATE FILLS DEPENDING ON NUMBER OF ADULTS AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN THE HOUSEHOLD.

Transition into Child-Referenced Questions:

Now I'm going to read you several statements that people have made about the food situation of their children. For these statements, please tell me whether the statement was OFTEN true, SOMETIMES true, or NEVER true in the last 12 months for (your child/children living in the household who are under 18 years old).

CH1. "(I/we) relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed (my/our) child/the children) because (I was/we were) running out of money to buy food." Was that <u>often</u>, <u>sometimes</u>, or <u>never</u> true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

        [ ]   Often true

        [ ]   Sometimes true

        [ ]   Never true

        [ ]   DK or Refused

CH2. "(I/We) couldn't feed (my/our) child/the children) a balanced meal, because (I/we) couldn't afford that." Was that <u>often</u>, <u>sometimes</u>, or <u>never</u> true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

        [ ]   Often true

        [ ]   Sometimes true

        [ ]   Never true

        [ ]   DK or Refused

CH3. "(My/Our child was/The children were) not eating enough because (I/we) just couldn't afford enough food." Was that <u>often</u>, <u>sometimes</u>, or <u>never</u> true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

[ ] Often true

[ ] Sometimes true
[ ] Never true

[ ] DK or Refused

Screener for Stage 2 Child Referenced Questions: If affirmative response (i.e., "often true" or "sometimes true") to one or more of questions CH1-CH3, then continue to *Child Stage 2;* otherwise skip to *End of Food Security Module.*

NOTE: In a sample similar to that of the general U.S. population, about 16 percent of households with children (35 percent of households with children with incomes less than 185 percent of poverty line) will pass this screen and continue to Child Stage 2.

Child Stage 2: Questions CH4-CH7 **(asked of households passing the screener for stage 2 child-referenced questions).**

NOTE: In Current Population Survey Food Security Supplements, question CH6 precedes question CH5.

CH4. In the last 12 months, since (current month) of last year, did you ever cut the size of (your child's/any of the children's) meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

    [ ] Yes

    [ ] No

    [ ] DK

CH5. In the last 12 months, did (CHILD'S NAME/any of the children) ever skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

    [ ] Yes

    [ ] No (Skip CH5a)

    [ ] DK (Skip CH5a)

CH5a. [IF YES ABOVE ASK] How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

    [ ] Almost every month

[ ] Some months but not every month

[ ] Only 1 or 2 months

[ ] DK

CH6. In the last 12 months, (was your child/were the children) ever hungry but you just couldn't afford more food?

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] DK

CH7. In the last 12 months, did (your child/any of the children) ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

[ ] Yes

[ ] No

[ ] DK

Semi-structured Interviews Topic Guide

Name of interview respondent:	
Type of respondent	
Contact details of respondent:	
Time:	
Date:	

Introduction:

Hello, my name is Andy Jolly and I am a student at the University of Birmingham. I am carrying out this interview as part of a study into undocumented migrant families and their experience of food poverty. I would like to make a recording of our conversation so that I can come back to it later and remember exactly what we talked about. The recording will be kept securely and nobody will be able to access the recording except for me. Is it ok to record this interview?:

⬜ **YES**

⬜ **NO**

Have you had the opportunity to read and understand the project information sheet and do you have any questions?

⬜ **YES**

⬜ **NO**

Do you understand that all your information will be confidential and will be securely stored, that the transcript from the interview will be anonymised using a number and all identifiable references will be removed? Please let me know if you are unhappy with the transcript being used in this way.

Do you understand that the only instance in which I would break confidentiality is if you inform me of any harm or proposed harm to yourself or another person, or if you disclose any criminal activity?

⬜ **YES**

⬜ **NO**

Background information

1. Could you please tell me a bit about yourself (e.g. your age, nationality, where you live)?

2. Can you talk to me about how your immigration status? How does this affect you and your family day to day?

3. Some families find that they become destitute because of their immigration status – could you tell me more about your experience of that?

4. How does it feel to not have any papers?

Food and Diet

1. What is the typical food and beverage intake in a day for your family?

2. If the food and beverages your family consumes varies greatly from day-to-day and can't be described as 'typical,' please describe the types and amounts of foods and beverages your family has eaten over the past week.

3. How does the food and beverage intake of adults in your household differ from that of the children in your household?

4. Who in your household is mainly responsible for obtaining food and beverages?

5. Is food regularly cooked or prepared in your household? If so, who in your household is mainly responsible for preparing/cooking food?

6. What are the primary places/shops/agencies where you get your food and beverages from?

7. Is there anything you would like to change about your food and beverage intake? Is there anything you would like to change about your children/child's food and beverage intake?

Other aggravating factors

1. Can you tell me about where you and your family are currently living?

2. What means of financial support do you have for you and your family?

3. Do you or any of your family have any health problems which impact on your daily life – could you tell me a bit about them?

4. Some families find that they have to do things that they don't want to do in order to survive – is that something that you have found?

Access to services

1. Have you ever been refused help because of your immigration status? – could you tell me about that?

2. What is your experience of:
   i. Social services
   ii. Health services
   iii. Education
   iv. Food banks

Personal Network Size

1. How many families with children do you know (who also know you), who live in Birmingham, and don't have papers/are undocumented, and who you have seen in the last two weeks?

Ending

Thank you very much for participating in this research.

Do you have any questions about the interview or any further comments about the subjects discussed?

Photo Elicitation Topic Guide
1. Can you talk me through why you picked each of these photo's.

I.What is the photo of? Does it have a title?

II.When and where was the photo taken?

III.Why does this photo represent 'food' to you?

IV.How were you feeling when you took this photo?

V.How do you feel now looking back at the photo?

2.   Which is your favourite photo, and why?

3.   Do you have any other favourites?

4.   Do you have a least favourite photo?

5.   Is there anything else you want to add? It doesn't have to be about the photo

Our ref: 2733533
Date: 6 November 2018

Mr Andy Jolly

Freedom of Information Act 2000

Dear Mr Jolly,

This request is being handled under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding.

Request

"I am currently undertaking research into the support for families with NRPF, and am writing to you under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 to request the following information from the Children's Trust:

NRPF Support

The number of a) families and b) children with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) currently supported (in September 2018) by the Children's Trust under section 17 of the Children Act.

The number of families supported by the Children's Trust under section 17 of the Children Act who are housed outside of the borough.

If there is a starting point for deciding the rate of subsistence support given to children and families with NRPF, please specify: a) the amount per child b) the amount per adult

Referrals

The number of referrals/requests received by Children's Services/Children's Trust for section 17 support for families with NRPF received between April 2017-March 2018.

The number of pre-assessment screenings completed for families with NRPF received between April 2017-March 2018.

The number of child in need assessments completed for families with NRPF received between April 2017-March 2018.

Number of families given support under section 17 following the completion of an assessment between April 2017-March 2018.

The number of families found to be ineligible for support because of Immigration status between April 2017-March 2018

If the above information is contained or partially contained in a policy or procedure document, please provide the policy. If this is not available, or it only partially contains the information, please provide the information in an excel spreadsheet."

Response

I am writing to inform you that we have searched our records and some of the information you requested is not held by Birmingham Children's Trust. Not recorded on some of the systems.

I have detailed below the information that is held.

The number of a) families and b) children with No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) currently supported (in September 2018) by the Children's Trust under section 17 of the Children Act.

There are 156 No Recourse to Public Funds families supported under Section 17 of the Children Act 1989 and 299 children (as at 13 September 2018).

The number of families supported by the Children's Trust under section 17 of the Children Act who are housed outside of the city.

There are 49 families housed outside of the City.

If there is a starting point for deciding the rate of subsistence support given to children and families with NRPF, please specify: a) the amount per child b) the amount per adult

Our NRPF policy is currently under review; however subsistence rates are clearly intended as a guideline. The rates we are working to are:

Single parent – £35.39
Couple – £68
1st Child £40 and £30 thereafter for each subsequent child
Where additional family needs are identified, financial support is flexible to meet specific need. Basic subsistence rates are reviewed on a case by case basis, at the discretion of the NRPF Team Manager, when requested by a family or their allocated social worker.

The number of referrals received by Children's Services/Children's Trust for section 17 support for families with NRPF received between April 2017-March 2018.

We completed 153 NRPF assessments between April 2017 and March 2018 arising from referrals received.

The number of pre-assessment screenings completed for families with NRPF received between April 2017-March 2018.

We do not undertake pre-assessments screenings. All referrals are screened by our Children's Advisory Support Services (CASS) which is the first point of contact for all services for children.

The number of child in need assessments completed for families with NRPF received between April 2017-March 2018.

As advised above, there were 153 family assessments completed between April 2017 and March 2018.

Number of families given support under section 17 following the completion of an assessment between April 2017-March 2018.

The number of families given support after the completion of an assessment was 137.

The number of families found to be ineligible for support because of Immigration status between April 2017-March 2018

We do not collect this information.

Please quote the reference number 2733533 in any future communications.

If you are dissatisfied with the handling of your request, you have the right to ask for an internal review. Internal review requests should be submitted within two months of the date of receipt of the response to your original letter and should be addressed to:

Corporate Information Governance Team
PO Box 16366
Birmingham
B2 2YY
Email: infogovernance@birmingham.gov.uk

If you are still dissatisfied with our response after the internal review you have a right of appeal to the Information Commissioner at:

The Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire SK9 5AF.
Telephone: 01625 545 700
Website: www.ico.gov.uk

I will now close your request as of this date.

Yours sincerely

Alison Williamson
Customer Relations Service Officer

Appendix 5: Coding Tree

Ch. No.	Selective codes	Axial Codes	Open Coding	Number of Sources	Number of References
5	(in) Adequacy	Household Food Security	Food running out	17	55
			Balanced diet		
			Cutting portion size and skipping meals		
			Not eating enough		
			Hunger		
			Not eating for a day		
			Losing weight		
			Free school meals		
			Making money for food stretch		
		Financial exclusion	Easier to get food than rent or utilities	15	29
			Cost of providing food for nursery and education		
			No money for school uniform		
			Cannot afford transport costs		
			Remittances		
			Destitution		
6	Abandonment	Poor Support	Refusal of local authority support	15	90
			Poor housing and overcrowding		
			Misleading advice from social workers on NRPF		
			Fear of support being withdrawn		
			Amount of subsistence support given		
			Intrusive assessment process		
			Refusing support until crisis		
			Length of time for assessment		
			Precarity after regularising status		
			Relocation out of city		
			Moving house		
			Eviction from council house or NASS accommodation		
			Disappointment at lack of care		
7	Access	Food Access	Access to foodbanks	12	33
			Shopping in supermarkets and traditional shops		
			Distance from food shops		
			Use of fast food restaurants		
8	Abundance	Food availability	Variety of food	11	17
			Choice of food eaten for breakfast		
			Healthy food		
9	Agency	Children's Agency	Children's food preferences	10	17
			Children did not want food from country of origin		
		Parent's agency	Holding together for the children	6	6
			Wanting a better life for the children		
		Attitudes	Making the best of inadequate accommodation	17	27
			Gratitude		
			Budgeting		
			Work ethic		

			Mutual aid			
		Risky behaviours	Transactional sexual relationships	7	22	
			Making ends meet			
			Informal work			